

INSPECTION REPORT

REGENT FARM FIRST SCHOOL

Gosforth, Newcastle-upon-Tyne

LEA area: Newcastle-upon-Tyne

Unique reference number: 108440

Headteacher: Mrs J Humphrey

Reporting inspector: Mr D. Nightingale
OFSTED Inspector Number: 18911

Dates of inspection: 22nd – 25th May 2000

Inspection number: 189753

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Wansbeck Road South Gosforth Newcastle upon Tyne
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Enid Mitchell
Date of previous inspection:	14 th October 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr. D. Nightingale	Registered inspector	Mathematics	What sort of school is it?
		Information Technology	The school's results and achievements
		Special educational needs	How well are pupils taught?
			How well is the school led and managed?
			What should the school do to improve further?
Mrs K. Anderson	Lay inspector	None	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr D. Earley	Team inspector	Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Design and technology	
		Physical education	
		English as an additional language	
Mr A. Woodward	Team inspector	English	
		Art	
		Geography	
Mrs J. Platt	Team inspector	History	
		Music	
		Religious education	
		Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage	
		Equal opportunities	
Mrs S Wake		Visual Impairment Unit	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is a Nursery and First School of above average size for boys and girls aged 3 to 9 years. There are 301 pupils on roll with slightly more boys than girls. Information from the statistics available indicates that when pupils enter the school their overall attainments are well below those expected of children of their age. There are 25 per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals; this is above the national average. There are 63 pupils on the register of special educational needs which is a broadly similar number to schools nationally. The ten pupils in the Visual Impaired Unit all have statements of special educational needs. The number of pupils from ethnic groups is a little above the national average in schools and some of these pupils have English as an additional language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective and improving school which is successful in developing good standards in pupils' personal and social skills. Pupils have good attitudes to their work and this is reflected in the improvement in standards each year so that they are at least as good as they should be by the time pupils leave the school. Pupils benefit from good teaching and a curriculum that is well planned to make sure that they learn skills and knowledge systematically. The school looks after its pupils and keeps parents well informed. It has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils make very good progress in mathematics and achieve standards that are better than those expected nationally by the time that they leave the school.
- Standards in English and science are improving so that pupils' achievements are better than in similar schools.
- Children under five make good progress in their personal and social development.
- The good learning pupils achieve is the result of the good quality of teaching.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes towards school and their work.
- The way the school encourages good behaviour and attendance is good.
- Relationships between children and adults and between the pupils are good.
- Parents receive good quality of information about the school.
- A good range of worthwhile activities is provided to meet the interests, abilities and needs of all pupils.

What could be improved

- Standards in pupils' writing by the end of Key Stage 1.
- The way the school monitors how well it is doing to judge the effect of its policies and decisions in order to plan appropriate targets for further development.
- The use of accommodation provided for particular purposes.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in October 1996 progress has been good in improving religious education and pupils now acquire the knowledge and understanding that would be expected. Progress has been good in introducing a range of ways to assess pupils' progress although the information is not always used as effectively as it could be. The needs of the higher attaining pupils have been successfully addressed and test results show that more pupils than the national average achieve higher levels in the national tests for seven-year olds. Progress in raising attainment in English has led to an improvement in standards but writing at Key Stage 1 still does not reach the standard expected. A marking policy has been developed but has yet to be consistently implemented across the school. Procedures for monitoring the work of the school have been introduced and have some success in improving the quality of teaching but they still need to be further improved to be

more extensive in what they cover and in providing more information about school priorities. The school has also improved the quality of teaching. This is reflected in a general improvement in standards, particularly in mathematics, history and music. An Equal Opportunities Policy has been written and parents are now much clearer about the behaviour policy. The way the school provides for pupils moral, social and cultural development has also improved.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
Reading	E	C	C	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Writing	E	E	D	C	
Mathematics	E	D	B	A	

Test results show that standards have been improving over the past three years, often better than improvements nationally. Results in mathematics have shown particular improvement as standards are now better than most schools nationally and much better than schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Although improving, standards in writing still do not reach the expected level. Despite an above average percentage of pupils achieving standards that are better than expected the significant number of pupils who do not achieve the expected level keeps standards below average. Inspection evidence supports the improving trend as standards in English, including writing, are about what is expected of pupils by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 4. In mathematics standards are above average by the end of Year 4 and in science pupils do at least as well as expected by the time they leave the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are enthusiastic about school life and show interest in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are friendly, polite and help each other. Most pupils concentrate well in lessons. Pupils work and play well together.
Personal development and relationships	Good. When given the chance pupils happily help around the school. They have a good understanding of how their actions affect others.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

Pupils' positive attitudes, good behaviour and enthusiasm for their work helps them to make good progress and achieve appropriate standards. Relationships between pupils and between adults and pupils are good. Those pupils who experience difficulties with their behaviour respond well to the support given to them.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching in English at Key Stage 2 is very good. Teaching of English at Key Stage 1 and mathematics, science geography and information technology throughout the school is good.

Teaching of children under the age of five is good, as is the teaching of pupils in the unit for children with visual impairment. Teaching of numeracy skills has been particularly effective in raising standards. Literacy skills are taught well and pupils in Year 4 benefit from working in sets based on their abilities. Planning for different levels of ability helps teachers meet the needs of all the pupils. Pupils from the Visual Impairment Unit are integrated well into classes for some lessons. Where teaching is very good teachers insist on high standards of behaviour, explain what pupils are expected to learn well, ask challenging questions, use resources well and ensure the lesson moves along quickly. Where there are minor weaknesses in teaching pupils become distracted when the pace of the lesson is too slow or teachers do not ensure all pupils are listening.

Seventy-eight per cent of teaching seen was good or better, with 21 per cent of lessons being very good. One lesson was excellent. There was no unsatisfactory teaching.

Pupils' learning overall is good. They usually work at a good pace through lessons and acquire expected levels of understanding, knowledge and skills. They make good use of their previous knowledge when learning new work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a broad range of worthwhile opportunities which meet the interests, aptitudes and needs of all pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Early identification of pupils' difficulties helps set up suitable support to help pupils make progress. Provision for pupils with visual impairment is good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Pupils are integrated well into the life of the school. They receive specialist support but not throughout the year.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Pupils are taught right from wrong and helped to understand the need for rules. They are given opportunities to learn to work together and encouraged to look after one another. Pupils are given a good understanding of their cultural heritage and the cultures of others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Successfully encourages attendance and a climate of good behaviour. Extensive procedures for assessing pupils progress.

Links with parents are effective and have a positive influence on how well pupils achieve. A good range of information about school activities, procedures and pupils' progress is given to parents.

The curriculum is well planned to make sure that all pupils have a good range of experiences of all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Children under five have work planned to meet national guidelines. There are few opportunities for pupils to take part in clubs or other activities outside lessons.

Policies and procedures for the care and well being of pupils are good and implemented effectively. Simple and well-understood rules supported by a good range of rewards help to produce good behaviour. Good use is made of support services to help pupils with special educational needs and to successfully improve pupils' rates of attendance. Pupils from the unit for children with visual impairment are helped to feel part of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. Headteacher provides clear vision for the work of the school. Teachers with subject responsibility provide good support in developing their subject but have yet to fully develop their role in monitoring to provide clear information on what needs to be improved.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Support the school well but are not involved enough in deciding priorities and in judging the effect of decisions.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Sensible use is made of test results but procedures for monitoring the work of the school are not extensive enough to provide a clear view of what the school needs to do to continue to improve.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning is good and is supported by efficient administration. Good use is made of staff to support pupils learning. Accommodation is generally used well but some areas are not fully utilised for the purpose for which they were designed.

There is an appropriate level of suitably qualified teaching and support staff. Accommodation is good, although some areas inside are in need of decoration. There is an adequate level of resources to support teaching and pupils' learning.

The headteacher is clear about what the school should achieve and works hard in trying to put this into practice. Teachers with subject responsibilities are knowledgeable about their subjects and give colleagues good support. The monitoring of the work of the school by the staff and governing body is not extensive enough to provide a sufficiently detailed analysis of what the school does well and what it needs to do to improve further. The school strives to apply the principles of achieving best value in its resources and in its day to day work and as a result provides sound value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best. • Their children behave well at school. • Their children make good progress. • They feel comfortable to approach the school with questions or if they have a concern. • Their children enjoy going to school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school does not provide enough activities outside lessons.

Evidence from the inspection supports the generally positive views of parents about the school. Most parents hold the school in high regard. Other than for football, pupils have no other activities to take part in after school or during lunch times.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The level of children's overall attainments when they begin school in the Nursery is well below that expected of children of their age. Evidence from the assessments teachers make soon after children start school shows that this is particularly the case in language and literacy, where children's skills are less well developed than would be expected for their age. Numeracy skills are slightly better but still not at a level expected. Inspection evidence shows that children make good progress and by the end of the Reception year standards in language and literacy have improved but are still below what would be expected, particularly in the development of writing skills. In mathematical understanding, children are working at around the level that would be expected. In their knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development, physical development and personal and social development, children are achieving standards that are about those expected for their age. The work in the Nursery and Reception classes lays the foundation for the good progress most pupils make by the time they leave the school.
2. In language and literacy children improve their vocabulary through explaining their work to adults. By the time they are five they recognise a number of words and use letter sounds to begin to read other simple words. They are beginning to form letters correctly and to use letter sounds to help spell simple words but too few children have the confidence to try to write on their own. Through games and other suitable activities children develop an understanding of number and most children can count to ten and describe shapes by their shape and size. Children improve their knowledge and understanding of the world through their role-play, observations, discussions and visits. They develop their creativity through their play, through painting colourful pictures and through the imaginative use of materials to make models. They join in with singing enthusiastically. They achieve appropriate standards in their physical development when using large toys or moving around large spaces such as the hall. They develop suitable skills in using pencils, brushes and similar equipment.
3. By the end of Key Stage 1 when pupils are seven and by the time pupils leave the school at the age of nine, test results show that standards overall are about what national standards require of pupils of their age. In mathematics, pupils' overall attainments are better than would be expected. Standards in writing are not quite up to the expected requirements. This is due to the significant number of pupils who do not achieve the expected level as the percentage of pupils achieving at the higher level (Level 3) is much better than that achieved nationally. An examination of test results over the past three years shows that standards have steadily improved each year at a rate better than improvements nationally. The effect of this has been to bring standards much closer to the national average in reading and writing and above this in mathematics. When results are compared with those achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, standards are good. Test results were better than those of similar schools for reading and much better in mathematics. In writing, the school's results were about the same as those of similar schools. Indications from the tests this year are that the improvements have been sustained. Since the last inspection there have been improvements in the quality of teaching and this is reflected in the improvements in pupils' overall levels of attainment.
4. The inspection found that pupils' overall attainments in English at both key stages were about those expected of seven and nine-year-olds. There are variations, as the standard of pupils' reading and their skills in speaking and listening are appropriate for their age but the standard of pupils' written work is not as good as it should be.

Given their low attainments when they start school pupils make good progress by the time they leave the school. By Year 2 most pupils speak clearly and take part in interesting discussions. The older pupils, at Year 4, listen maturely and share their ideas and feelings in discussions confidently. By the age of seven most pupils read accurately and confidently and they further improve by the age of nine to read fluently giving their reading suitable expression. The school has worked hard to try to improve the standard of pupils' writing and test results indicate that in this they have had some success. Standards, however, still remain below those expected nationally. A significant number of pupils do not write accurate sentences and spelling is not as consistent as would be expected. Pupils' handwriting is also inconsistent. By the end of Year 4, pupils write in a number of different ways, such as letters, poems, stories and instructions. The more able pupils' writing is well organised, imaginative and interesting, sometimes using punctuation such as speech marks and exclamation marks correctly. Too many pupils produce written work that is poorly presented, with not enough attention to detail, untidy handwriting and inaccurate spelling.

