

INSPECTION REPORT

St Cuthbert's RC Primary School
Hartlepool

LEA area: Hartlepool

Unique Reference Number: 111692

Inspection Number: 189040

Headteacher: Mrs Margaret Gibson

Reporting inspector: Mr G Brown

Dates of inspection: 18-21 October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707085

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

Type of control: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Stratford Road
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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Michael Fearon

Date of previous inspection: 30 April 1996

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Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
George Brown, RgI	Design and technology Information technology	Attainment and progress Leadership and management Efficiency Under fives
John Lovell, Lay Inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community
Jim Stirrup	English Music	Curriculum and assessment Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
David Speakman	Mathematics History Geography	Equal opportunities Teaching
Mary Griffiths	Science Art Physical education	Special educational needs Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

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REPORT CONTENTS

Paragraph

MAIN FINDINGS

- What the school does well
- Where the school has weaknesses
- How the school has improved since the last inspection
- Standards in subjects
- Quality of teaching
- Other aspects of the school
- The parents' views of the school

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

INTRODUCTION

- Characteristics of the school 1-3
- Key indicators

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school

- Attainment and progress 4-18
- Attitudes, behaviour and personal development 19-23
- Attendance 24-36

Quality of education provided

- Teaching 27-33
- The curriculum and assessment 34-44
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development 45-50
- Support, guidance and pupils' welfare 51-57
- Partnership with parents and the community 58-65

The management and efficiency of the school

- Leadership and management 66-72
- Staffing, accommodation and learning resources 73-76
- The efficiency of the school 77-83

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

Areas of learning for children under five

84-95

English, mathematics and science

96-124

Other subjects or courses

125-167

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

Summary of inspection evidence

Data and indicators

MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are generally good and above the national average.
- Pupils make at least satisfactory and most often good progress in their learning.
- The response of pupils to their learning is good and they behave well in class and around the school.
- Teaching is mainly good and is a growing strength of the school.
- Children make a good start to their school lives in the nursery.
- There is a strong sense of teamwork among all the adults working in the school and this helps to provide a stimulating environment in which pupils can learn.
- The leadership offered by the headteacher is very good and provides vision and direction for the school.
- The support and guidance given to pupils is good and helps them to make largely good progress.
- The curriculum provided at both key stages is an effective tool for learning and is enhanced by a good range of additional activities for the pupils to enjoy outside of normal hours.
- The provision made for the pupils' moral and social development is good.
- The school makes effective use of its major resources including all adults on the site.

• Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Although standards are satisfactory overall, there are insufficient planned opportunities for pupils to use and extend their speaking skills across the curriculum.
- II. There is insufficient emphasis given in both the curriculum and in teaching, to the independent learning of the pupils.
- III. There is inadequate planned provision for the spiritual development of pupils within the wider curriculum.
- IV. The curriculum planned for the under fives in the reception class is rather formal for the needs of young children.
- V. The arrangements made for the development of pupils' musical skills are inadequate and limit the progress they make in this subject.
- VI. The school has built up a financial surplus that has not been clearly targeted and used for specific areas of school development.

This is a good school. The weaknesses are greatly outweighed by its many strengths, but they will nevertheless form the basis of an action plan to be prepared by the governors, headteacher and staff.

• How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made very good progress since it was last inspected in April 1996. Following that inspection, a great deal of documentation was put in place to support the development of the curriculum, which is now good overall. The elements causing almost 22 per cent of unsatisfactory teaching reported in 1996 have now disappeared. A consistent whole school approach to the assessment of pupils' work was introduced and this is now helping to inform teachers about the lessons they should prepare. Improvements have also been made to the science curriculum and this has been beneficial in helping to raise standards in the subject, particularly among pupils at Key Stage 1. The standards achieved by the pupils in all subjects and the effectiveness of teaching in that process, are now the subject of regular review and evaluation. This is helping to drive up standards still further. The school field has now been put into more regular use and has increased the opportunities made available for physical education. The time parents spend in bringing and collecting their children to and from nursery sessions, has been cut down, ensuring more time is available for teaching and learning. The school continues to show very good capacity for improvement in the future, particularly in the determination to raise standards still further.

• **Standards in subjects**

This table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools
English	C	A
Mathematics	C	A
Science	C	B

	Key
<i>well above average</i>	A
<i>above average</i>	B
<i>average</i>	C
<i>below average</i>	D
<i>well below average</i>	E

The results of the 1999 tests show that standards in the core subjects have risen again at Key Stage 2. Standards at Key Stage 1 fell in 1999 in reading and writing but almost 30 per cent of these pupils were targeted for special support. The inspection findings confirm that standards in English and mathematics are above average at Key Stage 2 and above average in English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 1. Standards in information technology have risen considerably and are now fully in line with those expected for pupils of primary age. There are also strengths in pupils' work in art and physical education and the great majority make good progress in much of their learning. Pupils make mainly unsatisfactory progress in music, due to irregular and incomplete provision. Standards among the under fives are average overall. The rise in pupils' attainment is largely due to more effective teaching, improved curriculum planning and the willingness of pupils to respond positively to what they are asked to do in everyday learning.

• **Quality of teaching**

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good	Good
Science	N/A	Good	Good
Information technology	N/A	Good	Good
Other subjects	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

The quality of teaching is good overall with almost two thirds of observed teaching judged to be good or better. There was no unsatisfactory teaching and in approximately 14 per cent of lessons it was very good or excellent. Some good teaching occurs in almost all subjects and there are particular teaching strengths in the nursery and in English, mathematics, science, information technology, art and physical education at both key stages.

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

• **Other aspects of the school**

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Good in classrooms and around the school. Pupils respond positively to the behaviour policy and show good relationships with their teachers and each other.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The school does its best to keep pupil absence to below the national average and there is a prompt start to the school day.
Ethos*	There is a good and effective learning environment to which pupils respond well. The targets set by the school to help raise standards still further are challenging yet realistic.
Leadership and management	Good overall, particularly the influence exerted by the headteacher. The role of the subject coordinators is increasingly effective and the governors meet their statutory requirements.
Curriculum	It is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. The curriculum provided for children on entry to reception is too formal for their immediate needs. The assessment of pupils' work in the curriculum is good.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Satisfactory overall, with good provision made for pupils' moral and social development. The planned provision made for the spiritual development of pupils within the curriculum is undeveloped and more could be offered to pupils in relation to their awareness of the multicultural nature of society.
Special educational needs	The provision made for pupils is good and this leads them to make mainly good progress.
Staffing, accommodation and resources	The school provides well in these areas and uses them effectively to help meet pupils' needs and the demands of the curriculum

Value for money

The school gives good value for money.

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

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
<p>VII. Most children do well at school and are happy to come.</p> <p>VIII. The school gives parents a clear understanding of what is taught.</p> <p>IX. The school is a caring place and gives good information about what is provided for pupils.</p> <p>X. The school's values and attitudes have a positive influence on what pupils' think and how they behave.</p> <p>XI. There is emphasis on good pupils' attendance.</p> <p>XII. There is usually a good range of activities for pupils to enjoy outside of school hours.</p> <p>XIII. There are improved facilities for outdoor physical education and also for working with computers.</p>	<p>XIV. It is not always clear when and what progress.</p> <p>–</p>

The inspection bears out all the positive points made here by parents. In respect of homework, the school has recently attempted to clarify with parents the purpose of homework and how much will be given to pupils on a weekly basis. The impact of homework on pupils' learning is judged to be satisfactory.

· **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

In order to raise still further pupils' standards and the quality of education provided, the governors, headteacher and staff should

1. Improve and extend the planned opportunities for all pupils to develop and practise their speaking skills (paragraphs 8,9,10,99,100,101).
2. Place greater emphasis in both the planned curriculum and in teaching, on pupils of all ages taking wider responsibility for their own learning. Ensure that pupils act more under their own initiative and improve and extend aspects of their personal development by acting more on targets set by themselves (paragraphs 19, 32, 37, 76, 106).
3. Re-examine the current curriculum provision made for pupils under five in the reception class. Ensure that the curriculum is more clearly based on the six areas of learning suggested for children of this age and that the work expected of them is less formal and helps builds on the good progress they make in the nursery (paragraphs 8,28,35).
4. Ensure that the current financial surplus now at the school's disposal, is clearly targeted for future spending and that the basis of this is recorded in the school development plan (paragraph 79).

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

- The arrangements made for the development of pupils' musical skills are inadequate and affect the progress they make in this subject (paragraphs 17,39,155-161).
- There is inadequate planned provision for the spiritual development of pupils within the wider curriculum (paragraphs 36,46)
-

· **INTRODUCTION**

· **Characteristics of the school**

- 1 St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Primary is a Voluntary Aided School that aims to provide, on a coeducational basis, a broad and balanced education for pupils in the age range 4-11 years. The school is located near to the centre of Hartlepool and serves the Roman Catholic parish of St Cuthbert's. The majority of pupils are from Catholic backgrounds and live near to the school, but others, including non Catholics, come from wider, more outlying areas around the town. The local area is mainly residential and is a blend of rented and owner occupied accommodation. Few pupils are from homes that are disadvantaged, but the number who come from high social class backgrounds is broadly half the national figure. Some 21 per cent of pupils are entitled to free meals, a figure broadly in line with the national average. None of the pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds or from homes where English is not the first language. Most of the pupils have participated in some form of pre school education, many at the nursery attached to the school. The attainment of children on entry to the reception classes is within the ability range expected for this age group and is considered to be average overall. There are currently 20 per cent of pupils on the register of special educational needs, broadly in line with the national average. One pupil has a statement of educational need.
- 2 Children are admitted to the reception class in accordance with the policy jointly agreed between the local education authority and the governors of this Voluntary Aided School. The school has two intakes; one for the oldest children at the beginning of the autumn term, and the other at the beginning of the spring

term, for all other children. At the time of the inspection, there were 13 children in the reception class who were under five years old. There are currently 282 pupils on roll, plus a further 73 part time children in the nursery. When all reception children are admitted, the total number on the school roll will be above the national average.

- 3 The school's aims and mission statement are reviewed annually in order that it remains a family school with a strong sense of community. It sets out to be a welcoming school where Christian values help every pupil develop to their full potential. Among its main aims are to develop pupils' independence in thought and action while, at same time, make them aware of the common good and the need to be caring and sensitive towards others. The school is continually trying to review and evaluate its policies and practice in order to meet the changing needs of the school and the pupils it serves. A current target is to improve standards still further in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and to use the very new computer suite to increase pupils' awareness of and progress in information technology. The school is also targeting pupils with special educational needs in an attempt to increase the amount and quality of the support given to them.

3

Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	27	22	49

3 National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	18	20	23
	Girls	18	19	20
	Total	36	39	43
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	73(89)	80(89)	88(86)
	National	82(80)	83(80)	87(84)

3 Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	20	23	26
	Girls	20	21	21
	Total	40	44	47
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	82(86)	90(86)	96(92)
	National	82(80)	86(84)	87(85)

.....

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1997/98	25	21	46

3 National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	17	18	20
	Girls	17	17	18
	Total	34	35	38
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	74(65)	76(56)	83(70)
	National	70(65)	69(59)	78(69)

3 Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	16	19	19
	Girls	18	19	19
	Total	34	38	38
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	74(72)	83(70)	83(81)
	National	68(65)	69(59)	75(69)

3 **Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed
Through absence for the latest complete
Reporting year: 1997/98

		%
Authorised Absence	School	5.3
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.8
	National comparative data	0.5

3

3 **Exclusions**

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

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

3 **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	13.8
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

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

3 **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

3 **Attainment and progress**

4 In the 1999 national tests for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 or higher was below the national average in reading and writing and broadly in line with the national average in mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 in these subjects was broadly average in terms of similar schools. When account is taken of the school's results in these subjects over the three year period between 1996 and 1998, the performance of pupils was above the national average in all three areas. Comparison with similar schools for 1999 shows that pupils scored above the national average in mathematics and broadly average in other areas. The 1999 tests show that pupils' attainment has dropped slightly at Key Stage 1 overall, but this was a year where almost 30 per cent of the total group had been targeted for special support. The results of inspection confirm relatively high standards at Key Stage 1, that attainment in English, mathematics and science is above average and that pupils make good progress overall including those with special educational needs.

5 In the 1999 national tests for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 or higher was above the national average in English, mathematics and science. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was close to the national average in mathematics and science and well above average in English, when compared to similar schools. Taking all the core subjects together over the three year period between 1996 and 1998, the performance of pupils fell just below the national average. The 1999 tests show that standards have risen again in the core areas of the curriculum. The above average attainment in English and mathematics is confirmed by the results of the current inspection which also finds that standards in science are broadly average at the end of Key Stage 2. By the time they are ready to transfer to high school education, the attainment of pupils in the core subjects of English and mathematics is above average, while in science it is in line with the national average. Pupils make good progress overall including those with special educational needs.

