

INSPECTION REPORT

PALLISTER PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Middlesbrough

LEA area: Middlesbrough

Unique reference number: 111631

Headteacher: Mrs Christine Wain

Reporting inspector: Mrs Barbara Parker
22261

Dates of inspection: 8th – 11th May 2000

Inspection number: 188587

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Gribdale Road Pallister Park Middlesbrough
Postcode:	TS3 8PW
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Councillor M Barker
Date of previous inspection:	30/09/96 – 04/10/96

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Barbara Parker Registered Inspector	Music The provision for children under five	What sort of school it is and what it should do to improve further The school's results and achievements How well pupils are taught
Mr Jim Griffin Lay Inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents
Mrs Kath Hurt Team Inspector	English Art	How good the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils are
Mr David Matthews Team Inspector	Mathematics Geography History	How well the school is led and managed
Mrs Carole Jarvis Team Inspector	Science Design and technology Physical education	The effectiveness of the school's assessment procedures
Mr Henry Moreton Team Inspector	Equal opportunities Special educational needs Information technology Religious education	The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Mrs Diane Pearson Team Inspector	Junior support base	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Pallister Park is a large primary school for boys and girls aged 3 to 11. It is much bigger than most other primary schools, with 488 pupils on roll, including 78 children attending the nursery part-time. The school is situated within the Middlesbrough Education Action Zone. The children's attainment on entry to the nursery is well below that found nationally. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals - 67 per cent - is well above the national average. Twenty-three per cent of the pupils have special educational needs, 10 of whom have Statements of Special Educational Need. This is above the national average. These pupils are taught in the designated local authority area support class for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. The majority of the pupils are of white United Kingdom heritage. Two pupils speak English as an additional language, but neither of them is in the early stages of English language acquisition.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Pallister Park is an improving school with some particular strengths. Although standards are below average overall by the time the pupils leave the school, they are commensurate with pupils' attainment on entry and pupils achieve satisfactorily because teaching is effective. There is a shared commitment amongst staff to improve provision and raise standards further. Because of this and the outstanding leadership, drive, and determination of the head teacher appointed two years ago, the school is well placed for further development. In relation to the circumstances of the school and its achievements, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in physical education are above the expected level by the time the pupils leave the school.
- Teaching in the nursery and in music and physical education in Key Stages 1 and 2 is good.
- Adults throughout the school manage pupils well and because of this, relationships and pupils' behaviour are very good.
- Support staff contribute effectively to pupils' learning and progress, particularly the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs.
- The range of extra-curricular activities is exemplary and contributes significantly to pupils' personal, social and physical development.
- The head teacher's leadership and management of the school is very effective.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics and science could be better because teachers do not always use their assessment of pupils' previous achievements effectively to adapt work.
- Homework and marking is inconsistent and do little to raise standards or help pupils to improve.
- The governing body is insufficiently involved in the leadership and management of the school.
- The monitoring and evaluation of teaching is in its infancy.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement since its last inspection in 1996. It no longer has serious weaknesses. All of the key issues have been successfully addressed. School leadership is much improved. Standards are improving in line with the national trend because teaching and curriculum planning are more effective and resources are better. Development planning is good; targets are relevant to the needs and circumstances of the school and are financed appropriately. Because teachers manage pupils well and motivate them successfully, pupils' behaviour is now very good. Other less significant weaknesses have been addressed but not all of them have been successfully dealt with. There is still below average attendance, although the school works hard to encourage pupils to attend and to arrive on time for the start of lessons. Appropriate improvements have been made to the curriculum provision for the oldest reception children, but the younger ones are still being introduced to the National Curriculum too early. Although some work has been done to improve the assessment procedures, pupils are not always set work based on their previous learning.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	E	E	E*	E	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	E	E	E	D	
science	D	D	E	C	

In 1999, the school was in the lowest five per cent nationally in English, indicated by the E* in the table. However, all of the figures in the table include pupils from the local authority area support class for pupils with learning difficulties. If these pupils are removed from the statistics, to give a much more accurate picture, in comparison with similar schools last year, the same percentage of pupils reached the expected level in mathematics, more reached it in science, but fewer reached it in English. The trend in the school's standards over time is broadly in line with the national trend. Although the school sets realistic targets initially, securely based on pupils' attainment on entry and on-going test results, these are often increased, and for the last two years, have been unrealistically high and have not been met.

Inspection evidence shows that by the age of five, seven, and eleven, most pupils do not reach the expected level in English, mathematics and science. Although most pupils attain levels commensurate with their attainment on entry, standards could be better for all pupils if teachers' used their assessments more effectively to inform teaching and learning. Pupils' speaking skills are under-developed and pupils do not always use punctuation accurately in their extended writing. They do not use an interesting vocabulary and because of this, their writing is more factual than descriptive. Their use of larger numbers is restricted by their inability to understand the value of different digits and to explain how they arrived at their answers to sums. Their scientific skills are hindered by their inability to record test data without a lot of adult support. Standards in physical education are high. Standards in all other subjects are as expected for pupils of their age.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils generally work hard and sustain good concentration.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good and has improved substantially since the last inspection.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils of all ages take responsibility for themselves and their actions and form very effective relationships with others.
Attendance	Below average. A number of pupils arrive late and sometimes miss the start of lessons.

Pupils' good attitudes towards their work and their very good behaviour contribute well to their concentration and motivation in class. Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy attending. They settle to work and show interest in their lessons. They are polite and courteous.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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 and learning is sound overall. It is consistently good in the nursery and in music and physical education in Key Stages 1 and 2. Ninety-eight per cent of the 94 lessons seen were satisfactory or better. Twenty-nine per cent were good, and seven per cent were very good. Good and very good lessons were spread throughout both key stages. Literacy and numeracy are taught effectively in English and mathematics lessons, but are insufficiently promoted through work in other subjects. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is sound overall but teachers do not always have sufficient regard to pupils' individual learning targets in ordinary lessons. Teachers across the school manage pupils well and pupils respond by paying attention and working hard. Time is used effectively and lessons generally move at a brisk pace. Pupils' consequently work productively and with good effort. Classroom assistants enhance pupils' learning well, supporting the less able pupils particularly well.

There was one unsatisfactory lesson seen in each key stage and unsatisfactory aspects of teaching in some lessons throughout the school. Teachers do not use effective day-to-day assessment consistently to inform teaching and learning of different attaining pupils, slowing learning at times. Homework and teachers' marking do not help pupils to improve their learning. Teachers do not always share with the pupils what they are going to learn and why, and this lowers pupils' involvement in their own learning. Some of the mathematical investigation work and the recording of scientific experiments is over directed.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Broad and balanced and effectively planned – a significant improvement since the last inspection.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory overall in mainstream school and good provision in the junior support base.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There are two pupils identified as having English as an additional language. They both speak fluent English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' spiritual and social development is good. It is very good for pupils' moral development and satisfactory for their cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Staff know their pupils and care for them well. Assessment is unsatisfactory.

The school works well with its parents. Parents are comfortable with the staff and the information the school gives them about the progress their children make is good. Extra-curricular provision is excellent. Support for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, but teachers do not always have sufficient regard to pupil's individual learning targets in lessons. There is no scheme of work for developing pupils' speaking skills in particular, adversely affecting standards. Assessment procedures are under-developed and because of this, teachers are unsure about how to adapt work to suit the needs of the different attaining pupils. Children under five in the youngest reception class are introduced to National Curriculum work too soon.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	This is good. The head teacher is a very effective leader. She and the staff share a commitment to raising standards. Subject leadership is very effective, although not all co-ordinators monitor teaching in their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Unsatisfactory. The governors have limited involvement in the leadership and management of the school. Although they are developing their roles as subject link governors and are starting to ask questions about, for example, test results appropriately, they do not play a major part in shaping the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This is good. The head teacher has a very clear picture of what the school does well and where the weaknesses lie. Lesson monitoring has led to some improvements in literacy and numeracy teaching, but is not extended to other subjects.
The strategic use of resources	Finances are well managed and efficiently controlled. Financial resources are used effectively. Funding from the Education Action Zone programme has financed many new developments and has helped to raise standards.

Subject co-ordinators are aware of strengths and weaknesses in their subjects and contribute effectively to development planning. Although the governors are gaining a greater insight into how the school operates, encouraged and informed well by the head teacher, they are unsure about what needs to be done to improve standards further. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good, but there are too few books in the library. The principles of best value for money are applied well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • Children behave well in school and make good progress. • The effective teaching. • The information about how their children are doing in school. • The approachability of the staff and in particular the head teacher. • The way their children are encouraged to work hard and to do their best. • The leadership of the head teacher. • The way the school cares for their children and helps them to become responsible and mature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality and range of homework.

The inspection team agree with all but one of the parents' comments. The pupils make sound progress overall, rather than good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Standards are below average at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time the pupils leave the school. Their achievements are satisfactory, accurately reflecting their attainment on entry. Nevertheless, standards could be higher for all pupils if teaching took better account of pupils' previous learning.
2. Children enter the nursery with attainment well below that found nationally. Many have poor communication skills and about a quarter of them have speech problems, making it difficult for adults and others to understand what they are saying. Less than two in every ten recognise their own names. Many have limited knowledge and understanding of numbers and about 20 per cent of the children are unable to count. Their knowledge and understanding of the world is weak. Nevertheless, they make good progress in the nursery and their learning in reception is sound, so that by the time they reach statutory school age, although their language and literacy, mathematical, and personal and social skills are still low, many children attain the Desirable Learning Outcomes in physical and creative development. Their musical and computer skills are particularly good. Children in the reception classes sing tunefully and clap on the beat with good accuracy. They switch on computers, load programs, and confidently open and close files. They guide the cursor around the screen with good co-ordination and control. Their cutting-out skills are good and they manoeuvre wheeled toys confidently and with a good awareness of space.
3. The results of the 1999 national tests for eleven-year-olds were very low in English and low in mathematics and science when compared with other schools nationally. In comparison with schools with a similar percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, Pallister's results were well below in English, below in mathematics and in line in science. However, these results included six pupils from the junior support base, all of whom had Statements of Special Educational Need. If these pupils are removed from the statistics to give a much fairer comparative figure, the results were below average in English, average in mathematics, and above average in science. The results of the national tests for seven-year olds show a similar picture. Standards were well below the national average in reading and below in writing. They were very low in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, however, Pallister's results were above average in writing and average in reading, although they remained below average in mathematics.
4. Taking all three subjects together, the trend in standards is broadly in line with the national trend, showing an overall improvement since 1996 in all three subjects. Evidence from the inspection shows that recent substantial improvements to curriculum planning and better teaching are not yet impacting on the end of key stage results, although standards are getting better, particularly in the early stages of Key Stage 1, where the improvements to the curriculum are having most impact. However, pupils in the older classes are having to 'catch up' on much of their work and are not, therefore, yet reaching expected levels. The implementation of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy is improving the teaching of English and mathematics, and there is a greater emphasis on experimental work in science, particularly effective in developing pupils' enquiring minds. These improvements are beginning to raise standards across the school.
5. By the time the pupils leave the school, their listening skills are generally good. Pupils listen attentively in lessons and to one another. However, their limitations in expressing themselves clearly, mean that ideas are not always forthcoming and this is having an adverse effect on their writing. There is evidence of improvement to pupils' spelling as the pupils move through the school, but their basic writing skills remain under-developed by

the end of Key Stage 2. Their use of interesting and exciting vocabulary is limited, resulting in their writing tending to be factual rather than descriptive. The great majority of pupils appropriately adapt their style of writing for different purposes, such as when writing letters and reports. They structure their stories appropriately and use a wide range of punctuation, though not always accurately. Pupils' reading skills are better developed than their writing skills. Many pupils are accurate readers, understanding the story and making tentative predictions about what might happen next. However, their limited vocabulary and their difficulties in expressing their thoughts hinder their explanations and ability to talk about the texts.