5. Inspection findings support the results of national tests in finding that standards in mathematics are better than would be expected of pupils at the age of seven and by the time they leave the school at the age of nine. Regular oral and mental activities improve pupils' confidence and speed in which they answer questions. Pupils at Key Stage 1 have a good understanding of number and find different sums with the same answer as well as working confidently with increasingly large numbers. The older pupils know and use a range of strategies to help solve problems quickly. Most pupils calculate accurately using addition and subtraction and are beginning to use multiplication and division. Higher attaining pupils carefully solve problems with numbers involving hundreds. Pupils use their good understanding of fractions to calculate parts of numbers or shapes accurately. Younger pupils are beginning to measure lengths and record times, usually correctly. Higher achieving pupils make sensible estimates. The older pupils read different scales or rulers confidently although at both key stages pupils do not do enough practical work on measuring capacities. Pupils at Key Stage 2 record information they have collected on tally charts and block graphs, sometimes using the computer to make colourful presentations. There is limited evidence of pupils' doing enough investigation to use the knowledge they have acquired.
6. In science pupils attain standards that are about those expected by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4. This is an improvement from the results of the last assessments teachers made at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils make good progress in developing their understanding of how to carry out simple experiments and in acquiring appropriate scientific knowledge. By the time they are seven, pupils conduct simple investigations when they observe what happens closely and describe clearly what they have seen. Higher attaining pupils make simple predictions and give short explanations of what they have seen. Some pupils have difficulty in recording their work. By the age of nine, pupils know why tests should be fair and explain what they have discovered. Higher attaining pupils record their results clearly on tables and charts. By naming parts of the body and recording the conditions needed for living things to survive, the younger pupils improve their understanding of living things. Higher attaining pupils compare the differences between animals. At Key Stage 2, pupils extend their knowledge by, for example, learning important parts of the human body such as the skeleton. Pupils develop a sound understanding of different materials. The younger pupils sort different types of material according to their characteristics while the older pupils explain how some materials can be used. Seven-year-olds know that pushing and pulling are forces and have begun to explore simple electricity. By the age of nine, pupils have learned how to include switches in an electrical circuit and the higher attaining pupils have a sound understanding of forces such as friction and air resistance.

7. Progress of pupils with special educational needs is good. The careful setting of suitable tasks means that these pupils learn at a rate that is similar to other pupils in their year group, particularly in mathematics. Setting in Year 4 for English benefits the pupils with special educational needs, as the pace of the lessons is more closely related to their needs. Where targets in individual education plans are precise it helps pupils make good progress towards their achievement. When pupils who have targets to improve their behaviour are successful it has a beneficial effect on their work. Some pupils make sufficient progress as to no longer need additional support. Pupils in the unit for children with visual impaired achieve appropriately and some attain the levels that are expected for their age.
8. In information and communication technology pupils achieve standards that are close to those expected for their age by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time they leave the school. Pupils make good progress in developing and using relevant skills. By the time they are seven, most pupils can use the basic controls on a computer. They use word-processing and other suitable programs to write their name in different sizes or to draw interesting pictures. Some pupils select pictures stored on the computer to add to their writing. Pupils know how information can be found from information stored on a CD. By the time they are nine, pupils have learned how to use other equipment such as a scanner to copy information onto the computer and to add this to their work. They alter the size of the picture to fit space available and use the correct keys to help make corrections to their writing. The computer is used well to support work in other subjects such as when pupils recorded the results of a science experiment on a data program, which produced interesting block graphs.
9. Pupils' learning in religious education is at least satisfactory and their progress is such that they attain knowledge and understanding that is about that expected for their age. Younger pupils retell well-known Bible stories and know interesting information about other religions such as Judaism. They discuss the needs of others whose lives are less fortunate than theirs and consider how their own actions may affect other people. Older pupils link the Bible stories they hear to their own lives. They see the need for sensible and fair rules by which to live their lives. Through their study of other religions they begin to understand how belief is influential in many people's lives.
10. Pupils learning in art, design and technology, geography, history and music is good, so that by the time they leave the school they have knowledge and understanding in these subjects that is at least as good as that expected for their age. Too few lessons were seen in physical education to be able to judge the overall standards in this subject but that which was seen was appropriate for the age of the pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Children under five make very good progress in their personal and social development. By the time they are five they take part in lessons with enthusiasm and interest and are generally happy and well behaved. They are beginning to concentrate for appropriate lengths of time and to share activities sensibly with others. When asked they take responsibility for tidying away toys and equipment. The few incidents of silly behaviour are dealt with quickly, firmly and fairly.
12. Pupils display very positive attitudes to school. Most of them arrive on time and are well turned out in the school uniform. Attendance rates are similar to the average for schools nationally. Pupils enjoy both the work and the out of school visits. They talk enthusiastically about what they are doing. An example of this was when two Year 4 pupils took pleasure and pride in showing a visitor round their classroom and explaining some of the work that was displayed on the walls.

13. When pupils are well supervised, behaviour around the school is good. Movement between lessons, to and from assemblies and at break times is very orderly. Pupils queue quietly at the end of lessons and when waiting to enter the dining hall. Behaviour at mealtimes is very good. They help each other and are polite and friendly. Isolated examples of less ordered behaviour occur when staff are not present. Behaviour in most classes is good. For example, very good behaviour was observed in a Year 3 literacy lesson when all pupils were fully involved in discussions about possessive pronouns. They maintained concentration well when writing their own opening paragraph for a 'spooky' story and took pleasure in reading their work to the rest of the class. In a few lessons when teaching is less stimulating, pupils' concentration wanders and behaviour lapses. For example, in a mathematics lesson one group of pupils did not concentrate on the task set and did very little work. On the playgrounds, although lively, pupils generally play well together and share the play equipment.
14. Pupils take pride in the awards they receive for good behaviour and attitudes. They understand the school rules and have a clear sense of right and wrong. Pupils whose behaviour falls below the standard expected are carefully supervised and monitored. The positive way the school manages these cases is generally effective in improving behaviour. There have been no exclusions this year. Relationships with each other and between pupils and staff are good. No incidents of harassment were observed. Pupils from the unit for children with visual impairment are well integrated into the school.
15. Pupils work well both in groups and on their own. A good example of working well in a group was seen in a Year 3 history lesson when pupils planned together the items they would put in an explorers box. They took responsibility for allocating tasks and used initiative to extend the activity. Opportunities for pupils to take this type of responsibility for their own learning vary from class to class. Pupils answer questions with enthusiasm and confidence. They listen carefully to each other. An example was observed in a Year 1 religious education lesson when pupils listened attentively whilst others spoke about happy and sad feelings. They help each other and consider the effect of their actions on others. A Year 3 lesson illustrated this well when pupils were asked to recall an occasion when they had been kind. Through religious education and history lessons pupils consider the values and beliefs of others; for instance Year 2 pupils considered the feelings of a mother during a pit disaster. In another lesson a pupil said "It is horrible to have no home" as part of a discussion on helping others at harvest time.
16. When given the opportunity, pupils willingly take on responsibilities, which they carry out with diligence and pride. Pupils take the register to the office or help with putting out equipment or tidying up. For example, two pupils take bats and balls into the yard each play time. Year 4 pupils take some responsibility for others such as sitting with Reception children during lunch. Pupils use the technology in the library independently to record the books they have withdrawn. The range of responsibilities is limited and could be extended to further develop pupils' initiative and personal responsibility.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching is good overall and makes a significant contribution to the good quality of learning that pupils achieve and the steady rise in standards. Teaching was good or better in 78 per cent of lessons observed and in 21 per cent of lessons it was very good. One lesson seen was excellent. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching of children under five is good, as is teaching at both key stages. In Years 3 and 4 over 90 per cent of teaching was good or better. Teaching in the unit for visually impaired pupils is good. Teaching of mathematics is

good and this has a marked effect on the high standards achieved. Teaching of English at Key Stage 2 is very good and is a significant factor in the improved standards in English achieved by pupils by the time they leave the school. Teaching is also good in English at Key Stage 1, art at Key Stage 2 and in science, geography and information technology at both key stages. It helps pupils make good progress in these subjects. As only a limited amount of teaching was seen in design and technology, history, music, physical education and religious education, it is not possible to make a judgement on the overall quality of teaching. The teaching that was seen in these subjects was usually good.

18. Where teaching is very good teachers insist on high standards of behaviour that ensure pupils work at a good pace throughout the lesson and stay concentrating on the discussions or tasks. For example, in a science lesson the pupils co-operated very well because the teacher's high expectations of good behaviour were supported well by clear explanations. Pupils know what they are expected to learn and what they are to do in lessons as the aims of lessons are explained clearly. This helps them to settle to work quickly with a clear understanding of what it is they have to achieve in the lesson. Teachers make good use of their good knowledge of the subject to be taught to plan work that is well suited to the different levels of pupils' ability. For example, work planned for pupils in a mathematics lesson meant that the more able pupils progressed quickly through tasks to more challenging activities, while those pupils who learn more slowly worked steadily on a practical task more suited to their needs. Pupils think hard about the answers they give during discussions involving the whole class because teachers use questions well to challenge them to use their previous knowledge. In an English lesson, for example, the teacher used questions very effectively to tease out action words from the text and by so doing further extended pupils understanding of verbs. In these sessions teachers make very good use of voice to maintain pupils' interest. They transmit their enthusiasm to pupils who, as a result of the interest generated, work well by themselves. Lessons proceed at a very brisk pace and pupils work quickly to produce work of a high standard. Outstanding use of well-made resources inspires pupils so that they use their imaginations well to apply their newly acquired knowledge. A good example of this was seen in a history lesson where pupils were so enthused by the teacher's presentation that they insisted that the artefacts they were asked to make were accurate in every detail.
19. Some of these features were present in the lessons where good teaching was seen. In the lessons which are good or better, relationships between pupils and teachers are good. Pupils feel confident to answer questions without fear of failure and ask questions to seek explanations. Through the answers and questions they ask pupils are able to clarify their thinking by relating their existing knowledge to the new ideas. Teachers present lessons in stimulating and interesting ways that help pupils sustain concentration and interest. Effective planning ensures that lessons are well organised so that pupils know what to do and have easy access to resources. Pupils behave well and work quickly and quietly as the result of well-organised lessons where movement around the classroom is well managed and expectations of good behaviour are clearly set. There are high expectations of what pupils will achieve which results in pupils making good progress in what they learn in most lessons. Effective use is made of assessment of lessons and weekly planning to build on what pupils have learned and to plan work to help the different groups continue to make progress. In the best lessons the marking of pupils' work indicates what pupils could do to improve their work, but this is inconsistent from class to class.
20. Teaching of literacy and numeracy is good and effective in helping pupils to make good progress in the development of reading skills and mathematical understanding. Teachers have a good knowledge of the National Literacy Framework appropriate to the ages of the pupils they are teaching. They have successfully adopted the National Numeracy Framework, as the school's mathematics scheme was similar in

structure to the framework. Teaching pupils in sets according to their abilities in literacy in Year 4 helps focus more closely on what the pupils in each group need to learn. This helps to teach more effectively relevant skills and helps pupils to work at a suitable pace. In both literacy and numeracy teachers' planning follows closely the guidance in the appropriate framework. This helps provide suitable activities and a good structure to develop pupils' learning. Lessons are well balanced to ensure that time is spent teaching the whole class, group activities are sensibly organised and effective use made of short sessions at the end of lessons to review what pupils have achieved. Teachers are confident in teaching the skills required in literacy and numeracy lessons. They explain strategies clearly such as when a Year 2 teacher showed pupils ways to change statements into questions. In numeracy teachers make good use of their understanding of number such as when improving pupils' speed in addition by encouraging them to look for pairs of numbers adding to a ten or hundred.

21. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in classrooms. The good planning of activities for pupils of different abilities means that these pupils make progress that is similar to their peers. Where relevant pupils have individual education plans to identify what they need to learn. Some of these targets are too general to be useful in planning and for some pupils do not match with separate targets set for literacy. Pupils from the visually impaired unit who join classes for some lessons work well within the class. Their progress is helped by working at tasks appropriate for their age and by working with other pupils. Where necessary they receive good support from very competent assistants but some pupils are able to work independently in classes.
22. Although teaching overall is good, there were minor weaknesses in some lessons. Lack of precise objectives for what pupils are to learn leads to pupils being unsure about what they are expected to do. This also results in work that does not have enough challenge to encourage pupils to produce work of suitable quality. Pupils become distracted when the pace of a lesson becomes slow and they lose interest. This also happens when pupils are kept sitting for too long on the carpet. In some lessons teachers do not ensure that all pupils are paying attention and taking a full part in the lesson. When pupils are engaged in group activities the teacher does not have enough awareness of what each group is doing. For example, in one lesson pupils in the group farthest from the teacher were noisy and did little work on the task set. In several classes teachers do not make it clear to pupils that high standards of presentation are important.