6 The attainment of children on entry to both the nursery and reception classes is within the broad range expected for their age and is considered average overall. At the time of the inspection, 13 out of 18 reception children were under five years old. By the time they are five, the great majority achieve the 'desirable learning outcomes' expected for their age.

7 Children make a particularly good start in the nursery. There is a wide range of activities open to them, allowing for good progress to be made in all the recognised areas of learning. Children quickly develop an awareness of rules and routines and coexist very happily alongside one another. Language skills are well developed by listening to stories and through well structured imaginative play that also encourages good personal and social development. The beginnings of important letter sounds and formation are well established and many children recognise their own name as well as that of several everyday objects in their classroom. Listening skills are good but speaking skills are underdeveloped. In mathematics, children count up to five by touching the right number of objects and know the difference between red circles and blue oblongs. Their physical development in particular is well planned for, as well as a good range of activities that extend their creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Most children make good progress in the nursery.

8 By the time they are five, the great majority of children reach the standards anticipated for their age in all the approved areas of learning. They make mainly satisfactory progress in the reception class, including those children with special educational needs. The curriculum for the under fives in the reception class is very much planned on the National Curriculum and presents rather too formal a structure for many young children just transferred from the nursery. For example, developing good patterns of speech through imaginative play is sometimes overlooked with the onset of work in the literacy hour which begins almost at once. Despite this, children respond well to lessons, show themselves capable of quite sustained periods of concentration and take on some responsibility for their own learning. In English, they write

letters and key words to the expected level and most attempt a good range of reading books. Mathematics and creative development are both sound and standards in physical development are most often good.

- 9 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress in their speaking and listening and good progress in all other aspects of English. There are however, instances where speech could be promoted and provided for better, allowing for standards to rise still further in this important area. Standards of attainment in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 are good. While a minority of pupils with special educational needs have identified reading problems, the majority of pupils read with clarity, interest and enthusiasm. The Literacy Strategy is encouraging pupils to be critical writers and standards of story writing as well as more descriptive and evaluative texts are accurate and of good length. Pupils also make good gains in their grammar, spelling and standards of presentation.
- 10 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress with their listening and speaking skills but lack the platform to go on and increase their oracy skills, including those involving debate and argument. Reading standards are good and pupils use a wide range of fiction and non fiction for both enjoyment and information gathering purposes. There is some lack of sustained practice in taking wider responsibility for more of this kind of work. Writing skills make good progress with pupils extending their writing skills across the curriculum and in an ever increasing range of contexts. There is an under use of drafting skills to refine, edit and improve still further the quality of finished work.
- 11 By the end of both key stages pupils attain above average in all aspects of mathematics and make good progress in relation to their previous learning. Pupils have particular strengths in numeracy including their mental alertness and accuracy with everyday computation. Pupils make important gains in their knowledge and understanding of shape and measure and, particularly at Key Stage 2, handle and use data with confidence. As their knowledge and mathematical skills progress, pupils become more adept at investigational mathematics, and begin to apply previously learned concepts to new situations. The Numeracy Strategy is ensuring that skills and concepts are taught progressively and that pupils can understand mathematics as well as merely practice what they have been shown.
- 12 Pupils at both key stages make good progress in science. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is above average and is in line with national averages at Key Stage 2. Pupils at Key Stage 1 demonstrate a good working knowledge of living processes and the properties and uses of various materials. Their knowledge and use of experimental science is also mainly above average. At Key Stage 2, pupils also show good skills when carrying out basic experimental work and know, for example, how to conduct a fair test by altering only one variable at a time. They show good knowledge of magnetism but their knowledge does not always extend to knowing how to set up an experiment of their own to test a hypotheses. All other aspects of science are satisfactory or better.
- 13 Standards in information technology are in line with those expected for pupils at the end of both key stages and the improvement in the quality of teaching and in the greater access to computers, leads to pupils making good progress overall. Pupils show increasing knowledge of the use of computers in their everyday lives. Their technical skills, including mouse control and being able to access, follow and change on screen information, are at the standard anticipated for their age. Pupils move from being able to 'dress a teddy bear' using a computer in the reception class, to very sophisticated and challenging work in the upper part of Key Stage 2. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are able to 'log on' without help, relocate information and images to different parts of the screen and utilise menus and tool bars with increasing speed and confidence. They make good and sometimes very good progress with art programs, and combine the skills of art, mathematics and geography when creating accurate plans of their classrooms onto the screen. Standards in this particular subject have risen considerably since the last inspection.
- 14 Pupils at Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress in their termly projects involving design and technology. All work involves aspects of design and evaluation of finished products. The work completed on puppets and on designing and making Joseph's coat of many colours, reflected satisfactory progress in the use of a range of creative and constructional materials. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to follow a common format for the presentation of their designs and by Year 6 progress to designing, making and evaluating model fairgrounds and a series of controllable vehicles.

- 15 In art at both key stages, pupils make consistently good progress using a range of media and techniques. Standards are particularly good at Key Stage 1 when they combine various techniques to make a large creative pieces based on Joseph's coat of many colours. At Key Stage 2, standards are at the expected level for the age of the pupils, for example when they display good manipulative skills when building up relief blocks for printing. The observational drawing skills of many pupils show increasing accuracy and good attention is paid to detail and perspective.
- 16 In history and geography, pupils make mainly satisfactory progress and reach standards anticipated for their age. At Key Stage 1, pupils make a good start in map making when they follow the route taken By Little Red Riding Hood. They effectively use large maps and pictures to link objects to different stages in the journey and make a good start in map making and using symbols. Pupils show a satisfactorily developed sense of place and location and most are able to clearly differentiate between important and less important features of places. Younger pupils at Key Stage 2 have an appropriate knowledge of the life of a river and trace its course through from its source, recognising such features as tributaries, waterfalls, meanders and lakes. The oldest pupils have a satisfactory grasp of more distant locations such as Africa and India and progress well in their use of geographical criteria and language to compare and contrast localities.
- 17 In physical education, pupils make satisfactory and often good progress particularly at Key Stage 1. In general movement, dance and gymnastics, Key Stage 1 pupils show good poise, balance and the ability to use space well. At Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory gains in relation to their previous experiences, but some of the work set does not extend their strength or ability to raise and extend new skills. Swimming standards are satisfactory. In music at both key stages, pupils make unsatisfactory progress overall. A lack of regular practice, particularly in composing and performance, leads to standards below those anticipated for the majority of pupils of this age.
- 18 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them and in relation to their previous learning. This is largely due to their needs being well met through good provision both in and out of the classroom. The targets set on individual educational plans are realistic and progressive in nature. This is an improvement on the last inspection and also includes more able pupils who are now appropriately challenged in a range of subjects. Progress is also heightened by regular reviews of targets and completed work.

18 **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

- 19 Pupils enjoy school and have good attitudes to learning. This was also verified by the parents at their pre inspection meeting. They generally sustain their concentration well and undertake work with interest and enthusiasm. Pupils listen carefully to teachers and to each other. They relate well to each other and to adults and display consideration for their feelings, values and beliefs, taking pleasure in sharing in the celebration and recognition of the successes of each other. Beginning among the under fives, pupils work effectively on their own and with others, sharing resources and cooperating well with each other; such as when children in the nursery share building bricks to built a tower taller than themselves. Children under five make a good start in terms of their overall personal development and general behaviour. As they move through the school, pupils become increasingly able and willing to collaborate. Pupils also respond well to challenging work and display initiative when opportunities are provided. Particularly at Key Stage 2, some pupils begin to take responsibility for their own work and learning targets and organise themselves independently when undertaking group activities. Pupils' development of personal and independent learning skills is variable.
- 20 Pupils' response to their learning is generally good in the majority of lessons. Their behaviour is often good and sometimes very good in the classroom, in the hall at lunchtime and at play. On occasions, a small minority of pupils behaves in an inappropriate manner. Pupils are orderly in their movement around the school and are courteous and polite. They are trustworthy and have respect for equipment, resources and property. There is no evidence of graffiti or litter around the school. Pupils know that bullying and violent behaviour is wrong and recognise they may turn to staff for support and that any

incidents will be dealt with fairly and effectively. There have been no exclusions in the current year and the rate of exclusions is static. Pupils understand and respond well to the expected high standards of behaviour outlined in the code of behaviour and rules of the school. They show good understanding of the need to regulate their own behaviour in order to produce an environment in which they can all be secure, comfortable and learn.

- 21 Pupils' response to opportunities for social development is good. Throughout the school, pupils have opportunities to assume minor responsibilities and display some initiative. They tidy up after activities at Key Stage 1, and undertake monitorial responsibilities within the classroom. Such opportunities increase at Key Stage 2, where pupils volunteer to undertake voluntary responsibilities such as looking after Key Stage 1 pupils during wet playtimes, thereby setting a good example to younger pupils. Pupils respond well to the opportunities that are made available for them to undertake responsibility.
- 22 Throughout the school, pupils welcome visitors and are keen to show and discuss their work and share ideas. They respond well to visiting speakers, to a wide range of visits and to identifying and supporting a range of local, national and international charities such as CAFOD. Pupils play an active part in the local community through established links with the parish and local groups such as St Bridget's home for the elderly and St Cuthbert's Day Centre.
- 23 The pupils' good attitudes to work and play, good behaviour and good relationships and a good response to those opportunities which are provided for personal and social development and to display initiative, make an effective contribution to pupils' attainment and progress. This positive aspect of school life was reported as such during the last inspection and has remained in place since that time.

23 **Attendance**

- 24 Attendance is satisfactory and close to the national average. Standards are similar to those reported during the last inspection. Overall attendance of 94 per cent during the last school year for which there are national comparative figures (1997/98) indicates that attendance is satisfactory. In the same year there were 0.8 per cent of sessions missed through unauthorised absence, which was just above the national average. In the last year (1998/99) attendance levels rose to 94.5 per cent with unauthorised absence levels to 0.9 per cent. 25 pupils achieved an excellent 100 per cent attendance record, although 22 pupils had attendance levels of less than 85 per cent, which is poor.
- 25 The majority of authorised absences occur as a result of illness and sickness, medical visits and holidays which have been requested and authorised, despite strong encouragement from the school for holidays to be taken outside of term time. The school works in close collaboration with parents and the education welfare officer to monitor attendance levels and address concerns. An analysis by the school clearly shows that poor attendance has a detrimental impact on attainment and progress.
- 26 Registration practice throughout the school is consistent and registers are generally marked efficiently and accurately, although occasionally there are omissions, which are addressed later in the day. A very small number of pupils are late for the start of sessions and lateness is properly and consistently recorded. For the great majority, the school day begins promptly and efficiently. During the day, lessons begin at the planned time. The change between activities and classrooms is achieved efficiently and movement around the school is purposeful and well ordered.

26 **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

26 **Teaching**

- 27 At the time of the last inspection, there were significant variations in the quality of teaching. Almost 22

per cent of teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory and approximately 11 per cent very good or better. The balance was satisfactory. The report highlighted areas such as better monitoring of teaching, as being crucial to improving the overall standards of teaching across the school. This message and others related to it, has been carefully actioned by the school and the results of the current inspection bear out the improvements that have occurred. All lessons were of at least a satisfactory standard, two thirds were good or better and more than one in ten was either very good or excellent. Currently there is no significant variation in the quality of teaching across the school. Teaching is judged to be good overall for children under 5 and also at both key stages. Teaching is consistently good in English, mathematics, science, information technology, art and physical education at both key stages. It is satisfactory in all other subjects at both key stages, although there are elements of weakness in the teaching of music. There is insufficient evidence on which to base a judgement on the quality of teaching in design and technology at either key stage.