6. In mathematics, most pupils start from a low base on entry to the nursery and make steady gains as they move through the school. The scheme of work from the National Numeracy Strategy is providing better structure to teaching and learning, and the recently implemented daily mental arithmetic sessions are having a positive impact on improving pupils' calculation skills, although most pupils are unable to articulate the calculation process. By the time they leave the school, most pupils understand factors and square numbers, although their understanding of the value of the different digits in large numbers is insufficiently developed, with some of the lower attaining pupils confusing, for example, the value of 200 with 2000.
7. Although there is more emphasis on experimental and investigative work in science, some over-direction by teachers, particularly in the recording of investigation findings, is limiting pupils' progress. Nevertheless, by the time they leave the school, most pupils understand fair testing and the importance of altering one variable at a time. They make sensible predictions and record their findings accurately as directed. They use scientific terms correctly, remembering them better if they see them written down. They understand electrical circuits and that different materials have different properties and are used for different purposes.
8. The school has a good idea about which level each pupil will reach by the end of each key stage in English and mathematics, based on their previous achievements and annual test results, and it set realistic targets for the end of Key Stage 2. However, last year and this the school increased its figures unrealistically after being encouraged by the local education authority to strive for higher numbers at the expected level at the end of Key Stage 2. This has resulted in the setting of unrealistic targets, which were not based on secure information. These targets were not met in 1999 and are unlikely to be met in 2000, although the success of the booster classes gives an early indication of some pupils from the lower level achieving up to the expected level.
9. Standards in information technology are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time the pupils leave the school. Pupils throughout the school use computers confidently and competently to record and handle information. By the time they reach Year 6, most pupils use word-processing programs to record their written work, such as stories and poems, and CD-ROMs to retrieve information about, for example, ancient Greece. They produce bar and pie charts and line graphs showing, for example, the different shoe sizes of pupils in each class.
10. Pupils' attainment in religious education meets the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time the pupils leave the school they have an impressive respect for different faiths and religious beliefs, listening to the teachers' comments and learning from them. They understand what 'a believer' is and know about different religious symbols, holy books, and places of worship.

11. Standards in physical education are above average, enhanced greatly by the excellent range of extra-curricular sporting clubs and events. Pupils have particularly good ball control skills. Swimming standards are good, with most pupils swimming 25 metres and further by the time they leave the school. They are skilful in sequencing dance movements and gymnastic routines. Standards in all other subjects are broadly as expected by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time the pupils leave the school. Pupils have a particularly strong awareness of environmental geographical issues, such as recycling waste and pollution. Although standards in art are satisfactory, pupils' knowledge of artists and their work is inconsistent and they rely too much on adult guidance during art lessons instead of using their own imagination.
12. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress, although teachers do not always have sufficient regard to their differing needs in ordinary lessons and their learning is sometimes slowed as a result. There are no variations in the attainment of pupils of different gender, ethnicity or background.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Pupils' attitudes to school are good overall. Pupils are proud and protective of their school, which most enjoy attending. The great majority show interest in their lessons. Most pupils settle to their work without delay at the start of the day and at the end of breaktimes. Pupils of all ages usually listen attentively and are comfortable asking and answering questions. During practical activities in particular, most pupils show good concentration, perseverance and enthusiasm. Most enjoy reading. During literacy and numeracy lessons, the majority of pupils work independently in their groups whilst the teacher works with another group. Pupils with special educational needs mostly show good attitudes to learning. They work hard and enjoy the individual help they receive. The clear and consistent approach of teachers to behaviour and classroom routines provides pupils with a secure base from which they develop their liking for school and interest in learning.
14. Behaviour in classrooms and during lunch times and playtimes is very good. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection, when a number of pupils misbehaved during lessons and breaktimes. Behaviour generally improves as pupils progress through the school and become more mature. Pupils routinely form orderly lines and move about the school in a calm and responsible way. For example, the orderly way in which Year 4 pupils go to and return from swimming is striking; stopping at appropriate points along the route, without adult prompting, and crossing the road in a very calm and orderly way. Pupils regularly hold doors open for visitors and other adults. During the inspection, the behaviour of pupils at lunch times and playtimes was very good. There was no sign of any bullying, racism or sexism. Pupils, however, confirm that rare incidents of bullying and other antisocial behaviour occur in the playground, but are clear that they must always inform adults in such an event. The rare incidents of poor behaviour mostly involve boys. There were no exclusions last year and just one this year. Based on questionnaire responses, the great majority of parents are now very pleased with pupils' behaviour. The good and reliable behaviour of nearly all pupils helps create a very good atmosphere for learning. Pupils take good care of property and resources and help keep the school in an attractive condition.
15. Relationships between adults and pupils and among pupils are very good, with adults acting as very good role models on which pupils can base their own relationships with others. Teachers value pupils' work and effectively praise effort and good work. The pupils respond in a positive manner. They show caring and considerate attitudes towards each other and adults. Most pupils work well in pairs and small groups, for example, when in the new computer suite. They become more able to collaborate as they move through school. Pupils with special educational needs are fully accepted during lessons and playtimes.
16. Pupils' personal development is good overall. Most pupils enjoy speaking with visitors.

Nearly all show good respect for rules. Pupils show a very high level of respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. For example, in a Year 5 religious education lesson about the Passover, pupils were asked who prayed regularly and why. The rest of the class listened with great respect to the pupils' reasons for praying. Pupils respond well to the opportunities to help and take responsibility in the day-to-day running of the school. For example, Year 6 pupils are effective as door monitors during break and lunch times, whilst other pupils tidy up and help, as needed, in their classrooms. Wider opportunities for pupils to have their views heard on matters such as the playground, are limited, however. Key Stage 2 pupils compete in a wide range of team sports, including regional and national swimming and gymnastic competitions. These events help develop pupils' discipline, personal application, team spirit, and sense of fair play, as well as their wider knowledge of surrounding areas.

17. Attendance is unsatisfactory. Despite good efforts by the school, the attendance rate remains persistently below the national average. The unauthorised absence level is now broadly in line with the national average, which is an improvement since the last inspection. A small minority of pupils are regularly late for school, sometimes missing the start of lessons, impacting detrimentally on their learning and progress.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. Teaching and learning are sound overall. Teaching was satisfactory or better in 98 per cent of the lessons seen. More than one in every five lessons seen was good, and just fewer than one in every 10 was very good.
19. Literacy and numeracy are taught effectively in English and mathematics lessons and pupils' learning and progress are sound as they move through the school. Shared text sessions are particularly successful in developing pupils' basic reading skills. Teachers act as good role models when reading stories out loud and pupils mimic their style well when reading along with them. Many teachers inject humour and suspense into their voices, such as when reading about 'the dark, dark wood' in the older reception class. This promotes pupils' interest in and a love of books successfully. There is a good emphasis on teaching spelling and word skills throughout the school, particularly since the implementation of the literacy hour. Punctuation in writing is encouraged and this results, in one lesson seen, in a pupil inserting inverted commas in her story about 'the hungry giant'. This is not common, however, and teachers need to be sure that pupils apply the word skills they have learnt to their extended writing. Mental arithmetic skills are developed well although pupils are not encouraged often enough to explain how they arrived at their answers. The promotion of literacy and numeracy through work in other subjects is limited, although examples were seen during the inspection. Pupils write about their experiments in science; they explore time lines in history; and they count beats in music. However, these are unplanned and too incidental to impact significantly enough on raising standards in English and mathematics.
20. Teaching and learning are good in physical education and music throughout the school. Music is taught by two specialists and, although one of them is an unqualified teacher working under the direct supervision of the class teachers, their subject knowledge is exceptional. The short weekly lessons include a wide range of musical aspects and move at a very brisk pace, resulting in good learning of musical skills, knowledge and understanding. In physical education, because the teachers have high expectations of pupils in lessons and make good demands on them, pupils' learning is good. In response to teachers' effective questioning, pupils think carefully about what they are doing and how they can improve, for example, their dance routines and gymnastic sequences. Teachers'

questions are well focused and thought provoking, and pupils respond by thinking carefully before answering. Teaching in all of the other subjects is sound overall.

21. The quality of teaching and learning in the nursery is good. The room is a buzz of talk and activity. Adults talk with children at every opportunity, asking and answering questions such as “Where do you live?”, and “Who is your daughter marrying?” There is a wide range of purposeful activities, which children engage in enthusiastically and productively. There is a lovely, relaxed atmosphere in which children feel secure. Talk is valued and encouraged; adults sit with the children, often joining in their work and play - acting as effective role models on which children can base their own actions - and discussing with them what they are doing. They order ham and cheese sandwiches from the role play café and make fat and thin sausages out of play dough. Adults relate well to the children and talk at ease with them, establishing very effective relationships. Children respond well and with great enthusiasm, maintaining good concentration and staying at activities until they have completed their tasks. Effective use is made of parent helpers, for example in the woodwork area and at tabletop matching activities. Planning is effective and ensures purpose and direction to the different activities and experiences set out around the room each day. Staff are clear about what they want children to learn and this gives good direction to their work. They use assessment effectively to identify children who need additional support and to inform access to the different activities. The classroom is large and spacious, with every bit of space used well to provide a range of different experiences for the children. The outdoor area is well supervised, with adults intervening effectively in children’s learning, for example throwing balls and encouraging them to hold out their hands to catch them. There are times during the physical education sessions in the hall, because all of the children are in the hall at the same time - up to 39 - when children have to queue for five or so minutes for a turn on the apparatus. This wastes time and slows children’s physical activity.
22. Teaching and learning in the reception classes are sound overall, with some good features, particularly in the older class where the teaching is lively and children respond well, enjoying their lessons and sustaining good concentration. Music and computer skills are taught well in both classes. Effective planning in both classes gives lessons direction and appropriate structure. Explanations are clear so children know what to do. In the older class, the teacher explains to the children what they are going to learn and then checks with them whether or not they have learnt it. This involves children in their own learning well. The teacher in the older class, in particular, is usually well aware of what is going on around the room and ensures all of the children stay on task. During the morning activity sessions at the start of the day, a suitable range of activities in both classes develop children’s skills across all of the areas of learning. Although the teachers are clear about what children should learn during these times, the learning of the younger children, in particular, is often incidental. These children would benefit from more challenge and purpose in their work, such as building something specific with the bricks, or writing a letter to someone in particular in the writing area. Adults in both classes use praise well to build children’s confidence and raise their self-esteem. They manage children well. Lessons are well prepared and usually move at a brisk pace. Too often in both classes, children are set the same work with little regard given to their previous learning and individual achievements. For example, they all practise the same letter regardless of whether or not they write it correctly in their work and they all trace over their name even though some of them can write their name accurately. Consequently, the work is inappropriate for some of the children some of the time and learning is slowed unnecessarily.
23. Teaching and learning in Key Stages 1 and 2 are sound overall. Teachers manage pupils’ behaviour particularly well. They make it clear that they expect pupils to pay attention and listen carefully mainly by focusing on individuals and saying, for example, “Can I have your attention please?” They target questions at particular pupils, for example during a Year 6 literacy lesson when predicting and discussing story lines. They use time effectively and

lessons generally move at a brisk pace. As pupils grasp a particular idea about, for example, characteristics of living things in science, the teacher quickens the pace of questions and sharpens the focus. Adult helpers and classroom assistants support pupils well in their learning. For example, in a Year 1 design and technology lesson, the classroom assistant engages pupils in a lively and interesting discussion about different fabrics, introducing new vocabulary effectively. They make sure that particularly the lower attaining pupils, can do the work set.