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

23. The school does all that it is required to do in teaching all subjects of the National curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. It provides a good range of well-planned and interesting learning opportunities to meet the interests, needs and aptitudes of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. However, the school has not fully addressed a criticism from the previous inspection by devising systems to ensure effective monitoring and evaluation of major topics in order to ensure more effectively that pupils build on previous work. The school places a well-balanced emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy. It takes advantage of the current national guidance in its planning of some subjects such as science, information communication technology and design technology.
24. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils who are likely to experience difficulties with learning are identified soon after they enter school, as are those pupils whose behaviour prevents them from learning effectively. Individual education plans identify pupils' problems with learning and set

targets to bring about improvement. Targets for those pupils whose behaviour needs improvement are usually clear and success can be easily judged. Where pupils need extra help with their learning the targets are of inconsistent quality and not always precise enough to help pupils learn in the small steps that are appropriate or to judge how successful they have been. Plans are reviewed regularly to assess pupils' progress and, where necessary, to set new targets to be achieved.

25. Provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language is satisfactory. Although there was no specialist provision for these pupils during the inspection, arrangements put in place by the school ensure that these pupils make good progress. Further additional support is rightly planned in the near future according to the stage of pupils' language acquisition. These pupils are well integrated into the life and work of the school.
26. The school makes satisfactory use of the skills and interests of staff in, for example, music, information communication technology and sport. The organisation of Year 4 in English into classes based on prior attainment ensures that pupils meet work that is both suited to their abilities and provides enough challenge to their thinking.
27. The school has implemented the literacy and numeracy frameworks successfully and provides good opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy and literacy skills in other subjects of the curriculum. For example, pupils use mathematical skills in scientific investigations into the permeability of different kinds of soils where they measure and calculate accurately. In work on friction they produce graphs using information communication technology and in history they represent information about life in Victorian times using block graphs. In English, pupils produce graphs as part of information gathering and in art and design work they use rotational symmetry to produce interesting patterns. Pupils use their English skills in historical research work on explorers and write about the lives of slaves in ancient Greece. In geography, pupils use their speaking and listening skills effectively in discussions about sea shore locations and write persuasive letters about the local environment of the school.
28. In order to enrich the curriculum the school provides a satisfactory range of visits to places of interest such as Whitehouse Farm, St. Nicholas Wildlife Park, Beamish Museum and St. Mary's Island. Also, the school invites visitors, such as drama students from Newcastle College, theatre groups and puppet theatres to perform to pupils. Pupils are asked to consider issues of conservation during performances by science based theatre groups and develop insights into life in New Testament times during a Bible event led by a group of actors who included clergy. The school makes satisfactory use of the local community in order to support its work in the curriculum. For example, through links with the Education Business Partnership the local Inland Revenue help pupils with the production of an attractive and informative school newsletter. Pupils use the local supermarket to work on a series of mathematical activities. Although the school has access to the Internet in order to communicate with a wider community, the use of this has yet to be fully developed. Visits by the local police and nurse support work in pupils' social and health education. Pupils are also given the chance to visit the local church in order to take part in services or to see how it is used in Christian celebrations. The Victorian Day, which is produced as part of work in history, includes performances to parents that use local songs, stories and traditions. The range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school is unsatisfactory. It is limited to approximately 24 boys and girls in the fourth year who are members of the football club run by two members of staff assisted by parents.
29. Provision for equal opportunities is sound and has been maintained since the last inspection. There is a clear policy, which is understood by all staff. Planning ensures that all pupils are able to take part in all subjects and this contributes to the positive attitude to learning shared by all. Careful planning has ensured that all pupils, boys,

girls, older and younger, have fair opportunities to use the playground spaces and equipment. Resources and displays in the school show positive images of all groups in society and in particular promote understanding of disability. The visually impaired children are helped to feel part of the school community.

30. Provision for personal and social education is satisfactory. Pupils are given the chance to contribute to the smooth running of the school. For example, they accept responsibility for looking after playground games boxes and a small group takes responsibility for monitoring the efficient storage of books in the library. Older pupils help younger pupils who find difficulty with behaviour as part of a "buddy" system. The governors have an approved sex education policy and education about healthy life styles is included in science and physical education. However, as noted in the previous inspection, the school has yet to write a policy on how it approaches the topic of drugs and there is limited evidence of consistent work in this area. The school has good links with local schools, particularly its local middle school. Arrangements for the transfer of pupils are thorough and include visits by pupils to the middle school and teachers from there taking lessons at Regent Farm. The school has co-operated successfully with the middle school to produce shared schemes of work, for example, in science, and has worked with local schools to produce a policy on higher attaining pupils.
31. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when it was satisfactory overall and had weaknesses in cultural development. Provision for cultural development is now good.
32. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Collective worship provides opportunities for prayer and reflection and complies with the legislation. There are opportunities for considering special times and places in the religious education lessons. From time to time pupils show an awareness of the wonder of the world, as when a Year 2 boy spoke of music bringing tears to his eyes and the rapt attention of Year 3 pupils looking at a treasure box in a history class.
33. The school makes good provision for moral development and from the earliest days in the Nursery children are helped to know right from wrong. Assemblies and the circle times where children discuss ideas and difficulties with their teachers are used well to reinforce truthfulness, respect for others and honesty. The religious education lessons also encourage pupils to think about fairness and self-respect.
34. Provision for social development is good. The behaviour policy and the good relationships in the school foster a sense of responsibility and the pupils look for opportunities to help one another. Lessons in religious education and collective worship allow pupils to explore the need for rules and how to apply them fairly. The rota for sharing play space and equipment arose from pupils' suggestions to improve fairness. The school actively promotes good understanding of disability and the rights of others in society, particularly through the presence of pupils with visual impairment. There are limited opportunities for pupils to have formal responsibilities but they help in the library and with routine tasks. Older pupils are given some responsibility for looking after younger pupils who find behaving appropriately at breaktimes difficult.
35. Provision for cultural development is also good. History and music make a strong contribution to developing knowledge of, and pride in the local culture. Pupils sing songs from the area and learn about the history of their streets and city, talking to local people. They have opportunities to hear music and stories from all over Britain and the wider world. Positive images of other cultures are given in history, music and literature and pupils learn about Judaism and Hinduism. Members of other communities, such as a Chinese artist, are invited into school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The school provides a friendly and caring environment where pupils can work and learn in a safe and orderly community. Parents receive a warm welcome into the school and value the community spirit. The level of support and guidance the school gives has a positive effect in raising pupil's achievements.
37. Appropriate security measures and a perimeter fence have been installed. The headteacher is aware that regular fire and safety checks should be carried out; the formal system of recording these should be extended to cover an internal health and safety audit. Regular equipment checks and risk assessments are made. Systems are in place for reporting of major accidents and there is a person with First Aid qualifications permanently on site. The emergency contact scheme for contacting parents when pupils are unwell generally works well. Child protection procedures are in place. All staff have received suitable training and are alert to any signs that may cause concern. Dinner and play times are well supervised by lunchtime supervisors. The school makes good use of external agencies such as the health worker, audiometrician and Education Welfare Officer; the doctor is available if required. All staff are vigilant to any signs of poor behaviour, bullying or harassment. A policy is in place so that if incidents do occur, they are quickly reported and effectively handled. Movement around school is very well organised. Corridors and cloakrooms are tidy. The north wing corridor is particularly well maintained in order to facilitate safe movement of pupils with visual impairment. However, the large volume of resources in some classes impedes movement during lessons. The governing body is aware of the need for improving the condition of the infant toilets, as it is identified as a priority in the site development plan.
38. Relationships between staff and pupils are good. Staff have a good understand of their pupils and are sensitive to their differing needs. As a result, informal monitoring of each pupil's personal progress is continuously taking place. Pupil profiles and Pathways folders record personal achievements. Formal procedures for monitoring of personal development are limited. Pupils are asked to carry out some responsibilities both in class and in the wider school community: for instance, three pupils help to look after the library and pupils from each class return registers to the office. Pupils show visitors around the school. Pupils learn the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle through the science and physical education lessons. Pupils' work is valued through imaginative displays and pupils talk about it with pride. Pupils are not always encouraged to look after property carefully - for example, in the way they handle exercise and textbooks, or to present their work with consistent care.
39. Since the last inspection, when a lack of a consistent approach to assessment was identified as a key issue, the school has made significant improvements. The school now has a teacher responsible for assessment and has produced a written policy. There is an extensive range of assessment procedures and information used to monitor pupils' progress throughout the school. Not only does the school test pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 using the tests set nationally but also uses a range of other tests. Assessment tasks in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are administered regularly to all pupils, throughout both key stages. There is an agreed system in place for the day-to-day assessment of pupils' understanding of work in the core subjects. This is monitored from teachers' planning by the teachers responsible for each subject and by the headteacher. Little evidence was seen of detailed assessments taking place in other subjects.
40. The information collected is used to inform staff and governors of overall progress made by each year group and to help set targets for raising achievement in English and mathematics, particularly at the end of Key Stage 1. The analysis of some of this information led to the introduction of setting by pupils' ability in English at Year 4 and identifying some pupils who need additional support.

41. An assessment file with details of all records and procedures is kept in every class. Every pupil in the school has an individual portfolio, which contains all the information about their academic progress. There are inconsistencies in the information that they provide, as many are not up to date. An additional record is kept for pupils with special educational needs. This contains useful information including results of tests and assessments, copies of individual education plans and the results of regular reviews.
42. The assessment co-ordinator has successfully established a comprehensive system of assessment and record keeping throughout the school. The information that has been collected needs to be used more effectively by teachers in their daily planning and classroom organisation to target individual pupils or groups. More use could be made of an analysis of test papers to see what it is that pupils do well or do not do well.
43. The school places a strong emphasis on good behaviour. A positive behaviour policy is in place and the Home-School Agreement involves parents in its implementation. Monitoring of behaviour is good and very well established. The system of merit awards, school stars, class cups and awards assemblies is very effective in promoting good standards. Pupils whose behaviour falls below the level expected of them are very carefully monitored through a system of daily and weekly reports. Parents feel that the school manages behaviour well. Attendance rates are regularly reviewed by headteacher and welfare officer who provides very good support to the school and to parents. Through the School Charter parents are encouraged to bring their children to school regularly and on time. They know that they must inform the school when their child is absent. Staff complete registers neatly and consistently.
44. Pupils with special educational needs receive a good level of support. Concerns about progress or behaviour are identified as soon as possible and relevant action taken to support pupils. Their progress is carefully monitored with individual education plans being reviewed at least every six months. The school makes effective use of support agencies to advise teachers on ways of helping pupils and to provide direct teaching where necessary. This is particularly useful when providing support for pupils who experience difficulties with their behaviour. Good use is made of the help provided by the educational psychologist and the willingness of the education welfare officer to provide a range of support. Pupils in the unit for children with visual impairment receive a good level of specific support related to their needs. The staff in the unit know these pupils well and provide a range of well constructed activities to enable pupils to deal with their everyday lives.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. The school is held in high esteem by its parents. The questionnaire, parents meeting and discussions during the inspection confirm their high degree of satisfaction with the work of the school. Most feel welcome in school. They are comfortable to approach staff with problems or concerns they may have. However a significant minority of parents feel that the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons. The inspection team support parents' views on this point. The headteacher acknowledges that extra-curricular activities could be extended beyond football.
46. A number of parents occasionally help in school. More give effective support to out-of-school visits. When parents do help in school their support is good and is valued by teachers. A small group of dedicated parents run the parents association, which raises a considerable amount of money through events such as, barbecues, Christmas Fayres and discos. Funds have been used for the benefit of pupils by buying items such as cookery equipment for the Nursery, cameras for each class and

a computer for the library. These contributions have a positive effect on pupils' learning.

