

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **BEXHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Town End Farm, Sunderland

LEA area: Sunderland

Unique reference number: 108780

Headteacher: Mr D Smith

Reporting inspector: L A Furness  
8245

Dates of inspection: 9th – 13<sup>th</sup> July 2001

Inspection number: 190737

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior school

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3-11

Gender of pupils: Mxed

School address: Bexhill Road  
Town end Farm  
Sunderland

Postcode: SR5 4PJ

Telephone number: 0191 5536916

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Cllr. Robert Symonds JP

Date of previous inspection: 9<sup>th</sup> December 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
8245	L A Furness	Registered inspector	English as an Additional Language Mathematics	What sort of school is it?  How high are standards? The school's results and pupils' achievements.  How well are pupils taught?  How well is the school led and managed?
19431	J Holmes	Lay inspector		How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.  How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
16761	M Hemmings	Team inspector	Equal Opportunities Special Educational Needs Science Information and Communication Technology Physical Education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
22761	D New	Team Inspector	Foundation Stage of Learning  Art and Design  Design and Technology  Geography  History	
22027	G Pearce	Team Inspector	English  Music  Religious Education	How well does the school care for its pupils?

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
 <b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
 <b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	 <b>11</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
 <b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	 <b>14</b>
 <b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	 <b>15</b>
 <b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	 <b>18</b>
 <b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	 <b>19</b>
 <b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	 <b>20</b>
 <b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	 <b>22</b>
 <b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	 <b>24</b>
 <b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	 <b>28</b>

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Bexhill Primary School is a larger than other primary schools, having 308 pupils on roll aged between 3-11 (compared with the national average of 226). This figure includes 51 nursery-aged children who attend on a part-time basis. The majority of pupils come from the local area, which is an area of high unemployment. The percentage of pupils having special educational needs (21.4%) is broadly in line with the national average, and the percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs (1.9%) is also broadly in line the national average. The percentage of pupils eligible for school meals free of charge (51.7%) is well above the national average. There are 13 classes including the nursery, 10 classes of pupils of a single age range and 2 classes with pupils from both Years 5 and 6. Children are admitted to the reception classes in the September term following their fourth birthday. Although the attainment of children varies considerably from year to year, initial assessments indicate that, on entry to the nursery, the attainment of the majority of children is well below that expected for their age in language and literacy, mathematical and personal, social and emotional development. In September 2000, the school was successful in its bid to become a Beacon primary school.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a very effective school, which has many very good features. By the time pupils are 11 years of age, they attain standards that are above average in English and science and well above average in mathematics in relation to similar schools. The quality of teaching is very good and school leadership and management are very effective. The headteacher is very much at the heart of the school, ensuring that pupils enjoy their education and behave well. When the attainment of children on entry to the school, the progress they make and the academic standards they attain are taken into account, the school provides very good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The headteacher provides very good leadership, ensuring that all staff work together very effectively as a team to maintain high quality education.
- The overall quality of teaching throughout the school is very good.
- Pupils' very good attitudes to school and very good social development impact very positively upon their learning.
- The broad and balanced curriculum is very successfully enriched and enhanced by numerous visits out of school and visitors to the school.
- The quality of resources is excellent and teachers use these resources effectively to make learning interesting and exciting for pupils.

#### **What could be improved**

- Pupils' skills in handwriting and presentation, in speaking and in reading for meaning and understanding.
- The existing tracking and target setting systems.
- Ensuring that the very good progress that pupils make from entry into school until the age of 7 and in Years 5 and 6 is consistently maintained throughout the rest of the school.

*The school as key priorities for improvement identifies issues one and two.*

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in December 1996 and all of the key issues identified have been successfully addressed, although the school has identified the need to continue improving pupils' handwriting, presentation of work and language development. Standards have improved since 1996 and the curriculum has benefited from the very good implementation of the National Literacy and



Numeracy Strategies. The quality of teaching is very good, with a higher percentage of very good teaching now evident. Since the time of the previous inspection the school has made good progress.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				<b>Key</b>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	E	B	E	B	well above average      A above average            B average                      C below average            D well below average      E
mathematics	C	B	D	A	
science	B	C	D	B	

The pupils' performance in the 2000 National Curriculum tests at the age of 11 was well below the national average in English and below the national average in mathematics and science. However, in comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance was above average in English and science and well above average in mathematics. The trend in the school's average National Curriculum points for all three subjects since 1996 was broadly in line with the national trend. When averaged over the last three years, girls' performance has been better than that of boys by at least one term in all three subjects. The majority of pupils currently in Year 6 are attaining standards that are in line with the national expectation in all National Curriculum subjects. Although, this represents very good achievement overall, as the majority of children start school in the nursery with under developed linguistic, mathematical and social skills, boys' performance remains behind that of the girls. This is a situation of which the school is very aware and has been trying to address. In 2000 performance of 7-year olds was close to national average in reading and mathematics and well above the national average in writing. In relation to similar schools, the results were well above average in reading and mathematics and very high in writing. In writing the results were in the top five per cent of similar schools nationally. On the basis of teacher assessment, the school's performance in science was very low in comparison with the national average, being in the bottom five per cent of schools nationally. In relation to similar schools, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level was well below average. Since 1996 the trend in reading, writing and mathematics has been one of improvement. Pupils currently in Year 2 are attaining standards that are in line with the national expectation in reading, writing and mathematics and science. Girls' performance is again better than that of boys. The very good achievement of pupils reflects the commitment and hard work of the teachers in their efforts to raise standards and make sure that pupils achieve as well as they can during their time in the school. The school was encouraged to set ambitious targets for the year 2000 and 2001, which, despite the utmost effort, it did not achieve in either English or mathematics.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school. They involve themselves fully in school life, have very good attitudes to learning and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The vast majority of pupils behave very sensibly in and out of school. They are very polite and well mannered.
Personal development and	Very good. Staff and children show mutual respect, a factor that

relationships	contributes very positively to the caring ethos of the school community. Pupils are encouraged to take on responsibilities and to think for themselves.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory. The majority of children are punctual and lessons start on time.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is very good. It is very good in 50 per cent of lessons; good in 32 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in the remaining 18 per cent of lessons. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. English and mathematics teaching is very good and the very good teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is helping pupils to achieve very well. A strength of teaching is the way all teachers share with pupils their clear objectives for the lesson. Good questioning techniques are used to involve all pupils at the start of lessons, to assess their work and to add extra challenge where necessary. Sound evaluations of pupils' learning take place at the end of lessons and teachers skilfully use what is learned from these and from assessing pupils' work to plan what they are to learn next. The majority of teachers are creative and make learning interesting and exciting for pupils through the very good use of the excellent resources and motivating activities. The very good relationships that exist between adults and pupils result in pupils trying very hard to succeed. Teachers successfully help to raise pupils' self esteem so that they become confident learners. In the satisfactory lessons, teachers do not manage pupils as successfully as in the good and very good lessons; pupils are not allowed to think for themselves and teachers do not provide good models for improving pupils' language skills. The school addresses the needs of pupils with special educational needs very well and uses classroom assistants very effectively to support these pupils.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. Children under five and pupils aged 5-11 all benefit from a very good curriculum. Very good use of the National Strategies for literacy and numeracy, and a strong commitment to the arts, very effectively enhance the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Teachers plan very effectively for the needs of these pupils and classroom assistants are used very well to support their learning. Very good systems are in place to check the progress they make and to adjust the pupils' learning needs accordingly.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school is effective in helping pupils to be kind to one another and take care of each other. Social development is a strength. Pupils experience a variety of activities that effectively reflect a range of other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school is a caring community that provides effective support for its children, both academically and personally. Good procedures are

	in place for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety. Existing systems for tracking progress and setting targets for learning could be improved further.
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Parents have a very good opinion of the school. A high percentage of parents returned the parent's questionnaire and their response indicated their strong support for the school. The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory.

### **HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership and is very well supported by the senior management team, curriculum co-ordinators and all staff. A very clear commitment to improving standards gives strong encouragement to very good achievement in all aspects of school life.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	They do this well. The governing body is enthusiastic and supportive of the school. It fulfils its statutory responsibilities and shows good awareness of strengths and areas for development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school evaluates its performance well and takes positive and effective action to address its weaknesses. Regular monitoring and evaluating of teaching and learning take place.
The strategic use of resources	Spending is closely allied to the school's stated priorities and very effective use is made of designated funding. The school spends wisely to improve provision, and careful thought is given to checking on best value for money and how various resources are likely to have an impact on teaching and learning.