24. Lesson planning is sound. Numeracy and literacy weekly plans in particular are detailed and give good structure to lessons. Teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn by the end of the lessons, but are insufficiently clear about how to adapt the work to suit different attaining pupils and too often the work is the same for all pupils. This results in work sometimes being too difficult for some of the pupils and too easy for others. Although the pupils generally find the work inspiring, it is sometimes aimed to suit the needs of the majority, and is insufficiently challenging for some of the pupils some of the time. Because not all teachers tell the pupils what they should achieve by the end of the lesson, and then check with them to see if they have been successful, pupils are insufficiently informed about their own learning. Where this does happen, pupils are much better motivated because they understand why they are doing something.
25. Teachers are generally receptive to pupils' personal and social needs. They ensure that boys and girls mix well in lessons. They treat all pupils with equal fairness and this develops effectively the principles of tolerance and respect. Teachers celebrate the work of all pupils through effective and attractive displays around the school. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is sound overall. Teachers work closely with these pupils, and classroom support assistants are particularly effective in ensuring that the pupils are able to complete the work set. Pupils are often paired, for example in computer lessons, so that the more proficient can assist those with less-developed skills. However, lesson planning does not always refer specifically enough to the pupils' individual learning targets and this means that pupils are not always set appropriately adapted work in the light of their Individual Education Plans. Pupils in the Junior Support Base are very well integrated into mainstream school and the school community in general. Provision for the pupils in this base is good. The pupils benefit from working with those in the main school in some subjects, including science and art.
26. Two of the 94 lessons seen were unsatisfactory and other lessons, although sound overall, had some unsatisfactory features. Day-to-day assessment procedures are inconsistent and teachers do not use information about pupils' previous learning effectively to adapt work to suit the different attaining pupils in the class. Homework does not help pupils with their work in lessons and marking is inconsistent and does little to inform pupils where and how to make improvements. Teachers' comments do not set the work in context and so they are of little aid to assessment. Although teachers' subject knowledge is sound overall and it is particularly good in music and physical education, it is patchy in information technology, with one teacher during the inspection having to send for a Year 3 pupil for assistance when starting the machines.

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

27. There have been significant improvements to the curriculum since the last inspection. Curriculum provision for children under five is good in the nursery and satisfactory overall in the two reception classes. In the nursery, there is a wide range of good, purposeful activities and valuable experiences to build children's skills well in all of the areas of learning. The curriculum for children under five in the reception classes is appropriately based on the areas of learning for children of this age for the autumn and spring terms. In the summer term, however, it is subject based and National Curriculum focused. Whilst this is relevant for the older children, who are, by this time, statutory school age, many of

the children in the younger reception class are still under five, and would benefit from further opportunities to learn through observation and exploration. They do not have access to the outdoor play area for children under five, or to enough exploratory activities in the classroom. This is a weakness remaining from the last inspection.

28. The school now offers a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the requirements of the National Curriculum in all subjects. The weaknesses in coverage of such subjects as geography, design and technology, and information technology have been fully addressed. All subjects now have appropriate time allocations and provide a suitable range of experiences. Religious education is taught in line with the locally Agreed Syllabus. The school places a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Teachers plan closely to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy frameworks. This is giving them confidence, and ensures that they are clear about what pupils are to learn from the tasks they set. Throughout the school, there is a strong emphasis on basic skills, such as spelling, punctuation and phonic knowledge. Teachers promote these strongly in literacy hours and this is already improving pupils' reading and spelling skills.
29. The weaknesses in planning identified in the last inspection have largely been addressed. All subjects now benefit from a relevant policy and scheme of work. However, planning to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills is weak, and there are insufficient planned opportunities for pupils to develop these skills across the curriculum. Pupils' weak skills and limited vocabulary adversely affect their ability to describe, discuss, explain and write expressively, as in Years 4 and 5 when they struggle to explain their feelings about texts such as 'Black Beauty'. Useful activities, such as explaining their strategies in mental calculations in Year 2 and writing science reports in Year 6, reinforce pupils' oral and writing skills well. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their reading, writing and speaking skills in other subjects of the curriculum. Teachers do not focus sufficiently on this in their planning and do not make the best possible use of work in other subjects. The art policy is in need of revision as it lacks sufficient detail about how the skills and awareness of the work of famous artists is to be developed in each year group. Some of the planned activities are inappropriate for the age of the pupils. This leads to some patchy coverage and lack of opportunities for pupils to develop independence and creativity. The school now provides appropriate experiences for pupils to carry out mathematical and scientific investigations. However, these are sometimes still over directed by teachers and this weakens pupils' ability to work independently in planning, organising and carrying out their own investigations.
30. All pupils have full and equal access to the curriculum, irrespective of their abilities, gender and background. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Individual Education Plans are well written and set appropriate targets. However, these are not always used sufficiently in planning relevant tasks in lessons and these pupils sometimes struggle to cope with similar tasks to those of other pupils, particularly when unsupported.
31. The range of extra-curricular activities is exemplary. There is a strong emphasis on sporting activities, which parents value and pupils clearly enjoy. These make a significant contribution to the very good relationships that exist between staff and pupils. There are clubs and school teams for most sports, competing with considerable success both locally and nationally. The school is rightly proud of its achievements, for instance coming second in the British final of the Sports Acrobat competition and in the local swimming championship. Instrumental tuition is provided, such as violin, guitar and recorders. Pupils' interest is further stimulated by visits, for instance to watch a ballet rehearsal at the local theatre and a Beethoven concert in Middlesbrough – both of which were funded through the Education Action Zone project. The school promotes information technology well by offering three after-school sessions each week in the new computer suite, which enables some pupils to extend their experiences considerably.

32. There is a clear and useful policy for developing pupils' personal, social and health education. As part of this, sex education is taught in line with the governors' policy. The school has responded effectively to weaknesses in its last inspection report, and now has a useful policy for teaching pupils about the dangers of drugs misuse. Valuable opportunities, like the Year 5 pupils' visit to a local football club for fitness and football training where they learn about the dangers of smoking and the need for a healthy lifestyle, reinforce their learning considerably. These experiences make a significant contribution to pupils' health education and physical and social development.
33. There are sound links with the community. The school makes good use of its links with a local mobile telecommunications study centre in promoting pupils' literacy, numeracy, and information technology skills. The head teacher actively encourages parents and members of the local community to visit the school on guided tours. Liaison with secondary schools is difficult as pupils transfer to one of seven schools in the area. Nevertheless, there are some good links with the two main receiving schools, with regular visits between the schools, for instance when the secondary school teachers visit Pallister Park to observe literacy teaching, and pupils from Pallister visit the secondary school to take part in a food technology session.
34. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. The provision for spiritual development is good. The daily assemblies include an act of collective worship and a time for reflection. Assemblies are uplifting occasions, which pupils and staff enjoy. They contribute significantly to the harmony of the school and are used well to celebrate achievement. Religious education promotes the understanding of the significance of a range of faiths well. Pupils learn to respect other religions and they respond very well when finding out about the rituals of others religions, including Judaism and Sikhism.
35. The provision for moral development is very good. Pupils develop a sense of right from wrong because staff talk through issues of behaviour with them thoughtfully and sensitively. Assemblies often address moral issues in a way that engages pupils' interest. Adults in the school provide pupils with good role models through their relationships with one another and with the pupils.
36. Social development is promoted well. There are opportunities for pupils to develop a sense of responsibility within the school. Older pupils listen to younger ones read. In one information technology lesson, some Year 3 pupils were called upon to help Year 1 pupils with their work, showing a well-developed sense of responsibility. Pupils of all ages and abilities take part in a wide range of sporting and non-sporting activities. This makes a good contribution to pupils' social development, and many of these activities, whether at the local swimming baths or the local study centre, all help to develop pupils' sense of community.
37. The provision for pupils' cultural development is sound. Opportunities are taken to emphasise the contribution of a range of cultures, for instance when learning about some of the major world faiths in religious education. Pupils of all ages are introduced to a range of music through assemblies and music lessons, and there are some opportunities for them to appreciate the work of famous artists in art lessons. They learn about past cultures in history when they are asked, for example, to imagine what it might have been like to live at the time of the Romans. Pupils visit places of cultural interest in the local community and wider afield, including the theatre, the ballet and the cathedral. The school has visitors from local churches in to talk to pupils, and pupils also visit local places of worship, including temples and mosques, but their knowledge and understanding of multicultural issues is relatively underdeveloped. Pupils take part in local dance and drama activities, and in the annual school productions.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. As at the previous inspection, the pastoral care arrangements for pupils are good. Procedures to promote and ensure pupils' well being are good. Pupils are effectively encouraged to be sensible, and to help, respect, and care for others. This leads to a calm and supportive atmosphere in school and has a positive effect on pupils' learning. Pupils are well cared for if they are ill or otherwise distressed. The school has good arrangements for induction to the nursery and other classes. Year 6 pupils, who typically transfer to one of seven secondary schools, are effectively supported.
39. Procedures to ensure pupils' health and safety are satisfactory overall. The health and safety policy effectively defines staff and governors' responsibilities. Regular health and safety inspections are reported to a governing body committee. Teachers usually make pupils aware of health and safety issues in practical lessons, such as physical education and science. This effectively contributes to the development of a safety conscious attitude. Regular evacuation drills are carried out. Fire alarm testing and the inspection of portable electrical equipment are routinely carried out by external agencies. The practical arrangements, including first aid, to deal with any incidents or accidents are well established and appropriate.
40. Child protection procedures are good. Linked to local area guidelines, the school's arrangements and responsibilities are clearly defined in the staff handbook and prospectus. Two trained, experienced staff members share this responsibility. Arrangements are known to staff and there is a system of recording any concerns.
41. Procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour and discipline are good. As a result, the school's atmosphere provides good conditions for learning. A clear policy on behaviour and discipline is generally applied consistently across the school. The main emphasis is on recognising and rewarding good behaviour and nearly all pupils respond positively. A clear range of rewards and sanctions are in routine operation. There is good awareness and involvement of parents, when needed. For example, all parents sign a behaviour contract for their children at the start of each school year. In lessons, teachers use praise effectively and maintain clear and consistent boundaries between what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Links between lunchtime and teaching staff are good. Lunchtime staff routinely record cases of inappropriate behaviour in the playground and report these to staff. As a result, the lunchtime staff feel well supported and pupils are in no doubt that all staff operate to similar shared expectations about behaviour.
42. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour, including bullying, are good overall. The small minority of pupils with significant behaviour difficulties are clearly identified and their needs are systematically addressed. Parents and outside support services are effectively involved in defining the source and nature of their problems. Individual behaviour programmes are put in place and carefully monitored and adapted until behaviour improves. Nearly all staff deal very effectively with any misbehaviour in lessons. As a result, pupils' learning is unaffected. The head teacher keeps a record of serious behaviour incidents and the measures taken to address such incidents. As a result, the school is well able to monitor the effectiveness of its measures. The school aims to prevent bullying through its personal and social education program and assemblies. Pupils confirm that bullying incidents are rare and that such incidents, once disclosed to staff, are effectively handled.
43. Procedures to monitor and improve attendance are good. Notes from parents are sought for all absences. Pupils with poor attendance are identified and carefully monitored. The education social worker is effectively involved in following up such cases. Attendance data is updated on a monthly basis. Measures to monitor and address lateness take a lower priority. These measures are sensitive to the need to avoid causing additional absence.

Parents are clear about the need to inform school when pupils are absent and are well aware of the school's views and rules about holidays during term time. Recognition and rewards are given for full attendance, over a term and the school year.

44. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is sound overall. The administration of the Individual Education Plans is secure and makes it easy to track pupils' progress through the school. The support from other agencies is very good. Care is taken by the teachers and the classroom support assistants when supporting pupils in class, but the individual learning targets of the pupils in ordinary lessons are not always paid sufficient regard to by the teachers, with only a few of them including these pupils specifically in their lesson planning.
45. Assessment for children in the nursery is satisfactory. The staff keep records about what individual children can do, and use this information appropriately to plan future activities and to target their support for particular children. Each member of staff is responsible for keeping note of the achievements of 13 children. This information is difficult to access, however, and cannot be easily located by other staff if needed.
46. The procedures for assessment and their use in Key Stage 1 and 2 are unsatisfactory and remain a weakness from the previous inspection. Half-termly assessments in English, mathematics and science and yearly assessments in other subjects have only recently been introduced. As yet, they provide insufficient detail to inform teachers of what exactly pupils know, understand and can do. Consequently, teachers rely on guidance from the schemes of work and do not use their assessments to adapt the curriculum to meet the differing needs of pupils or to inform teaching and learning. The on-going day-to-day assessments are inconsistent and lack rigour. They do not focus on specific groups or individual pupils and are not based on National Curriculum criteria. Teachers keep insufficiently detailed records to enable them to use the information to inform lesson or curriculum planning, particularly at the beginning of the year. This lack of assessment causes teachers to often set learning objectives for only one group in the class and this is not always appropriate for all pupils. Therefore, work is sometimes too challenging for one group and lacks challenge for others. Marking is inconsistent. It does not identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses sufficiently to guide pupils and help them to improve.
47. The tracking of pupils' progress is sound. Baseline assessments are satisfactory and lead to target setting for the statutory assessment test results at the end of Key Stage 1. The school uses the optional tests from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority to set targets for the end of Key Stage 2 statutory assessments. The head teacher records and analyses these results and this informs attendance to the booster classes. Co-ordinators are beginning to identify weaknesses in teaching and gaps in learning, through analysing the test papers in order to adapt the curriculum appropriately. However, teachers' ability and success in supporting pupils' academic progress is less effective due to the inconsistent procedures for assessment and its use.
48. Procedures to monitor and support pupils' personal development are good. Good use is made of 'pupil profile' sheets, to regularly monitor pupils' attitudes and general personal development. As a result, pupils and their needs are well known to staff. Good work and attitudes are regularly celebrated in assemblies. This recognition and reward provides pupils with frequent and public confirmation of what is good in their lives and helps raise their self-esteem. The assemblies also provide pupils with good opportunities to reflect on the lives and needs of others. Parents value highly the rounded education provided and consider that the work on pupils' personal development is an important part.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. Overall the school's partnership with its parents makes a good contribution to the quality

of education provided and the standards achieved. The good links identified at the previous inspection have been maintained.

50. Nearly a quarter of parents replied to the questionnaire and three parents attended the pre-inspection meeting with two of the inspectors. Based on the parents' meeting and questionnaire returns, parents are very happy with what the school now provides, except for homework. The school has an open-door policy and parents now feel comfortable raising questions, suggestions or concerns.
51. The quality and range of the school's links with parents are good overall. School related information, in the nursery booklet and prospectus, is of good quality. Parents get a clear impression of the school's expectations and character. There are also useful outlines on the subjects of the curriculum. Newsletters keep parents well informed about school life and raise important issues such as the importance of regular attendance. Links with parents about, for example, concerns regarding pupils' behaviour or attendance, are prompt and effective. Termly consultation evenings provide regular opportunities for parents to be informed about their children's progress and any issues arising. The quality of pupils' written annual reports is satisfactory overall. Most reports give a realistic view of pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science. However, except in English, advice on areas for improvement is minimal. The inclusion of pupils' personal and social progress is a positive feature. Information and other links with parents of special education needs pupils are satisfactory overall.
52. Parents' involvement in the work of the school makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. Most parents are interested in supporting the progress of their children but despite the school's best efforts, interest in a wider understanding of pupils' education is low. For example, although parents' attendance at school meetings is better than it was, only about two thirds of parents attend the termly consultation evenings. Attendance at meetings to discuss matters, such as the literacy hour and the schools' results in the national tests is very low. Many parents attend and enjoy Christmas and summer performances, by, for example, the school choir. Significant numbers also attend the innovative half-termly guided school tours, when they see the school in session. Most parents have signed the children's behaviour and home school partnership contracts. Homework is optional, and does not provide all pupils with sufficient opportunities to regularly practice and apply classroom learning at home. Nevertheless, discussions with Year 2 pupils indicate that most have somebody at home who listens to their reading. The level of regular adult helpers is low for a school of this size. Nevertheless, valued help is provided with games in the nursery and with reading in Key Stage 1. All parent governor positions are filled. There is no fund raising group to support school with fund raising and social activities.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The head teacher is a very effective and strong leader. She has a very clear vision for the school that includes the raising of standards. She has effectively introduced a range of measures to address all of the key issues from the last inspection, including those relating to the serious weaknesses in leadership and management. The head teacher and staff share a strong commitment to succeed. Senior managers have clear roles and although there is some delegation to senior staff, the head teacher consults with the whole staff rather than limiting decision making to teachers with senior management responsibilities. This has enabled her to build an effective team where all staff are valued and where they work well together in their efforts to improve the school. Given the improvement that the school has made over the last two years, the outstanding drive and determination of the head teacher and the effectiveness of her leadership in bringing about change, the school is well placed for further development.

54. The school has agreed aims and values that are set out clearly in its mission statement, which is effectively communicated to parents in the governing body's annual report. It is displayed to pupils in the school's entrance. The head teacher and all staff are successful in ensuring that the school's values are reflected well in the pupils' very good relationships and in their very good behaviour, including the absence of oppressive behaviour such as bullying.
55. School development planning is very effective, and gives a clear steer to the improvement of the school. The school's priorities for development are well matched to its needs and they continue to be focused on raising standards. They are set out clearly in the school's improvement plan, together with specific targets to help to achieve the intentions. The successfulness of the action taken to meet the targets is evaluated appropriately before new targets are set. This ensures that the development plan is a very effective management tool in helping the school to improve. There is a suitable focus on national initiatives such as literacy and numeracy as well as areas for development that are specific to the school, such as information technology and the improvement of pupils' writing through extra lessons. The last inspection found that the school's development plan did not clearly identify priorities or include finances to meet them. It did not indicate time scales by which targets would be met. The plan now includes specific criteria and time scales. Effective financial planning identifies the cost of each initiative and links spending with priorities in the school's development plan. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. The previous report pointed out that the governing body needed to work closely with the school to monitor and evaluate the implemented changes. So far, evaluation by the governing body has been informal and there is still a need for a systematic approach to their evaluation of developments.
56. The governing body is very supportive of and strongly committed to the school. Governors have a clear understanding of some of the strengths of the school, but have a limited understanding of how the school needs to improve. The governing body is effective in fulfilling its statutory duties, although it is insufficiently involved in shaping the direction of the school. Nevertheless, governors are beginning to ask questions and seek further clarification, for example about the school's targets for the end of Year 6. The head teacher has tried to involve the governors more fully in the work of the school. For example, she has recently established a link governor for each subject, but there has been insufficient time for this initiative to have an impact on governors' understanding of the school's provision. Governors' current role tends to be one of agreeing policies, rather than of holding the school accountable. The current school improvement plan appropriately sets out the intention to increase the involvement of the governing body, but it is not specific enough about what each governor will do, for example in monitoring action plans, or evaluating developments and the impact of major spending decisions on the school. The most recent annual report of the governing body to parents includes most of the required information. However, it does not include details about the provision for pupils with disabilities. Apart from this omission, the governing body ensures that statutory requirements are effectively met and this addresses a key issue from the previous inspection.
57. The management of special educational needs is satisfactory. Individual Education Plans set realistic targets for improvement and are appropriately maintained. One governor has the role of overseeing the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs, but the governing body's procedures for monitoring the progress of these pupils do not give them a sufficiently clear or comprehensive picture of the overall provision.
58. The school has placed a strong emphasis on monitoring teaching in literacy and numeracy. This is an improvement since the last inspection when the monitoring and evaluation of teaching was under-developed. The co-ordinators for English and mathematics have effectively observed teaching in their subjects, and provided useful

feedback to improve teaching. The head teacher and the local education authority officer have also monitored and evaluated teaching in order to improve its quality. However, these procedures are still in their infancy, and have not led to development targets for all teachers. They have yet to be extended to all other subjects and to the teachers of children in the early years, so that teachers are very clear about what does and does not work in their teaching and what they can do to make it more effective in raising standards.

59. Teachers co-ordinate their subjects very effectively. Co-ordinators take their roles seriously. All co-ordinators are enabled, with the exception of monitoring teaching, to influence developments in their subjects. They have established schemes of work for their subjects, which has addressed a weakness from the last inspection. They are empowered to make decisions, for example by drawing up an annual development plan for their subject, which have effectively improved provision.
60. Careful financial planning supports the school's educational aims and objectives well. The school takes appropriate account of its priorities for development when allocating financial resources. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The governing body ensures that grants for specific purposes, such as those relating to special educational needs and the Middlesbrough Education Action Zone project, are targeted appropriately. The action zone project has financed many new developments including classroom assistance in the reception classes, new resources for the nursery, and new computers. This year it is to finance the Reading Recovery Programme. This additional funding has been a crucial factor in improving provision and raising standards, particularly in literacy, numeracy and computer studies.
61. The school plans to take appropriate steps to ensure that it has a realistic contingency fund in future for any unexpected circumstances. The school uses new technology well to maintain records and to monitor its spending. It follows advice from the local education authority on applying the principles of best value for money to its spending decisions. The school recently had an audit of its financial procedures that reported that there have been significant improvements to financial administration. This is largely due to the relatively recent appointment of the very efficient administrative assistant who effectively ensures that financial routines are well organised so that the head teacher is free to focus on other school matters. The administrative assistant provides good levels of financial information to the head teacher and the governing body so that they know finances are in good order and appropriate decisions can be taken.
62. There is an appropriate number of staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. A number of teachers are very experienced and some have been more recently trained. This provides an appropriate balance within the teaching team. Teachers have a range of subject expertise and the school makes effective use of this through its subject co-ordinators. The previous inspection reported a lack of teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics and science. This is no longer a weakness; all teachers have received appropriate training in both and in particular in the teaching of numeracy. The school uses music specialists very well so that pupils benefit from their expertise. Support assistants work well alongside teachers and they are appropriately informed about their roles and responsibilities. Support staff working with pupils with special educational needs are effective in enhancing pupils' learning. This also contributes to the effectiveness of the school's provision for pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need in the junior support class. There is no systematic appraisal system that effectively identifies targets for all teachers to enable them to improve the quality of their teaching. However, there are opportunities for teachers to evaluate their own teaching during discussions with the head teacher and to guide them in their choice of suitable courses. Very effective arrangements are in place to ensure that newly qualified teachers and those who are new to the school are well supported, for example through the allocation of a mentor.

63. The accommodation is good. There is a specially designated and well-equipped room for information technology. Since the previous inspection, the school has effectively allocated additional funds from the Education Action Zone project to the nursery and this has resulted in very good accommodation for these pupils. The interior of the school is clean, attractive and well cared for. The classrooms and school grounds are spacious and well maintained, and the school has worked hard to improve its environment, for example by planting flowers near the entrance. Teachers draw pupils' attention to environmental issues, for example in Year 2 geography. This fosters good attitudes towards caring for the school grounds and enables pupils to play an active role in their surroundings. The library is inappropriately placed and does little to encourage a love of books or occasion for browsing or for research. The quantity and range of books in the library is insufficient for promoting pupils' independent research skills and extending their reading.
64. Learning resources are good in range, quality and quantity, particularly in English, mathematics, science, and information technology, and have improved significantly since the last inspection. Field trips are underused for enhancing pupils' knowledge and understanding of geography, but they are used well in history. Some teachers, such as in Year 1, make an extensive range of resources to enhance learning, for example in numeracy.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

65. The head teacher, governing body and staff should:

- (1) Raise standards in English, mathematics and science by:
 - a) improving the promotion of literacy and numeracy through other subjects;
 - b) improving pupils' opportunities to develop their speaking skills including increasing planned opportunities for them to articulate their thinking and explain their mathematical calculation strategies;
 - c) allowing pupils to be responsible for some of their own scientific investigations and the recording of their findings;
 - d) ensuring teachers have sufficient regard to the individual learning of pupils with special educational needs, particularly in English and mathematics lessons;
 - e) improving the quantity and range of books in the library (paragraphs 5-7, 12, 19, 25, 29-30, 44, 63, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, 85, 88, 90, 96);

- (2) Improve the quality of teaching and the consequent rate of pupils' learning by:
 - a) improving assessment procedures so that teachers are clear about what individual pupils already know, understand and can do and adapt work suitably to meet their differing needs;
 - b) improving teachers' marking so that their comments inform assessment effectively and give the pupils an idea about what they have done well and how they can make improvements to their work next time;
 - c) sharing learning objectives with pupils so that they understand what they are learning and why;
 - d) improving the use of homework to reinforce pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding;
 - e) improving the procedures for monitoring and evaluating teaching so that all teachers are aware of what does and does not work in their lessons across all subjects (paragraphs 22, 24, 26, 46-47, 52, 58, 77, 79, 85-86, 88, 91, 100, 103, 108);

- (3) Increase the role of the governing body in the leadership and management of the school so that they can be more effective in shaping the direction of the school (paragraphs 55-57).