47. Through the brochure, newsletters, and meetings, parents receive very good quality information about the work and routines of the school. Reports to parents are informative and comply with statutory requirements. A parents' notice board is kept in the entrance to school. Parents are able to talk to staff at the beginning and end of each day. The Pathways folder is a recent initiative where a good range of information is collected together and taken home on a regular basis. This folder provides an excellent means of communication between school and home but is not yet fully utilised. Letters are sent to inform parents about the topics which are currently being studied and how they can help. The school has held a range of meetings to inform parents of new initiatives such as Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the School Charter. However attendance at these meetings is variable. Since the last inspection meetings have been held to explain the school's policy on behaviour so that parents are now much clearer about the school's expectations and procedures.
48. The Home-School Agreement has been introduced and most parents have signed it. Both parents and staff believe that it has increased the level of parental involvement. Parents are aware of the school's homework policy although there is no formal homework diary. All pupils take work home and the quantity increases as they progress up the school. Most parents are content with the amount of homework their children are given.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. Leadership overall is satisfactory. The headteacher has a clear vision of what the school should do to help pupils achieve their best. This is set out well in the school's mission statement, which the headteacher produced in collaboration with the deputy headteacher. The staff and the governing body support it. This shared commitment means that the school is successful in putting its aims and values into practice. This is particularly the case in respect of social development, where the strong commitment to improving pupils' attitudes and behaviour is put into action through the school's Positive Behaviour Policy and the recently introduced Pathways Project. As a result, there is a clear feeling within the school that pupils are valued. This is reflected in the good relationships between adults and pupils. There is also a shared commitment to raising standards and test results over the past two years show they have been successful. There is general agreement on what needs to be done, although the agreed planning (for example in information technology) is not always fully implemented in every year group.
50. The responsibility for the management of the day-to-day work of the school and for the development of the curriculum is appropriately delegated to relevant staff. Leaders for each key stage in the school ensure that activities are suitably organised and that the classes in each year group for which they are responsible provide pupils with similar learning and other opportunities. Teachers with responsibility for each subject make good use of their knowledge to organise planning for their subjects. This makes an important contribution to making sure that pupils learn skills and relevant knowledge at the appropriate time as they progress through the school. As a result standards are steadily improving each year. Teachers' role in monitoring what is happening in the school, particularly for the subject or part of the school for which they are responsible, is limited. Some monitoring has taken place and this has looked at samples of lessons in literacy, numeracy, science and religious education to see if the planning has been implemented. The headteacher has also monitored teaching and this has been successful in improving the quality of teaching in classes where there was a need for improvement. Information from the range of tests used by the

school is used successfully to monitor progress of groups of pupils and to identify general weaknesses such as writing. This also helps to establish that the school is doing well in raising pupils' achievements. Results are not analysed enough to identify what it is that pupils find difficult.

51. The school acknowledges that although there has been some progress since the last inspection on developing ways to monitor the work of the school it continues to be a weakness in need of further development. The procedures in use at the present have limited success, as they are not extensive enough to make sure each subject is thoroughly evaluated often enough. Although the relevant teachers regularly look at teachers' planning, they do not see enough of teaching and pupils at work through a regular programme of classroom observations. Nor do they collect pupils' work to judge standards or to assess what teachers do well or find what areas of work pupils need to improve further. This is not co-ordinated as a focused activity to give a detailed look at the strengths and weaknesses of each subject. This restricts the ability of the teachers with subject responsibilities to be involved in deciding the overall priorities for development or in judging the success of school targets. As a result some targets continue to appear as priorities. The group of senior teachers who meet frequently to discuss issues affecting the running and development of the school provide useful information for the headteacher. A weakness in this senior management team is the absence of a representative from the early years' classes. As a result the teachers in this part of the school are not always aware of the significance of decisions arising from discussions of the team.
52. The governing body is supportive of the school and has a commitment to improving the quality of education provided by the school. Appropriate committees and individual governors with identified responsibilities ensure that all statutory responsibilities are met. Responsibility for special educational needs is taken seriously, with the identified governor successfully using criteria in the Special Educational Needs Policy to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's provision. Although the governors have a policy on the remission of charges, a copy is not readily available in school. Through the reports of the headteacher the governing body receives suitable information about the work of the school and the issues affecting the school. This has helped the governors make a sensible decision about the staffing needs for the next year in the light of a predicted fall in numbers and budget. The governing body rely on the headteacher's reports for most information and do not have effective strategies for evaluating work of the school, other than in special educational needs. Individual governors visit the school to observe lessons and look at the aspects for which they are responsible but there is not a regular pattern of visits linked to evaluating the success of the targets in the School Development Plan. As a result the visits have limited influence on the decisions taken. The chair of governors is aware of the need to improve evaluation particularly in judging the effect of changes in class structure next year. The weaknesses in the school's programme of monitoring, and the lack of structure for the governing body's evaluations result in governors not being able to identify weaknesses, although they are clear about the school's several strengths.
53. Despite the weaknesses in identifying clear priorities through monitoring and evaluation, the annual school development plan is a clearly written document identifying sensible targets for development. In recent years many of these targets have been determined by national initiatives. Some of the other targets have been included, frequently raising questions about how effectively they have been addressed and reinforcing the need for clearer evaluation. The governing body, however, are not sufficiently involved in the process of producing the development plan. They receive the final draft but are not involved enough in agreeing targets. The plan indicates how each target will be evaluated but criteria by which their success in helping to improve the quality of education and in raising standards can be

judged are not precise enough to help to the governing body make suitable judgements.

54. Overall, financial planning is good. It takes careful account of historical spending and ensures that the basic requirements are adequately funded. Available finance is matched to the key areas of spending for the year. Sensible decisions are taken to meet the effects of a reduced budget. More detailed planning to meet the development and maintenance of resources for teaching is limited. Although each subject is given appropriate finance, the teachers responsible are not consulted enough about how the money available could be allocated to meet the school's priorities. Decisions on how it has been spent are not evaluated to see how effectively resources have been used in improving teaching or raising standards. The governing body tries to assess value for money through looking at test results and making comparisons with similar schools. It does not, however, look to see how the costs involved with running the school compares with other schools. The school also ensures that best value decisions are taken on purchases. Good use is made of all appropriate grants – the school is very effective at obtaining relevant grants. The shortcomings in the success criteria in the development plan means that the governing body does not always judge how well resources that have involved significant expenditure are used - for example, how effective changes or improvements to areas of the premises have been. Financial administration is secure, with relevant procedures in place although they are not written down. School administration is effective in providing necessary information to the headteacher and governing body. The school administrator is also efficient in supporting teachers and allowing them to concentrate on the central task of the school – teaching pupils. Good use is made of computerised systems for school administration.
55. The school has satisfactory resources for all areas of the curriculum and for supporting pupils with special educational needs. Resource provision for children under five, English, mathematics, art and information and communication technology is good. The small library is effectively organised. It has sufficient books, both fiction and non-fiction, of satisfactory quality to meet the needs of the curriculum. The introduction of a computerised bar-code system for borrowing library books is popular with pupils. This is very effective in recording which pupils have books on loan and in providing a system which links closely to that pupils experience in the world outside school. All classrooms have basic resources and class library areas. Storage space around the school is limited, but too often resources appear to be kept in an untidy and careless way.
56. There is a satisfactory number of well-qualified and experienced teaching staff to teach the National Curriculum, religious education and children under the age of five. Staff are matched well to their responsibilities for subjects and various aspects of school organisation. An appropriate number of experienced support staff work closely with class teachers. They have a good effect on pupils' overall attainment, particularly the achievements of pupils with special educational needs. The arrangements for staff training and development are adequate. There should be a much clearer link between the school's priorities and the training requirements of individual members of staff, including support staff.
57. The school stands on a large open site, with extensive grassed and hard areas. A good level of accommodation provides a safe and secure place for pupils to learn. A new perimeter fence has greatly reduced vandalism around the school. There are some specific areas of the site, such as the outdoor play area for the nursery and the information and communications technology suite, which need to be used more effectively. In some parts of the school standards of internal decoration have fallen. The school is cleaned daily to a high standard.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. In order to continue the improvements made since the last inspection the school should:
- i. Improve the quality of pupils' writing by the end of Key Stage 1 by:
 - providing more opportunities for children under five to develop independent writing skills through their play activities;
 - providing precise targets for pupils to achieve in each lesson, particularly for the group of pupils identified as under achieving in writing
 - analyse pupils written work more closely to see what pupils need to do to improve further. (*paragraphs 2, 4, 69, 81, 83*)
 - ii. Improve the effectiveness of the current procedures for monitoring the work of the school by:
 - involving all teachers with responsibilities for subjects and with other management responsibilities in a co-ordinated approach to monitoring;
 - producing a timetable for the regular monitoring and evaluation of all the work of the school;
 - using a variety of strategies, including classroom observation, examination of pupils' work, discussions with pupils and analysis of test results and papers;
 - using the information gained in identifying what the school does well and what it needs to do to improve further so that priorities and targets for the school are clearly identified;
 - improving the clarity and precision of success criteria in the school development plan to help make evaluation of targets more effective;
 - involving the governing body more in the identification of priorities and in the evaluation of their success. (*paragraphs 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 90, 103, 108, 118, 123, 128, 134, 138, 144*)
 - iii. Make more efficient use of designated areas of the site by:
 - implementing the Information Communication Technology (ICT) Development Plan so that the ICT Suite is used effectively in teaching;
 - Consider and implement ways in which the outdoor area for children under five can be used more effectively to enrich and extend the curriculum (*paragraphs 54, 57, 61, 75, 128*)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

59. The school should also consider the following issues:
- Make sure that the policy on charging for school activities is reviewed so that it is up to date and available when needed. (*paragraph 52*)
 - Produce an appropriate policy for education on the misuse of drugs. (*paragraph 30*)
 - Consider ways to improve the general care of resources and the premises to ensure that it makes a consistently positive influence on pupils' attitudes. (*paragraphs 55, 57, 96, 154*)
 - Consider ways of extending the good practice of including pupils from the unit for children with visual impairment into mainstream classes for more of their day-to-day life at school. (*paragraph 151*)
 - Consider ways of providing activities outside lesson time. (*paragraphs 28, 45, 140*)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	68
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	21	56	22	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	29	272
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A	75

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	10
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	63

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	9

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	30
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	31

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	5.2	School data	1.0
National comparative data	5.4	National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	28	24	52

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	18	25
	Girls	21	21	23
	Total	41	39	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (78)	75 (68)	92 (77)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	21	26
	Girls	20	20	18
	Total	40	41	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (81)	79 (85)	85 (86)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	4
Chinese	0
White	210
Any other minority ethnic group	3

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	3	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	4.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	140

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	60

Number of pupils per FTE adult	9.7
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	561436
Total expenditure	565485
Expenditure per pupil	1807
Balance brought forward from previous year	16437
Balance carried forward to next year	12388

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	301
Number of questionnaires returned	42

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	34	7	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	61	32	5	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	51	5	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	48	12	2	2
The teaching is good.	60	29	10	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	63	22	10	5	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	29	2	7	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	37	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	45	32	10	5	8
The school is well led and managed.	37	41	5	7	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	37	15	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	38	17	12	14

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

60. Provision for children under the age of five is good and has been maintained since the last inspection. Children join the nursery in the September of the year in which they are four and transfer to the Reception classes the following September. At the time of the inspection there were 18 full-time and 22 part-time children in the nursery and 13 children under the age of five in the Reception classes. Children are carefully introduced to school and over the first few weeks gradually extend the time spent in the Nursery. When they move to the Reception classes they again increase the time they stay over a few weeks. These gradual introductions support the children's confident and positive approach to school. Parents are welcomed in all classes and have opportunities to talk to staff at the beginning and end of sessions. Good quality written information helps parents to know what the children do at school and suggests ways in which they can help. The written reports are informative and the photo-diaries being developed in the Nursery provide very good, personal records of each child's life in school.
61. The children receive good teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes; in one third of the lessons seen it was very good. The staff members know the children well and activities are carefully planned to ensure that children make good progress. The nursery nurses, (and during the inspection a parent helper) make a very good contribution to children's learning. All staff members plan together and create a smooth journey through Nursery and Reception, which gives a good preparation for later learning. A good example is when Nursery children are taught to listen quietly to stories while adults point to the words in a 'Big Book', encouraging children to join in when words are repeated. This is very good preparation for pupils' learning of literacy in Reception and later years.
62. When children enter the Nursery their overall attainment is well below that expected for children of their age. In particular, many have poor language skills and social development. They make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes, particularly in personal and social development, imaginative play and reading. By the age of five they are attaining broadly what is expected for their age except for language and literacy, where they remain below expectation.
63. The children benefit from good accommodation in the Nursery and the use of good resources. All classes have access to a spacious outdoor area, which is underused. The use of this outdoor area to enrich and extend the curriculum would further improve the already good start to school life.
64. The under-fives team is well lead by the co-ordinator; there is clear understanding of the needs of these children and good ideas about how the provision can be improved. The co-ordinator has not enough opportunity to monitor the teaching and therefore to judge the success of changes in improving learning. She also has limited opportunity to contribute to discussions of whole school priorities at a senior level to ensure that they meet the needs of the under fives.