- 28 Teaching for the under fives is good overall, but better in the nursery than in reception, where the curriculum is not judged to be wholly appropriate for the youngest children. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of how young children learn is good overall. This enables good planning of lessons that takes account fully of the recommended areas of learning for children under five in the nursery. Planning in reception is not always appropriate to the children's age and stage of development at this early stage in the year, for example the use of almost a full literacy hour approach on most days. Nevertheless, teachers' expectations of these young children are of a high standard. Management of children under five is good and they are very well supported during lessons by support staff and other adults. The methods and organisation used by teachers and their assistants are good and have a positive impact on the good progress made by these young children. Contributing well to this good progress is the positive relationships and the teachers' efficient use of time and resources. The quality and use of day to day assessment of children is satisfactory and informative records of pupils' attainment and progress are kept and used satisfactorily.
- 29 Teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2 is good. With the exception of music, teachers at both key stages have a good command of their subjects, enabling them to give clear explanations and to question pupils to good effect. They are fully aware, for example, of the requirements of the National Literacy and Numeracy initiatives. The teaching of these is effective and well supported by teachers' good knowledge, effective planning and organisation. Their knowledge and understanding of their pupils is also good. Even at this early stage in the year, teachers are beginning to know their pupils well and monitor work carefully in lessons, using praise to encourage and stimulate pupils to make good progress. This was seen in almost all lessons.
- 30 Assessments in English and mathematics are supported by national and published tests, but regular assessment in many other subjects is not sufficiently developed in order to ensure that all pupils, including higher attainers, are consistently challenged. Aspects of this concern are still evident and current inspection findings show that, although teachers' expectations at Key Stage 1 are sound, and good overall at Key Stage 2, the level of challenge for higher attaining pupils in some lessons is not high enough.
- 31 An issue of concern in the previous inspection was that some unsuccessful lessons arose from pupils learning different subjects at the same time and teachers could not help effectively because of divided attention. Now lessons are more effectively thought through, with planning outlining the structure and main activities of lessons, opportunities for the assessment of pupils' work and an evaluation of past teaching and learning. Lessons seen, for example, in numeracy, art and physical education met these criteria. Learning objectives are included appropriately in planning, which is usually completed in year group teams and is an effective and efficient way of preparing pupils' work. Almost all teaching is done by staff working within their own class, but pupils are currently taught in mathematical sets based on their prior attainment, and this effectively cuts down on the wider ranging levels of attainment associated with mixed year classes. Although the marking of pupils' work is good, the use of day to day assessment is only satisfactory overall.
- 32 Teachers' methods and organisation are good at both key stages and are usually appropriate to what is being taught and what pupils are intended to learn. More could be organised to help pupils take greater

initiative in their own learning. Teachers use exposition well, particularly in the literacy hour, and conduct discussions effectively. In the best lessons, introductions are lively, engage pupils' interest, are of the right length and leave an appropriate amount of time for pupils' main learning activities. Teachers manage their pupils well, and classrooms are purposeful and orderly. Relationships are good and teachers generally establish and maintain very high standards of behaviour in their lessons. All of this creates a sound climate for learning to take place. Activities are well managed and the use of resources to effectively support teaching and learning is good overall. The best lessons move at a brisk pace and generally efficient use is made of time. Lessons start promptly and there is no time wasted. Homework is used satisfactorily and provides sound support for learning.

- 33 Good teaching enables all teachers to play an active role in supporting pupils with special educational needs, although there are insufficient opportunities for sharing good practice. Individual educational plans are in place for all pupils requiring them and there is a high level of involvement of class teachers in setting and monitoring targets. Although there are attempts to match work and resources to pupils' individual needs, practice is still inconsistent. Practice is particularly good however, in mathematics and information technology and in many English lessons. Teachers use the expertise of classroom assistants very effectively to help support the pupils.

33 **The curriculum and assessment**

- 34 The school provides a broad balanced and relevant curriculum, which meets all statutory requirements and reflects the aims and objectives of the school. It forms a good foundation for the next stage of pupils' learning when they transfer to high school education at the end of Year 6. There have been several improvements in curricular provision since the school was inspected in 1996, particularly in relation to support documentation and better planning.

- 35 The curriculum provided for the under fives in the nursery is good and is soundly based on the six established areas of learning for under fives. The curriculum planned for the under fives in the reception class is rather formal for the needs of young children, particularly for work undertaken in the autumn term.

- 36 The curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2 covers all areas of the National Curriculum and religious education. The curriculum successfully promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development and prepares pupils for the next stages of education. It is less successful in providing planned opportunities for the pupils' spiritual development. The governors have a suitable policy for sex and drugs education, which is delivered where teachers deem it to be relevant, usually within the science curriculum and personal and social education lessons.

- 37 The school ensures that all pupils have equality of access to all aspects of the curriculum. The planned provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, with all pupils having relevant individual education plans, which meet their needs. The issue of transferring actual targets to planned provision for pupils with special educational needs was identified as a weakness in the last inspection report and has largely been overcome. There are no issues of equality of opportunity and gender imbalance.

- 38 The school has been successful in its approach to adopting the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and good attempts are being made to integrate literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. The current focus on literacy and numeracy places some pressure on time allocation for other subjects in the curriculum. This particularly applies to science and music where the below average time allocated to these subjects inhibits some staff in fully responding to all aspects of the programmes of study. The curriculum also needs to be re-examined in terms of creating greater opportunities for more independent learning among the pupils. In contrast to the last report, provision for information technology is very good and will continue to improve as the new suite for this subject comes on line. There is a governors' curriculum working party, with linked governors for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs and these appointments are successful in helping governors in general to become involved in the core curriculum.

- 39 All subjects have a coordinator, often with another 'key' person acting as a support in the alternative key stage. In response to a key issue raised in the last inspection, all subjects now have policies and scheme of work, though the scheme of work for music is very much at a draft stage. Other policies and schemes of work have only recently been adopted from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and are still 'bedding in'. The curriculum maintains a sound balance between pupils' knowledge and understanding and the progressive skills they have to learn and practise. There are some weaknesses in music and design and technology in this respect. Teachers' weekly and half term plans are closely linked to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study and provide good opportunities for progressive learning across years and key stages. While there are some inconsistencies, the majority of teachers' plans take account of the different age ranges and abilities within the mixed year classes. This was identified as one of the areas for development in the previous report.
- 40 The school provides a good range of extra curricular activities, including booster classes for Year 6, Spanish, French, an art club, a choir, sewing, football and gymnastics. A good range of visits to the theatre, museums, field trips and activity holidays further enriches the curriculum. Regular visits by such people as the police, musicians, puppet and theatre companies also make a valuable contribution to the varied and extended curriculum provided by the school. Parents rightly praised the range available at their meeting and in the response given on questionnaires.
- 41 Assessment in the nursery and in the reception class is good. The baseline assessments made by the school when children enter both nursery and reception, enable teachers to match work to the future needs of pupils and track progress through the six agreed areas of learning. Teachers make satisfactory use of procedures to assess pupils on a day to day basis and have a clear understanding of pupils' progress.
- 42 The school uses a good range of assessment procedures at Key Stages 1 and 2, with particular strengths in both English and mathematics and satisfactory procedures in science. Apart from fulfilling all the statutory requirements of the end of key stage assessments, all pupils take optional national tests in Years 3,4 and 5. All results are closely analysed in order to identify areas for improvement. There are occasional lapses in accuracy in teacher assessment as to how well pupils are likely to do at the higher levels. Teachers are aware of the need to sharpen up their experiences of being able to moderate or level accurately, pupils' work at both key stages. There are good procedures for the early and effective identification of pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans are regularly monitored and assessed and the great majority has good, measurable and realistic targets.
- 43 Subject coordinators collect and closely monitor teachers planning. The core subject coordinators assess and then evaluate both the delivery of the National Curriculum and the quality of teaching through classroom observations. This is beginning to influence standards in these subjects but more needs to be done. Within individual foundation subjects, teachers barely use a satisfactory range of assessment and recording procedures and the school is rightly scheduled to re examine its assessment of pupils' attainment in the foundation subjects. The assessment coordinator has begun to regularly carry out assessment and monitoring procedures for some foundation subjects in order to assess if the National Curriculum is being delivered in a consistent and appropriate manner. All pupils have their own profile of retained work containing samples of work carried out within each year. These profiles are passed from teacher to teacher.
- 44 In response to a point made in the last inspection report, the school has introduced a policy for curriculum overview, that helps ensure curriculum balance, as well as progressive learning. The headteacher and the assessment coordinator regularly engage in a range of monitoring procedures to ensure systematic delivery and assessment of the whole curriculum. The school fulfils all requirements for providing annual reports at the end of each year, and for informing parents about the statutory assessments undertaken by their children. The high priority placed by the school on assessment, evaluation and monitoring is highlighted by the fact that the Monitoring and Assessment Policy remains on the school development plan and is reviewed each year.

44 **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

- 45 The provision made for pupils' social and moral development is good and that made for their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. All of these aspects of personal development play an important part in the life of the school, with satisfactory and often good provision being made for their delivery. As reported in the last inspection, the ethos of the school is calm, caring and responsive to the needs of others and provides a good platform for personal development. All aspects have broadly remained at the level reported during the previous inspection. At their meeting, parents were rightly supportive of the school and the response and values it seeks from pupils.
- 46 Spiritual development is central to the overall ethos and aims of the school, with much of the provision for its planned delivery being provided for within the collective act of worship and the taught religious education lessons. The latter was not within the remit of the present inspection. During the worship attended, there was a good sense of reverence and awareness of God's presence that was presented by the worship leaders. While some sense of reflection, awe and wonder was observed in information technology, storytelling and in some of the artwork on display around the school, there is little planned provision for spiritual development in individual subjects of the curriculum and this remains an area for further development.
- 47 An effective sense of morality underpins the aims and ethos of the school, with pupils having a strong sense of right and wrong. Pupils are aware of the responsibility they have for their own actions, and a concern for the well being of others. All of this is re enforced by the school's rewards and sanctions system. Pupils at both key stages are provided with the opportunity to explore a range of moral issues both within their personal and social education lessons and in a few other subjects in the curriculum. Good examples of writing about such moral issues as the use of animals in circuses, the destruction of the environment, and problems of the third world can be found in the English curriculum. There is a particularly strong sense of fairness about how all members of the school community react towards and treat each other.
- 48 Pupils develop good social skills as they move through the school. All adults on the site provide good role models for pupils of all ages. All pupils recognise the high demands made on themselves in terms of their social behaviour, and respond in a positive and helpful manner. Pupils move around the school in a safe and sensible manner, display good manners in the dining areas and are courteous to visitors. Pupils also develop an understanding of good citizenship, through their regular fundraising events for CAFOD, and their close relationship with a nearby residential home for senior citizens. Pupils develop good interactive skills and a keen understanding of the importance of working together. This is done through regular involvement in a range of timetabled and extra curricular sporting activities, as well through regular opportunities for collaborative work. Pupils in Year 6 are also provided with the opportunity to develop problem solving skills, and an understanding of the need to work in a collaborative manner during residential activity holidays. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into a caring and supportive environment.
- 49 The quality of provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Most pupils share a common cultural background, and are given opportunities to appreciate their cultural heritage through an exploration of the area they live in, and how it has changed over a period of time. Geography allows pupils to consider a range of alternative life styles and cultures, whilst history provides pupils with the chance to examine the changing nature of their own culture as well as examining the cultures of other societies, the Roman, the Greeks and the Egyptians. In English pupils develop an understanding of their literary heritage, while in art, pupils come to an understanding how artists' work reflects the society they live in.
- 50 All these aspects of the curriculum, plus a good range of extra curricular activities, provide pupils with the opportunity to acquire a cultural identity and to come to an appreciation, understanding and respect for the world they live in. While pupils acquire an understanding of a range of countries and cultures around the world, there is insufficient planned provision, other than in religious education, for pupils to develop an understanding of the multi cultural society that they now find themselves living in. This was a

weakness indicated during the last inspection and one that has not been totally resolved.