Other less important weaknesses which are included in the report, but which are not given as key issues, but which should nevertheless be considered for inclusion in the action plan are:

1. The provision for pupils' multi-cultural development (paragraph 37);
2. The pupils' unsatisfactory attendance and punctuality (paragraph 17);
3. The inappropriateness of some of the curriculum for the children under five in the youngest reception class (paragraphs 22, 27);
4. The insufficiently detailed scheme of work for art (paragraphs 11, 29, 93, 95, 96).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	94
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	50

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	7%	29%	62%	2%	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	78	410
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	272

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	10
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	102

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	36
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	27

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	8.51
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.71
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	26	28	54

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	24	21
	Girls	20	25	20
	Total	38	49	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70 (54)	91 (63)	76 (71)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	23	25
	Girls	23	22	22
	Total	42	45	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78 (58)	83 (80)	87 (75)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	30	34	64

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	17	21
	Girls	14	13	17
	Total	24	30	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	38 (38)	47 (45)	59 (62)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	16	21
	Girls	15	14	17
	Total	27	30	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	44 (40)	48 (46)	61 (59)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	89.4
Any other minority ethnic group	0.6

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	18.1

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	39

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
	£
Total income	666574
Total expenditure	649958
Expenditure per pupil	1488
Balance brought forward from previous year	-11341
Balance carried forward to next year	5275

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	470
Number of questionnaires returned	98

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	78	20	1	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	84	15	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	70	27	2	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	34	19	3	2
The teaching is good.	74	23	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	66	27	6	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	24	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	29	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	51	43	3	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	69	26	1	1	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	70	24	2	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	55	29	4	1	11

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

66. Standards are below those found in most other schools. By the time they are five, most children attain the Desirable Learning Outcomes in physical and creative development, but many of them have under-developed personal and social, language and literacy, and mathematical skills, and their knowledge and understanding of the world are limited. These standards accurately reflect their attainment on entry.
67. Children's personal and social skills are developed well in the nursery and reception classes. The quality of teaching is good, particularly in the nursery. Adults in the nursery praise children for sharing. When one child hands another an apron, the nursery nurse says "That is very kind of you", turns to the other and says "What do you say?" Children respond by being polite to one another and sharing things sensibly. The teacher and nursery nurses encourage children to play together and be responsible for getting out and putting away equipment. They encourage politeness through example and effective discussion. They encourage children to share and have high expectations of their behaviour. The children respond by sharing well and behaving appropriately. Children in the nursery play happily in the play-kitchen together. They describe, usually in short phrases or one-word answers, what they are doing and which foods they are cooking. In the bedroom, they imagine they are going to 'the ball'. The nursery nurse extends their language well by asking, "Why have you got an invitation to the ball?" Children's personal and social skills are developed further in the reception classes, when the teachers, for example, appoint 'leaders' to ensure that the rules of group games are adhered to and that all children concentrate and take part. Lively, friendly discussions happen when, for example, bean bags rest between two scores – but an agreement is amicably reached in the end! By the time they are five, many children show care and concern for their pets, and although their speech is difficult to understand, they talk about how they catch the bus to grandad and grandma's house and about how old their brothers and sisters are. They are developing confidence in themselves, but lose concentration easily and are reluctant to initiate ideas. Although they talk amongst themselves with increasing ease, they lack confidence in more formal situations and are usually reluctant to answer questions individually, especially in front of others, avoiding the 'limelight' if possible.
68. Although standards are below those found in most other schools, children's language and literacy skills are taught well in the nursery and satisfactorily in the reception classes. The staff in the nursery engage in conversation with the children all of the time, asking, during water play for example, why they think the boat is sinking. Children try to explain what is happening and why, but they have difficulty expressing themselves and cannot find the right words to explain what they mean. Although their speech is developing, their vocabulary is limited and many children struggle to maintain a conversation - calling, for example, a magnifying glass 'a mirror'. However, the adults are very sensitive and understanding and continue to talk with the children, using good Standard English as a role model. They engage children in conversation at every opportunity, for example, talking with them about how teachers have names, and asking well-focused questions about children's work and play. Children show little interest in books, unless mimicking the adults looking at books. By the time they enter the reception classes, most children recognise some words on sight, but they need a lot of adult support to use their knowledge of letter sounds to read unknown words. By the time they are five, the majority understand the structure of the book and know that authors write the stories and illustrators draw the pictures. They recognise capital letters and full stops when reading books together. Although the class book areas are not particularly attractive or inviting and children do not use them often enough, the teachers read the 'big books' during shared

text sessions with liveliness and enthusiasm, inspiring the children well and successfully promoting a love of books. They cover some of the words up, injecting excitement and tension by asking children to guess what the missing words could be. Children respond well to the challenge by concentrating and making sensible suggestions. Most children understand that print is read from left to right, but they sometimes read pages in the wrong order, often reading the one on the right first. They talk about their own experiences, but usually in direct response to specific questions and many find it difficult to listen to one another without interjecting with their own tale. Their writing is uneven in size and, although many can recognise and write their first names, some are unable to write their surnames.

69. Mathematical skills are developed well in the nursery and extended appropriately during numeracy lessons and general activities in the reception classes. Teaching is good in the nursery and sound overall in the reception classes. Interesting games in the nursery make learning fun, such as when staff hide different coloured pieces of string in the sand and then ask children to find them and place them, for example, 'under' or 'at the side of' the bucket. Matching games develop children's recognition of colour and shape, such as when matching coloured petals to the same colour flower heads. In the reception classes, work is sometimes adapted to suit the different needs and attainment levels of the children. Teaching is often lively and interesting, particularly in the older class, and children respond well. They enjoy the mathematics lessons and usually sustain good concentration. A range of skills are successfully promoted through, for example, a simple game where children throw bean bags to score points, which are then tallied to find the winning team. Although not attaining the Desirable Learning Outcomes overall, many children are nevertheless developing a secure understanding of number and starting to add two numbers together. They make accurate repeating patterns and recognise sets with 'more' and 'less' objects in them. They measure things that are heavier and lighter, and draw things that happen in correct sequence.
70. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world are limited, particularly in the nursery. Many children do not attain the Desirable Learning Outcomes by the age of five, although the quality of teaching is sound in both the nursery and the reception classes. Children in the nursery grow plants from seeds and observe, with the adults, changes to them over time. Their computer skills are developed well. Children are confident users of the computer in the nursery. By the time they reach the reception classes, they load programs, open and close files, and control the cursor, for example, to dress teddy for either a cold or a hot day. They are proud of their achievements on the computers in the well-equipped computer suite and work together well in pairs. Children in the reception classes talk about where they live, but not many of them know the name of the street or describe nearby features or landmarks. They name the parts of a plant such as stem, roots and petals and know from their planting of cress and sunflower seeds that plants grow from seeds or bulbs. They are enthusiastic learners, especially when looking at cross sections of bulbs through magnifying glasses, exclaiming in absolute amazement, "It's bigger!" Children are developing a sense of time passing and know that they are different now to when they were babies and that they have changed over time.
71. Children's physical and creative skills are developed well in both classes, and taught particularly well in the nursery, where each day has a wide range of interesting and stimulating activities to develop children's creative and manipulative skills. When children are painting in butterfly outlines, the teacher extends their understanding of the effectiveness of colour well by guiding them in its use. Stimulating activities, including woodwork and sandwich making, extend children's creative and physical skills very well. Children handle the tools and equipment well, using saws, glue spreaders, paintbrushes and scissors with developing control and co-ordination. They join rail tracks together well and guide the computer 'mouse' carefully to move the cursor on the screen to exactly where they want it. They 'paint' the walls of the Wendy-house, with the teacher enquiring

“Is it all going to be one colour?”, effectively encouraging them to make choices and decisions. They strike musical instruments to create sounds in time to taped music. Children’s climbing and balancing skills are developed well during their time in the hall and outdoor play. They develop a good awareness of space when using the wheeled toys, pushing and pulling one another along on them. Children in the reception classes develop their physical and creative skills further when, for example, throwing beanbags into hoops and onto chairs. Their cutting skills are particularly well developed and many children cut out shapes accurately and with good scissors control. The teaching of music is good in the reception classes. Children are well motivated and sing well as a result. They clap on the beat in music and know that music can tell a story.

ENGLISH

72. Pupils' attainment is below average by the end of both key stages in all aspects of English. Standards are higher in reading than in writing, and listening skills are stronger than speaking skills. The school has made good improvements to the subject provision since the last inspection. There is a much clearer focus on raising standards through identifying strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning, curriculum and teaching. Resources are better than they were (partly due to Education Action Zone funding) and curriculum planning is much improved. Training for the National Literacy Strategy has raised teachers' confidence and improved their teaching skills, particularly in the teaching of reading. The co-ordinator has more influence on improving provision through effective monitoring of teaching and learning.
73. Many pupils enter the school with very limited skills in speaking and listening. Teachers ensure that pupils listen carefully in lessons. They provide good role models by speaking clearly, sometimes repeating instructions to ensure that everyone understands. As a result, most pupils make sound progress in developing their listening skills. Teachers' lively story reading encourages young pupils in Key Stage 1 to listen intently so that they recall the main points of the stories they hear. Older pupils listen carefully in spelling sessions, which enables them to identify the different letter sounds in words and improve their spelling accuracy. The school does not yet have systematic planning for developing pupils' speaking and listening skills, either in English or in other subjects of the curriculum, and there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to extend their speaking skills as they move through the school. This weakens the progress pupils make, particularly in Key Stage 2. Pupils are sometimes reluctant to speak and their speech is indistinct and brief. Many pupils have a limited vocabulary, for instance not understanding words such as 'brook', 'rage', and 'sheet' (of paper). Because of these weaknesses, they struggle to express themselves when answering questions or talking about their work. For instance, when discussing "The Diary of a Killer Cat" in Year 4, pupils struggle to explain their ideas about the text. This adversely affects their work in other subjects, such as when explaining how they reached answers in mathematics and how they conducted experiments in science.
74. Pupils throughout the school make sound progress in reading. They enjoy listening to stories and have positive attitudes to reading. Teachers are enthusiastic and transmit this well to pupils by their lively reading of interesting texts in the literacy hour. As a result, pupils willingly describe the books they read, and show a keen interest in shared reading sessions. The school has recently increased its emphasis on developing pupils' phonic skills in lessons. This is helping to improve pupils' reading skills, particularly in Key Stage 1, where pupils readily use their knowledge of letter sounds to attempt unknown words without adult prompting. Reading diaries are used appropriately in Key Stage 1 to help parents in supporting their children's reading at home. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils read independently. They have a basic vocabulary of words they read on sight and use picture and other clues to make sense of their stories. They are often less confident when reading books other than those from the reading scheme. Pupils make sound

progress in Key Stage 2, becoming more fluent in reading more challenging texts. They learn to use a range of phonic, context and other strategies to make sense of the text. However, some children lack confidence in using such skills, and rely heavily on adults to support them. Their weak reading skills hinder their learning in other subjects of the curriculum, for instance some pupils in Year 4 struggle to read the text on the screen when working on computers. However, by the end of Key Stage 2, many pupils become accurate readers, understanding the story line, making tentative predictions and skimming for information to answer questions about the text. Their comprehension skills are weaker. They are often unable to appreciate the underlying meaning in what they read and their lack of vocabulary inhibits their ability to explain their observations.