Personal and Social Development

65. When pupils start at the school they have well below average personal and social skills. Many find it difficult to play happily with other children, to concentrate or to follow instructions. Children are helped to make very good progress and by the age of five their development is in line with the national guidelines of expectations for their age.

66. The Nursery staff members work very hard and put a strong emphasis on the personal and social development of all children. They provide good examples of behaviour, kindness and respect for other people. They constantly encourage good behaviour by praising the children. Numerous activities designed to improve personal and social skills are provided; for example sharing toys and equipment in sand and water play, learning to take turns in dice games and learning to concentrate when tracing. Nursery Nurses help children to learn to listen quietly and to join in songs by sitting with them and praising their efforts. Children learn to take responsibility by helping to tidy up when asked although they do leave toys and equipment in disorder at other times. During the inspection they were confident, happy and well behaved and clearly enjoyed being in the Nursery. Staff deal quickly with occasional silly behaviour in a firm and friendly way.
67. The children continue to make good progress in the Reception classes. The teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and encourage them to develop their independence and concentration. Pupils take part in lessons with enthusiasm and excitement and show genuine concern if someone else is unhappy. When used the safe outdoor area provided for these children helps them to gain confidence in outdoor play.

Language and Literacy

68. Children enter the Nursery with skills that are well below national expectations in language and literacy. By the age of five they have made good progress although standards are below national expectations except in writing, where although progress is sometimes good, attainment overall remains well below expectations.
69. Children in the nursery make good progress in speaking and listening. They are given many opportunities to talk to adults and to take part in role-play - for example, in 'the fire station' or 'the laundry'. They extend their vocabulary when adults encourage them to explain what they are doing or to talk about their paintings and drawings. This continues in Reception where the teachers make good use of numeracy and literacy sessions to encourage children to talk about their work.
70. In the Nursery children make good progress in reading. They enjoy books, have good opportunities to choose and look at them and learn to sit quietly while listening to stories. They treat books with care, know where to start and that it is the words and pictures that tell the story. The higher attaining children suggest what might happen next and show their understanding by giggling or making comments such as, "He is a naughty monster." The good progress continues in the Reception classes where the Literacy Strategy and Jolly Phonics scheme have been used effectively in the learning of letter sounds, word building skills and other reading strategies. The children all enjoy books and can confidently use the words or pictures to tell the story. Most children know a number of words by sight and can use letter sounds to read simple words. The higher attaining children read simple books with confidence and work out longer words for themselves. They notice when they make a mistake and try to put it right.
71. In writing, progress in the nursery is satisfactory. Children learn pencil control and copying skills and some can write their own name but they have too few opportunities to develop their understanding of writing as a way to communicate with others. They would benefit from more encouragement to write in play situations and to attempt to write independently. In Reception pupils continue to make satisfactory progress. They develop good knowledge of letter sounds and use them to spell simple words. The higher attaining children spell words such as another and brother unaided. All make sound progress in letter formation. Higher attaining children make good progress and develop independence in writing. Too many children lack confidence in

their own ability as writers and are dependent on tracing over or copying under an adult's writing. Independent writing needs a greater emphasis.

Mathematical

72. Children enter the Nursery attaining well below national expectations in mathematics. They make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes. By the age of five they are attaining broadly in line with expectations for their age.
73. The activities provided for mathematics in the Nursery are varied and imaginative and catch the children's interest such as when a child, dressed as Dr Foster, had to find numbers on puddles and put them in order. Most children can count correctly by pointing at objects to at least 10. Careful questioning by adults helps children to make good progress and to develop the vocabulary needed to describe shape, size and colour. In Reception the structure of the numeracy strategy has been used well to meet the needs of the younger children. Teaching is lively and holds children's interest. The lesson moves at a brisk pace but pupils are given plenty of time to think and offer their ideas. They are encouraged to be confident in their own skills and reinforce their learning with practical activities. For example, children build towers to match a given number and then add two more to find a new number. This is effective in giving pupils confidence and allows them to work independently. Almost all children can count to 10, recognise the numerals and decide whether a number is more or less than another. Higher attaining children do simple calculations adding 2 or 3 to numbers up to 10 and use correct language to describe size and shape with confidence.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

74. By the age of five children have knowledge and understanding of the world that is appropriate for their age. The curriculum is well planned in both the Nursery and Reception classes to provide activities that allow children to make good progress. Good use is made of visits, such as to a farm, role-play - for example, the fire station and laundry - and of collections of everyday things like the bathroom articles in the Nursery. Children in a Reception class demonstrated their understanding of a dam by building in the sand and explaining, "rain makes rivers *fuller* and then they go to the sea." Children observe and talk about flowers and develop understanding of different materials by using water, sand, clay and dough. They learn to control the computer using the mouse.

Creative Development

75. By the age of five children attain standards that are about those expected for their age. There are high standards in children's imaginative play. In both the Nursery and Reception classes there is an emphasis on role-play and imaginative play which is a strength of the creative development. Adults take part in and extend children's play. For example, when children in the Nursery wanted to wear turbans in the laundry the teacher quickly provided fabric. Imaginative areas are carefully planned to stimulate ideas: in a Reception class an underwater world had been created where children played imaginatively talking about the plants and animals they might see, this was developed to include talk about sounds by a very good intervention by the teacher.
76. Children develop skills in painting and drawing and with clay and dough. They represent things they can see such as flowers and things they imagine or remember such as bathtime. They experiment with colour in paint and using a computer. They join in songs with enthusiasm and tap their feet and clap in time.

Physical Development

77. Children achieve standards that are expected of five-year olds by the time they reach the age of five. The large accommodation enables children to learn to move about with confidence and there are opportunities to climb and jump indoors. Reception children use the hall for physical education lessons. The outside area is used by all children under five for play times and good provision is made for ball skills, ride on toys and running and climbing. These opportunities could usefully be extended to longer periods of the day as a choice and there are plans to further develop the equipment provided. Children learn to use pencils, brushes and scissors and other tools correctly and can use construction kits and jigsaws.

ENGLISH

78. Overall standards of pupils' attainment in most aspects of English are about average at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4. Despite the good progress made by children in the Nursery, pupils enter Reception still attaining below national expectations in speaking, listening and reading. Good progress continues in the Reception classes and throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. In writing pupils enter Reception well below the national expectation. In spite of the good progress made in Key Stage 1, writing and spelling is still below the national average at the end of Year 2. Inspection findings are consistent with the results of last year's National Curriculum tests for seven-year olds. Good progress in writing and spelling continues at Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs make similarly good progress but their attainments are below those of others in their class.
79. Most seven-year-olds are beginning to speak clearly and many are beginning to express themselves confidently in a wide variety of contexts. Teachers show expertise in asking challenging and interesting questions which focus the attention of pupils immediately. They listen carefully to the teacher and respond enthusiastically in many areas of the curriculum. In the best lessons the teacher moves the lesson forward but still has plenty of time for pupils to think and explain. This sometimes creates very interesting discussions, where good learning takes place, as in a Year 1 geography lesson about locations.
80. By the end of Year 4 pupils are able to talk and listen maturely in a variety of situations. Pupils in Year 3 listen very attentively when being given advice on how to write an exciting start to a story. Some Year 4 pupils share ideas on how to improve their local environment, whilst others feel confident enough to share their feelings, about what makes them unhappy, with the rest of the class.
81. By the age of seven, children read aloud confidently, accurately and fluently from a range of fiction and non-fiction 'big books'. When asked, many pupils are able to predict what will happen next in a story. The majority of pupils are enthusiastic about reading. They enjoy taking books home and treat books with care and respect when using the computerised library borrowing system. They are aware of the terms "author", "illustrator", "contents" and "index". Both in Reception and throughout Key Stage 1 pupils respond well to the Literacy Strategy and Jolly Phonics scheme which have been used effectively to promote the learning of letter – sound relationships and other reading strategies.
82. By the end of Year 4, pupils are reading more fluently and with greater expression. Some are beginning to develop opinions about what books they like and dislike and express preferences for different authors. They read from a variety of texts, including poems, with expression. Pupils still respond enthusiastically when practising phonic skills. Some pupils in Year 4 use their knowledge of the alphabet to locate words in a dictionary or thesaurus to improve the vocabulary in their writing.

83. In response to a key issue from the last inspection the school has worked hard to improve the standard of writing and spelling of all pupils by the end of Key Stage 1. In Reception the higher attaining pupils can spell words such as *brother* and *another* unaided. Although these pupils are developing independence in writing, a significant proportion of the rest lack confidence in their own ability as writers. By the end of Key Stage 1 overall standards in writing and spelling are still below average, with a significant number of pupils unable to write accurately in sentences, that include interesting words. Many pupils are still poor at spelling and generally the handwriting of the majority of pupils is inconsistent and inaccurate.
84. By the end of Year 4 some pupils are developing their writing skills in a variety of forms, including narrative, letters, poems, reports, instructions and plays. They write fantasy stories, facts about the human body and a sequence of instructions on how to make a badge. Others write letters of complaint and include adjectives in persuasive writing. This work is usually well organised, imaginative and interesting. Most words, including more complex ones, are spelt correctly and sentences are often grammatically correct with evidence of the use of speech marks, exclamation marks and apostrophes. However, the majority of the written work seen was quite poorly presented, with inconsistent handwriting, poor spelling, and a lack of attention to detail. In one Year 4 lesson more able pupils had access to dictionaries, spelling books and lists of key words when planning a story. These well established routines and good class management, by the teacher, help pupils to improve the quality of their written work, but unfortunately the practice is not consistently applied through the school. Handwriting is now taught each day in a whole-class lesson, which the pupils appear to enjoy. However there is still considerable inconsistency in the quality of work produced by all pupils.
85. Writing and spelling have been identified as weaknesses for some time. New ways are now needed to bring about an improvement in standards in these areas. Teachers and pupils throughout the school need to focus on writing and presentation skills. A consistent approach is required, supported by the methodical monitoring of pupils' work as well as classroom practice.
86. Overall, teaching of English is good in Reception and at both key stages. All lessons are planned to the structure of the literacy hour. At times teaching is very good and it is never less than satisfactory. In Reception and Key Stage 1 the best teachers use excellent questions to challenge pupils and show good knowledge of English, including technical expertise with phonics. Their lessons move along briskly, but with no feeling of the pupils being rushed.
87. At Key Stage 2, some teachers clearly share the learning objectives with the pupils and this gives an immediate focus to the lesson. The best lessons have exciting introductions that create immediate interest. They encourage pupils to want to learn. For example, in a Year 4 class, the choice of the poem 'It Happens' was well matched to the objective for the lesson and it quickly inspired pupils to produce many suggestions about 'feelings', which they shared with each other. Some teachers use their voice well to make the shared text as interesting as possible and this helps raise the enthusiasm of the pupils.
88. A feature of some lessons is the very good integration of pupils from the Visual Impairment Unit. In a Year 3 lesson one partially sighted pupil, fully supported throughout by an adult, was able to complete the whole lesson successfully by using resources that had been adapted to his needs.
89. A feature of all lessons is the good relationship between teachers and pupils. Teachers often use praise and encouragement to motivate pupils. Most classrooms have well established routines which follow the Literacy Strategy. However, a weakness of most lessons, at both key stages, is the lack of insistence by teachers on

good quality written work. This is reflected in the mediocre standard of much of the work seen in pupils' books and in displays around the school. In the lessons seen there was little intervention by the teacher during the writing activities and consequently an opportunity to raise the standard of written work produced by pupils was lost. As a result many good ideas generated in the earlier parts of lessons were wasted and progress in writing hindered. Teachers make some reference to the fact that pupils need to use new knowledge and skills learnt in lessons to improve the standard of their writing and presentation. Pupils do not consistently do this and should be given more frequent reminders. Although pupils' work is regularly marked, greater attention needs to be given to giving a focus to the marking of written work in an effort to improve standards.