The level of staffing, both teaching and non-teaching, is very good. This enables pupils to benefit from smaller classes and from small group and occasionally individual teaching. The accommodation is very good and is maintained well. Resources are excellent. They are used very effectively, very well organised and easily accessible.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children are making good progress.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• Children like school.</li> <li>• The school expects my child to work hard.</li> <li>• The school is helping their children to become mature.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More information about how well their child is getting on.</li> <li>• The school's work with parents.</li> <li>• The range of after school activities provided.</li> </ul>

The inspection team can understand why parents are so happy with this school and they agree with all of the parents' positive views. The parents are right to be appreciative of the work and dedication of all the staff. With regard to the areas for improvement, the inspection team judges that the curriculum is very effectively enriched by the wide variety of visits, visitors to the school and clubs that it provides. The team therefore does not agree that the school does not provide an interesting range of after-school activities. The school provides a good written annual report for each child and has regular meetings for parents regarding pupils' progress. However, the inspection team agrees that the school

could provide parents with more information about how well their child is doing, and could work more closely with them in helping each child to improve and make progress. The school has good plans in place to address these two issues.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. The pupils' performance in the National Curriculum tests at the age of 11 was well below the national average in English and below the national average in mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance was above average in English and science and well above average in mathematics. The trend since 1996 in the school's average National Curriculum points for all three subjects was broadly in line with the rising national trend. Girls out performed boys by approximately 3 ½ terms in English and mathematics and by 1½ terms in science.
2. The 2001 National Curriculum tests in English and mathematics show that the majority of pupils attained the level expected for their age with approximately one quarter of the pupils attaining the higher level, (Level 5). Although the standards of the majority of pupils in reading and writing are broadly in line with the national expectation, standards in speaking and listening are below the national expectation. In science, attainment of the majority of Year 6 pupils is in line with the national expectation. There is also a significant difference in performance between boys and girls in the current Year 6 cohort. The boys did not perform as well as the girls. The school is aware of the difference between boys' and girls' attainment at the age of 11 and is using a variety of strategies to try to address this issue.
3. In 2000 at the age of 7, pupils' performance was close to national average in reading and mathematics and well above the national average in writing. In relation to similar schools, the results were well above average in reading and mathematics and very high in writing. In writing the results were in the top five per cent of similar schools nationally. On the basis of teacher assessment, the school's performance in science was very low in comparison with the national average being in the bottom five per cent of schools nationally. In relation to similar schools' the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level was well below average. Since 1996 the trend in reading, writing and mathematics has been one of improvement. Boys' performance was better than girls in reading and in writing but in mathematics girls performed better than boys. When averaged out over the last three years, there was no significant difference.
4. The results of the 2001 National Curriculum tests show that the attainment of approximately two thirds of pupils currently in Year 2 is in line with the level expected in reading comprehension and spelling. In writing, three fifths of pupils attained the expected level for their age with only 4 per cent of pupils attaining the higher level. Standards in speaking and listening are below the national expectation. There is a significant difference in performance between boys and girls with the boys' performance not as good as that of the girls. In the 2001 National Curriculum mathematics and science tests, four fifths of the pupils attained at least the expected level for their age (Level 2b+) with approximately one third of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 3). These results indicate that the pupils are achieving very well. In mathematics and science girls perform better than boys.
5. The majority of children start school in the nursery with under-developed linguistic and social skills. Despite good progress the majority of children enter reception with skills in all six areas of learning below the standard expected nationally. Very good progress continues and by the time the children enter Year 1, the majority have attained the recommended early learning

goals for children of this age in all areas of learning except in communication, language and literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world.

6. Pupils' achievement in developing their speaking and listening skills is good. Pupils aged 5-7 are offered good opportunities by their teachers. As a result pupils develop the confidence to ask and answer questions, to listen attentively and to join in group discussions. By the age of 7, pupils confidently speak aloud in front of others and enthusiastically read their stories to the rest of the class. By the age of 11, pupils are keen to offer their own ideas and the majority of pupils speak clearly and confidently. However, throughout the school, pupils do not always pronounce words correctly and often miss the endings of words. Although some teachers provide very good models for developing pupils' speaking skills this is not consistent throughout the school. Some teachers do not use Standard English and also pronounce words incorrectly. Pupils achieve very well in reading overall. By the age of 7, the majority of pupils read with appropriate expression. They are able to decode unfamiliar words and the higher attaining pupils are able to spot and explain examples of alliteration. However, despite some very good teaching pupils do not find it easy to read for meaning and do not always understand the meaning of the text. This shortcoming continues. By the time pupils reach Year 6, their skills of inference and deduction are not as well developed as they should be. The school has identified that reading for meaning and understanding is an area for development throughout the school. Pupils' achievement in writing is good. By the age of 7 pupils are able to write independently, but they tend to lack imaginative ideas to use in creative writing and their vocabulary use is limited. By Year 6 pupils are able to write in extended sentences using adjectives, similes and alliteration satisfactorily. However, the use of correct punctuation throughout the school is inconsistent and handwriting and presentation are often untidy. Many pupils do not use joined up writing confidently even in the older age groups, and many pupils in Years 5 and 6 are still writing in pencil. Pupils are constantly encouraged and reminded to use and apply their literacy skills when working in other subjects, and this strategy is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement and progress.
7. In mathematics, pupils' achievement by the ages of 7 and 11 is very good. By the age of 7, pupils confidently count forwards and backwards from given numbers. They know about simple equivalent fractions and higher attaining pupils are able to solve simple fraction problems, for example a  $\frac{1}{2}$  is the same as two  $\frac{1}{4}$ s. They use simple mathematical vocabulary correctly. By the age of 11, the lower attaining pupils are able to double numbers, such as 130 but find it more difficult to double 168, for example. Pupils in the average and above average group are much more competent with number and have a good knowledge of number tables. They are able to explain their ideas and have a variety of strategies for mental calculation activities. For example they are able to suggest quick methods of dividing by 25. Numeracy skills are used well in other subjects. For example, in science, pupils use their knowledge of measurement to explore the difference between themselves and their friends, and as part of work in a geography topic, pupils in Year 6 produce graphs to show the average monthly rainfall in the Lake District over a year.
8. In science, pupils achieve very well. Pupils age 5-7 have many good opportunities to engage in practical science activities, which ensures that, by the age of 7, they handle equipment carefully and safely and take part in discussions about scientific ideas using scientific vocabulary, correctly. Higher attaining pupils make sensible predictions and with the support of adults are able to carry out a simple fair test. By the age of 11, pupils have a good scientific knowledge but also have good skills in scientific investigation. They are able to collaborate well in groups, to find information for themselves and higher attaining pupils are able to devise independently a fair test

9. At the ages of 7 and 11 pupils attain standards in information and communication technology that are in line with national expectations, and they achieve well through the school. There is a strong emphasis in teaching the basic skills of information and communication technology to pupils aged 5-7. By the time they are 7, pupils are able to change the type and size of text and to retrieve, process and display information. They know that computers can be used to make words and pictures and to assemble text and also to control movement. By the age of 11, pupils use information technology to enhance many aspects of their work in subjects such as English, mathematics, science, history and geography, as a result of information communication technology being naturally integrated into classroom activities. In these activities, the pupils are able to use information communication technology confidently and appropriately to organise and present their ideas.
10. In religious education at the ages of 7 and 11 the majority of pupils fulfil the expectation of the locally agreed syllabus and a minority of pupils exceed it. In Years 1 and 2 pupils have studied Christianity and different religions including Buddhism. They know how and why Buddhists meditate.. They were able to sit still and meditate in silence themselves for about five minutes and were able to empathise with the need to feel good. By the age of 11, pupils know a great deal about different religious beliefs, festivals, practices, symbols and places of worship They have a good knowledge of Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism. Year 6 pupils are able to appreciate different views and opinions and show a good understanding of the concept of charity, kindness and consideration of others.
11. Standards of attainment for pupils aged 7 and 11 in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and in the games element of physical education are in line with national expectations, and pupils demonstrate good and very good achievement in these subjects.
12. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well. They benefit from a good balance of whole class teaching, small group work and some individual attention to their areas of difficulty. The school was encouraged by the Local Education Authority to set ambitious targets for the year 2000 and 2001, which it did not achieve in either English or mathematics despite its utmost effort.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

13. Pupils really enjoy school and have a very good attitude to learning. The parents' questionnaire indicates that parents agree that their children enjoy school. Their behaviour is good both in and out of lessons and their personal development is very good. These are important strengths, which are helping pupils to learn effectively.
14. There have been no exclusions in the last year and this is a regular pattern for the school. Pupils understand the high expectation of behaviour and are good both in class and around school. The majority of pupils display a good level of self-discipline and maturity. The pupils reported that there were few cases of bullying but that if it did occur, it was reported to a member of staff who dealt with it immediately. There is no oppressive behaviour and very little inappropriate behaviour in the school. The pupils are aware of their impact on others and respect each other's point of view. From an early age, children in the foundation stage of learning (nursery and reception) are taught to care about others and to listen respectfully to the views of other children.