50 Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

- 51 The support and guidance given to pupils is good and has been maintained at the level reported during the previous inspection. The school provides a secure environment in which teachers and staff know pupils well, set high standards and, together with other adults working in the school, provide good role models. Teaching and support staff have a clear understanding of pupils' academic and personal progress through day to day monitoring and by setting regular assessment tasks. Pupils feel that they are well supported and are confident in approaching staff with any problems. Support for pupils is good and they clearly benefit from the educational opportunities offered. Additional support is being provided to a group of pupils at the start of Key Stage 2, and this is having positive benefits on their attainment and progress. The grouping of pupils by attainment level in mathematics, provides appropriate challenge and support. Teachers' records in literacy are good and pupils are aware of their personal targets and the national curriculum levels they are working towards. The monitoring of pupils' academic progress and personal development contributes well to their overall attainment and progress.
- 52 Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and there are appropriate arrangements in place for their guidance and welfare. Liaison between class teachers, support staff and the special educational needs coordinator is good. There is a consistent approach to the management of any behavioral problems throughout the school. Links with a range of outside support agencies are good and their involvement is valued. All such measures influence the good progress of pupils and the overall support they are given.
- 53 Child protection arrangements are sound and the school uses the local area protection committee's procedures which comply with requirements. The headteacher is responsible for child protection and has received appropriate training and updates. There are appropriate liaison arrangements with outside agencies. Staff are aware of the procedures to be followed in the case of any concerns, although other adults helping within the school do not have the procedures fully explained to them. The school is vigilant and sensitive in exercising its responsibilities. The school complies with the Education Act 1996, Section 550A; DfEE Circular 10/98 in respect of the use of force to control or restrain pupils; it has a recent policy on the subject and maintains appropriate records.
- 54 Management of health and safety matters is good and teachers take care to teach and emphasise good practice in lessons. They are successful in ensuring that pupils recognise the need to behave and act sensibly for the safety of themselves and others. The headteacher is responsible for health and safety and the school has appropriate policies in place. Electrical and fire appliances are regularly tested and the school regularly conducts whole school fire drills. Risks are identified through on site inspections and the school carries out regular risk assessments, the results of which are recorded.
- 55 The arrangements for providing first aid are satisfactory and three staff currently hold full first aid certificates. Pupils are looked after well and parents are advised of any head injuries that occur. First aid boxes are available within the school and for school journeys. Satisfactory records are maintained of all accidents and these are reviewed informally by the headteacher to help identify and address any future risks.
- 56 The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance and punctuality. Parents are very conscious of the school's emphasis on ensuring that pupils attend school regularly. In conjunction with the education welfare service, the school monitors attendance and carries out a detailed annual analysis to identify those cases where parents fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child at school and go on to develop strategies to promote an improvement. Staff work well with parents and outside agencies to address any concerns. Registers are marked accurately, although on occasions entries are omitted during the registration session and completed later in the day. Telephone contact is made with parents on the first day of absence, if the school has not been contacted, to ascertain the reason for absence. The school recognises and values good attendance through the award of certificates. The school receives good support from the education welfare service and a new education social worker has recently

been appointed.

- 57 The school's ethos and the high expectations of staff are successful in promoting pupils' good standards of behaviour in and around the school and during lessons. This view is supported by the great majority of parents. The school seeks to promote self discipline and has an effective set of rules that are displayed within classrooms. Such rules are applied consistently and behaviour is monitored by all staff who work in the school. Pupils have a clear understanding of the rules, commendations, award certificates and sanctions that may be applied. They know what is right and wrong. The school's attitude towards combating any incidents of bullying is positive and understood by both staff and pupils.
- 57 **Partnership with parents and the community**
- 58 The school's partnership with parents and the community is good and has a very positive influence on standards and the life and work of the school in general. This was reflected in both the parents' pre inspection meeting and the response to their questionnaires. It is also an area that has shown both expansion and improvement since the school was last inspected. The home school agreement, which has recently been introduced, seeks to build on the partnership between school and home, serving as a witness to the Catholic Faith. Over 15 parents provide regular help in classrooms in a variety of ways, such as helping pupils with reading and acting as models for artwork. Other parents provide practical assistance, such as by preparing displays and helping with the supervision of pupils on visits and regular trips to the local library.
- 59 Homework increases as pupils move through the school and parents are supportive when their children are asked to undertake homework such as reading, handwriting, spellings, tables and preparation for projects. The school has an updated homework policy and recently responded positively to the concerns expressed by some parents that the amount of homework provided was too much. The Friends of St Cuthbert's School, which involves parents, staff, members of the parish and 'friends', is actively engaged in fundraising activities. Members organise events such as a summer fair, discos for children and a Christmas Fayre. Through their efforts, they are successful in raising about £1000 each year for the school, which has been well used to improve the computer facilities, subsidise transport, provide hymn books and to buy ingredients for the Christmas cakes which children bake themselves. The assistance provided by parents and other friends of the school is appreciated by staff and pupils and makes a positive contribution to learning within the school.
- 60 The school provides a satisfactory range of information for parents about events and visits. Letters are distributed frequently, some providing an outline of the curriculum and how parents can support their children at the start of each term. Parents are offered opportunities to attend workshops to inform them about areas of the curriculum such as literacy and numeracy and, although these are not always well attended, the school is exploring ways of attracting more parents to the meetings. Pupils' progress is reported to parents through an annual report which parents feel provides them with good information about their child's progress. The reports identify what pupils know, understand and can do, but do not provide explicit targets which can be helpful to parents in supporting children in their future learning. The reports are supplemented by consultation meetings that are held each term. Staff are readily accessible to parents to discuss any concerns that may arise and work in effective partnership with parents, involving them at an early stage in the event of any personal or academic problems.
- 61 Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well informed about arrangements for their children and are fully involved in reviews and the setting of individual education plans. They are generally supportive of what the school is trying to achieve. Parents are strongly encouraged to be involved in their children's learning, sometimes to the extent that the local authority support staff will involve them in any training taking place within the school, if it is likely to be beneficial to their child. Attendance at review meetings is good.
- 62 The school arranges visits for pupils within the local community and to places of interest which enhance and enrich the curriculum. Recent visits have included those to the Green Dragon Yard Museum to

support a Year 5/6 topic work on the life of Victorian children and a visit to Preston Hall Museum to support reception pupils' study of houses and homes. Pupils regularly visit the local 'Foggy Furze' Public Library and Year 6 pupils participate in a three day residential trip to a centre which involves visits linked to the curriculum and outdoor adventurous activities. These visits promote pupils' understanding and are accurately linked to the delivery of the curriculum, providing good learning opportunities as well as promoting personal and social development.

- 63 The school receives and utilises a number of visitors, ranging from local residents who come into school to talk about their life and experiences, to local musicians and dancers. The school has good links with the emergency services and, during the course of the inspection, a police sergeant visited the school to talk about a scheme involving the community in reducing the incidence of local burglaries. Parents and local residents are regularly invited into school for performances and pupils provide much appreciated entertainment for elderly local residents. The school participates in sporting competitions with other local schools and has good links with the English Martyrs Secondary School to which many of the pupils transfer. These activities broaden pupils' understanding of aspects of the curriculum and increase their cultural awareness and appreciation, in addition to promoting personal and social development.
- 64 There are good links with St Cuthbert's Church which support assemblies and the preparation of pupils for their first Holy Communion as well as providing opportunities to enrich the curriculum. The school has very few links with other faiths to help prepare pupils for life in a multi faith society. Through assemblies and visiting speakers, pupils have a good understanding of the needs of others, supporting various local, national and international charities through fundraising activities. Charities which the school has supported recently include ECHO (the European Children's Help Organisation), CAFOD, and appeals for which children have initiated their own ideas for fundraising and have then organised their own activities.
- 65 Businesses links are good and the school actively uses participation in competitions, such as that to consider the problems of vandalism and design a poster, to develop curriculum areas and extend their notion of citizenship. A local supermarket has given pupils in Years 1 and 2 the opportunity to understand how information technology is used in shops, and Hartlepool Power Station has supported science work, as well as providing valuable sponsorship and resources.

65

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

65 Leadership and management

- 66 The leadership and management of the school are good overall and show further improvement and effectiveness since the time of the previous inspection. The quality of leadership offered by the headteacher is very good and she is central to much that is both planned and achieved. She also has good vision and provides clear educational direction for the school, including the priorities that must be worked upon. Together with other staff, she helps evoke a good spirit of teamwork that is effective in setting high standards and in helping the school move forward towards its prescribed aims.
- 67 The role of the coordinators has been both developed and improved in recent months, particularly in relation to the targets set for improving standards and ensuring subject areas are well supported by learning resources and curriculum documentation. Their role in the monitoring and evaluating of what actually occurs is less successful, although some good practice does exist in relation to English and mathematics. The coordinators are well informed about their subjects and carry out useful annual audits that help management to decide on priorities over the ensuing year. There are accurate job descriptions in place that help coordinators to manage their subjects more effectively and these are also well linked to further opportunities for staff development.
- 68 The governing body is a well informed group that meets statutory requirements and satisfactorily

influences the life and workings of the wider school. Governors attend various committees that are established to make efficient use of their available time and help conduct and support the everyday business of school management. They very much view themselves as critical friends and are extremely supportive of the school community including its aims, staff and pupils. Although sometimes lacking in major contributions towards the long term strategic view and planning for the school, they are involved in important matters of policy making at critical times and therefore make a lasting contribution to overall school development. There is particularly good attention paid to matters of health and safety and to the overall management of special educational needs.

- 69 All those in management roles, particularly the headteacher and senior staff, help ensure that there is good implementation of the school's aims and values. These are known and approved by parents and well supported by the entire school community. As a result, the ethos of the school is good and embraces principles of Christian care and friendship that is an integral part of the parish in which the school resides. There is an effective and attractive base for learning as well as for the support of the individual pupil. A particular strength of management has been the greater emphasis now placed on raising pupils' standards in all subjects, particularly in English, mathematics, science and information technology. To this end, there has been recent and sustained support and monitoring of teaching and curriculum development. Such measures are helping to raise standards still further.
- 70 The implementation of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies provide good examples of such practice. The considerable improvement in the quality of teaching across all age groups is partly the result of effective monitoring of teachers at work in the classroom, which has involved both appraisal and additional good measures to strengthen staff development. The monitoring of both pupils' standards and the effectiveness of teaching is still largely undertaken by the headteacher and this responsibility could be more profitably widened. Several staff undertake the analysis of statutory assessment at the end of both key stages, and this evaluation is effective in noting where potential areas of weakness occur within pupils' attainment.
- 71 The quality of development planning is good. Each annual plan begins with a thorough evaluation of what has been achieved during the previous period. The current and past development plans reflect the aims and priorities of the school. It is clear where the responsibilities lie for each development and what finance and other resources are to be linked to each initiative. In this area too, governors make a satisfactory contribution but do not become sufficiently involved with developments and initiatives at the early stage.
- 72 The management of the school worked hard to ensure that the action plan that resulted from the last inspection successfully tackled all the issues and areas of weakness indicated on the report. Consequently, the school has shown very good levels of improvement since the last inspection and shows very good capacity for embracing further improvement.

72
and learning resources

Staffing, accommodation

- 73 The school has a good ratio of suitably qualified and experienced teachers and support staff to teach the curriculum, children under five and pupils with special educational needs. The good level of staffing enables an extra teacher to be available to help pupils who are struggling at the beginning of Key Stage 2. Although there is an imbalance of men and women, in favour of women, this does not disadvantage pupils in any way. All staff, including midday assistants, administrative and caretaking staff make a significant contribution to the well being of pupils as well as to the work of the school. Staff are dedicated and work hard as a team and this has a significant, positive impact upon standards of achievement and the progress pupils make. The work of voluntary helpers and parents is greatly appreciated and their contributions are valued. Good support is given to pupils with special educational needs and staff operate effectively to provide support both in and out of the classroom.
- 74 Staff have signed job descriptions which clearly outline their additional curriculum responsibilities. Due

to the lack of breadth in teaching expertise there are a number of coordinators who are not specifically qualified for the areas in which they have responsibility. However, the headteacher and governors are committed to providing appropriate training where this is necessary. Arrangements for coordinators to monitor teaching and curriculum planning are now firmly established and effective. Appraisal of staff meets statutory requirements and is linked to their professional development. A good feature of staff development is the regular feedback of information to other teachers after courses have been attended. Arrangements for supporting newly qualified staff as well as staff who are new to the school are now good. These measures help to improve teachers' subject knowledge as well as increase their confidence to teach the curriculum more effectively.

75 Accommodation is good and during the last financial year premises have successfully been improved to make classrooms more comfortable and more conducive to learning. Security at the main entrance has now been improved. The accommodation is clean, tidy and well maintained. There is sufficient space in the buildings and grounds for all curriculum areas to be taught effectively. Good use is made of shared practical areas outside classrooms and the roof garden continues to be a well used area to support pupils' learning. Since the last inspection a screen has been erected in the mobile classrooms and this has effectively reduced the noise level between rooms. The appearance of the school is enhanced by bright and stimulating displays which include pupils' work. Drapes are used effectively to enhance some exhibitions of pupils' work in art.

76 Resources at the last inspection were judged to be satisfactory. They are now good in most curriculum areas, apart from music, particularly in the core subjects. In music resources are limited and reduce opportunities for pupils to make music. With increased resources in many areas, storage is sometimes a problem. The school has two good libraries that are attractive and centrally positioned. While being in satisfactory use, higher attaining pupils in particular could carry independent work more frequently than is the current practice. The recent installation of a computer suite is encouraging staff and pupils to undertake relevant training and is already rightly viewed as a valued and exciting resource. The school makes effective use of educational visits, the local environment and the involvement of members of the local community. These all make a valuable contribution in supporting pupils' work and enriching their learning experiences.

76 **The efficiency of the school**

77 The school is a well run and administered unit and generally makes good use of the financial and other resources made available to it on an annual basis. Since the previous inspection, governors have improved their strategic oversight of the budget planning process and are now involved in financial matters to a satisfactory level. A further improvement has been in the use made of the school field, a matter of considerable concern at the time of the last inspection.