90. As a result of the good relationships present in lessons and an insistence on good standards of behaviour by most teachers, pupils throughout the school generally have good attitudes to English and they enjoy the subject. At Key Stage 2, pupils' attitudes to English are very good. At both key stages pupils can work independently, co-operate in groups or work as a whole class depending on the purpose of the lesson. Deterioration in the behaviour of a minority of pupils, usually in the writing section of a lesson, occurs when the work is not suitable and pupils' tasks are unclear. This also has an adverse effect upon the standard of work produced in some lessons.
91. A strength of the subject is the good links between English and other areas of the curriculum. Whole-class reading often links up with other work being covered. Year 2 pupils read about seed dispersal and make links to the science they are doing. Pupils in Year 1 write sentences about sounds and noises to go with their paintings and Year 3 pupils describe a day in the life of a Victorian child. Letters are written in geography about the local environment and there are written lists of instructions in science and design and technology. At both key stages pupils have discussions in English lessons that are relevant to many areas of the curriculum.
92. The experienced co-ordinator has worked hard to ensure the successful implementation of the Literacy Strategy. With the help of all the staff, especially the deputy headteacher, this has been efficiently carried out. Resources for the subject are good and well maintained. The key weaknesses of writing and spelling have been identified already by the senior management team who have analysed results and set targets for improvement. The role of the co-ordinator needs to be reviewed, with much greater emphasis placed on the monitoring of lessons and pupils' work on a regular time scale. This would help identify priorities for the school development plan and inform the planning for the further development of the subject.

MATHEMATICS

93. By the time they leave the school at the age of nine most pupils have made very good progress and the standards they achieve are better than those required nationally. Most pupils work at the level expected and many exceed this. This progress builds on the good start pupils receive in the Nursery and Reception classes. The National Curriculum tests taken by the seven year old pupils at the end of Year 2 support this as, last year, the school's results were above those achieved nationally and much better than those of similar schools. Standards in mathematics have improved since the last inspection, when they were described as about average. This has been mainly due to the adoption of a new approach to teaching and the purchase of a suitable commercial scheme which supports the school's methods. This has been helpful in making sure that the school had no difficulties in introducing the National Numeracy Strategy. Indications are that the results of the tests for this year will have maintained the high standards achieved last year.

94. Regular oral sessions have led to pupils' confidently using number and enjoying the challenge of mental work. By the age of seven, most pupils make simple calculations quickly and accurately, particularly the more able pupils. Their written work shows a good understanding of number as they find different ways to calculate answers for the same number. They count on and back in regular patterns of two, five or ten. The more able pupils work confidently with numbers as large as 1000 whilst the less able pupils are confident in working with numbers up to 20. Pupils are beginning to measure lengths using centimetres and metres. The higher achieving pupils estimate accurately before measuring. Younger pupils know the days and seasons and the older pupils record times to quarter and half hour on a clock face, although only the most able are consistently accurate with this. Pupils do not do enough work on measuring capacities, particularly through practical tasks. By the time they leave school at the age of nine, most pupils have further developed their confidence in using number. The higher attaining pupils calculate accurately with numbers involving hundreds. They respond well to the challenge of finding quick ways of adding several numbers by looking for combinations of ten or hundred. Other pupils are confident in using numbers up to 1000 when making different calculations. Pupils have a good understanding of fractions and calculate parts of numbers or shapes accurately. The higher attaining pupils work at this at a high level and successfully compare fractions with the decimal equivalents. When using measurement pupils read scales or rulers accurately although they do very little work on measuring capacities. Information from class surveys is recorded using tally charts. This is presented as graphs, sometimes using the computer to make colourful three-dimensional block graphs. Through investigations pupils extend their understanding of shapes when, for example, they explore the difference between area and perimeter. There is limited evidence of pupils doing enough of this type of investigation.
95. Most pupils enjoy the oral lessons and are eager to give quick responses. Some pupils sensibly use their initiative by using number displays in the classroom to help them answer questions. They usually listen carefully to explanations and instructions so that they are able to settle quickly to work. They work well in group activities and, when given opportunity, co-operate effectively with each other. The more able pupils are good at taking responsibility for organising their work. Some pupils are confident in their ability and are able to recognise and correct errors they make. In some lessons pupils are not always fully involved in oral activities – they listen rather than volunteer answers, particularly if they are unsure about the accuracy of their answers. A few of the older more able pupils do not always take part in activities that lack challenge for them but they are quick to respond when questions become more difficult. In several classes pupils do not always look after books carefully. The care with which work is presented is not consistent between classes or even within classes.
96. The very good progress pupils make as they move through the school is significantly influenced by the overall good quality of teaching. At Key Stage 1 it is usually good although some lessons are not of the same high quality. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is consistently good. Teachers have sound understanding of what they are to teach and this helps them to give clear explanations which help pupils increase their knowledge and improve their understanding, particularly of number work. Quick, sharp oral sessions at the start of lessons improve the speed at which pupils give their answers. For example, pupils improved their understanding of the tens and tenths through a short but lively question and answer session. Many lessons make effective use of games or other resources such as number cards to make sure that all pupils' take an active part and sustain their concentration. In their explanations teachers involve pupils well by asking them to demonstrate a method they have used. This keeps pupils interested and helps to improve their understanding, as they have to explain how they reached an answer. This challenges pupils to use previous understanding and to think carefully about their work. Teachers choose good examples to demonstrate methods and usually make sure that examples given match the different abilities of pupils. For example, when encouraging pupils to find combinations of 10 in

order to make quick calculations the questions used increasingly larger numbers in order to make the higher attaining pupils think in hundreds as well as tens. To develop pupils' ability to think creatively about problems, teachers ask pupils to find different methods to solve number problems. Not only does this extend pupils' understanding but also it makes them realise that a question may have more than one answer. Questions are used effectively to prompt pupils' thinking and help them work out answers. Sensible planning of the tasks for group activities provides pupils of different abilities with suitably challenging work. This has an important influence on raising standards as the higher attaining pupils are able to succeed at work which has appropriate difficulty while the pupils who find learning less easy are able to work at the same topic but with examples that help them understand what they are doing. It also helps with the good management of the group activities, as pupils know what they have to do and can settle quickly to work. This lets the teacher support individuals or groups needing particular help. Lessons end with a short discussion when pupils share what they have learned. On some occasions the teacher explains how the work will be developed in the next lesson so that pupils understand the connection between lessons and are ready to make further progress. Teachers make very good provision of resources to help with their explanations and to help pupils work independently. This is particularly successful when pupils with visual impairment are working with the class. It helps these pupils to work as part of the class so that they make progress consistent with their peers.

97. Although there is no unsatisfactory teaching, pupils' learning is limited in a few lessons. In a very few lessons the pace at which the oral session is conducted is too slow to keep pupils interested. In a very small number of other lessons teachers do not ensure that all pupils take an active part in oral sessions. Consequently some pupils do not listen or are bored because of a lack of challenge in the work. In other lessons pupils are expected to sit for too long during explanations with the result that they became restless. This can lead to the explanation of the tasks being too brief with the result that pupils are unsure what it is they are expected to do. In some of these lessons there are too many group activities for the teacher to manage efficiently with the result that pupils do not work consistently at the tasks set.
98. The teacher responsible for mathematics is enthusiastic and has led effective changes to planning and teaching strategies. These have resulted in a raising of standards achieved. There is an appropriate range of procedures for assessing how well pupils are making progress. These provide useful information to help track progress of groups of pupils and compare results in succeeding years. Information from these assessments needs to be used more effectively to identify areas for improvement as well as aspects of mathematics which are successful. For example, the answers pupils give to test questions are not analysed enough to see what it is they have not understood sufficiently. Although the teacher responsible has had some opportunity to watch other teachers at work the methods for judging the success of mathematics, identifying what needs to be done next and what resources are needed are limited. The teacher responsible sees too few lessons and does not conduct a regular scrutiny of samples of pupils' work to judge standards at first hand. There is no careful evaluation of how effectively money spent to provide resources has helped to raise standards in mathematics. This needs to be incorporated into a regular programme of monitoring of the work of the school. Resources for use by teachers and pupils are good although some are well used and need replacing. In some classes pupils do not take enough care of their books, with the result that covers are becoming detached and the useful life of exercise books is reduced.

SCIENCE

99. By the end of Year 2 and Year 4 standards are about those expected of pupils aged seven and nine. This is an improvement on the 1999 National Curriculum teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 but is in line with the findings of the previous inspection.
100. During the inspection the quality of teaching in both key stages was consistently good. At Key Stage 2 it was occasionally very good. Teachers have a good subject knowledge which they explain clearly. This is used to help pupils in Key Stage 1 to learn, for example, that the sun gives light and that the earth moves around the sun. Teachers' good knowledge of the subject enables them to give clear explanations such as helping the older pupils to know how to investigate the transport of water through plants. At Key Stage 1 most pupils, including those with special educational needs, know that a source of light is essential for seeing things and that without light other senses can be used in identification. This is because teachers present their work in lively and interesting ways. For example, they provide pupils with a range of exciting opportunities to identify unseen artefacts so that pupils are interested in their work and sustain their concentration. At Key Stage 2, most pupils learn to look closely at organisms and to group them according to features they can see because teachers present them with carefully prepared work and use questions skilfully to prompt them to think hard.
101. At Key Stage 1 pupils classify materials accurately and know about how they are used. This is because teachers present them with challenging work, which follows on clearly from previous activities. In investigations into insulation Key Stage 2 pupils know how to conduct fair tests and use accurate measures to compare time and temperature. They record this information in well-presented tables. In so doing they use considerable intellectual effort in the acquisition of new knowledge and skills because teachers have high expectations of their involvement.
102. Teachers at both key stages plan work which is well suited to the abilities of pupils. For example, in Key Stage 2 higher achieving pupils produce accurate and well considered predictions and conclusions about their investigations into circuits and write accurate and well presented accounts of the work of scientists such as Faraday. At Key Stage 2 lower achieving pupils produce simple group charts showing measurement in Newtons and at Key Stage 1 they show that they understand safety issues when dealing with electrical equipment. However, poor writing skills at both key stages limit lower achieving pupils in recording their work clearly. They complete less and their understanding is sometimes unclear; for example, in Key Stage 2 their work on water temperature is brief and shows limited understanding.
103. Teachers organise pupils and equipment well so that they remain on task and sustain their hard work. As a result, pupils are able to develop a sound understanding of scientific ideas. For example, at Key Stage 1 most pupils accurately compare and estimate the distance and speed of moving objects and understand the effects of heat on different substances. Where the quality of teaching is very good, pupils collaborate very well, using a key to help classify organisms. This leads them to develop their own classification systems and keys. In these lessons teachers have very high expectations and make very good use of assessment during the lesson in order to help pupils with any difficulties and advise them on the next steps to take.
104. At both key stages teachers have good relationships with pupils and control them well. This helps to create a friendly, hard working atmosphere in which pupils behave well and make good progress in their understanding and knowledge. For example, pupils at Key Stage 1 work well independently when they recognise similarities and differences in plants and make labelled drawings. Key Stage 2 pupils use information and communication technology to produce graphs recording their work on friction.

Teachers value and welcome contributions made by pupils. This means that they are confident to discuss their findings with visitors.

105. A contributory factor in pupils' good learning and improved attainment is in the way the school has made good use of national guidance. This provides a clear structure to help teachers plan work to build on pupils' previous work and so raise standards. The teacher with responsibility for science works hard to organise the subject and to link the scheme of work with that of the middle school. The teacher responsible for the subject does not see teachers at work in the classroom often enough nor look at pupils work regularly. This limits the amount of information available to help decide what needs to be done to raise standards further.