15. Pupils work well and are keen to respond to questions. In the introduction to lessons, for example in mathematics, they are keen to offer answers and they participate enthusiastically with an eagerness to please in practical subjects such as art and design and music. They listen attentively to teachers and show interest when others are speaking. Questions are answered sensibly and pupils contribute confidently to discussions. Pupils with special educational needs respond well to the additional support they receive. The very good attitudes to learning in lessons are due to the very good relationships that exist between pupils and staff. A very small minority of pupils behave inappropriately and this is mainly due to a slow pace in lessons and the teachers' low expectations of what is acceptable.
16. Pupils' personal development and relationships throughout the school are very good. There is a very good level of trust and respect between staff and pupils. Pupils are independent, confident and interested in learning. They work very well together, sharing ideas and resources. The majority of pupils communicate easily with adults. Pupils willingly take on responsibilities, for example when called upon to undertake jobs such as door monitors and helping to keep equipment tidy in the hall or in class. The older pupils have further opportunities to take responsibility. Year 6 pupils manage the bank, help in the office at lunchtime, assist in setting up assemblies and help with younger pupils. The pupils have the benefit of a wide range of visitors to the school and of out of school visits. All pupils in Year 6 have had the opportunity to go on a residential visit. The school promotes the personal development of pupils through very good teaching, particularly in 'circle-time' activities and religious education.
17. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average and is satisfactory, although it is better than that reported for other schools in the local area. The level of unauthorised absence is zero and parents are very good at notifying school of absence. Punctuality is satisfactory and pupils are settled in class to start lessons promptly.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

18. The quality of teaching is very good. It is very good in 50 per cent of lessons, good in 32 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in the remaining 18 per cent of lessons. There is no unsatisfactory teaching and the amount of very good teaching has improved since the last inspection. The quality of teaching has a very positive impact on the achievement and progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs.
19. The teaching of children in the foundation stage of learning is very good overall. Very good written planning is securely based on the national guidance for the teaching of children aged between 3-5. Teachers wisely use the National Curriculum programmes of study and the relevant sections from the National Literacy and Numeracy Frameworks when it is appropriate to do so. Very good liaison between the nursery and reception teachers ensures that the children experience clear progression in all six areas of learning. Regular assessments are used well to adapt work to the varying needs of the children, and all staff have a very good relationship with the children and their parents. The quality and use of resources are a strength. All of the staff use resources very effectively to provide a range of good quality interesting activities that very effectively extends children's learning.
20. Teaching is very good in science, religious education and music. In information and communication technology, art and design, geography, history and physical education, teaching is good. There was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching in design and technology.



21. Teaching is very good in English and mathematics and the very good teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is helping pupils to achieve very well. All teachers have a secure understanding of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy and use their knowledge well to plan lessons. Written planning is very good with the learning intentions of the lesson and the development of the lesson clearly identified. A strength of teaching is the way all teachers share with pupils their clear objectives or learning intentions. Clear objectives for learning are shared with pupils in a language they can understand and, in most lessons, constantly referred to throughout the lesson so that pupils know where they are up to and how well they are doing. In a mathematics lesson for lower attaining Year 6 pupils, the teacher very effectively used a 'learning wall' so that pupils were aware of the learning for the week and were very easily able to assess their progress. The learning intention for the day was read together, with pupils then identifying vocabulary they were unsure of. For example, unfamiliar words were quadrant, co-ordinate and plot. The teacher then very clearly explained the meaning of these words. Sound evaluations of pupils' learning take place at the end of lessons. Teachers skilfully use what is learned from these and from assessing pupils' work to plan what pupils are to learn next. Pupils in some classes, notably one of the Year 2 classes, are very involved in self-assessment. At the end of the lesson they inform the teacher if they need further work or if they have thoroughly understood the intended learning of the lesson. Homework is used well in both literacy and numeracy to improve and extend pupils' learning, and is having a positive impact on the standards pupils attain.
22. Good questioning techniques are used to involve all pupils at the start of lessons, to assess their work and to add extra challenge where necessary. The majority of teachers are creative and make learning interesting and exciting for pupils through the very good use of the excellent resources and motivating activities. All adults are used well in classrooms and the learning support assistants contribute well to the pupils' very good achievements. The very good relationships that exist between adults and pupils result in pupils trying very hard to succeed. In art and design for example, teachers use questioning well to encourage the pupils to look carefully at their work, and the very good relationships between adults and pupils enable sensitive evaluation of work and promote pupils' understanding of how to improve. In religious education, probing questions and high expectations encourage pupils to make thoughtful and respectful contributions during discussions.
23. Although there were no unsatisfactory lessons, teaching in Years 3 and 4 is not as good as in the rest of the school and is mainly satisfactory. Teachers in the Year 4 classes do not manage pupils as effectively as other teachers. In one class, the teacher has low expectations of pupils' behaviour and allows off task chatter and inattention to occur. In the other class, the teacher's firmness does not allow the pupils to think for themselves and to make their own decisions about how to sit and behave. In Year 3 in particular, the teacher does not provide a good model for improving pupils' language skills. The pace of lessons is sometimes slow and the teaching does not always challenge the range of ability in the class from the pupils. These weaknesses were seen in science, mathematics and English. In mathematics in Year 3, the teacher's own use of information and communication technology during the mental mathematics session was ineffective and impeded pupils' progress. In addition, while the teachers regularly mark pupils' work the quality of marking and the use of comments to guide and improve pupils' work are variable throughout the school. A newly introduced system of target setting is in place, but again its use is inconsistent and as yet it is not having a major impact on pupils' attainment. There was very little evidence of teachers referring to the targets set, apart from in the nursery class.

24. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. It addresses the needs of these pupils very well and uses classroom assistants very effectively for additional support. Good account is taken of the targets in their individual educational plans and the support they receive contributes positively to the very good progress they make.

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

25. The curricular and other opportunities offered are very good and much improved since the last inspection, when they were judged to be good. All pupils have access to a wide range of exciting and stimulating learning experiences and are encouraged to learn through first-hand practical experiences within a broad, well-balanced and very relevant curriculum. The very effective learning environment that has been created in the foundation stage of learning leads to good academic and personal progress for all children in the areas of learning for this age range. There is an emphasis on providing a variety of well-structured opportunities for children to develop their language and personal, social and emotional skills, as these are poorly developed on entry to school. Very successful work with the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies enables pupils aged 7-11 to achieve well in English and mathematics. There are many opportunities for pupils to use their information communication technology (ICT) skills to enhance their work in other subjects. Pupils in Years 4 and 6 take swimming lessons at the City of Sunderland College Pool and, by the time they leave school, nearly all of them can swim a minimum of 25 metres.
26. All statutory requirements are met, as are the demands of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. A strong commitment to developing the pupils' creativity enables them to take part in many rich experiences in music and art. There are visits to art galleries, museums and musical productions, while a wide range of visitors, including artists and professional musicians, work with the pupils to develop a variety of skills. Pupils are able to join a high quality choir and take part in a range of musical performances for parents and members of the community. The provision for music is also enhanced by visits to Glass Centre in Sunderland to play glass instruments and by opportunities to take part in performances such as the 'Hallelujah Concert' at the Newcastle Arena. The curriculum is also enriched by involvement in national and local initiatives and, from next term, the school will be involved with other local schools in an Education Action Zone. This will promote education in the community and provide further learning opportunities for pupils.
27. The provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education is good. They have numerous opportunities to relate to others, in a variety of situations, so that they learn to respect the values and beliefs of other pupils and adults. An extensive range of visits including residential stays in the Lake District very effectively supports social development. During their stay they learn a variety of social skills, such as working together and caring for others. Many opportunities, in and out of classrooms, for pupils to show initiative and take responsibility effectively support their personal development. Younger pupils deliver messages between classes, and get out and put away resources and equipment in lessons. Older pupils at various times of the day look after them in a caring way. Pupils in Year 6 have the responsibility of running a branch of a national bank. They do this in a mature way that involves them in working collaboratively and using their numeracy skills to good effect to ensure the monies balance. There is appropriate provision for sex education, which with the help of the school nurse, stresses the importance of warm and caring relationships. Pupils are helped to develop

good attitudes towards healthy eating and, with the support of the community police and the school nurse, are made aware of the harmful effects of drugs. Pupils are also able to take part in 'circle-time' activities, in which they sit in a circle with their teacher to talk about any problems they might have and such issues as the importance of caring for others.

28. The school is very successful in ensuring that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum and equality of opportunity is implicit in all aspects of its life. Effective systems support pupils with special educational needs and enable them to make very good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Teachers plan very effectively for the needs of these pupils and classroom assistants are used very well to support their learning. Very good procedures ensure that the progress they make is checked and their learning needs adjusted accordingly. Good use is made of outside agencies to help with any specific difficulties that pupils may have. The planning procedures effectively incorporate the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's curricular schemes and provide teachers with clear information about the key learning objectives and skills to be taught, so that they are able to give work that effectively builds on pupils' prior learning.
29. An 'Education Beyond the Classroom' policy gives emphasis to learning through activities that are not confined to the classroom and pupils benefit from access to two mini buses with registered drivers to take them to places of educational interest. All pupils are able to take part in the very good provision for extra-curricular activities, which includes inter-school competitive team games. A wide variety of clubs including football, computers, gymnastics, choir, recorders, brass, and art and craft, is offered to boys and girls. All the pupils have opportunity to take part in a very good range of educational visits that enrich the curriculum by providing further significant learning experiences. Pupils have visited Sunderland Museum, Vindolanda and the Roman Army Museum, Newcastle theatre, Durham Cathedral, Backhouse Park and St. Bede's Church as a way of extending their knowledge and understanding of a range of issues. An annual residential experience at Wasdale in the Lake District for pupils in Year 6 is linked to various aspects of the curriculum. During this visit, the pupils take part in outdoor activities such as canoeing, orienteering and nature trailing, which effectively support their personal and social development. The school arranges for numerous visitors to come to school, including authors, artists, professional musicians and drama groups, who work with pupils to develop their skills across a range of areas.
30. The strong links with the community, especially St. Bede's Church, make a good contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils visit the church at least three times a year to help develop their understanding of Christian faith and to support their spiritual development. The choir sings for the community residents' association and also, at Christmas, performs carols at local homes for elderly residents. The community police come in to raise pupils' awareness of the dangers of drugs and to give 'Stranger Danger' talks, and the local fire brigade visits to give advice on fire safety. There are opportunities for pupils to raise money for a wide range of local and national charities, including Barnardos', and 'Children in Need', in which they gain a good understanding of the needs of others. Links with a variety of local businesses enable the pupils to gain an awareness of the world of work and also provide sponsorship for educational resources. Effective links with partner primary schools on a range of aspects, and also with the local Secondary Schools, successfully prepare pupils in Year 6 for when they transfer to these schools. There are also close links with Northumbria and Sunderland Universities, whose students come into school to work with pupils to extend their learning.
31. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and effectively enriches the quality of the school's life as a community, helping pupils to develop

positive attitudes, a sense of responsibility and high self-esteem. The school's aims for pupils' development in these areas are strong and well supported by the values that permeate the daily running of the school. This makes a good contribution to pupils' achievement, because it underpins the school's strong ethos for learning.