78 The grants given to the school for special educational needs and those from the standards fund are well directed and accounted for. The oversight of resources for special educational needs are particularly well used. The school has made effective use of the finance made available for the implementation of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The financial and other resources linked to the school development plan are carefully directed to ensure that the various initiatives and priorities are supported appropriately. Such measures continue to exert good influence on the quality of the curriculum and therefore the attainment and progress of the pupils.

79 The school budget is well constructed and shows good, thoughtful expenditure across the essential areas of school life. Many aspects of financial planning are therefore good. However, the school has built up an excessive contingency fund over a number of years, partly as the result of being given grants for projects that it had initially budgeted for itself. The resulting balance of almost £100,000 accrued over several years, has not been targeted rigorously enough, although several ideas do exist as to how and when the funding should be spent. These ideas have not as yet been prioritised and finally agreed and acted upon.

- 80 There are good levels of financial control and administration. The budget is well monitored by senior staff and the finance committee of the governing body. All spending is reviewed on a regular basis and governors are kept informed as to the level of funding available for the various planned initiatives. Financial records and accounts are well maintained. The most recent audit showed that the school worked within approved and efficient financial systems and the minor recommendations were speedily put into effect. The day to day running of the school is good. At their meeting, parents rightly praised the ease with which they could make contact with the school and the quality of the response normally given to their inquiries. The daily administration is well handled by the headteacher and experienced secretary.
- 81 A strength of the school's efficiency is the use made of teaching and support staff. Good use is made of teachers' experience and expertise as subject coordinators, although the impact of some of those more recently appointed to posts of responsibility has yet to be felt in terms of standards achieved by the pupils. Good use is made of teachers to support mathematical learning by the daily teaching of pupils in broad ability groups. Efficient use is also made of a range of support staff particularly in relation to assisting with special educational needs. An overall strength is the team work evident within the various year groups, allowing a good level of curriculum planning involving both teaching and support staff. This team work is also used very effectively within the nursery.
- 82 Good use is made of the accommodation and available learning resources. Communal spaces have been well developed to give additional room for group teaching or in the creation of space for libraries. There is even more scope for these to be better used by a wider range of pupils to help encourage their independent study skills. The school has recently opened its own computer suite and this is already proving to be an efficient and valued resource, impacting on the rate of progress pupils achieve in information technology. The school hall is an attractive resource that is used well to give the best possible access to pupils for physical education and drama. Classrooms and corridor areas are attractive, clean and bright and are used effectively to display and celebrate a range of pupils' work and achievements. Resources are used well to support all levels of pupils' learning, with the exception of music. In many subjects, for example the literacy hour, good use is made of a wide range of resources to help bring clarity and interest to pupils' learning. The curriculum is also well supported by a range of outdoor visits and visitors who help enrich curriculum experiences for the pupils.
- 83 Taking into account the attainment of pupils on entry, their good standards of attainment, progress and behaviour, together with the good quality of education provided and the unit costs involved, the school gives good value for money.

83 **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

83 **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

- 84 Children are admitted part time to the nursery, normally for at least a year prior to entering compulsory schooling at the beginning of either the autumn or spring terms, depending on when they are five. This is in accordance with the policy agreed between the local authority and the governors of the school. At the time of the inspection, the reception class contained 20 children, 13 of whom were under five. Although children enter both nursery and reception classes within a broad range of attainment and previous experience, the majority are considered average in terms of particularly their pre school literacy and numeracy skills and their knowledge and understanding of the world. A minority have well developed language and literacy skills and very good attitudes to learning. From starting in the nursery, children make largely good progress and transfer to the reception year and the more formal learning of the National Curriculum. This presents something of a difficulty to many young children, as there is too sharp a break in learning style between the best of nursery practice and the more formal nature of National Curriculum work. The work planned for reception children is not governed by the six areas of learning usually planned for the under fives and as a result, the majority make satisfactory rather than the good progress experienced earlier in the nursery class. Nevertheless, by the time they are five, the great majority of children attain the learning outcomes expected for their age across all the areas of learning.
- 85 Children's personal and social development is satisfactory and the majority achieve the expected standard by the time they are five. They quickly adapt to the rules and routines of the nursery class and integrate well with other children. They share and explore learning together and become increasingly aware of the need to operate in safety and with due consideration for others. They make good progress in their earliest strides towards independence and in the nursery learn to tidy up and support each other when building models or completing jig-saws. The teacher more rigidly directs the work in reception and children have less time to informally explore their own feelings and experiences. They make satisfactory progress however in being able to concentrate for more sustained periods and begin to develop greater awareness of what is right and wrong. The introduction of more formal personal and social education also provides a few additional opportunities for talking about their learning and concerns.
- 86 With regard to children's language and literacy development, the school sets out to give high priority to the development of early listening and speaking, reading and writing skills. A majority of children achieve the standards expected for their age. In the nursery in particular, all staff plan well to help reinforce children's language skills within all the areas of learning. Children listen carefully to their teacher, adult helpers and one another. They begin to develop a satisfactory vocabulary through activities such as role play in the nursery and also in the reception class where discussions are held during the literacy hour and where each child is encouraged to share ideas and information. Imaginative role play is used particularly well in the nursery to help promote the development of language and social skills. Children use experiences from home and school to act out roles in their imaginary office, using the 'telephone' to talk to family and friends. There are therefore some, but insufficient planned opportunities for children to develop their speaking skills.
- 87 A majority of children make good progress in the nursery and satisfactory progress in reception in the development of early reading and writing skills. Children listen carefully to stories and know many action songs and rhymes by heart. They use appropriate actions and repeat rhyming patterns accurately. They know how to handle books and many children retell stories in their own words and create stories using picture sequences. Most know letter sounds and are developing a sight vocabulary of simple, regularly used words. Many recognise labels and captions around the room, and are familiar with basic vocabulary in their reading scheme books. A few are able to read simple sentences. All children use a range of strategies to help them read and most use picture cues, recognise initial letter sounds and often know simple blends. Average and higher attaining children often use the context of a sentence to use a sensible alternative to words they do not know. Many children have a knowledge of the alphabet and can identify the next letter when a random sequence is given. They volunteer a range of words starting with a specific letter.

- 88 In the nursery they are aware of how letters make sounds and can share with adults a good range of basic key words and sounds that develop into the earliest of reading experiences. By the time they are five, their work in English has become more measured and several tackle simple reading books with obvious pleasure and are able to write some early words of their own, often independently of the teacher. Most develop good pencil control and form letters satisfactorily. In a literacy lesson, the teacher shared a big book with the children and a group of six were able to sequence the events into accurate order, while almost the entire class were able to understand and recognise the differences between a fiction and non fiction book
- 89 Throughout their time in both the nursery and reception classes, children learn through a sound range of mathematical activities and by the age of five most attain standards expected for their age in terms of their mathematical development. They make satisfactory progress overall. Children sort, match, count and create sets of objects by colour, shape and size. Many in reception make sound progress in the development of space, position and early number. In the numeracy hour, they successfully count forwards and backwards to 20 and beyond, while in nursery, they make repeating patterns using coloured beads and construction materials. The great majority of nursery children count and recognise numbers to at least five and relate counting to objects and space. Children make satisfactory progress with their work on shape with nursery children differentiating between triangles, squares and oblongs and reception children who know more about the properties of several shapes.
- 90 Children make satisfactory progress overall in terms of their knowledge and understanding of the world and reach the expected standards by the time they are five. In the nursery, children identify why objects are the same or different. They distinguish appropriately between hot and cold, soft and hard, dry and soggy. Most are aware of their immediate environment and talk about additional excursions to places and even countries beyond their immediate surroundings. Information technology is introduced at an early stage and most nursery children show good skills involving mouse control and moving picture images around on a monitor screen. When they join the reception class, the majority of children already have a satisfactory understanding of the world around them. This is built upon rapidly as children undertake separate lessons for history, geography and science. They make for example, satisfactory progress in early scientific and geographical concepts. In a lesson combining English and geography, children built up a map containing a wide range of different features and used sensible criteria to decide their location. In science they use an appropriate range of vocabulary to explain what is happening and begin to predict likely outcomes in experimental work. Their skills on the computer also increase relative to their age. And they use the mouse and moving cursor in good coordination to help dress a teddy bear appearing on the screen. In history, children have mainly average knowledge of the past and are able to sequence important events in their lives.
- 91 In their creative development, children make good progress in the nursery and mainly satisfactory progress in the reception. By the time they are five, the great majority work to the levels expected for their age. In their creative work in both classes, children explore colour and texture, and use a range of materials to create their own pictures, prints and patterns. They show sound and sometimes good manipulative skills as they cut and stick. Some children organise their own materials and most handle tools and equipment sensibly. Through art, stories, imaginative play and to a lesser extent through music, children show an increasing ability to use their imagination to listen and observe. Particularly when using soft modelling and pliable materials, children employ simple techniques well in order to give them greater control over the materials they use. Good use is made in both classes of informal moments when children can rehearse and extend their knowledge of rhymes and action songs.
- 92 In their physical development, children develop many above average skills and make mainly good progress overall. They run, and change direction and speed with increasing control and show sound levels of coordination when exercising, for example, in a large hall. They keep in time with music and most move confidently and imaginatively in a wide range of movements and physical skills. In the classroom, they make good progress in handling large and small equipment and their general dexterity in making or joining things together is at a mainly good level.
- 93 Children respond with enjoyment to their activities in both the nursery and reception classes. They

generally sustain interest in their tasks and move confidently about their respective class base. They follow instructions and cooperate well in pairs and small groups. The children have good attitudes to their work and ask and answer questions with reasonable confidence, although too many are reluctant to express their ideas at reasonable length.

94 The teaching of children under five is good overall, particularly in the nursery. Teachers and support staff have a good understanding of the needs of young children and how best they learn. This enables them to provide a sound range of interesting activities across all areas of experience, particularly in language development. This facility is muted somewhat in reception, where the curriculum becomes too formal too quickly, slowing down the progress of aspects of children's personal development. Planning is detailed in both classes with the nursery focusing very strongly on all areas of learning and making sure that such learning is progressive and meeting the needs of individual children. In reception, planning is much more to the Programmes of Study within the National Curriculum and there is good emphasis on knowledge and understanding. Both teachers provide a secure and supportive ethos in which these young children are well settled. The control and organisation of young children is a strength of much of the teaching. The spiritual and moral development of children is mainly developed through stories and sometimes reinforced within activities linked to the areas of learning. The school uses the local authority scheme for the assessment of children on entry into both the nursery and reception classes and uses the results to group the children for some activities. The information from this 'base line assessment' is sometimes used to ensure a broad match of work to what the children already know, but this is not always the case. The recognition and teaching of children with special educational needs is good allowing them to make good progress set against their previous learning and the priorities expressed on individual educational plans.

95 Resources are deployed well and provide opportunities for children to take some responsibility for getting out and returning their own equipment, including those used in physical education. General resources for children under five are good overall, and are used well to enrich and extend learning. Good links are established with parents, and the current induction programme includes visits by children and their parents before they start school. The problem of parents picking up their children early and during the working sessions, has now all but disappeared. While there is a very helpful nursery brochure, the school does not yet have a written policy for early year's education. There is therefore no general policy describing the many good principles already followed, nor sufficient clear statements about the intended provision for the four year olds in the reception class. Since the last inspection, the education of children under five has maintained its status as basically a good feature of school life.

95 **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

95 **English**

96 The results of the 1999 statutory assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 indicate that attainment is below the national average in reading and broadly in line with the average in writing. Scores remain broadly average when these aspects of English are compared with those of pupils from similar schools. Scores in English have dropped since last year, but in part this reflects the particular cohort of pupils who took the test. Over the three year period between 1996 and 1998, the percentage of pupils' attaining the expected Level 2 and above in reading and writing, was above the national average, with girls doing marginally better than boys. The findings of the current inspection are that standards in English are good and above average at the end of the key stage and that pupils make good progress overall, including those with special educational needs.

97 The results of the 1999 statutory assessments at the end of Key Stage 2, indicate that attainment is above the national average for all schools and well above the national average in relation to schools serving similar social backgrounds. The percentage of pupils reaching higher Level 5 in English, was again well above the average figure relating to similar schools. Taken over a three year period between 1996 and 1998, the performance of pupils was close to the national average with no significant differences between

the attainment of boys and girls. The 1999 results show considerable improvement over the 1998 figures. This was borne out by the results of the current inspection, which confirms that standards in English are above the national average. Pupils throughout Key Stage 2 make good progress, including those with special educational needs.