ART

106. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection and therefore no judgements can be made about teaching and learning at either key stage. From the two lessons seen, evidence from looking at pupils' artwork displayed throughout the school and from discussions with pupils and staff, it is clear that by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4 pupils' learning and progress are at least sound and the standards achieved about what would be expected of pupils of their age.
107. The extensive displays around the school give evidence to show that pupils throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 are given the opportunity to develop their skills using a variety of media and techniques. The younger pupils paint vibrant abstracts and large pictures of vehicles, creatures and people linked to their work in English. They produce three-dimensional window blinds, using translucent fabrics, in a variety of colours and shades, and create number pictures from cardboard cylinders. Older pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 produce a variety of responses, including collage work and large models, linked to their work about "The Iron Man" and ancient Greece. Appropriate computer programs are used at both key stages. A strength of the artwork is the way in which teachers link it to other subjects, including English, mathematics and science.
108. There is also ample evidence of collaborative work, including a number of large textile collages displayed in prominent areas of the school. These were created as part of the school's Millennium Arts Project. Children were given the opportunity to work with local artists and they have produced pieces of work which make public areas of the school environment more attractive. There are examples of pupils from the unit for children with visual impairment working with pupils from their year group to make models inspired by their work in history about the Greeks.
109. Most pupils enjoy their work in art, especially drawing and painting. Older pupils can discuss work that they have done in the past and they know about famous artists such as Paul Klee, L. S. Lowry and Van Gogh. When teaching is good, pupils' knowledge and understanding of famous artists are developed by a well-informed introduction to the lesson. For example, some pupils are shown examples of work by Monet and told about the Impressionist school of painters. They are then challenged to copy his style of painting, using a variety of suitable paints and crayons.
110. At the time of the previous inspection art was found to be satisfactory. Since then the school has improved its provision for art by developing the range of three-dimensional work and appointing a teacher to take responsibility for the subject. Now the role of the co-ordinator needs to be developed, particularly with regard to monitoring the standards achieved and identifying what needs to be done next to improve art teaching further. A new policy and scheme of work will provide a more consistent approach to art throughout the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

111. During the inspection it was not possible to see any lessons in design technology. However, from looking at pupils' work and teachers' planning and from discussions with teachers and pupils, the evidence is that learning is good at both key stages.
112. At Key Stage 1, pupils plan, design and make model houses from box frameworks and construct well-finished model vehicles using construction kits. They decide what materials and tools to use and make well-finished rotational plaques with clay and paint. Pupils use a range of materials in such activities as weaving, tube sculpture and making finger puppets. They use labelled drawings as part of their designs and finish artefacts such as candleholders neatly and attractively.
113. As they move through Key Stage 2, pupils increase the range of materials they use and develop good techniques for marking, measuring, cutting, joining and decorating. Pupils produce detailed labelled sketches for their designs of Iron Man models which they finish attractively. Pupils make careful nets as part of their work on packaging. They carefully take apart torches in order to better understand how they work. They make well crafted moving puppets using hydraulics. Pupils use elastic effectively in making moving models of volcanoes and produce attractively decorated mirrors.
114. Teachers ensure that the quality, quantity and range of pupils' designing and making skills increase as they move through the school. Pupils build their knowledge and skills carefully on what has gone before and work is effectively linked to other subjects of the curriculum such as history, science and art.

GEOGRAPHY

115. By the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4 most pupils are achieving above the standards expected. At both key stages pupils are generally making good progress. This finding is similar to that of the previous inspection.
116. As they move through the school most pupils are developing sound geographical skills and knowledge. As a result of effective questioning and high expectations by teachers, during whole-class discussions, all pupils are extending their knowledge of locations, geographical vocabulary and their understanding of environmental issues. Pupils in Year 1 talked about the beach, harbours, rock pools and the sea. At Key Stage 2, older pupils collect information by conducting a simple geographical survey in a systematic way. They discuss what they have found out, confidently expressing views on positive and negative features of their local environment and what measures could be taken to improve it. In Year 4 pupils complete this sequence of activities by writing letters which make sensible recommendations and suggestions about ways of improving the local environment.
117. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is mostly good and sometimes very good. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is always good. In the best lessons, imaginative planning, such as the idea of Barnaby Bear going on holiday in Year 1, immediately captures the pupils' interest and helps very good learning to take place. A feature of all lessons is the enthusiasm shown by the teacher and the quality of questions they ask, which often challenge the pupils to really think. Pupils are always managed well in whole-class discussions as the result of good relationships between the teacher and all pupils.
118. Lessons are usually part of a series, with the teachers making good reference to previous learning. In most lessons learning would be improved if appropriate ways of recording work were taught more and teachers insisted on greater care and attention

to detail in the pupils' written work. For example, simple maps drawn by Year 2 pupils did not make enough reference to the use of a key or colours nor was there insistence on much greater neatness and accuracy. In the best lessons teachers choose resources well to match their objectives. Work is marked regularly but there is little indication of how the written work might be improved. Assessment by teachers is still under developed. Geography makes a good contribution to English throughout the school, but especially in the development of the speaking and listening skills of all pupils.

119. Most pupils enjoy their work in geography and are interested in the lessons. They co-operate well in groups and are able to agree with each other. Pupils from the visual impairment unit are integrated very well into lessons and take a full part in all activities. Behaviour is good when they are outside conducting a survey of their environment. They listen carefully in discussions to the views of others. However, all pupils need to take greater care and pride in the presentation of their work, in all areas of the subject.
120. Effective use is made of the school environment as a resource and visits to a local wood, a farm and the coast enrich the subject. In general, geography resources are satisfactory. However, the role of the co-ordinator needs to be developed, particularly with regard to the strategic planning and monitoring of the subject throughout the school.

HISTORY

121. It was possible to observe only one history lesson during the inspection. Evidence from talking to pupils and examining their work indicates that standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and above national expectations by the time pupils leave the school in Key Stage 2. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when standards were sound at both Key Stages.
122. Children thoroughly enjoy history, talk about it with enthusiasm and make good progress. At Key Stage 1, they learn stories from the past and describe how things change. By the end of Year 2 they have a good knowledge of how to find out about the past and can explain evidence on the school site which shows there was once a pit in the area. They explain the story of a local pit disaster and consider how the people would have felt.
123. At Key Stage 2, they learn about ancient Greece, the Victorians and explorers. All pupils have a good knowledge. They develop their understanding of how to discover the past and learn to use books, objects, places and real documents to collect information. By the end of Year 4 they explain the differences in the lives of different groups in the same society for example the lives of men and women in Ancient Greece or the rich and poor in Victorian England. The higher attainers can suggest questions they could try to answer as well as considering what may have been the motives behind historical events. They improve their knowledge of chronology and put the periods they have studied in the correct order.
124. The good progress and attainment and the positive views of the pupils indicate that they are well taught. The one lesson seen was excellent. Imaginative use was made of a box of homemade objects, which could have belonged to an explorer, to hold the pupils spellbound. It led to very good learning as the pupils discussed what could be discovered from the various letters, journals and maps. They used their good knowledge of the period to track down which explorer had lost the box and at what point in his voyage. This excellent use of resources is seen in many parts of the scheme of work and the school museum makes a very good contribution to the work.

A Year 1 class compared an old vacuum cleaner with a modern one. Visits, such as the one into Newcastle to find evidence of the past, and history reconstruction days are used very well. Year 4 pupils gave vivid descriptions of the Victorian school day and the visit of the Inspector. The curriculum offered is good and develops historical thinking as well as knowledge. Pupils are given good opportunities to discover the history of the local area. Writing done in history makes a good contribution to literacy.

125. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and supports the planning, particularly the use of visits and visitors who include members of the local history society. She has insufficient opportunity to monitor pupils' work or the teaching to gain knowledge of how well the pupils learn in other classes.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

126. By the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time pupils leave the school at the age of nine, their standards are about those expected of pupils of their age. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. The younger pupils confidently switch on the computer and use the mouse to select actions from a menu. They write their name, change the size of the font and print out their work. Using different programs they draw pictures, such as abstract patterns to match similar patterns drawn in art lessons. They do not use a computer program to create simple graphs. Many pupils in Year 2 are able to select pictures stored on the computer and add them to their writing. Not all pupils have had the opportunity to develop this skill. They know how to use a CD-ROM to seek for information, with commands such as 'find and search' - for example, when finding out about "Dangerous Animals". Most pupils give instructions to a programmable model to make it move in given directions. Older pupils use a scanner to add pictures to their work. They are able to edit the size of the pictures as well as alter and correct their text. They enter information on to a database and use the program to produce colourful three-dimensional block graphs. Using an appropriate program pupils give instructions to create simple repeat patterns. Pupils have not yet had enough opportunity to send and receive e-mail. Pupils at both key stages confidently use the hand scanner in the library to read bar codes to record which books they have borrowed.
127. Teaching of information and communication technology is good and helps pupils make steady progress in learning new skills. Pupils are taught basic skills in class lessons and then given opportunities to practise the skills they have learned by working in small groups on the computer throughout the week. Although not all teachers are confident in teaching the subject, they use correct vocabulary to describe actions so that pupils learn and use the proper terms when working on the computer. Teachers with more confidence and expertise help their colleagues, sometimes by working with them in teaching a particular skill to a class. In lessons like these a good detailed plan for the activities is followed closely so that pupils develop the relevant skills in a logical way. Teachers give clear explanations and involve pupils in demonstrating skills as much as possible. In the best lessons teachers hold pupils' attention well so that all the class are involved in the discussions and begin to develop their knowledge of the skill being taught. For example, in a lesson on how to add sounds to a piece of music, pupils learned how to record a basic beat of three taps and how to use appropriate keys on the computer to change the speed to fit other music. The class lessons make sure that pupils are introduced to the skill or technique to be used but as only one computer is available pupils are not able to practise these straightaway. For example, pupils are encouraged to ask suitable questions in order to use a program to find information but many pupils have to wait several days before they have the chance to use the computer to put what they have been taught into practice. Teachers select the order in which pupils work on the computer so that those who have picked up the necessary technique quickly can

further develop their understanding by supporting other pupils who are less sure about what to do. The lessons do, however, give pupils the incentive to want to work on the computer later in the week. In some lessons well thought out and challenging tasks, which are suited to pupils' different abilities, make sure that pupils improve their understanding of how computer programs work. For example, pupils developed a good understanding of the need to construct a suitable series of questions in order to find out specific information. Questions are used skilfully to find out how well pupils have understood what has been taught. In some lessons pupils are given a practical task to help improve a part of the skill they have learned in the demonstration. In a lesson on research skills, for example, pupils were asked to write a suitable question that would help them find information when they used the program in a later lesson. From this the teacher was able to establish that several pupils would need extra help with this skill. Although only one computer was usually available other resources such as pictures, questions and written statements are prepared and organised well. These are used effectively and help pupils improve their understanding of how computers work.

128. Although lessons with the whole class are successful in teaching pupils the basic skills of computing, some lessons are not always easy to manage, as a few pupils find it difficult to keep their concentration for long periods of time. While those pupils do not give their full attention to the lesson they do not distract other pupils. When group activities are organised the teacher is not always aware of what some pupils are doing when attention is given to one group. As a result some pupils do not work consistently at the task set.
129. Most pupils work with high level of enthusiasm and are eager to answer questions and to demonstrate their knowledge. They settle quickly to practical tasks and co-operate in pairs when needed. In order to further their understanding they are prepared to ask pertinent questions such as asking about how to use the function keys on the keyboard when exploring how to manipulate sounds. Pupils are fascinated by the way the computer changes sounds or produces designs following a series of instructions.
130. Planning for the subject is good. It closely follows the national guidelines provided for all schools and this gives a good structure for pupils to develop the skills and understanding needed to be competent users of computers. Not all teachers, however, follow the scheme, with the result that some pupils in Year 1 do not cover the range of activities expected. An enthusiastic teacher is responsible for developing the subject and offering support and guidance to teachers. His role is limited by too few opportunities to see other teachers at work in order to judge the effectiveness of the planning. A good plan for the future development of information communication technology has been drawn up. This includes the need to increase the number of up to date computers available so that the subject can be taught more effectively and better use made of the information and communication technology suite. Although this room has had the necessary cables and connections fitted, most of the computers there are old and not suitable for the purposes outlined in the plan. With the right equipment this room would be used more efficiently, as it is well suited to the teaching approach the school has adopted and would give more pupils a chance to use a computer during a lesson. The school has a good range of other resources such as a scanner, digital camera and programmable robot. When given the opportunity to use these, pupils do so with confidence.
131. Suitable computer programs are used to support other subjects. Pupils talk animatedly about using programs to improve their number skills and spelling. The younger pupils make good use of a computer program to support work about abstract art. Support from the Inland Revenue as part of an Education Business Partnership has been very successful in helping small groups of the oldest pupils use their skills to design and produce a newsletter for the school.