75. The school has used its literacy funds effectively and now has a good selection of interesting books that successfully stimulate pupils' interest. Older pupils particularly enjoy the selection of paperbacks, confidently identifying their favourite stories. They have a growing awareness of books and authors and begin to appreciate the style of older texts, such as 'Black Beauty'. Extra activities, partly funded by the Education Action Zone project, such as the 'Shakespeare for Kids' day, make a considerable contribution to widening pupils' awareness of different types of literature. The school library was identified as unsatisfactory at the last inspection. It has been transferred to the hall, which is used most of the time for physical education, music and other activities. This means that it is not always accessible to pupils. There are too few opportunities for pupils' own research both in school and for homework. The book stock is of good quality, but it is insufficient in range and quantity for the number of pupils in school. The school has recognised this and arranges visits to the local library. However, many pupils are unsure how to locate books in the library and their research skills are relatively weak.
76. Writing standards are below average in both key stages. The head teacher and co-ordinators have thoroughly analysed recent National Curriculum assessment results and have set in place an effective programme of initiatives to address the weaknesses. Already there are signs that these are improving pupils' learning. There is a strong emphasis on spelling and punctuation with good teaching of these aspects in the literacy hour. An example is seen when a more able pupil in Year 1 accurately uses inverted commas to add dialogue to her story of the 'Hungry Giant', following a class demonstration. Pupils learn to write in sentences, their simple stories become more structured, and they become more accurate in spelling basic words correctly. Their handwriting becomes more controlled and legible, though none use a joined script because of the school policy not to develop this until Year 3. Pupils learn to use capital letters and full stops to punctuate their work, but do not always use them in their writing.
77. Pupils' writing becomes more extended in Key Stage 2 where pupils learn to adapt the style for different purposes, for instance letters of complaint, poetry and reports. They pay greater attention to such features as the characters and development of the plot in their stories, and this gives their stories a better structure. They use a wider range of punctuation, though not always accurately, and some pupils begin to organise their work into paragraphs. They practise a cursive handwriting style but some do not use it consistently in their writing. Pupils do not develop and extend their use of a varied and interesting vocabulary sufficiently to enliven their work, much of which is factual rather than descriptive. This is a weakness throughout the school and reflects the weaknesses in pupils' vocabulary. Exceptions are seen in Year 4 where pupils are encouraged to use expressive words in their poetry and in Year 6, one pupil writes of "branches cushioned in blossom". There is good teaching of writing skills in the literacy hour, but pupils often do not use these skills in other lessons. Insufficient emphasis on extending pupils' writing skills in other subjects means that there are limited opportunities for pupils to practise and consolidate new skills. The school has recently begun to address this by introducing additional writing classes with extra staffing and a clear focus on improving pupils' extended writing. It is too early to judge the effectiveness of these, however. Opportunities

for pupils to check, evaluate and redraft their writing are insufficient, and this results in careless technical mistakes and missed opportunities to write more descriptively. There are some useful opportunities for pupils to extend their writing skills in science when they write reports of their experiments. Teachers boost pupils' confidence by marking their work positively, but their comments often do not help pupils to identify what they need to do to improve their work, and targets are not clearly set. Where this happens, pupils try hard to improve their work, as when a teacher in Year 5 makes pertinent comments about how a pupil could make a story more interesting, and the pupil redrafts an exciting 'Rescue' story.

78. Pupils have good attitudes to their work and most behave very well in lessons. They show enthusiasm for reading and listen carefully to their teachers. They soon settle to their work and generally work hard, though some lose concentration and waste time chatting to others when working independently, particularly when they are unsure of the task or how much work is expected.
79. The quality of teaching is sound overall. Teachers are well trained and confident in delivering the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy. They forge very good relationships with pupils and manage them very well. They target questions carefully to check understanding and to ensure that pupils are concentrating. The strong emphasis on praise and encouragement, a feature of all the teaching seen, raises pupils' self esteem and promotes positive attitudes towards the subject. Teachers' high expectations of behaviour and good management strategies ensure that lessons run smoothly and time is used effectively. Teachers plan carefully for each segment of the literacy hour following national guidelines closely. However, weak assessment procedures mean that teachers are unclear about what pupils can and cannot do in each of the English strands. This means that independent group work is often not matched sufficiently to the different needs of groups and individuals in the class, with similar work being set for most pupils. As a result, tasks sometimes lack challenge or are too difficult, and do not build on and extend pupils' previous learning systematically. There is sound support for pupils with special educational needs. The school has spent wisely on extra staffing to support these pupils in small groups. Sometimes, however, lesson planning takes insufficient account of their Individual Education Plans in adapting tasks to support their learning targets. Practice in setting homework is inconsistent, and there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to extend their research and writing by practising their skills in homework tasks, particularly in Key Stage 2.

MATHEMATICS

80. Although standards are below the expected level by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time the pupils leave the school, the school's effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has already begun to help to raise standards. Pupils' progress in the acquisition of basic number skills is satisfactory; most start from a low base and make steady gains throughout both key stages. Daily opportunities for mental calculations enable pupils to develop these skills well. Pupils with special educational needs receive effective support and most make sound progress towards the targets in their Individual Education Plans.
81. By the end of Year 2, higher attaining pupils recognise odd and even numbers, and are beginning to understand that the value of a digit depends on its place in a number. They identify simple fractions such as a half and use the correct mathematical names for two and three-dimensional shapes, recognising some of the properties of these. They communicate data effectively using bar charts. Average attaining pupils are beginning to use non-standard measures such as spans to measure objects such as a door or table. They know about quarter and half turns but this is not yet extended to knowledge of right angles. Lower attaining pupils do not readily recall addition and subtraction facts up to 10

and they have difficulties interpreting questions presented by the teacher such as "What do seven and three make?" Pupils generally lack competence in describing the methods that they have used in their work and they are less successful at using mathematical terms when talking about what they have done.

82. In Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils are working at a level below that which is expected for their age, and Year 6 pupils are attaining standards below those expected by the end of Key Stage 2. A few pupils in Year 6 are achieving the expected Level 4, whilst the greater majority have not yet reached this level. Over time, however, the progress made by pupils in Key Stage 2, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory and accurately reflects their attainment on entry to school. Pupils take part in daily mental practise and their skills in rapid accurate calculation are developing well. Their progress in understanding how to carry out calculations in various ways is helped by opportunities to explain how they arrived at their answers, although some struggle to articulate their thoughts clearly. Most teachers are incorporating these strategies regularly in their lessons.
83. By the time the pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6, the brighter pupils calculate the area of a shape by counting squares. They construct and interpret simple line graphs and divide decimal numbers up to two decimal places. Some of them are still unsure of how to multiply a two-digit number by another two-digit number. All pupils have a growing awareness of the properties of factors and square numbers. The less able pupils know the properties of two-dimensional shapes such as when the opposite sides of a shape are of equal length. They have an insufficiently well developed understanding of the place-value of digits to be able to multiply a whole number by ten efficiently, and some pupils confuse 200 with 2000. A minority of the less able pupils have problems with basic computation such as "How many fours in four?"
84. Pupils throughout the school have good attitudes to the subject. They listen well to their teachers, they are keen to answer questions, and they show good levels of determination to carry out their work accurately. Most pupils show appropriate levels of concentration.
85. The quality of teaching in both key stages is sound. Teachers manage pupils effectively and this ensures that behaviour is generally good. They make good use of time by maintaining a brisk lesson pace that holds pupils' interest well and enhances their progress. This is a strong positive feature in most lessons, and it is particularly effective in Year 4 when combined with skilful use of resources to promote good learning about decimals and their relative values. Teachers develop strong positive relationships with their pupils, which fosters sound learning through the pupils' positive attitudes. The last inspection found that teachers lacked knowledge and expertise in the subject. All teachers have received training in teaching numeracy and this has improved their teaching skills, so that they are now confident in structuring their lessons effectively and delivering the mathematics curriculum to produce efficient learning. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully managed and teachers are ensuring that it impacts positively on pupils' learning. At times, pupils use graphs appropriately to enhance their science work and they refer to time lines in their history to help them to develop a sense of chronology. There are too few planned opportunities, however, for pupils to use mathematics across the subjects of the curriculum to develop their learning further. Opportunities for developing links between numeracy and information technology are notably absent in promoting pupils' learning and the school has plans to address this deficiency. Homework is used appropriately in some classes to consolidate pupils' learning. For example, pupils in Year 2 use it to reinforce their understanding of how to round numbers to the nearest 10, and pupils in Year 1 make up their own sums. Throughout the school, however, teachers make insufficient use of homework to build on pupils' understanding, knowledge and skills. Teachers place strong emphasis on pupils taking a pride in their work and presenting it neatly. This promotes positive attitudes to

work and fosters the accuracy of computation. Teachers sometimes enable pupils to explain how they carried out a calculation and this fosters their learning and that of others. Opportunities are, however, missed for pupils to articulate their thinking and to judge the effectiveness of different methods and strategies.

86. Teachers make good use of the results of tests to monitor pupils' progress and to set realistic targets for the numbers of pupils expected to reach different levels of attainment by the end of each key stage. The assessment of pupils' attainment on a daily basis and the use of information gained from this, however, is unsatisfactory. The school has established a system of assessing what pupils know, understand and can do. These assessments, however, do not always relate specifically to what pupils have been taught in lessons and the information that teachers gather from them is insufficiently used to match planning to the specific learning needs of individuals and groups within the class.
87. The subject is well led and managed. There is a range of strategies in place for raising standards. For instance, all teachers have been observed teaching numeracy, and after-school booster classes are established to consolidate and extend pupils' understanding and skills. The previous inspection highlighted a lack of resources for practical mathematics. The school now has adequate resources for the subject, and some teachers, such as those in Year 1, make a wide range of resources of their own that capture pupils' interest well.

SCIENCE

88. Standards in science are below nationally expected levels by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time the pupils leave the school. Nevertheless, there has been good improvement since the last inspection, particularly in the teachers' improved approach to investigation and experimental science. Much of the work pupils now do is based on investigation or experimentation. Pupils make sensible suggestions about how to carry out tests, for example, to find out the effects of light and heat on growing plants. They record their findings in a variety of ways, such as on charts and tables. However, the teachers usually direct pupils without giving them sufficient opportunities to record results in their own way. This limits pupils' independence and the ability to think for themselves. The co-ordinator supports colleagues effectively, raising teachers' confidence and expertise. Improved learning resources enable teachers to teach all aspects of the science curriculum effectively and present learning in an interesting way. An effective scheme of work now provides guidance to enable teachers to build pupils' learning systematically over time. However, although teachers have records of which levels pupils have achieved overall, these provide insufficient detail to enable teachers to adapt the scheme of work to meet pupils' differing needs. This means that work does not always match pupils' attainment, particularly for the more able, slowing their learning.
89. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils understand the importance of healthy eating, hygiene and exercise. They identify the forces of pushing and pulling to move objects. They test the movement of toy cars when changing their height and weight. Pupils identify the similarities and differences between themselves and their classmates. By the time they leave school at the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils understand fair testing and the importance of only altering one variable at a time. They predict what may happen during investigations, record their findings and explain what they have discovered. They use tables and graphs, but generally follow the methods of recording suggested by their teachers. Pupils know the names of major organs of the human body. Higher attaining pupils know the position of these organs and their function. These pupils also use scientific terms well. For example, they use words such as 'permeable', 'flexible' and 'transparent' to describe the properties of different materials. Most pupils know that a metal spoon gets hot in hot water and the more able pupils know that metal is a conductor of heat. Pupils draw and explain different types of electrical circuits. They explain vibration

and the transmission of sound, through simple diagrams.