- 98 The effective introduction of the National Literacy Strategy, and the extra time allocated to reading and sustained writing appears to have made a positive contribution to the raising of standards at both key stages. The subject is now in a better position both in respect of pupils' attainment and progress since the school was last inspected.
- 99 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils display satisfactory speaking and listening skills, with the majority of pupils speaking confidently to both friends and adults. There are however, instances where speech could be promoted and provided for better, allowing for standards to rise still further in this important area. Standards of attainment in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 are good. While a minority of pupils with special educational needs have identified reading problems, the majority of pupils read with clarity, interest and enthusiasm. Standards of attainment in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 are good, with the majority of pupils writing in an extended manner, relative to their age, about events in their own lives. They also produce imaginative responses to the stories and poems read to them in class. For example, Year 1/2 pupils wrote imaginatively and expressively about what they saw and heard on entering 'The Magic Garden.'
- 100 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils also display satisfactory social speaking and listening skills. Many however lack the confidence and ability to organise their spoken ideas in a structured manner, and to present this information within a more formal surrounding. Insufficient opportunity and practice is given to them in this respect. Standards of attainment in reading are good, with many pupils in the upper school displaying high order reading skills. Standards of attainment in writing at the end of Key Stage 2 are good overall. Pupils write for a wide range of purposes, and with a particular audience in mind. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 were able to read a short extract from a novel and considered how it could be made into a play. Pupils also make some very informed written responses to a range of contemporary issues and media information, and produce a good range of extended imaginative and creative written work, in response to literary materials, and the topics and projects they explore in class. Pupils have good, basic English skills and are capable of producing written work with few or no mistakes. Handwriting, spelling and presentation are generally above average at both key stages.
- 101 Attainment in English on entry to the school is broadly average. Pupils then go on to make good progress at both key stages. Pupils at Key Stage 1 make good progress in their speaking and listening skills. They listen quietly to their teachers and are eager to respond to their questions. Planned opportunities for structured play make a valuable contribution to the development of pupils' oral skills. A lack of further planned opportunities for developing good speech, particularly at Key Stage 2, means progress in this area is less good than in other aspects of English. While pupils are provided with occasional opportunities to engage in drama and role play activities, examination of teachers' planning indicates that most oral activities come about as a response to pupils' reading and written work. There is insufficient planned provision to explore and develop speaking and listening as a discrete English attainment target.
- 102 Pupils make good progress in their reading as they move through Key Stage 1. Reading is well taught with teachers using a good range of appropriate strategies linked to the commercial reading scheme used by the school. Pupils with reading concerns receive good support from teachers and classroom assistants. The effective school home reading scheme also makes a significant contribution to the development of good reading skills. The highest attaining pupils make satisfactory progress in their independent, research skills. Pupils continue to make good progress in their reading as they move through Key Stage 2. Much of this progress come about through extra opportunities to engage in silent and guided reading activities, outside the literacy hour. All pupils have a school library book, and regularly visit the local library as members of a class on a regular basis. While the oldest pupils have satisfactory reference and research skills, they are provided with limited opportunities to put these skills into practice.
- 103 Pupils make good progress in their writing as they move through both Key Stages. At Key Stage 1, they

make continuous improvement in their word and sentence building skills. They also develop a good knowledge of spelling, punctuation and grammar and use these skills in writing more detailed and extended pieces of work. At Key Stage 2, the Literacy Strategy is helping pupils to develop writing styles not only of their own, but to write in different forms including letter writing, poetry and autobiographical contexts. Although pupils are provided with the opportunity to take part in drafting activities, it is rarely more than copying from rough to best in their exercise books. Opportunities are lost for many pupils to redraft from exercise books to A4 paper, or on to computers on a regular basis. This development would provide below average attaining pupils with the opportunity to improve their writing skills, as well as extending the more able pupils. The retention of these pieces of work would also provide a good indicator as to progress across years and key stages. Pupils with special educational needs have equality of access to all aspects of the English curriculum and make good progress across both key stages. Their individual tasks are usually well suited to help them move on in relation to their previous learning.

- 104 Pupils' attitude towards their work is consistently good and usually very positive. Pupils listen quietly to teachers' introductions to lessons and soon settle down to work. They work with interest and sustained concentration. Their behaviour is good, building carefully and productively on the good relationships that exist between pupils and their teachers. A calm but active working atmosphere exists in the majority of lessons. All these factors contribute to the good progress made in individual lessons, and over time.
- 105 The quality of teaching in the great majority of lessons at Key Stage 1 is good and better, with teaching overall being never less than satisfactory. The majority of teaching at Key Stage 2 is good with the balance of teaching being never less than satisfactory. Teachers at both key stages have responded well to the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and demonstrate effective practice in its application.
- 106 Lessons at both key stages are well planned with clear aims. Teachers use effective questioning skills, often linked to a big book or other text, in order to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of the book as a piece of literature, or as a stimulus for the study of English skills. Teachers at both key stages provide a good range of group activities, that match the needs and abilities of groups of pupils. Teachers use the plenary session at the end of the lesson effectively, to help share and celebrate the work carried out by the pupils and to assess what they have learned. A relative weakness is that in the majority of lessons observed at both key stages, teachers had a tendency to over direct their pupils, with few opportunities provided for pupils to contribute more initiative to their own learning, and to develop greater independent learning and speaking skills.
- 107 There is an effective coordinator in place together with a detailed policy and a good scheme of work made up from teachers' medium term plans. The school provides all pupils with a broad, balanced and imaginative curriculum and fulfils all requirements of the National Curriculum for English. The subject uses a good range of assessment and evaluating procedures to monitor pupils' progress, and the delivery of the English curriculum. All of the issues for concern identified in the last Ofsted report have been addressed.

107 **Mathematics**

- 108 The results of the 1999 statutory tests in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1, show that the percentage of pupils' achieving the nationally expected Level 2 was above the national average. The percentage of pupils who achieved the higher Level 3 was also close to the national average. When compared with similar schools, attainment was generally average. Between 1996 and 1998, the average level achieved by pupils fell slightly. In 1999, the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 or above remained about the same as in 1998, as did the percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 3. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
- 109 The results of the 1999 statutory tests in mathematics for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, show that the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 or above was above the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was similar to the national average in relation to similar schools. Over the last three years, levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 have risen steadily with the exception of the

1998 results, which were below average. In 1999, there was a significant increase in the percentage of pupils attaining both the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.

- 110 Inspection evidence indicates that at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils are working at levels that are above average for their age, that standards are above average and that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the school. This represents a considerable improvement on the standards reported at the last inspection when attainment was judged to be average at the end of both key stages.
- 111 At Key Stage 1, lower attaining pupils count quickly in 2s both up to and backwards from 20, correctly identifying odd and even numbers and ordering numbers accurately. They can also count up to a hundred in tens. They make up several sums of money, stating which coins are needed. They make good progress when explaining the difference between two and three dimensional shapes, that two dimensional shapes are flat and three dimensional shapes have depth. Pupils know the names of and some of the properties of rectangles, triangles, pentagons and hexagons, mainly by the number of sides. In addition they recognise and name cubes, cuboids, prisms and pyramids, although they become confused as to where they find these solids in every day life. They identify faces of solids accurately. They measure the length of objects by direct comparison, stating accurately, which are longer or shorter. Average attaining pupils have a good understanding of place value to a hundred and are able to round numbers to the nearest ten or a hundred. Good progress is made in pupils' everyday understanding and use of number.
- 112 Year 2 pupils are able to read large numbers accurately, knowing the meaning of each digit. They develop a range of appropriate strategies when adding and finding the differences between numbers, such as counting on to find the difference between two numbers. They use terms such as vertical or horizontal with clear understanding and have a sound understanding of shape. In addition, higher attaining pupils can give accurate answers to multiplication questions up to ten times ten. Most make effective use of a wide range of strategies in working out the answers to addition and subtraction problems and know the associated vocabulary such as sum, total and difference. They have a good understanding of place value and use this well in their calculations and when comparing the sizes of numbers using specific digits. They are able to confidently, quickly and accurately double and half numbers. They tell the time with confidence and can name accurately a range of polygons, according to the number of their sides. Work is well consolidated before moving on, allowing progress to be good in all areas.
- 113 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils work with coordinates accurately, and some higher attaining pupils work well with these in all four quadrants, using negative numbers with ease and also when measuring temperatures below freezing. They are familiar with vulgar fractions, decimal fractions and percentages and accurately change fractions into equivalents using all three forms. Pupils are familiar with different types of numbers such as square numbers, prime and factors. They use large numbers confidently, such as when talking about distances in space for example. Pupils use measures accurately, for example, measuring angles to the nearest degree. They calculate accurately areas of a range of regular shapes and most know about metric measures and their imperial equivalents. When handling data, older pupils draw graphs, including line graphs, interpret and answer questions about the information and sometimes use scales effectively for grouped data. They use average and mean of data samples and also use the median and modes as different forms of approximating to the average. They progress well to understanding about probability, and can talk confidently about likely and less likely events. Pupils have good mental mathematics skills and work well with numbers, answering questions such as what must they add to 6.5 to make 10. They count quickly and accurately in threes or fives for example, starting off at any selected number. They apply their knowledge of place value well and lower attaining pupils for example, answer questions such as 4×80 based on their knowledge of 4×8 . When explaining their methods of calculation, they give valid and accurate mathematical explanations. Pupils at Key Stage 2 make good progress with their mental speed, growth in mathematical concepts and in their use of mathematical language and problem solving activities.
- 114 At the mathematics club that is held after school, older pupils show good skills in being able to approach mathematical problems and investigations with both confidence and knowledge of problem solving. They

work out their own methods that are valid, to solve questions and problems and can explain clearly what they are doing. Standards of numeracy within the curriculum are good and pupils use mathematics well in such subjects as science and geography, where, for example they use graphs to record their data and they read temperatures in negative form. The school's strategy for the implementation of the numeracy project is satisfactory. There are also well attended summer schools in mathematics for pupils to attend and enjoy. All these opportunities enable progress to be heightened.

- 115 Pupils' response in lessons is good. They generally pay full attention and behave well, responding quickly and eagerly to their teachers' questions. They work well individually, sustaining their concentration and interest. However, when teaching is less stimulating and some teachers' expositions are lengthy, pupils sometimes become restless. Relationships between pupils and between adults and pupils are sound and pupils support each other effectively in their group work. They are generally able to work well without the direct supervision of the teacher, although some lack concentration in less structured situations.
- 116 The quality of teaching is good and is never less than satisfactory. Teachers' knowledge and understanding is good and teachers are able to lead meaningful discussions, exploring topics to good effect. Expectations are high and teachers effectively move pupils' learning on through good questioning. For example, effective use is made of the short introductions to numeracy sessions that give valuable practice to pupils' mental skills. Pupils are managed well and teachers generally make clear their high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Planning is good. Work that is appropriate to pupils at different levels of attainment, including special educational needs, is carefully planned so that pupils make good progress. Teachers organise their classes well and the activities that they plan are appropriate to the work and to pupils' age and attainment levels. They support groups of pupils well in lessons and carefully use their assessments of pupils' work in order to help them overcome difficulties. Lessons are conducted at a satisfactory pace and resources are used effectively to support teaching and learning.
- 117 There is a good curriculum that fully meets National Curriculum requirements. Pupils are organised into groups according to their prior attainment, pupils in Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4 and those in Years 5 and 6 are grouped into sets for high, average and lower attaining pupils. Work is planned at appropriate levels and this helps to ensure that pupils make good progress. Information technology contributes satisfactorily to the provision of mathematics. There are good assessment systems in place that are well used to track the progress of individual pupils and to identify areas of strength and weakness in standards. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable coordinator, who is well supported by a "link person" from the other key stage. Their roles are clearly defined and are well met in practice. Resource provision is good, with adequate software to support information technology, a good range of appropriate text books and easily accessible resources that are efficiently used to support the introduction of the numeracy project.

117

117 **Science**

- 118 In the 1999 statutory teacher assessments in science for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attainment was well above the national average in terms of the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 or higher. The results of the present inspection indicate that attainment in science is above the national average at the end of Key Stage 1. By the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 or above was above the national average. The percentage reaching the higher Level 5 was in line with those from similar schools. The results of the inspection indicate that standards at Key Stage 2 are broadly in line with the national average and that pupils throughout the school make mainly good progress. This demonstrates clear improvement from the last inspection when there was considerable below average attainment in science at Key Stage 2. The judgement has been reached by observing lessons, looking at pupils' work and talking to teachers and pupils. Test results show that over the last three years there has been a steady improvement in standards. The 1999 performance data does not bear a particularly close relationship to first hand observations of work at Key Stage 2. The reasons for this may well be due to the fact that the tests are largely skills based. This suits many pupils particularly when they receive additional preparation before the tests are taken. Now that pupils and teachers are becoming familiar with the new scheme of work, it is anticipated that overall attainment will continue to improve.