MUSIC

132. At the last inspection standards in music were sound. The school has further improved the arrangements for music and pupils now attain good standards. Pupils at Key Stage 1 sing tunefully and confidently and can perform songs in two parts as a round or with a descant. They respond to music they hear with pleasure. One Year 2 pupil said, "when you listen to a beautiful voice it makes your eyes cry", demonstrating the contribution which music makes to pupils' spiritual development. They learn to improvise using tuned and untuned percussion instruments and also accompany themselves while singing.
133. At Key Stage 2 pupils progress to sing in three parts, using instruments to accompany themselves. They name composers such as Vivaldi and Mozart and describe styles of music that they like. Year 4 pupils remembered a concert with pleasure. They learn to represent music with symbols and to use these when they perform simple rhythms.
134. All pupils talk about music lessons positively and their enjoyment was obvious in the lessons seen. This positive attitude and the good progress made demonstrate that the teaching is at least sound. In the lessons seen the teaching was good. It was lively and enthusiastic and teachers had high expectations of what pupils could achieve. The lessons went at a good pace and retained pupils' interest and concentration with varied activities and the use of instruments and charts of symbols. Year 3 pupils made good progress as they learned to read musical notation confidently. They were taken skilfully from the use of picture symbols to reading and writing formal notes.
135. The scheme of work is good. It is based on commercial schemes that cover the full programme of music required and gives good support to teachers who are non-musicians. It is further enriched by specialist violin lessons for some pupils. Concerts and workshops are arranged for all pupils and Year 4 pupils remember singing at the City Hall with pride. Music makes a strong contribution to cultural development and effort is made to teach children local songs such as Blaydon Races and The Keel Row as well as songs and music from other cultures. Good use is made of information communication technology to support learning in music. Year 3 pupils use two different programs to compose music in small groups.
136. The headteacher provides sound leadership for music and teaches several classes. There is no monitoring of the teaching and therefore the effectiveness of the scheme has not been fully evaluated by the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

137. During the inspection too few lessons were observed for it to be possible to make overall judgements on the quality of learning and teaching. From discussions with teachers and examination of planning, the evidence is that the school meets the requirements for teaching all programmes of study, including swimming.
138. In the lessons seen at Key Stage 1 pupils linked movements together with increasing control to create a simple dance and responded promptly and sensitively to music. This was because teachers explained tasks clearly and used praise and encouragement to develop pupils' poise and confidence. Pupils usually move rigorously and safely as teachers maintain good control of the pupils and ensure that they warm up and cool down thoroughly. Pupils begin to explore feelings and moods in response to music and to travel and use gesture with growing balance and poise. Teachers' good knowledge of the subject and effective management of the pupils encourages them in this.

139. In the one lesson seen at Key Stage 2 pupils extended their skills in sprinting techniques and performed games and agility activities with increasing co-ordination and control. Skilled at observation and analysis of movement by the teacher helped in explaining to pupils how to improve their performance. At both key stages, in the few lessons observed, pupils behaved well and co-operated sensibly because teachers have good control of the classes and share firm friendly relationships with them.
140. As part of the limited extra-curricular activities offered by the school, two members of staff and parents volunteer to help the school provide opportunities for 24 boys and girls to participate in football. Hard work by the teacher responsible for the subject means it is well organised. However, the role of the co-ordinator in monitoring teaching and learning is underdeveloped. This does not allow her a clear view of how the subject should be developed in order to raise standards.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

141. Pupils make sound progress throughout the school and attain standards in line with the locally Agreed Syllabus. There has been good progress since the last inspection, when religious education was a key issue.
142. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils know Bible stories, such as the Lost Coin, and retell them accurately. They understand how their behaviour can affect others and identify occasions when they would want to say sorry. They learn about other faiths and know that the Torah is a Jewish special book. They understand the needs of others and explain how they collected food for the homeless at Harvest time. They speak of the homeless with respect and kindness.
143. At Key Stage 2 pupils learn to relate Bible stories to their own lives and to think about the need for rules. They suggest sensible rules for their school or family and many give reasons why particular rules are fair or beneficial. They know about the creation stories from many cultures and begin to see how beliefs can influence people's lives. They know something of Hinduism and talk about the festival of Divali. They know that there are special places and understand the importance of symbols such as bread and wine to the Christian Church.
144. Only four lessons of religious education were seen but these, with the information gained by talking to pupils and looking at their work, indicate that teaching is sound and sometimes good. Pupils enjoy these lessons due to the lively manner in which many are taught. Stories are well told and activities well structured to keep pupil's interest. In a Year 3 lesson pupils were asked to discuss parts of the story of Zaccheus with a friend before a wider class discussion; this gave all pupils the chance to develop their own ideas. Good use is made of visits, visitors and practical activities to stimulate interest and help learning. Year 2 pupils used the Easter Garden which they had made to explain about the tomb and the stone being moved and spoke about a visitor who had attended the Harvest Festival to collect the food. Year 4 pupils enthusiastically described their visit to the church and what they had seen there. Where teaching was not so lively pupils were easily distracted and the teacher lost time bringing them back into the lesson. The programme of religious education is well planned and it is clear what pupils are expected to learn. It covers all the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject.
145. Religious education makes a good contribution to pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. There is a strong emphasis on social and moral development, which leads to clear understanding of right and wrong. A Year 2 pupil explained that one of the thieves crucified with Jesus deserved to be forgiven because, 'at least he admitted it, he said he was sorry.' The work in lessons, books and displays make a sound contribution to spiritual and cultural development.

146. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and has helped to improve teachers' knowledge by arranging relevant training and developing links with visitors from other religions e.g. Hinduism, Judaism. She has begun to monitor the teaching to see how well children learn but this needs to be more extensive in what is looked at. There is a satisfactory level of resources.

UNIT FOR CHILDREN WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

147. The special educational needs unit for visual impairment forms part of the local education authority Educational Needs Teaching Support Service. The Team Leader for the Visual Impairment Service is currently based at Regent Farm. This role encompasses responsibility for all aspects of providing for pupils with visual impairment within the local education authority and liaison with other authorities as well as giving specialist teaching for pupils at Key Stage 1 within the unit. Another teacher, who was absent during the inspection, is responsible for Key Stage 2. The unit takes pupils from a wide area and some children come from other local education authorities. The unit is well established within the school and currently has 10 pupils, four at Key Stage 1 and six at Key Stage 2. The pupils work using print or Braille. Although visual impairment is the principal aspect of the pupils' educational needs, some have additional difficulties which affect their learning.
148. Pupils with sight impairment face considerable additional challenges in all aspects of their learning and development. Their acquisition and application of knowledge, understanding and skills are the result of great effort at all stages. Although a significant proportion of the pupils work at levels below that expected for their age, they achieve standards that are appropriate for their ability. A number of pupils achieve standards that are appropriate for their age. These pupils work alongside their peers in mainstream classes for many lessons such as literacy, mathematics and science. Pupils' work shows that they are developing skills in hand-eye co-ordination and recognition of colour, letters and numbers in appropriate representations.
149. The quality of teaching the pupils receive is usually good, both within the unit and when working in mainstream classes. This helps pupils to learn new skills at an appropriate pace. Regular consultations between teachers and support staff ensure that pupils have the support and materials they need to make progress. Features of the good teaching in the unit are the good clear introductions and explanations that help pupils become fully involved in lessons. Tasks are adapted to meet pupils' different needs so that pupils are able to answer questions or join in discussions. The pace of these sessions is brisk so that pupils' interest is maintained. Pupils are encouraged to use information from previous lessons to help develop their understanding of the topic being presented. For example, in a history lesson comparing items from the past and present the youngest pupils made good links with work from a previous lesson. Resources are used very effectively to help pupils learn and often these are sensibly adapted to meet pupils' needs. Pupils who use Braille are taught well so that they are competent when using a Braillewriter and quickly pick up new skills to use in different lessons. An example of this was seen when a pupil working in a mainstream class had quickly learned the relevant symbols to be able to read and record work on coordinates in a mathematics lesson.
150. Support assistants give valuable help to pupils. Good relationships with the pupils help establish good behaviour and enable suitable learning, such as some individual work on mobility, to take place. When working in mainstream classes pupils receive suitable help from the assistants. For example, in a mathematics lesson, the support assistant ensured that appropriate equipment was easily available so that the pupil was able to successfully participate in the oral session of mental activities.

151. Pupils develop good attitudes towards learning. They are eager to get on with their work. In discussions they answer questions sensibly and take turns to handle objects. Behaviour is usually good. When given the opportunity pupils are able to find the resources they need for their work.
152. When working in mainstream classes pupils are well integrated. Teachers have a good understanding of their needs and how they can best support them during lessons. They try hard to involve them in all activities. Pupils are successfully helped to take part in practical activities such as using compass directions to locate places on a large map. In discussions at the end of lessons pupils are given the chance to tell the others what they have found out as part of the class evaluation of the lesson.
153. Pupils follow the National Curriculum appropriate to their needs and ability. Some of the Key Stage 1 pupils join mainstream classes for lessons in literacy and numeracy and they all join for science, physical education and music lessons. At Key Stage 2, one pupil works alongside peers in a mainstream class for the majority of the school day. Other pupils follow a timetable in which they experience a variety of activities according to what it is they need to learn. Sometimes this involves working in the unit with a group from the mainstream class, such as setting up an experiment in science. At other times it may involve working with the unit teacher or other specialist staff to address particular skills. The visually impaired receive teaching in appropriate skills to meet their specific needs in mobility, communication and using a keyboard so that they are able to access the curriculum and develop their independence. Pupils in the unit also benefit from additional swimming lessons and from regular horse riding lessons. The school is wholly committed to the principal of integration and is moving towards further inclusion of pupils with their peers. Not all opportunities are taken to place pupils with their peer group for appropriate activities. For example, pupils are registered separately and do not join a class for this activity or when going to assembly. Whilst the unit gives valuable support in developing relevant skills, pupils would benefit from the discussions that take place in mainstream classes in lessons such as history as well as those lessons which they currently join. By working with their peers the presence of the sight-impaired pupils makes an important contribution to the development of social and moral understanding of all pupils.
154. The support and guidance for the pupils are good. Pupils are carefully looked after throughout the day to ensure their safety and well being. On some occasions this care is too protective. Procedures for assessing, recording, reviewing and monitoring the progress of pupils are good. Detailed records are kept and regular reviews involving staff and appropriate agencies are held. Suitable targets for pupils to achieve are recorded on individual education plans, although the forms used are consistent with the education authority practice they are different to those used in the main school.
155. Overall, the unit is well managed. There is good communication between the unit teachers and other staff and the teacher-in-charge joins other senior teachers as part of the senior management team. Given the good practice already in place, the school is well placed to consider the implications of recent national initiatives to further include pupils in the daily life and routines of the school and to make the good teaching skills of both mainstream and specialist teachers available to all pupils.
156. Resources for teaching the sight-impaired pupils are plentiful and usually used well to support pupils learning. The storage of these resources sometimes makes the unit appear cluttered and crowded, particularly as some of the equipment is not needed all the time. Overall, good use is made of space available and the main corridor is well marked to help pupils move around the school. All classroom doors are labelled with print and Braille. Access to the Year 1 class for the youngest pupils is difficult as it is located some distance from the unit making it difficult to establish easy links between the two bases.