32. The pupils' spiritual development is fostered through the curriculum and the close links with St. Bede's Church. In a visit to the church by all the school, the musical performances of pupils heightened the spirituality of the service. Religious education lessons play an important part in this development, as was seen in a lesson for pupils in Year 2 on Buddhism in which they were given time for quiet personal reflection. The teachers greatly value pupils' ideas and efforts, and this is shown by the way that all pupils are encouraged to make contributions during lessons and by the way their work is attractively displayed around school. The development of pupils' creative ability feature highly in the curriculum, especially in art and music, and successfully reflect moods such as happiness or sadness. As in the last inspection, there are some assemblies that do not successfully create an atmosphere of spirituality in which pupils can quietly reflect.
33. Moral development is positively promoted through the school's approach to encouraging good behaviour. A high value is placed on understanding the difference between right and wrong and the school successfully raises awareness that an individual's behaviour affects others. Moral themes feature in many aspects of the curriculum and are an integral part of the school's ethos. Staff provide good role models and value pupils in their care, acknowledging and praising their efforts and achievements. Class rules and their consequences are well understood, and most pupils respect each other and try hard to live up to the school's high standards. The staff work hard to promote a sense of fairness among pupils and are successful in teaching them to be tolerant of each other.
34. The provision for social development is very good. The school works hard to develop pupils' social skills so that effective learning can take place as they pass through the school. This is important, as many pupils start school with poor social skills and low self-esteem. They are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and to work and play together with respect and tolerance. From the start of their time in school, pupils have very good social development opportunities, with the staff providing good role models. Pupils listen to and respect the opinions of others, as was seen during the introductions and round up sessions of most lessons and in 'circle-time' activities. They are encouraged to work collaboratively in pairs and small groups, as is especially evident in mathematics, science, information and communication technology and physical education lessons. Very good relationships underpin all of the school's work, being based on mutual trust and respect between staff and pupils. The very good range of extra-curricular activities offered to pupils, including visits and a residential stay, very effectively support the development of their personal and social skills.
35. The pupils' cultural education is enhanced through work in art, music, history and geography. This is supplemented through the provision of a very good range of extra-curricular activities, including visits and visitors. Many opportunities are given for pupils to visit places of interest, such as art galleries, museums and theatres in Newcastle and Sunderland. Artwork and music feature prominently in developing their cultural awareness, and displays of pupils' work, posters and photographs reflect different cultural traditions. In lessons, the pupils are able to experience stories, music and art from a range of cultures and to work with visiting musicians, authors, poets and artists. Pupils have visited a Sikh temple and worked with Sikhs in school to find out about their way of life. Books have been carefully chosen to ensure that the environment reflects the valuing of different communities. In religious education lessons, there

is often emphasis placed on learning about the beliefs and traditions of other faiths and cultures. This was evident in a Year 2 lesson on Buddhism that began with pupils having opportunity for meditation as a starting point for finding out about the Buddhist idea of self-improvement. As pupils come from an area in which a variety of cultures are not represented, the school recognises the need to further develop their awareness of life in diverse cultural society.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

36. Overall the school provides very good quality care, guidance and support for its pupils. The school has a very positive ethos that promotes a happy, caring and good learning environment where pupils are happy, secure and able to learn. There is a strong emphasis on pupils striving to improve, succeed, and be kind and helpful. This is evident through the words of the school song that the pupils sang in church. All staff provide a very high level of support and relationships between adults and pupils are very good. As a result of these very good relationships, pupils feel very comfortable talking to staff about any worries and problems they may encounter. The school's administrator is a trained counsellor and very ably assists the headteacher when it is necessary to hold discussions with pupils. Procedures for child protection are very good. There is a very good policy and a named person who has had the relevant training. All staff employed in the school are well informed on issues concerning child protection. The staff know their pupils very well and work hard to meet all their individual needs.
37. The school is very well maintained and the environment is safe and secure. The formal procedures for health and safety are good and there is a good policy in place. The headteacher undertakes a risk assessment every term and gives a written annual report to the governing body. Every morning the school's caretaker carries out a site check. Fire procedures are good. First aid procedures are good and the accident book is used appropriately.
38. The school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. However, the school does not have an agreed, written policy for first-day absence that clearly outlines procedures for contacting parents and carers. A system is in place to track weekly attendance. The Education Welfare Officer attends school weekly to monitor attendance. Monthly attendance awards are given to individual pupils and certificates for 100 per cent attendance throughout the year are presented to individuals. Over twenty pupils received these certificates during the church service that was attended by an inspector.
39. The management and monitoring of behaviour are good. The children are given positive messages through school assemblies about being kind and caring and being a good friend. Behaviour is good at playtime and at lunchtime in the dining hall; only a very small minority of pupils behave inappropriately. The pupils' behaviour was good when walking to and from church. The school has good procedures in place for eliminating bullying and other oppressive behaviour. Any instances of oppressive behaviour that occur are dealt with quickly and effectively.
40. The school has a satisfactory procedure for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. Teachers know their pupils very well and keep a relevant, meaningful record that is passed on to the pupil's next teacher. Pupils are given good opportunities in class and in personal, social and health education lessons to express their ideas and opinions. Pupils who

have any worries or concerns willingly take the opportunity to discuss their problems with the trained counsellor (the school administrator).

41. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. The school keeps satisfactory records of pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science. National Curriculum test results are analysed by subject co-ordinators and the senior management team to explore reasons for individual and group achievement. However, the information resulting from the assessments is not shared effectively with the pupils to enable them to know what they need to do to raise their own attainment from one level to another. Teachers' written comments about pupils' work are often linked to the pupils' effort or presentation and do not always inform the pupil of the next step in the learning process. School tracking systems are not rigorous enough to identify the expected and possible progress for individual pupils each year in English and mathematics. Consequently the targets set for Year 6 pupils are overly ambitious and have not been achieved for the last two years in either subject.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

42. The majority of parents have very good opinions of the work of the school. Twenty-six parents attended the parents meeting and 239 returned the questionnaires out of 308 sent out, a very good response. Parents feel that the teaching is good; the school expects the children to work hard; the children like school; the children are making good progress, and the school is well led and managed. The responses also indicate that a significant minority of parents feel that the school does not keep them well informed about their child's progress, and that the school does not provide an interesting range of activities.
43. The inspection team agrees with all of the positive views and also agrees that parents could receive more information about pupil progress. Parents' evenings are held termly to discuss pupils' progress and the vast majority of parents attend these. The reports to parents about each pupil's progress are informative with a description of what the pupil can do. Parents would however, benefit if all reports had clear targets for future development and more information with regards to whether the progress the pupil has made is good enough. The inspectors could not uphold the parent's views on the quality of activities provided for pupils outside of lessons. The school provides a very good range of activities for the pupils, with a number of musical options, computers, sport, dance, and art and craft clubs. The pupils also enjoy a wide range of visits and visitors, which greatly enhances the pupils' learning experiences.
44. The school's links with parents are satisfactory and parents have a satisfactory impact on the life of the school and the learning of the pupils in school and at home. The school welcomes parents into school, and a number help in the classroom, listening to reading, cooking and sport. Some also act as volunteer drivers. The school does not have a parent association but each year the school holds a raffle to raise money for the Christmas party.
45. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. The school operates an open door policy and a number of parents come into school each morning. There are parent consultation evenings each year to discuss pupil progress formally and a written report to parents in the summer term. The school has an informative prospectus, which covers all aspects of curriculum, attendance, uniform, discipline and homework. Parents help their children at home with reading, spelling and mathematics. Information regarding projects and curriculum is not sent out on a whole-school basis, although individual teachers send out

requests for help with topics. The school plans to introduce basic skills teaching for parents and pupils in conjunction with the Education Action Zone, from September; the initiative is aimed at raising attainment and aspirations. The governors' annual report to parents covers all aspects other than to give details regarding special educational needs and the date of the next election of parent governors.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