- 119 Pupils at Key Stage 1 demonstrate good knowledge of the five senses and are able to make informed guesses as to which they consider to be the most important. When identifying a variety of food smells that the teacher had prepared in covered jars, they identify their best and worst smell and record their results. Pupils understand the necessity for conducting a 'fair test' and explain their reasons clearly. It is evident from pupils' writing that there is a lot of independent recording of their investigations, sometimes following independent research.
- 120 At the beginning of Key Stage 2, younger pupils excitedly demonstrate how they are able to make objects and other magnets move in certain ways by using another magnet. They are familiar with the terms 'attract' and 'repel' and use these terms correctly to predict what might happen. Making and testing predictions about whether or not materials are magnetic are generally successful. When categorising foods pupils have a clear understanding which foods should be eaten to provide short and longer term energy. Towards the end of the key stage, pupils have a clear understanding of how their pulse rates can be checked. They record what happens from being at rest and after vigorous exercise. They are then able to construct a line graph from their own evidence, of how long it takes them to recover and have their heart rate back to normal. By the end of the key stage pupils are able to write up experiments well and there is evidence in their books of extended independent writing.
- 121 Progress is good at both key stages and pupils make good gains in their knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. Good progress is the result of positive response and good teaching including high expectations which appropriately challenges pupils' ability. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is generally good, particularly when work is matched effectively to their individual needs. This is not a feature of all lessons though and practice should be reviewed.
- 122 Pupils' response to science is almost always good and on occasions is very good, particularly at Key Stage 1. Pupils are enthusiastic, hard working and well behaved. They enjoy practical activities such as identifying particular smells when learning about the senses, or recording their pulse rates at rest and after exercise. Levels of co-operation are good when pupils have to work in small groups and they show confidence when asked to explain what they are doing. Most take a particular pride in presenting their work well.
- 123 Teaching is good at both key stages. Occasionally, at Key Stage 1 it is very good. For example in a lesson in which pupils experimented with their sense of taste and smell, the quality of the teacher's own subject knowledge was enthusiastically passed onto the pupils. Teachers are beginning to feel more comfortable with the relatively new scheme of work and are developing good levels of knowledge and understanding. Planning is clear and is well adapted from the scheme to suit the needs of all pupils. Resources for investigation are well prepared, and the school nurse is able to make a valuable contribution when she joins lessons to talk about the importance of the senses of sight and hearing. The enthusiasm for science that many teachers display is infectious, enabling pupils to respond to scientific challenges in a positive way. Organisation of class activities is good and pupils are well managed. Assessment is linked to learning objectives outlined in the scheme of work, culminating in a yearly whole school science assessment. Although day to day assessment is effective there are occasions, when teachers do not give sufficient advice in their marking of work, about how pupils might improve. Recording of pupils' attainment is inconsistent.
- 124 The curriculum at both key stages continues to meet statutory requirements through a scheme of work that has only recently been adopted. There is still good emphasis on practical investigation but written work often lacks appropriate emphasis on handwriting skills and correct spelling. The school has successfully adopted the 'Science in nursery and Pre School years' (SNAPS) to ensure provision in the early years. The curriculum audit and the monitoring of classroom practice, enable the coordinator to support the work of other teachers and to arrange for professional development where they feel there is any weakness in expertise.

124 **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

124 **Information technology**

- 125 Attainment is in line with the standards expected for pupils at the end of both key stages and the great majority of pupils make good progress. This is a subject that has made considerable strides and improvement since the last inspection, not least in terms of the consistent progress pupils now make across both key stages, together with their growing knowledge and use of computers in everyday learning. These improvements are due mainly to the more efficient use of wider resources and the greater confidence of teachers to use information control technology as a useful resource in many of their lessons.
- 126 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a secure grasp of the role of computers in the modern world and can readily cite several examples where the micro-chip is used for example in everyday devices. They build on the good work already undertaken among children under five and progress well with basic keyboard skills and being able to communicate and handle information. The great majority of pupils open programs for themselves and can change on-screen information by clicking on different menus and using parts of the tool bar. A few gain valuable experience in word processing skills and most can print out their own work. With support, they enter and save information and retrieve and display what they have previously stored. Pupils are particularly adept with software that encourages the creative use of colour and pattern. In Year 2, pupils have satisfactory experience of the control and modeling aspects of information technology, using their skill to preprogram a robotic toy and to record its movements along a prescribed route. As well as computers, Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress with their use of other important devices such as headsets and listening centres that support their work well in English and science.
- 127 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have increased their experience with a wide range of software and their keyboard skills and knowledge of how to change on screen information have also been extended. Pupils use specialised programs to create and colour stained glass window designs. They have satisfactory mouse control and can use with confidence the enter and delete keys as well as the space bar. Pupils in Years 3/4 plan a sketch of goldfish in a bowl and transfer the image onto the screen, using quite advanced techniques. By the end of Year 6, pupils store, retrieve, edit, modify and print their work to a satisfactory standard. Many pupils combine aspects of art, mathematics and information technology by recreating visual patterns that support their class work on symmetry. Pupils' word-processing skills are average and they occasionally use this facility to help draft and redraft work in English. Much of the above work is completed as a whole class activity using the new computer suite, but classroom work is also of a sound standard with pupils involved with data handling and investigative work using CD-ROMS.
- 128 Pupils at both key stages make good progress overall. This is due to a good scheme of work that allows pupils to revisit, consolidate and then extend much of their work and which increases knowledge and skills progressively. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress during lessons and enjoy full access to equipment. By Years 5 and 6, most pupils show increasing confidence and independence in the use of information technology and build up a growing repertoire of software applications, information technology knowledge and skills. Many are becoming more competent in increasingly demanding situations and to a lesser extent in the interpretation and handling of data and displays. Pupils in a Year 5/6 class brought many of their recently gained skills together by accurately designing a plan of their classroom on screen and then changing the layout and scale using an ability to access a range of keys and functions. By Year 6, most pupils save and print out their work and have their own floppy disk to help them access and retrieve past work.
- 129 The response of pupils to their work in information technology is never less than good. Pupils work hard and remain on task in order to finish their work on time and reach their own or the teacher's targets. Pupils are allowed considerable initiative in this subject and this brings considerable satisfaction to them as well as creating valuable opportunities for personal development. Most are greatly excited by the new computer resource room, but behave well and treat expensive equipment with care. Good standards of collaborative work ensue, when that is the chosen way of working.

130 The quality of teaching has risen to be now good overall and this is a major reason for the largely good progress achieved by the pupils. The gaps in teachers' knowledge and understanding are rapidly decreasing and most now see information technology as an integral part of their own teaching as well as pupils' learning. The planning for the subject is satisfactory overall and teachers have high expectations as to what pupils of different levels of attainment can achieve. Their use of the computer suite in particular is good and all staff show good levels of skill in the control, management and organisation of the pupils. A particular strength is the current use made by teachers of time and resources. There is a new assessment scheme about to be introduced and trialled. Currently, assessments in information technology are satisfactory overall but do not follow a consistent whole school approach.

131 The curriculum planned for information technology is good and presents a thorough programme for progressive learning and the assessment of pupils' skills and experiences. Statutory requirements are met within the current provision. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic coordinator who is also responsible for the smooth running of the new computer suite as well as monitoring subjects and pupils' progress in the subject. This latter work has only just begun. The resources and accommodation for information technology are very good and are very well used by teaching and support staff. The introduction of a purpose built facility is already making noteworthy inroads into pupils' progress and experiences in the subject. A growing strength of the subject is also the way it is being used to support and resource other curriculum areas.

131

131 **Art**

132 Pupils are achieving standards at Key Stage 1 that are above those expected for pupils of the same age. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils develop a good understanding of the use of colour through being able to create their own shades from mixing primary colours. They handle tools well and good standards are achieved by creating their own Batik using flour and water. Some pupils have successfully used this process when designing and making Joseph's coat of many colours. Materials are selected appropriately when they create their own collages in the style of Kandinsky and Paul Klee.

133 At Key Stage 2, standards are at the expected level for the age of the pupils, as they were at the last inspection. They display good manipulative skills when building up relief blocks for printing. The observational drawing skills of many pupils show increasing accuracy and good attention is paid to detail and perspective. There is undoubtedly a positive development of their use of sketch books. Pupils use pencils, crayons and pastels effectively to depict highlights and shadows and display great enjoyment in putting this into practice when drawing a parent who was dressed in Victorian costume. They have a good understanding of three dimensional work.

134 All pupils make good progress, including those who have special educational needs. Increasing confidence and improved levels of understanding of the processes in which they are involved are due to effective teaching, the good response made by pupils and the influence of a keen and skilled art coordinator.

135 Pupils respond well to art and display high levels of commitment and enjoyment. Concentration is very good, enabling pupils to contribute effectively when they are asked to evaluate their tasks. This is again an area that has improved since the last inspection. Pride in finished work is of particular importance.

136 Teaching is good overall and is occasionally very good at both key stages. Teachers no longer lack confidence and subject expertise, as identified at the last inspection. This has been achieved through appropriate training by the coordinator. There is now a coherent scheme of work in which specific skills and concepts are taught systematically. Teachers are keen to expose pupils to a wide range of examples and activities that encourage them to observe and develop their own critical opinions. They plan work well and have high expectations of pupils. Information technology is an essential part of the scheme of work and teachers are rapidly developing the confidence to use pattern and paint programs as well as

encouraging use of the Internet to find out about the work of artists.

137 Good cross curricular links are established through art as can be seen when pupils illustrate their written work and develop their topics, history in particular, through the medium of art. Displays in classrooms and around the school are impressive and well presented. The school successfully competes in local competitions and their experiences are extended by regular visits to the local art college and museums.

137

137 **Design and technology**

138 It was not possible to see the subject being taught in any age group during the inspection week. Judgements on the progress made by pupils had therefore to be made on the basis of a relatively small amount of past work that was on display in the school, together with evidence of teacher planning and from discussions with staff and pupils.

139 Pupils make satisfactory progress overall. Of the sample tested, most were aware of the importance of the design and evaluation process, while others were confused as to the differences between this subject and art. Pupils at both key stages work to a similar format for recording their designs. This involves the use of careful diagrams and full listing of resources, equipment and methods. No samples of these have been retained for easy reference and access and this is unsatisfactory in terms of monitoring individual progress, not least in terms of the work undertaken.

140 Pupils in Year 2 complete a project on Joseph's coat of many colours and show the expected level of skills in their choice of materials and ability to finish a given piece of work. Evaluations occur as to how close to the original design the finished product is and what could have been improved. A similar approach is adopted in the same key stage when the oldest pupils design and make puppets using a range of scrap materials. It was not possible to see any of the work undertaken by Key Stage 2 pupils, but from teachers' planning, it is clear that a topic per term is undertaken using themes such as moving monsters, musical instruments, slippers and controllable vehicles.

141 It was not possible to observe the response of pupils or the quality of teaching in the subject. Pupils' work on display was carefully completed and the group interviewed indicated their enjoyment of the subject as a whole. Teachers plan one project per term and the planning is satisfactorily prepared and used when this occurs. Since the decision was taken to use a more flexible approach in this non core subject, teachers have expressed greater confidence in their knowledge and understanding of the new scheme of work been produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority,

142 The subject has remained at the level reported at the last inspection. There are rightly concerns that curriculum time for the core and compulsory subjects has led to a squeezing of the time available for design related topics. This will inevitably lead to a lessening of the essential skills required to ensure pupils' experiences are deepened and fully explored. The coordinator is well aware of the importance of keeping the subject to the forefront of future curriculum discussion. Assessment and record keeping are currently unsatisfactory. The current resources are satisfactory for the particular range of topics undertaken by the school.

142 **Geography**

143 Progress in geography is satisfactory at both key stages and pupils are generally working at levels that are expected for pupils of this age. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Standards in the subject have remained at a sound level since the previous inspection.

144 At Key Stage 1, pupils make a good start in map making when they follow the route taken By Little Red Riding Hood. They effectively use large maps and pictures to link objects to different stages in the journey and make a good start in map making and using symbols. They explain well why they place certain symbols in specific places. Pupils recognise the main features of their town and identify

attractions such as the Maritime Museum and West Quay as some of the important features that attract tourists to their town. Other pupils show a more naive view, and list Charlie Chalk's Wacky Warehouse as a main attraction. Pupils show a satisfactorily developed sense of place and location and most are able to clearly differentiate between important and less important features of places.