90. Teaching is satisfactory overall. During the inspection, it was satisfactory in all lessons seen and good in one Year 2 lesson on identifying similarities between humans. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when some poor teaching was seen. Teachers have secure knowledge of science and this enables them to teach all of the Attainment Targets confidently. They base much of their teaching round experimental and investigative science. However, although they manage pupils very well, which ensures behaviour is good, they restrict pupils' independence by limiting their methods of recording. However, when the Year 2 teacher asks the pupils to record in a variety of ways, they use pictures, words and sentences confidently. Teachers ask probing questions to extend pupils' thinking. For example, when discussing the characteristics of living things they ask, "Why is it important for animals to have ears?" During discussions, teachers keep a brisk pace of questions and answers, often increasing the pace of the lesson as pupils show an understanding of their new learning. This ensures pupils listen carefully, and maintains their interest and enthusiasm for science. Teachers use scientific vocabulary well. They reinforce its use by writing words on the board and using them throughout the lessons. As a result, pupils begin to use the correct technical language to describe their work, such as 'reflection' and 'reflector' when learning about light.
91. Day-to-day assessment is inconsistent and lacks rigour. Teachers have insufficient information about pupils' achievements and consequently lesson planning is very broad and applies to all pupils regardless of their attainment. Sometimes, this results in work lacking challenge for the more able or being too challenging for the less able pupils. For example, in one Year 6 lesson, all pupils were asked to match the names of body organs to a description. Brighter pupils had no opportunities to describe these organs and their functions themselves and this limited their progress. Teachers do not use homework effectively to support learning in science, such as researching for a new topic or learning scientific facts.
92. The co-ordinator supports colleagues well by working alongside them and by analysing test papers to identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning and to set targets to improve standards. The scheme of work provides effective guidance for teachers. These are having a positive impact on raising standards and giving teachers' confidence. However, there is no formal monitoring of teaching, which would improve the co-ordinator's influence on improvements to the subject further and help teachers to understand what does and does not work in their teaching.

ART

93. The school has maintained the sound standards found in its last inspection, and attainment is in line with that of pupils in other schools by the end of both key stages. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make generally sound progress in their learning. There are some weaknesses, however, largely due to the lack of sufficient detail in the scheme of work introduced since the last inspection.
94. Pupils in Key Stage 1 become more confident in working with paint, clay and pencils and use tools such as paint brushes carefully and with greater control. Young pupils use bright, bold colours in their paintings, for example of boats on the sea in Year 1, and produce interesting crayon pictures of the Great Fire of London. As they move through the school, pupils become more skilled in mixing their own paints, for instance when pupils in Year 4 create subtle shades in patterns and pictures when responding to the work of famous artists in a 'Colours in Nature' theme. This is developed further in Year 5 when pupils experiment with different shades and textures to create transparent and opaque effects in the style of famous artists, such as Van Gogh. Pupils develop keen observational skills and by Year 2, produce detailed drawings of animals. These skills

develop successfully in Key Stage 2 so that by Year 6, pupils use techniques such as shading effectively in their drawings of fruit, taking great care in adding intricate detail. At the time of the last inspection, there were insufficient opportunities for pupils to work with a range of different media. There has been some improvement, and pupils now use a suitable range of paints. Visits to places, such as the local craft centre, enable pupils to experience weaving and other interesting activities. However, much of the work in Key Stage 2 is in pencil or crayon and the range of media provided is still limited.

95. Pupils' awareness of the work of famous artists is patchy and inconsistent. The scheme of work does not specify clearly how this aspect will be developed in each year group. Whilst some pupils in Key Stage 2 discuss the works of Lowry, Monet and Van Gogh, which they have studied in their lessons this year, by the end of the key stage, many pupils struggle to identify famous artists or to reflect on their work. The range of three-dimensional experiences is limited, with clay being the main media used. Pupils learn to shape and mould it successfully adding more detailed finishes, for instance interesting textures on tiles and pinch pots in Key Stage 2. The policy and scheme of work lack clear guidance on how pupils' art skills will be developed to guide teachers in their lesson planning. Throughout the school, much of the artwork is over directed by teachers, even such tasks as putting on aprons. In most lessons, teachers set out the tools and materials for children to use. This means that pupils lack skills in planning, organising and undertaking their own art projects, and in choosing the materials and equipment to use. Sketchbooks are not used sufficiently for pupils to plan, evaluate and improve their work. As a result, pupils rely heavily on adults for direction, and do not develop their own confidence, creativity, and organisational skills sufficiently.
96. The quality of teaching is sound overall. Teachers plan carefully and are clear about what pupils are to learn in their lessons. Most teachers have secure subject knowledge. They explain tasks clearly and supervise pupils well as they work, encouraging them to improve their work. They expect, and achieve, high standards of behaviour. Weaknesses in teaching arise when work allocated to a year group in the scheme of work is inappropriate. This is seen in Year 1, where young pupils struggle to understand the task when examining different fabrics to see how they are woven. They lose interest and waste time. Others struggle to tie knots when working on intricate weaving projects. Weak assessment procedures mean that teachers have insufficient information on which to base their planning, for instance in extending pupils' skills or their awareness of famous artists. This leads to the over direction and weaknesses in coverage of the different strands of art.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

97. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection. However, from discussion with pupils and teachers, scrutiny of pupils' work and examination of teachers' plans, standards in design and technology are as expected for pupils of this age. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards by the end of Key Stage 2 were below expected levels. Pupils in Key Stage 1 experience an appropriate range of materials, tools and techniques. They develop simple planning strategies appropriately. In Year 1, they design a waistcoat for their teddy and make a paper pattern with help. Pupils in Year 2 follow instructions successfully to make a lemon drink. They develop sewing skills by making sock puppets and selecting materials to create their own designs and represent facial features. In Key Stage 2, pupils extend their designing skills and increase accuracy in making. They work with reclaimed materials, card, paper and wood and use a variety of techniques to join them. However, they have few opportunities to study food technology or work with textiles. Pupils in Year 3 design party invitations. In Year 4, they design and make musical instruments and dragon costumes. Year 5 pupils extend cutting, measuring, gluing and sawing skills when making moving wooden models and toys. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils gather information about bridges to help them generate their own ideas. They test materials for their suitability and make detailed plans. As they make the bridges,

they evaluate their designs and suggest changes to improve them. Although pupils in Key Stage 2 experience a wide range of design and technology tasks, there is a lesser emphasis on identifying the purpose of design.

98. No judgement is made about the quality of teaching. However, planning shows appropriate coverage of the Programmes of Study for design and technology. An effective scheme of work provides guidance for teachers and includes assessment procedures to enable them to monitor pupils' achievements. Resources are adequate. These are all improvements since the previous inspection.

GEOGRAPHY

99. Standards in geography broadly reflect those found nationally. At the end of each key stage, pupils have satisfactory geographical knowledge, understanding and skills. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have an appropriate awareness of their own locality including roads, parks and features of the school such as the playground. Through a thoughtful analysis of the school environment, they have a good understanding of how it can be spoilt, for example by litter or graffiti. From drawing freehand plans and maps, such as those showing their route to school, they have suitably developed mapping skills. By the time pupils leave the school, they have an appropriately extended knowledge of the world. They know about the features of rivers such as the Tees, and they use the correct vocabulary, such as 'tributary' and 'meander' when writing about them. They are aware of localities beyond their own, such as Berwick Hills and North Ormsby, and their mapping skills are increasingly accurate, for example when mapping freehand the course of a river. They have a strong awareness of environmental issues such as the value of re-cycling waste, and they know about places such as Antarctica that are, as yet, relatively unpolluted.
100. No lessons were seen during the inspection. From an analysis of pupils' work, scrutiny of planning and talking with pupils and teachers, teaching is satisfactory. A relative weakness is the lack of accuracy in teachers' matching of pupils' work with their differing levels of attainment. Teachers generally miss opportunities to use homework to extend pupils' learning further.
101. The co-ordinator leads the subject well, and plays a full role in planning for its development. This includes an annual review of the subject that is incorporated into the school's improvement plan. He does not, as yet, observe teaching in order to spread effective practice and remedy areas of relative weakness. Good use is made of the school's immediate environment to develop pupils' geographical skills and understanding. Opportunities are missed, however, for pupils to make visits and to take part in fieldwork in order to broaden their knowledge of locations different from the ones with which they are familiar. Information technology is insufficiently used to foster pupils' understanding and knowledge in geography.

HISTORY

102. Standards of work in history are broadly in line with those found nationally at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time the pupils leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2. This reflects pupils' achievements at the time of the last inspection. By the time the pupils leave the school, they know about the main events within historical periods such as the Roman Invasion of Britain. They are aware of the main changes and events of the past through, for example, an effective analysis of the differences between old and modern Middlesbrough. All pupils have a sound understanding of the lifestyles of certain ancient civilisations such as that of the Greeks. They effectively empathise with people from the past through their discussions and by considering such questions as "Would you like to have lived like that?"

103. The teaching of history is sound. Teachers have clear intentions for what they want the pupils to learn in each lesson and they effectively incorporate opportunities for pupils to reflect on the behaviour of characters from the past. For example, in one Year 4 lesson, pupils were asked to consider Boudicca's motives in her dealings with the Romans, and to evaluate who was right and who was wrong. Teachers use questioning well to develop pupils' thinking, and they make effective use of resources such as time lines to develop a sense of chronology. Teachers' knowledge fosters secure learning, and clear explanations enable pupils to make sound progress. Teachers have effective, firm control and this ensures good behaviour. They do not, however, make full use of homework to enhance pupils' learning. Sometimes teachers allow pupils to spend time cutting out pictures and pasting them into their books. This does not extend pupils' historical understanding, knowledge, or skills. In more effective lessons such as one Year 1 lesson, pupils are required to draw their own pictures. This enabled them to consider deeply the differences in lifestyles between life two hundred years ago and now. Teachers provide good opportunities for speaking in history, encouraged by probing questions such as "Why do you think that?"
104. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator, who draws up development plans for history that are effectively incorporated into the school's improvement plan. She does not, however, observe teaching in order to develop practice and raise standards further. A range of visits to places of historical interest such as Eden Camp, effectively enriches pupils' understanding, for example of what life was like during World War 2. The previous inspection found that resources, especially artefacts, were barely adequate. The school currently has adequate resources for delivering its curriculum. Pupils' good levels of interest in the subject combine with their good behaviour to support their progress well. They are confident, respond keenly to questions, and readily enter into discussions.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

105. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress in information technology. By the time the pupils leave the school, the quality of their use, knowledge and understanding of information technology is at a level expected for pupils of their age. This is an improvement since the last inspection when pupils' attainment was generally below the nationally expected level. The availability of computers to support teachers in their work has improved significantly, and during the inspection the new equipment was in frequent use. Funding from the Education Action Zone project has provided additional computers and the interactive white board, which have helped to raise standards further.
106. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use the 'mouse' and the keyboard confidently. Many log on and some open and close files, often without help. They use a variety of fonts, size and colours in writing. The higher attaining pupils drag and click with the mouse, moving text and graphics. They use their skills to make an interesting poster about the dinosaur triceratops, and to word-process their poetry writing. By the time the pupils leave the school, they are aware of the use of information technology in everyday life. They know about the Internet, and they have practical experience of its use. They use word-processing to draft and publish their work, as when doing follow up work on their visit to the local park. They know how to save, retrieve and print their files. They enter data on lists, and add names to documents. Pupils are familiar with the menu on the screen. They use CD-ROMs to retrieve information and databases to support their learning. For example, pupils in Year 3 use data handling programs confidently to produce bar and pie charts. In Year 4, they word-process their findings about life in ancient Greece and explore the different types of texts used by newspapers. In Year 5, pupils produce a variety of line graphs on the shoe sizes of pupils in the class. In Year 6, pupils word-process their work on 'Hitler's War'.