46. The leadership and management of the school are very good and the headteacher provides a clear and very purposeful sense of direction for the school. His commitment to ensuring that all pupils reach the highest possible standards is shared by all staff and governors. He is well supported by the senior management team and together they very successfully bring about changes necessary to move the school forward. Their roles and responsibilities, and those of the subject co-ordinators, are very clearly defined and carried out effectively. The school's commitment to improvement and its capacity to succeed are excellent.
47. The procedures for monitoring and evaluating the school's work, including teaching, are good. There are regular checks on teachers' planning files, and classroom observations in the last two years have mainly focused on literacy and numeracy. These observations have involved the senior management team, the subject co-ordinators and the Local Education Authority's consultants. Individual feedback is given to staff, whilst general issues are raised at staff meetings and effectively addressed at whole-school level. In other subjects, co-ordinators mainly monitor teachers' planning and sample pupils' work to ensure consistency and continuity in learning and to inform action plans for each subject. Effective action is taken to raise the quality of teaching and learning as a result of the monitoring. Such action have included: devising a consistent format for planning for literacy and numeracy; using demonstration lessons to share good practice; providing guidance for co-ordinators in monitoring their subjects, and establishing a programme of regular meetings between co-ordinators and the senior management team to decide best how to address weaknesses. All of these have contributed effectively to improved teaching and learning; as a result more very good teaching is now evident than in the previous inspection.
48. All of the key issues identified in the previous inspection have been successfully addressed, although the school has identified the need to continue to improve pupils' handwriting, presentation of work and language development. Standards by the age of 11 in English and mathematics have improved since 1996 and the curriculum has benefited from the very good and successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Since the time of the previous inspection the school has made good improvement. In September 2000, the school was successful in its bid to become a Beacon primary school offering a variety of specialisms, including school leadership, information and communication technology, curriculum development, music and initial teacher training.
49. Performance management has been well introduced. All staff and the headteacher have agreed appropriate objectives and all relevant documentation is in place. Very good procedures are in place for the induction of new staff and the school is a recognised institution for the training of students. From September the school will train teachers through the 'Graduate Teacher Programme'. During the week of the inspection the school received an award from Lord Puttnam, in recognition of its service to Sunderland University with regards to supporting initial teaching training.

50. The governing body is very appropriately involved in the life of the school and the school development process. The quality of the school development plan is good and appropriately identifies very relevant priorities for development. Designated governors attend relevant courses and are well informed as to their roles and responsibilities. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and carry out their statutory duties effectively. The headteacher values the opinions of those governors who act as critical friends of the school. The chair of governors is particularly well informed and ensures that all governors are effectively involved in decision-making, in supporting school improvement, and in monitoring the work of the school and the standards it achieves.
51. Financial planning is very good. The governors and headteacher have a clear commitment to ensuring that the school receives best value from all its spending. They set a prudent budget each year based on a range of secure financial plans submitted to them by the headteacher and monitor carefully the school's spending through the termly budget statements that they receive. Day-to day financial administration and control are effective. All school routines are very well established and the school administrative officer provides very good support for all teachers including the headteacher.
52. The management and administration of special educational needs are very good. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) is thorough and meticulous in keeping records up to date and ensuring that the recommendations of the special educational needs Code of Practice are fully met. Teaching and support staff work closely with the co-ordinator to ensure that appropriate work is planned for these pupils. The funding for special educational needs is used wisely to meet pupils' needs and a high level of support staffing is maintained to enable them to receive that level of individualised help that enables them to learn and achieve very well as they move through the school.
53. Staffing levels are very good and both teaching and non-teaching staff are well deployed. Accommodation is very good and the space available is very effectively used. There are an appropriate number of classrooms and additional teaching spaces. Very attractive displays help raise the standards of pupils' work by establishing high standards and celebrating success. Standards of cleanliness are consistently very good throughout the school, reflecting the commitment of the school caretaker and other premises staff. Outdoor facilities are very good with well marked hard-surface play areas and extensive playing fields available. Resources for learning are excellent in English, mathematics, science, art and design, geography, history, music and religious education. They are very good in design and technology, information and communication technology and physical education. Resources are well stored, easily accessible and effectively used to support pupils' learning.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

- 54 In order to raise attainment and improve progress the governors, headteacher and staff should improve:

### **1 Pupils' reading, handwriting, presentation and speaking skills by:**

- Developing pupils' higher order reading skills, including the skills of inference and deduction;
- Reviewing the whole-school policy and agreed practice for the teaching of handwriting;
- Improving pupils' punctuation skills;



- Raising teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of with regards to the time they are introduced to joined- up writing and their use of ink as opposed to pencil;
- Monitoring pupils' presentation skills;
- All teachers and adults providing good models for speaking and producing a whole-school programme of work for speaking and listening.

*(paragraphs; 6, 67, 68, 69, 85, 87, 98, 121 & 122) \**

## **2 The existing tracking and target setting systems by.**

- Establishing a tracking system that clearly identifies progress year by year and that provides reliable information about the progress that is appropriate for each individual pupil;
- Developing a whole-school agreed target setting system for all aspects of English and mathematics;
- Simplifying the existing target setting systems so that pupils are more aware of their targets and how they can be achieved;
- Improving marking practice so that pupils clearly know their strengths and how they might improve the quality of their work.

*(paragraphs; 23, 41, 71, 72, 81, 85, 87, 101 & 122)\**

## **3 The progress of pupils in Years 3 and 4 by:**

- Raising teachers expectations of what is acceptable behaviour;
- Improving the use of time in lessons;
- Ensuring that teaching challenges the range of ability within the class;
- Allowing pupils some autonomy for their own behaviour and learning.

*(paragraphs: 15, 23, 69, 71, 77, 78, 83 & 103)*

*In addition to the above, the governors should consider including the following minor issues in their action plan:*

Improving the performance of boys. *(paragraphs: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 63, 64, 73, 74 & 82)\**

Providing clear written guidance for first-day absence of pupils. *(paragraph: 38)*

Ensuring assemblies provide opportunities for pupils to quietly reflect. *(paragraphs: 32 & 121)*

Providing more information for parents regarding pupil progress and how parents may support their child. *(paragraphs: 43 & 45)*

The governor's annual report to parents. *(paragraph: 45)*

Improving existing assessment and record-keeping procedures in art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology, physical education and religious education. *(paragraphs: 92, 95, 105, 116 & 122)*

*(Issues marked with an \* are already identified issues for improvement within the school development plan.)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### *Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection*

Number of lessons observed	62
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	41

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0%	50%	32%	18%	0%	0%	0%

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	282
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	146

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	6	66

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

### *Attendance*

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### ***Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1***

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	18	12	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	17	17
	Girls	9	12	12
	Total	24	29	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (90)	97 (95)	97 (95)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	18	9
	Girls	10	11	9
	Total	23	29	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (90)	97 (95)	60 (78)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

*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
	2000	25	14	39

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	16	23
	Girls	13	12	14
	Total	27	28	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69 (85)	72 (79)	95 (92)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	17	22
	Girls	11	13	14
	Total	21	30	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	54 (77)	77 (85)	92 (85)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

*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	237
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*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)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.1
Average class size	23.5

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	146

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	51

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	49

Number of pupils per FTE adult	17
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000
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	£
Total income	703606
Total expenditure	694031
Expenditure per pupil	2261
Balance brought forward from previous year	14982
Balance carried forward to next year	24557

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

**Questionnaire return rate: 77.6**

Number of questionnaires sent out	308
Number of questionnaires returned	239

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	25	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	69	28	2	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	57	38	3	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	49	34	7	3	8
The teaching is good.	75	23	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	38	12	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	23	4	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	77	21	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	51	34	11	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	72	23	3	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	30	2	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	34	9	2	12

## **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**

- 55 Provision for the children aged 3-4 is within the nursery and reception classes. At the present time, 51 children attend part-time in the nursery and 45 children attend full-time in the reception classes. The staff carry out an initial assessment during a home visit prior to the children starting school in the nursery class. This assessment is followed by a more formal assessment during the first few weeks of term, which indicates that the attainment of the majority of children is well below that expected by the 'early learning goals' in all six areas of learning recommended for children of this age. Attainment is particularly low in communication, language and literacy mathematical and personal, social and emotional development. A very successful induction programme, involves parents and children in visits to the class. This ensures a smooth and happy introduction to the routines and patterns of school. Information evenings are arranged for parents to receive details of the curriculum and ways in which they can help their child at home, and they are generally well attended. This induction procedure is repeated when children are ready to move into the reception classes, the following year. There is very good liaison between the nursery and reception classes and the very good planning, which incorporates the foundation stage curriculum and the National Curriculum, ensures that learning is continuous throughout this stage of learning. Owing to the good teaching within the nursery class and the very good teaching in the reception classes, all children, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress in all areas of learning.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

- 56 The staff place great emphasis on this aspect of the children's learning and many opportunities are provided for them to develop their personal and social skills. Constant reinforcement leads to very good progress and the majority of children, achieve this 'early learning goal' by the time they are ready to enter Year 1. On entry to nursery, many children are unable to work with any degree of concentration, they do not listen carefully and cannot take turns when in group discussion. Because of the good teaching that occurs in the nursery, the majority can now sit and listen with attention to stories and participate appropriately in group activities. However, a number of children still lack self-control and at times the sessions are rather noisy. In the reception classes teaching is very good. Consequently, children collaborate when playing in the role-play area by taking turns to use the dressing up clothes and making choices over roles. They show interest in what they are doing and most have an awareness of the needs and feelings of others. Teachers foster independence very well by encouraging the children to take care of their own needs and to dress themselves for physical education lessons. Children are praised when they try hard or achieve something new and this builds up their self-esteem and confidence. All children are familiar with their targets for improvement and a target for the week is agreed with the whole class. 'Circle-time' during the week of the inspection focused on caring for others and the environment. Children offered their ideas about how to look after others and listened respectfully to the views of others. Good links are made with religious education and time for reflection and thinking skills is built into this aspect of their education.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