- 145 At Key Stage 2, pupils understand that different parts of the world have different climates, which affect weather patterns and thus the way in which people in different locations live. They locate different cities, such as Rome, Washington or London and locate some countries and continents accurately on a world map. They have a good understanding of the use of symbols in weather forecasting and in their presentations, younger pupils used weather maps and symbols well to give a weather report for different parts of the world. Younger pupils at Key Stage 2, have an appropriate knowledge of the life of a river and trace its course through from its source, recognising such features as tributaries, waterfalls, meanders and lakes. They roughly locate some of the major rivers in England, particularly those that are more local to their home. Pupils have a sound knowledge of India, its culture, location and some of the main features of the country, including climate and the life of people who live there. By the end of the key stage, pupils have satisfactory mapping skills. They can interpret an appropriate range of symbols and use simple scale to measure distance. They know some of the characteristics of mountains and of mountainous regions, such as the weather and sporting activities that can take place as a result. Pupils have a sound knowledge of the tourist industry, and list a number of advantages and disadvantages that are consequences of this industry.
- 146 Pupils' response is satisfactory overall. Pupils listen carefully to their teacher and pay attention during introductions. The best response is seen when lessons are stimulating and capture pupils' full attention. This was seen when groups of pupils were given the opportunity to present and film their own weather reports. During this activity, pupils were fully involved, showed high levels of enjoyment and confidence and some very good examples of collaborative group work were seen. When response is less than good, pupils occasionally lack concentration and call out at will for example; this is usually when the pace of lessons slackens. The presentation of a minority of pupils' work is unsatisfactory.
- 147 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and sometimes good. In the more effective lessons, good resources are used to bring lessons to life. This was seen in lessons such as the mapping lesson using Little Red Riding Hood and the weather forecast lesson when good information technology resources were used effectively. Teachers' knowledge and understanding is sound and this supports good planning, through which teachers plan lessons that are appropriate to pupils age and stage of development. Methods and organisation used by teachers are good at Key Stage 2 and are effective in encouraging the interest of pupils, although at both key stages, more could be done to give pupils wider responsibilities for their own learning.
- 148 There is a sound scheme of work that is being developed with recently published national guidelines in mind. It focuses on the building of knowledge and the progressive development of skills. Geography adds satisfactorily to the cultural development of the pupils through studying how people in different countries live and their cultures. The subject is well led by a keen and knowledgeable coordinator, who has clear ideas for the future of the subject's development. Provision and development is carefully monitored. Resources are good and support the curriculum effectively. Particularly effective is the provision of large world maps that pupils use well to enhance the quality of their presentations for example. There is a satisfactory range of information technology that is effectively used to support learning, as well as trips and residential field courses.
- 148 **History**
- 149 All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress at both key stages and work at levels that are generally expected from pupils of this age. However, pupils show good progress in the development of historical enquiry skills and the use they make of them in learning about the past. There have been a few improvements in the subject since the school was last inspected.

- 150 No lessons were seen at Key Stage 1, as history was not being taught at the time of the inspection. However, a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning, and discussions with pupils indicate that they are developing a sound idea of chronology and older pupils have grasped the basic ideas of how long ago different civilisations prospered. They have some knowledge of some of the major events in history, such as the Fire of London and of the lives of some famous people such as Florence Nightingale. They are beginning to recognise some of the major differences between times past and the present as identified in photographs.
- 151 At Key Stage 2, pupils build a good knowledge of the features of life in Victorian times. They have a sound understanding of how children in these times lived and compare rich and poor homes and the resulting lifestyles. They know what it was like to be a pupils in a Victorian school, and from an examination of texts at a Victorian museum, they are able to talk confidently about why and how pupils were punished and the types of illnesses that affected children in these days. Older pupils know that Victorian children were not as healthy as children of to day and they use photographs and writing of such people as Charles Dickens to give justifiable reasons for their poor health. Pupils have a sound knowledge of how industrial towns grew and the conditions that the working classes lived in those times. When learning about invaders, pupils find out about Roman homes, architecture, furniture and different rooms in the house. They have a sound knowledge of life in Roman times for different people. They use their observations from books to identify the main characteristics of life in these times, asking and answering questions about the past. While learning about the Roman invasion of Britain, pupils also learn about the defending Celts, how they defended themselves and what the Roman's impression of these people was. They learn about battle tactics used by both races. Pupils make good progress in being able to use historical evidence to ask questions and make judgements about the past, effectively extending their knowledge and understanding of history.
- 152 The response of pupils is good. They listen intently to their teachers during the introductions to lessons, when they are enthusiastic to answer the teachers' questions. They pay good attention to their work and concentrate well when working individually or as groups. Behaviour is good and relationships between pupils are good, as seen when pupils work within groups and share ideas to good effect. Pupils listen carefully to each other's views, for which they show a healthy respect.
- 153 The quality of teaching is satisfactory, although some good teaching was also seen during the inspection. Teachers lead discussions well and base the content on previous learning, effectively enabling pupils to develop their research skills within a well structured sequence. Better teaching effectively holds pupils' attention, through interesting presentations and high expectations. Planning is good and teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to use and develop their investigative skills. Resources are well chosen and are used well by teachers to add interest and stimulate pupils' interest.
- 154 The subject is well led by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic coordinator. She is currently developing the scheme of work using newly published national guidelines. She and the staff are assessing and adapting the scheme to meet the needs of the school. The curriculum is effectively enriched by trips that support the work in different topics. Pupils have visited Beamish, experienced a Victorian classroom on museum visits, visited a museum to support their work on the Ancient Greeks, a Roman fort and a folk museum that supported their work on the Saxons. History makes a satisfactory contribution to the social and cultural development of pupils. Resources are satisfactory. There is a good range of posters and textbooks and artefacts are available from loan services from local libraries and museums.
- 154 **Music**
- 155 Observations of a limited number of lessons, examination of subject documentation and discussions with staff and pupils, indicate that standards of attainment in music at the end of both key stages are below that normally expected of pupils of a similar age. Pupils made satisfactory progress in the lessons observed, but the gains they make are not consistent or progressive enough, particularly in relation to important elements such as composing and performing. Standards have declined since the last inspection mainly through the school not yet coming to terms with the fact that there is no specialist music teacher available, as there was during the last inspection.

- 156 Standards of attainment within the individual lessons observed were broadly average. Pupils at Key Stage 1 identify pitch and tone in xylophones and glockenspiels and use simple graphic/symbolic notation in playing these instruments. Pupils demonstrate simple singing skills, as they sing in 'rounds'. A number of pupils had problems with this task, with groups of pupils often finishing their songs at the same time.
- 157 Some pupils at Key Stage 2 display good recorder skills, with appropriate attention to finger work. A few have a satisfactory knowledge of a range of musical vocabulary, but others have gaps in their knowledge and understanding. Singing skills are broadly average, though most singing comes about as result of hymn practice and the preparation for assemblies, rather than the sheer pleasure of singing songs, and the development of appropriate singing techniques.
- 158 A range of evidence indicates that the subject is delivered in an inconsistent manner, with a number of classes only having music lessons on too infrequent a basis. Limited opportunities are therefore provided for pupils to compose and perform their own music. This was identified as an area for development in the previous Ofsted report and has not been rectified. Outside of assemblies, pupils are rarely provided with the opportunity to listen to and appreciate a range of different music. This is a significant and important element in the National Curriculum for music.
- 159 Pupils' response to the music observed at both key stages was satisfactory. Pupils listen to teachers' instructions and are keen to respond to their questions. When provided with the opportunity to do so, pupils take real pleasure in playing musical instruments. Pupils are prepared to share instruments, and handle them in a safe and sensible manner.
- 160 While not always specialists, the quality of teaching in the limited number of lessons observed was satisfactory. Teachers plan their lessons well, and provide a satisfactory range of musical activities within a single lesson. Teachers display good classroom control and management skills, and have good relationships with their pupils.
- 161 While there is a satisfactory policy in place, the scheme of work for the subject is at an early draft stage and lacks the detail to ensure music skills are taught systematically and that pupils enjoy a wide range of musical experiences. The school has a limited amount of instruments, with a number being in a poor state of care. This very much inhibits the future provision for pupils to compose and perform their own work. The school provides all pupils with the opportunity to play a musical instrument, through the visiting peripatetic music service, and the school has a well attended recorder group and choir.

161 **Physical education**

- 162 Standards in physical education are generally in line with what would be expected of pupils of a similar age at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1 however, standards are often above average, demonstrating an improvement from the previous inspection. From an early age pupils learn to travel in a variety of ways and at different levels. Movements are well controlled and generally of good quality. They understand how to compose a sequence of movements, linking them together smoothly and using space effectively. At all times pupils are encouraged to operate safely. Apparatus handling skills are good.
- 163 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a clear understanding of how to develop their games' skills but opportunities to do so are not always exploited to the full. They do not always work outside, even though the weather is suitable and when they do, activities are not vigorous enough to enable them to have a clear understanding of the pace of the game. This is particularly evident when they play hockey. Pupils further develop their gymnastic sequences and most can balance on a variety of body parts, maintaining complete stillness. All pupils have a good understanding of the necessity to warm up before exercise and to cool down afterwards. Although no swimming was observed, this is a regular feature of the physical education programme and pupils attain appropriate standards.
- 164 Pupils make good progress at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2. Progress at Key Stage 2 is restricted by teachers having insufficiently high expectations, resulting in pupils not being sufficiently

extended. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is often good due to the open ended nature of tasks that are set, together with an appropriate level of support from teachers.

- 165 All pupils display good attitudes to physical education. They enjoy their work and cooperate well in pairs and in small groups. Listening skills are generally very good, enabling pupils to make quick and accurate responses to instructions. There is some lack of emphasis on pupils setting targets for themselves and working in a more self evaluative way.
- 166 Teaching is almost always good at both key stages, showing a marked improvement since the last inspection. A notable feature of teaching is the confidence displayed by teachers together with their secure subject knowledge. Lessons continue to be well prepared and the management of pupils is a consistent strength. Most teachers appropriately deliver all elements of the attainment target when planning their work, although very occasionally, teachers provide pupils with answers before allowing them to respond. There is also a tendency for teachers to allow pupils to wear watches during lessons and this has implications for pupils' safety, particularly when they are working closely together. The practice of allowing pupils to wear trainers for gymnastics is also unsafe.
- 167 Statutory requirements are now fully met due to improvements in the use of the playing field. The programme for physical education is complemented by a good range of extra curricular sporting activities, whereby pupils are given opportunities to successfully demonstrate their skills in competition with other schools. The oldest pupils also benefit from the annual residential period when they attempt a range of adventurous activities.

167 **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**167 **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

The inspection was conducted by five inspectors who were allocated a total of 19 inspector days, during which:

- Eighty seven lessons or parts of lessons were observed. A total of 49 hours was spent in this main activity;
- The current inspection was not asked to comment on the provision made for religious education and collective worship. These will be the subject of a Section 23 inspection later in the school year;
- Discussions were held with pupils, the staff, governors, parents and visitors to the school;
- A member of staff from the high school was interviewed;
- A sample of some 30 individual pupils was heard reading;
- Various registration sessions were attended;
- Various assemblies were attended;
- Parts of after school activities were observed;
- Pupils were observed at play and in the dining room;
- Samples of work from pupils in all classes and subjects were inspected;
- A range of school documents, including the previous inspection report, the School Development Plan, schemes of work and teachers' plans were examined;
- Attendance registers, the records kept on pupils and their reports were examined;
- Twenty eight parents attended a pre inspection meeting, and their views were sought;
- Parents completed 106 questionnaires out of 173 distributed and their views were analysed.

• **DATA AND INDICATORS**

• **Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR - Y6	282	1	54	57
Nursery Unit	36	0	0	0

• **Teachers and classes**

• **Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):

12.10

Number of pupils per qualified teacher:

23

• **Education support staff (YR - Y6)**

Total number of education support staff:

4

Total aggregate hours worked each week:

75

• **Qualified teachers (nursery class)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):

1

Number of pupils per qualified teacher:

36

• **Education support staff (nursery class)**

Total number of education support staff:

2

Total aggregate hours worked each week:

60

Average class size:

25.6

• **Financial data**

Financial year:	1998/99
	£
Total Income	477944.00
Total Expenditure	486790.00
Expenditure per pupil	1427.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	107736.00
Balance carried forward to next year	98890.00

• **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out:	173
Number of questionnaires returned:	106

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	32	67	1	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	37	60	2	1	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	21	58	18	3	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	27	69	3	0	1
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	46	53	1	0	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	34	61	5	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	24	64	8	4	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	24	62	4	10	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	33	59	7	1	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	26	67	6	1	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	47	47	2	3	1