107. Pupils' response to information technology is good across the school. Pupils of all ages like working with computers. They work very sensibly together. Pupils treat equipment with care and they are keen to take their turn on the computers. Older pupils of all levels of attainment, both girls and boys, benefit from the very good opportunities to enhance their learning by using the information technology facilities at lunch times, and after school. Some also benefit from the use of the facilities at the local study support centre.
108. Information technology is effectively taught. Every class now uses the information technology suite, at least on a weekly basis. Teachers spend a short session explaining and demonstrating a new skill. Pupils are then given good opportunities to practise these skills. This is a secure way of ensuring that pupils acquire new knowledge and understanding. Teachers are careful to explain what the pupils need to do. They make good use of the time available. The subject has an appropriate profile in the school, which now has sufficient computers, partly through funding from the National Grid for Learning programme and partly through the Education Action Zone project. Some teachers use information technology effectively to support work in other subjects, as when pupils write poetry in English, and produce bar graphs and pie charts in mathematics. However, generally information technology does not make enough of a contribution to these and to other subjects of the curriculum. The knowledge and understanding of the subject varies greatly between the teachers, but all are committed to its use. Some set demanding work for pupils, as when Year 6 change the formulae in an Excel spreadsheet. However, work set is not always suitable for all the different levels of attainment in classes. Partly because of the very good opportunities for pupils to practise their skills in the computer clubs, and partly because some have access at home while others do not, some pupils are making better progress than others. When planning their lessons, teachers do not take this into account enough. Assessment is not being used effectively. Progress is sometimes slowed because some pupils are not able to read or understand the terms and commands used, which the teachers have not anticipated.
109. Since the last inspection progress has been good. The subject is well led and the school is well equipped, with staff expertise developing quickly. This is reflected in the progress seen, especially with the younger pupils. Since last term, the subject has had a well-considered and focused plan for its future development.

MUSIC

110. By the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time the pupils leave the school, standards in music are as expected for pupils of this age. Since the last inspection, a scheme of work has been put in place to ensure pupils' continuous learning as they move through the school and some new musical instruments have been purchased. Although more time was allocated to the teaching of music then, standards have been maintained and the judgement now reflects the one of the last inspection team.
111. Although a below average amount of time is spent teaching music, the teaching is inspirational, and so the pupils' learning is good. Pupils' knowledge and skills are built well week-by-week so that by the time the pupils leave the school, they perform confidently and sing with good pitch, tempo and dynamics. They understand that different types of music, such as jazz, classical, medieval and modern, are enjoyed by all and that music from different countries, such as Africa and India, has different tempo and rhythm and what they describe as "a different 'language'". They understand some musical terminology, knowing, for example, that tempo describes the speed, but they do not use other musical terms such as dynamics or duration, nor do they recall what they mean. They have some knowledge of classical composers such as Bach and Beethoven, declaring "I like Beethoven's ninth symphony the best". They have some experience of composing their own music. The older pupils sing well in two and four part rounds, very effectively accompanied by classmates playing chime bars, recorders, triangles and woodblocks.

112. Teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and very good in Key Stage 2. Two music specialists teach the subject, except in Year 5. Both of them have excellent subject knowledge, resulting in very good basic musical skills teaching and full coverage of the music curriculum. Because lessons are very well planned and move at a brisk pace, pupils learn a lot in a short time. Musical vocabulary is used well by the teachers and, even though not all pupils remember or use the words themselves, teachers explain clearly what words such as forte, tempo and dynamics mean.
113. Pupils enjoy their music lessons and concentrate well. Their class teachers join in enthusiastically and support the specialist teachers well, giving the subject status. Pupils perform confidently in front of their classmates and talk about how music, such as Irish folk, makes them feel. They read symbols and notation when playing a range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments and some of them receive good instrumental tuition from trained specialists. Pupils throughout the school name musical instruments correctly and listen attentively to musical compositions, such as 'The Nutcracker Suite' in Year 4. The teachers have high expectations of the pupils and make good demands on them. Pupils' learning is consequently greatly enhanced when, for example, the teacher points to a child suddenly, asking them to sing the next part solo. Very few pupils refuse!
114. Although pupils experience some musical composing using the computers, their experiences are limited due to an insufficient range of software. Although there is some instrumental tuition during the school day, the range of extra-curricular activities normally on offer has been suspended during the co-ordinator's absence. The school makes good use though of visiting musicians to talk to the pupils about, and show them, different musical instruments. There is no recording of pupils' achievements in music, although the temporary co-ordinator is planning to develop assessment within the subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

115. Standards in physical education are above expected levels by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time the pupils leave the school. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The co-ordinator has worked hard to improve the expertise of all teachers, with the support of outside agencies such as one of the local football clubs. This has helped to raise the expectations and confidence of all teachers and consequently, standards in both key stages are now better than those found in most other schools. The broad range of physical education activities enables most pupils to excel in at least one of them. Pupils' skills are developed further through the extensive number of extra curricular activities, such as volleyball, football, netball, gymnastics, sports acrobatics, and line dancing. Attendance is so high, particularly in gymnastics, football and volleyball, that these clubs take place several times a week. The commitment and enthusiasm of pupils and teachers is well rewarded by their success in a number of inter-school sports and national competitions. The school's achievements include a second place in the British final of Sports Acrobats and champions of the Middlesborough six-a-side competition. The school also gained the Football Association Charter Mark for Excellence in Football for the opportunities offered to pupils of all abilities. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 learn to swim and most can swim 25 metres by the time they leave the school, with a significant number of pupils swimming much further. A team of nine pupils came second in a recent regional swimming competition.
116. Pupils in Key Stage 1 understand the importance of physical exercise to promote a healthy lifestyle. They use equipment safely and improve their performance through practise. For example, pupils in Year 2 learn English country dancing and perform dances accurately and in time to the music. In Key Stage 2, pupils apply a great deal of physical effort to all of their physical education lessons. They understand the importance of

warming up their muscles before exercise and cooling down at the end. They improve hand and eye co-ordination through cricket lessons in Year 3, for example, and refine and extend dance routines in Year 4. When Year 5 visit the local football club, they join in games enthusiastically and show a mature attitude to teamwork. They move with agility and speed, using a high level of football skills. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are skilful in games, gymnastics, swimming and dance. They work confidently with partners, in groups, and individually. They build routines in dance and gymnastics, for example, and improve them through practice and by evaluating each other's performance.

117. The quality of teaching is good overall. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers have good subject knowledge, which gives them confidence in teaching all aspects of the physical education curriculum. They have high expectations of pupils and this results in high standards and very good behaviour. Regular use of pupils' demonstrations throughout lessons enables pupils to improve their own performance and the ability to evaluate the performance of others. Teachers ask probing questions such as, "Why is your pulse fast?" in Year 3 when reinforcing the effects of exercise. They use time well by changing activities to extend pupils' skills successfully. This helps pupils to focus clearly and encourages concentration. Planning for swimming is good. Teachers plan different learning intentions for each group, depending on pupils' previous achievements and their assessed needs. However, in other lessons, the planning is too broad and applies to all pupils regardless of achievement.
118. The subject co-ordinators are very enthusiastic and committed to continuing to raise standards in physical education. They support their colleagues well through lesson demonstrations and staff discussions. A large number of the staff organise or help with extra curricular activities. This commitment, both in and out of school time, contributes to the success of physical education at Pallister Park.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

119. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time the pupils leave the school. Progress is satisfactory overall. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of special religious places and books and make appropriate links with places of worship such as churches and synagogues with holy books such as the Bible and the Torah. They have a sound understanding of the significance of belief to a follower of a faith. They know some important words that describe Jesus, and write about how they do some of the kind and helpful things He did in their own lives. They enjoy their visit to the church and are most impressed by the bell ringing! At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the range of beliefs and their significance to a believer. They know, for instance, about the significance of baptism to a Christian. They know the key days of the Christian calendar such as Lent, Palm Sunday, and Good Friday. Pupils recognise the symbols of a range of faiths, including Judaism and Sikhism. Pupils of all attainments write quite extensively by the end of Key Stage 2, but this aspect of their work is less well developed before then.
120. Pupils have good attitudes to the subject. They behave well in lessons. They listen well and maintain their concentration. The subject makes a good contribution to their personal development. In some lessons seen, the pupils show great respect and reverence for the

way people with faith treat the written word of God. They enjoy the daily assemblies, which contribute to their knowledge and understanding of religion.

121. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is generally good and resources, especially artefacts, are used well. Teachers throughout the school have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, but their management of pupils is not always secure. Teachers do not always match tasks well to the individual needs of pupils. Some very good teaching was seen where the teachers created a calm, peaceful and respectful ethos in class through the skilful use of stories and artefacts, and by patiently allowing pupils to talk about their feelings and thoughts. In one lesson, this was then followed with a carefully prepared task that developed pupils' writing skills, using 'special' parchment paper. The same teacher worked sensitively with the lower attaining pupils whilst his classroom assistant supervised the rest of the class.
122. The school has maintained standards seen at the last inspection and benefits from good subject leadership.

JUNIOR SUPPORT BASE FOR PUPILS WITH STATEMENTS OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

123. Achievement in subjects is satisfactory and the attainment for a few pupils is good when compared with their attainment on entry. All of the pupils make satisfactory progress in lessons and over time. With sensitive support from the class teacher and support assistant, most pupils make particularly good progress in managing their behaviour and gaining confidence in the skills required to work independently.
124. During literacy lessons, pupils identify the difference between fact and fiction, most identify speech marks, and one can read a sentence with great expression. Pupils work together well to identify blends and sounds to form words. A few pupils make good progress in identifying key words and mid-frequency words, with one group developing simple comprehension well. All pupils are learning to predict what happens next in the text. Writing skills are not as well developed, but pupils try hard and there is evidence of some neat printing. All pupils try hard with reading, which is encouraged well by the class teacher through other subjects such as writing a sentence from a story when using computer skills. Particular attention is given to speaking and listening, with pupils giving each other time to express answers. Pupils are acquiring skills to change the font and style of text in computer sessions. Opportunities to use these skills daily would enhance all subjects.
125. During mathematics, all pupils use a number square and are learning to count back from a given number in ones, 10s and 100s successfully. Pupils are encouraged to think about the process by the class teacher and are able to explain their answer or realise where they have made a mistake. They make good gains in learning to interpret the wording of questions, which fosters their mathematical concepts well. Most pupils understand place value in numbers up to 100. Pupils manage the practical experiments in science well and a few understand the concept of sound waves. One Year 6 pupil has learnt that sounds travel in waves and has a concept of vibrations when producing high and low pitch sounds in an experiment.
126. Comprehensive medium term plans show that pupils have access to all National Curriculum subjects and where possible join in with pupils of their own age for music, science and physical education. They take a full part in all extra curricular activities, which enhances their learning in subjects, supports their personal and social development, and successfully promotes confidence building.

127. Pupils are well behaved in lessons and respond positively to the sensitive team teaching of the staff. They all try hard and relate well to each other working together and independently. They put up their hands, take turns, and are thoughtful. During playtime, they are sensible and have well-developed friendships.
128. Teaching is satisfactory, with the teacher and classroom support assistant working very well together to ensure pupils work independently but that they ask for support if necessary. Instructions are clear, and pupils are encouraged to listen carefully in order to understand tasks fully. Correct terminology supports pupils' learning well and is apparent in their answers. A range of tasks encourages pupils to practise skills independently, while sound plenary sessions ensure they are able to demonstrate their skills. Pupils are motivated well by praise, which engenders very good attitudes and concentration. Baseline assessment in reading, spelling and number concepts ensures Individual Education Plans reflect the educational needs of pupils. These small steps are successfully implemented in literacy sessions to show progress and require a similar approach in other subjects to ensure individual targets are met. Comprehensive annual reports to parents, contribution to reviews and the successful planning with a multi-discipline team from the local education authority, ensures that pupils' individual needs are met well. Pupils show great interest in their records of achievement and make relevant comments about their work in them.
129. The unit continues to provide a valuable and secure base for pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need. The surroundings are very pleasant with satisfactory resources and access to some main stream lessons with support. Good links are established with secondary and special schools to ensure continuity of placement for pupils.