- 57 The majority of children entering the nursery display levels of communication, language and literacy that are well below those expected for their age. Strong emphasis is placed on encouraging the children to listen carefully to their teacher and other adults, and to take turns when answering questions. Good teaching is evident in the skilful use of questions that not only gives the children confidence to speak and respond in group activities, but also gives them time to respond. All staff ensure that instructions are clear and precise. They use simple terminology and always use the correct vocabulary associated with each area of learning. Children make good progress whilst in the nursery and this is consolidated in reception, where the very good teaching promotes the children's vocabulary and enables them to participate more easily in discussion. All children are confident and keen to answer questions. A number of children confidently spoke about their excitement in preparing for the 'Ugly Bug Ball', describing the hats they were making and the food they were preparing for the 'party'. They were also anxious that all those invited received a ticket and an invitation. The teachers carefully plan for role-play, covering each of the 'early learning goals'. The 'invertebrates home' and the 'supermarket' taught the children to use specific vocabulary linked to the topic. A range of songs and poems are learnt by heart. In 'free' activity time, two children sang the song, 'Ugly Bug Ball', very well, pointing to the enlarged words. The nursery children enjoy listening to stories and are eager to talk about the pictures and give their opinions as to what is going to happen. The higher attaining children are beginning to empathise with the main characters. For example, one child understood that the rainbow fish was unhappy because he would not share. Good teaching draws attention to the title and author of the book and higher attaining children know how to handle books correctly, turning the pages carefully. Children in the reception classes know the initial letter sounds and the teachers use every opportunity to help them build unfamiliar words. In a guided reading session, a book connected to the topic was used very competently by the teacher to provide opportunities for the children to describe what is happening in the story and to identify the key features. Consolidation of common words such as 'here' and 'where' was successfully extended into the writing exercise when matching particular pictures with sentences from the book. The very good teaching in the reception classes is reflected in the way the teachers organise a wide range of stimulating activities. For example, a letter from 'Bobby Bee' motivated the children to write to him, inviting him to their party. The higher attaining children know and use the word 'alliteration' with good knowledge. The teachers provided very good role models for reading as they read the letter very expressively. Writing skills are promoted well in the nursery with children being encouraged to write their names and other familiar words. Independent writing is encouraged also, with teachers acting as models to help with letter formation and phonic skills. Reception children also experience a wide range of opportunities for writing, either independently or in a structured activity. The teachers value all children's efforts and they learn to progress well through the positive reinforcement that is given. Although the children make very good progress in this area of their learning, they are still below the standards expected by the 'early learning goals' by the time they enter Year 1.

## **Mathematical development**

- 58 Children make very good progress in mathematics and the majority will meet the 'early learning goals' by the time they reach the end of the reception year. Good teaching in the nursery introduces them to a wide range of experiences and practical activities that generate enjoyment in number work. Children can recognise numbers to 10 and know the number order. One higher attaining child knows that 0 comes before 1 and as a group they are able to solve simple number problems. A variety of activities is used to encourage children to sort for shape, colour and number. Reception children build on this good foundation and, using a dice to choose a number, they show good skills at doubling numbers. The very effective story

telling by the teacher motivates the children well to solve a partitioning problem and her high expectations are reflected in the way the children respond when thinking of ways to record this. Children know how to double to 10 and are able to explain how they worked it out; they are also able to count to the number 20. The quality of teaching in the reception classes is very good. Good links are made with personal and social education when the children are asked how they would help solve a problem for a friend. Children are also aware of the terminology for cone, cylinder, pyramid, cube and sphere, and know the words circle, triangle and square. However, although many know the questions to ask regarding properties, very few actually know that a square has four sides, for example. The children enjoy consolidating their mathematical understanding by singing number rhymes and using their fingers to help them count.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

- 59 The children make very good progress in this area of their development, although they remain below the level expected by the time they reach the end of their reception year. Teaching in this area of learning is very good in both nursery and reception. Very good planning incorporates a wide range of exploration and investigative opportunities. The topic on rain in the nursery led to the children creating mini-mountains made of clay and filling a hollow at the top with water. They are beginning to understand how the water is absorbed or runs in channels to the bottom of the mountain, thus introducing the idea of a water cycle. The majority of children know where rain comes from. Stories also contribute to their knowledge and understanding of the world. 'Handa's Surprise' introduced a number of fruits that the children had not seen or tasted before. They readily recognised and named banana, apple and orange but were less certain of pineapple and mango. An issue from the previous inspection was the lack of opportunities to use computers. This has now been addressed and the children use them on a daily basis. The majority select items using the 'mouse', and the higher attaining children begin to drag and drop menus. The progress of the children in using computers is good and reception children confidently use sorting activities and can complete and print invitations more or less independently. Discussion about the weather takes place daily and a chart following the days of the week enables the children to understand the passage of time. Various games are used to help the children consolidate their understanding of the features of the different invertebrates, for example, the 'Who Am I' games and classifying and sorting activities using the computer. They successfully use the tape recorder to listen to stories and musical compositions. A wide range of resources are prepared that enable the children to experiment in cutting, sticking and joining. As part of their preparation for the 'Ugly Bug Ball' the children made and decorated biscuits with adult help. One child knew that the icing took a while to set so had to hold the 'wings' in place until they were secure..

## **Physical development**

- 60 An issue from the previous inspection was the lack of fixed climbing apparatus in the outdoor area and the uneven paving. This has now been addressed very well and the whole area is covered to give a soft pliable surface. There are a number of interesting areas where the children can play imaginatively and climb up, through and under. They also have a very good range of wheeled resources that the children take turns to use. In addition to this daily outdoor play, the children are timetabled to use the hall for more formal physical development lessons where they confidently travel around the space and can jump off an object, landing with safety and control. Reception children use the main hall twice a week. Whilst practising for sports day, they demonstrated good awareness of space and of others. They can climb through hoops, jump with both feet together and show good control when balancing the egg on the



spoon. The children are beginning to work together as teams. Teaching is very good in this area of learning. The teachers use children effectively to demonstrate good practice, and their use of praise successfully builds up the children's confidence. Very good planning provides many opportunities for the children to develop fine motor control. For example through threading, drawing, sticking, pastry work and using a variety of small world equipment. The children make very good progress in this area of their learning but, although they are well on their way to achieving the 'early learning goal', the majority are below the expected level by the end of their reception year.

## **Creative development**

- 61 Work on display shows that children are given good opportunities to create their own pictures. They use a variety of media including paint, clay, pastry, glue, papers and fabrics. Starting from a low level of skill when they enter the nursery, the children make very good progress throughout the nursery and reception classes. Teaching is good in the nursery and the teacher uses story effectively to stimulate children's imagination. For example, using the story of the 'Rainbow Fish', as a stimulus the children in the nursery create their own designs to decorate a fish and show a satisfactory level of competence when cutting and sticking. They use paint to create rainbow patterns and demonstrate good control when painting the different sections of colour. In the reception classes, teaching is very good and the reception children benefit from a separate activity room where creative work is undertaken. The classroom assistant responsible for planning these activities works closely with the teachers to link opportunities to the class topic. Very good opportunities are planned for the children and they can use their knowledge of invertebrates to select appropriate materials, tools and techniques to recreate their own choices. Free painting reflects their knowledge of symmetry and other patterns that they recognised in the environment. The planning indicates that the creative experiences touch all areas of learning and clear learning opportunities are given. Musical appreciation and composition also take place although this was not observed during the inspection due to timetable arrangements. By the time children enter Year 1, the majority have achieved the 'early learning goal' for this area of learning.

## **Teaching and provision.**

- 62 The quality of teaching is very good overall. The teachers' planning is very good and firmly based in the curriculum guidance for the foundation stage of learning, taking into account the needs of the young children. Smooth transition is made into National Curriculum programmes of study when children are ready. Sections of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are used with the older children and they are being well prepared for a more formal curriculum when they enter Year 1. There is very good liaison between the nursery and reception classes, and the early years co-ordinator works hard to ensure that children experience progression in the development of all six areas of learning. Regular assessments take place throughout their time within the foundation stage and these are used well to plan work that is suitable to the varying needs of the children. Children with special educational needs are identified early and, where appropriate, individual educational plans are used. All children have individual targets, which the teachers refer to on a regular basis and change when the targets are achieved. Assessment procedures are currently being refined to ensure that the children receive the best possible education. All teachers and classroom assistants have very good relationships with the children whom they know well, and also their parents. Resources are excellent and all the staff use them very effectively. The foundation stage of learning is a strength of the school,

and all the staff create a warm, stimulating environment that provides a very good start to children's education.

## ENGLISH

- 63 The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests in English for pupils aged 11 were well below the national average but above average when compared with similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining higher levels was also well below the national average. Boys did not perform as well as girls in the tests with girls' performance 3½ terms in advance of the boys. Averaged out over the last three years the difference is not as significant with boys' performance 1½ terms behind that of the girls. Since 1998 the results for 11-year-olds have fluctuated. They reached a high in 1999, with a sharp decline in 2000 when there was a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the cohort, many of whom were boys. The 2001 National Curriculum tests in English show that the majority of pupils attained the level expected for their age with 24 per cent of the pupils attained higher than the expected level, (Level 5). Although standards of the majority of pupils in reading and writing are broadly in line with the national expectation, standards in speaking and listening are below the national expectation. There is a significant difference in performance between boys and girls in the current Year 6 cohort. The performance of boys is not as good as that of the girls.
- 64 The 2000 National Curriculum test results for pupils aged 7 were close to the national average in reading and well above average in comparison with similar schools. In writing, results were well above the national average and very high in comparison with similar schools. The schools' performance in writing was in the top five per cent of similar schools. Boys' performance is better than girls in both reading and writing by approximately one term. However, when averaged out over the last three years there is no significant difference. The results of the 2001 National Curriculum tests show that the attainment of approximately two thirds of pupils currently in Year 2 are in line with the level expected in reading comprehension and spelling. In writing, three fifths of pupils attained the expected level for their age with only 4 per cent of pupils attaining the higher level. Standards in speaking and listening are below the national expectation. There is a significant difference in performance between boys and girls with the boys not performing as well as the girls. The school is very aware of the difference in the performance of boys and girls in English throughout the school and is exploring ways of raising the attainment of boys in the subject.
- 65 The school was encouraged by the Local Education Authority to set ambitious targets for the year 2000 that it did not achieve. Again ambitious targets were set for this year (2001) that were not achieved. Despite this, when considering the children's low skills on entry to the school in communication, language and literacy, the pupils achieve very well by the age of 11.
- 66 Since the last inspection the National Literacy Strategy has been very effectively introduced and this has greatly improved the provision in this subject. The National Literacy Framework is used for planning and this document has successfully provided the school with a programme of work that ensures learning is continuous from reception through to Year 6. All teachers have adopted the structure and format of the literacy hour and classes benefit from the shared and guided reading and writing sessions.
- 67 Staff and other adults work very hard to improve speaking and listening skills and the pupils make good progress by the age of 11. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils were made aware of the importance of listening skills and these were developed through a game. The teacher used a very quiet voice to read a story to encourage the pupils to listen attentively. In Years 1 and 2,

pupils are beginning also to develop the confidence to answer questions and to discuss in pairs. In a Year 2 lesson, the pupils were keen to read aloud the stories that they had written. Very good models for developing pupils' speaking skills are given by some teachers. However, this is not consistent throughout the school. Some teachers do not use Standard English and pronounce words with a strong regional accent. This negatively affects pupils' own speaking and spelling skills. Limited language skills of pupils was a weakness identified in the previous inspection, which continue to be an area of development. Listening skills in the Year 4 classes need to be further developed, as a minority of pupils do not listen carefully to the teacher and interrupt the learning of others by calling out. However, this is mainly because one of the Year 4 teachers has low expectations of what is acceptable behaviour in class discussions and allows this practice to continue without intervention. In contrast the Year 5 pupils listen very carefully and are keen to answer questions. The pupils' in Year 5 were exploring how to turn a 'prose text' into a 'tree verse'. As part of this work the class were all involved in a discussion in which they spoke with increasing confidence and were able to take turns to speak. In a Year 6 class, pupils' were keen to offer their own ideas when discussing the use of descriptive vocabulary. The majority of the older pupils spoke clearly and confidently. As yet the school does not have programme of work for speaking and listening that ensures that learning is continuous throughout the school.

- 68 Pupils achieve very well in reading overall. In Year 1, pupils are developing good phonic skills. They enjoyed the shared reading activities and tried very hard to read the words in the story of Mog and the Ve Ee Te. The pupils gave others a chance to try to decode unfamiliar words and spontaneously celebrated their success. The pupils showed great enjoyment in reading the story. They were able to empathise with Mog and laughed at Mog's expression. Pupils expressed their opinions as to how Mog felt when the thorn was removed. In a Year 2 lesson, the children enjoyed the shared reading activities that involved the stories of Alan Ahlberg. The higher attaining pupils were able to spot and explain examples of alliteration. Guided reading was particularly well taught in Year 2 and the shared text was used well to teach children to use the text to answer questions. The pupils were encouraged to read together with appropriate expression, taking careful notice of the punctuation to make the meaning clear. In Year 3, good use was made of the overhead projector for guided reading activities. The pupils read letters that had been written for different purposes. However their reading lacked flow and expression and they needed much adult support. Despite very good teaching in Years 5 and 6, pupils' skills in inference and deduction are not as well developed as they should be. The school is aware of this shortcoming and has identified that reading for meaning and understanding is an area for development throughout the school.
- 69 Pupils' achievement in writing is good. Writing was a weakness identified in the previous inspection and the school has tried hard to address this issue. Pupils aged 5-7, are eager to write and willingly record their ideas on paper. In a Year 2 creative writing lesson, higher attaining pupils demonstrated good ideas. However, the majority of pupils tend to lack imaginative ideas to use in creative writing and their vocabulary is limited. The school has good plans to develop and improve pupils' ideas and vocabulary for writing through the use of drama. In another Year 2 class, very good strategies were being used to help pupils develop good habits when writing such as checking work for the use of adjectives, conjunctions, similes and punctuation. Some teachers give very good models for guided writing for example, how to plan a story, set the scene and introduce the characters. In a Year 3 class, pupils were reading and writing letters for a range of purposes. A group of pupils worked on the computer to write an e-mail to 'Mrs Croc'. The pace of their work was slow however and time was not well used in this lesson. In Year 6 pupils were taught to write extended sentences about themselves using adjectives, similes and alliteration. The pupils were given very good models for their

writing and clear expectations were set. Spelling skills are satisfactory by the ages of 7 and 11. However, throughout the school the use of correct punctuation is inconsistent. Pupils do not confidently use appropriate punctuation in their independent writing and handwriting and presentation is often untidy. Many pupils do not use joined up writing even in the older age groups and some pupils in Years 5 and 6 are still printing using pencil.

- 70 The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is very good and they make very good progress. All adults support them very well. Occasionally they work in small groups outside the classroom with the very good help of classroom assistants. All pupils enjoy English and demonstrate very positive attitudes and good behaviour in lessons.
- 71 Overall the quality of teaching and learning in English is very good. Teaching is very good for pupils' aged 5 to 7 and good for pupils' aged 7 to 11. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and are successful in their teaching of the basic skills of literacy. All written planning is very good and has clearly identified learning intentions that are shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons and revisited during the plenary session to enable pupils to assess how well they have achieved them. Classroom assistants make a very valuable contribution to learning in literacy sessions. In the very good lessons for pupils aged 5-7 and for pupils in Years 5 and 6, the teachers' enthusiasm, the brisk pace, well planned activities that meet the needs of all pupils, and a good understanding of the next steps in the pupils' learning, all have a very positive impact on pupils' progress and learning. In the lessons that are satisfactory, the pace is slower than it should be and teachers do not manage pupils well. This slow pace and ineffective pupil management negatively affects the progress of pupils in Years 3 and 4. The quality of written marking is inconsistent throughout the school and does not always tell pupils what they need to do to improve their work. Target cards are used to help pupils improve their performance in writing. However the use of these cards is inconsistent throughout the school and few teachers regularly refer to the targets to be achieved. The planned use of literacy skills across the curriculum is very good. It is particularly good in religious education and in science, when teachers encourage pupils to research information and to record their findings in note form or in scientific reports. Pupils in Year 2 have made an information booklet about the uses and dangers of electricity, which, is referenced clearly to a contents page. Homework is used well to extend pupils' learning in class. Pupils' are provided with good opportunities to read and discuss a range of texts from different cultures and to work together collaboratively. They regularly discuss the moral and social implications of different texts and the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- 72 The co-ordinator is very effective in her leadership and management of the subject. She has monitored the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy in all classes and has been involved in paired monitoring of writing. She knows the strengths and areas for development as a result of rigorous monitoring. Assessment and record keeping procedures are satisfactory. However, the whole-school tracking system is not as rigorous as it should be in order to ensure that the progress of pupils is tracked accurately each year. Also teachers and pupils need to be more aware if the progress that has been made is good enough. Pupils do not have a clear understanding of what is necessary to attain the next National Curriculum level. Information and communication technology makes a very valuable contribution to pupils' learning in English. Computer programs are very well used for teaching phonics, spelling, punctuation, grammar, word processing and creative writing. The resources for English are excellent. They are very well stored and used. They have a positive impact on raising standards. Very good use is made of the class, school and community libraries. Pupils enjoy

borrowing books to take home to read and there has been good improvement in English provision since the previous inspection.

## MATHEMATICS

- 73 In the National Curriculum tests for mathematics in 2000, the performance of pupils aged 11 was below the national average but well above average in comparison with similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher level was below all schools but above average for similar schools. Over the last four years results have fluctuated, reaching a high in 1999 and then declining to below the national average in 2000, when there was a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs who took the tests. Girls performed better than boys in the 2000 tests by 3 ½ terms. However, when averaged out over the last three years, the difference was not as significant, with approximately one term difference. In the 2001 National Curriculum mathematics tests, two thirds of the pupils attained at least the expected level for their age, with one third of these pupils attaining above the expected level. This represents very good achievement for the pupils. As in English in 2001, there is a difference in performance between boys and girls, with girls outperforming boys. The school is aware of the difference between boys and girls attainments at the age of 11, and is using a variety of strategies to try to address this issue. In 2000 and 2001 the targets set for mathematics, as a result of advice from the Local Education Authority, were overly ambitious, and were not met in either year.
- 74 In the National Curriculum tests for mathematics for pupils aged 7 in 2000, the schools' performance matched the national average and was well above average in comparison with similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher level was below the national average but matched the average for similar schools. Results have improved over the last four years peaking at well above the national average in 1999. Girls performed better than boys in the 2000 tests but when averaged out over the last three years, there was no significant difference. In the 2001 National Curriculum mathematics tests, four fifths of the pupils attained at least the expected level for their age (Level 2b+) with approximately one third of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 3). These results indicate that the pupils are achieving very well. Girls performed better than boys in the 2001 tests.
- 75 Considering the low starting point of children when they enter school, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well by the age of 11. This very good achievement is due to the very good teaching that it is occurring, the very good use of learning support assistants and the very successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. The National Numeracy Framework is used as the basis for planning and written planning throughout the school is very good. All teachers have adopted the structure and format of a numeracy lesson as suggested by the National Strategy and a mental mathematics session has become an integral part of every lesson. In the majority of lessons, pupils have good attitudes to their learning. They listen attentively to their teachers and to each other. They are keen to answer in the mental mathematics sessions and show particular enthusiasm for this part of the lesson. Their very good attitudes contribute effectively to their very good achievement, despite their low levels of competency on entry to the school.
- 76 The majority of pupils reach the expected level for their age by the end of Year 2 because the work that they are given to do builds effectively on the very good experiences they have in the foundation stage of learning. Pupils aged 5-7 make very good progress because of very good teaching. In Year 1, pupils become confident in dealing with numbers to 20. Effective mental mathematics sessions enable them to understand the sequence of numbers and they can count

forwards and backwards from different starting points. All pupils have some knowledge of time. Higher attaining pupils are able to solve time problems such as what is the time three hours before or after a given time? Lower attaining pupils can tell the time correctly to the hour and to half past the hour. In Year 2, pupils count confidently in twos and tens. They learn effectively about fractional equivalence with higher attaining pupils knowing that  $\frac{1}{2}$  is the same as two  $\frac{1}{4}$ s. Very good teaching reinforces mathematical vocabulary and pupils are encouraged to use their reading skills when asked to read aloud the learning intention of the lesson and the lists of key vocabulary. Teachers of Years 1 and 2 pupils are very aware of the knowledge of individual pupils and ask them direct and specific questions to assess their learning in a tactful and sensitive manner. One Year 2 teacher cleverly involves the pupils in their own assessment of their learning. At the end of the lesson she asks if anyone thinks they need to do further work on this topic. Five pupils very sensibly and maturely request further help, which suggests that, within this classroom, pupils feel very safe and secure with their teacher and with their friends.

- 77 Although progress is good overall for pupils aged 7-11, it is inconsistent because the quality of teaching is not as good in Years 3 and 4 as it is in Years 5 and 6. In Year 3, the teaching is satisfactory but the pace of lessons is slow. In one lesson the mental mathematics session was overlong and did not effectively engage the interest of all the pupils. The use of information and communication technology in this session impeded rather than enhanced learning. The teacher's own use of language is careless and continual reference to the table of 'frees' does not help the pupils who need good models from their teachers to help them with their speaking, writing and spelling development.
- 78 In Years 4, 5 and 6 teaching varies from very good to satisfactory. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 are grouped into ability groups for mathematics. The lower attaining pupils in Year 4 classify information using both 'Carroll and Venn' diagrams. They count and add numbers to 20 but many do not know number combinations fluently and have to count on to find the solution to a problem, for example  $9+6$ . Although the teaching of this group of pupils is good, the teacher is very firm and limited opportunities are provided for the pupils to think for themselves and to explain their methods of calculation. Teaching of the group of higher attaining Year 4 pupils is satisfactory. Although the teacher has good written planning and has thorough questioning techniques, her classroom management skills are less effective. The plenary session of a lesson was wasted because of the inability to manage the inappropriate behaviour of a minority of pupils. There was limited use of praise and the teacher had low expectations of what was acceptable behaviour.
- 79 Progress then improves in Years 5 and 6, where teaching is very good. The lower attaining Year 5 pupils are able to use a compass to solve simple direction problems and with support are able to add together multiples of 10. The teacher of this group of pupils has very clear explanation skills which she uses effectively to ensure all pupils know what they are expected to do. The lower attaining Year 6 pupils are able to double numbers, such as 130 but find it more difficult to double 168, for example. Very good use is made of the 'learning wall' where the key objectives for the week are displayed. Pupils are encouraged to read the learning intention of the lesson and then identify words that they are unsure of. The average and above average set of Year 5 and 6 pupils have a good knowledge of number tables. They are able to suggest quick methods of dividing by 25 and have a range of strategies for solving money problems. The teacher who works with this group of pupils is very successful in creating a calm working atmosphere where pupils support each other well and share their ideas very willingly. Very good relationships exist in this classroom. Although teachers throughout the school conscientiously mark the pupils' work, too little attention is given to providing effective

feedback to the pupils by way of extra challenge. The quality of resources is excellent and all teachers use them effectively to enhance pupils' learning and achievement.

- 80 Throughout the school effective use is made of information and communication technology. Teachers regularly seize opportunities to use the classroom based computers to give pupils further good learning experiences in mathematics. In other subjects such as history and science teachers take the opportunity for pupils to use their numeracy skills. In science for example, pupils use their knowledge of measurement to explore the difference between themselves and their friends. In history, the pupils use time-lines, which broadens their concept of number. As part of work in a geography topic, pupils in Year 6 produce good quality graphs to show the average monthly rainfall in the Lake District over a year. The subject also makes a good contribution to pupils' personal, moral, and social development. Pupils are encouraged to share ideas, listen sensitively to others and to collaborate in group activities.
- 81 The subject is led and managed by two co-ordinators and their leadership and management are good. They both have a secure knowledge of the National Numeracy Strategy and have attended numerous training courses. The co-ordinator who is responsible for pupils aged 5-7 provides a particularly good model for the teaching of numeracy. They have both carried out extensive monitoring activities, including examining teachers' planning, sampling pupils' work and observing lessons. They have a satisfactory understanding of strengths and areas requiring improvement. They recognise that in the age range of pupils aged 5-7 that pupils need more opportunities to record their own methods of calculation; also that pupils aged 7-11 need to improve their mental calculation skills and their use and understanding of specific mathematical vocabulary. A satisfactory system of assessment and record keeping is in place, and systems for tracking pupils' progress overtime are developing. However, as yet the school does not have a clear understanding of whether the progress that has been made by pupils is good enough. Although some pupils are given individual targets for learning, this practice is not consistent throughout the school. Consequently not all pupils and parents have a clear understanding of what is to be achieved. Arrangements for homework are good and effectively enhance pupils' learning in school. There has been good improvement in mathematics provision since the time of the previous inspection.

## SCIENCE

- 82 The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests for pupils' aged 11 were below the national average but above average in comparison with similar schools. On the basis of teacher assessment, pupils' results at the age of 7 were very low in comparison with the national average, being in the bottom five per cent of schools nationally. In relation to similar schools, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level was well below average. Over the last four years, standards have fluctuated but have generally followed and stayed above the national trend for pupils aged 11, except for the decline in 2000 when there was a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in those who took the tests. The results of the 2001 tests indicate that standards have improved, especially in the percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels. The standard of attainment of the current Year 6 and Year 2 pupils is in line with the national expectation, which shows that they achieve very well in relation to their low skill levels on entry to school. The school is aware that girls do better than boys and it is exploring ways of raising the attainment of boys in the subject.
- 83 The quality of teaching overall is very good. It is very good for pupils aged 5-7 and varies from satisfactory to very good for pupils aged 7-11. The satisfactory teaching is in Years 3 and 4 and the progress of pupils in these years is not as good as in other classes because of a lack of

pace to lessons and lower effectiveness in challenging pupils of different abilities. Teachers prepare their lessons thoroughly, have good subject knowledge and emphasise the importance of learning through structured practical activities. The majority of teachers have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and of what they can do. As a result, they set challenging and interesting work. A notable feature is the way pupils are given opportunity to show initiative and to take responsibility for their own learning when working in groups on their investigations. This is shown in the work of pupils in Year 6, in which they have effectively worked in collaboration to devise a fair test to find out whether small objects fall faster to the ground than large ones.

- 84 There are many opportunities for pupils in Years 1 and 2 to be involved in practical activities to develop their scientific knowledge and understanding of their senses, and how they can be used to find out about the world around them. This was seen in a very good lesson for pupils in Year 1, when they were investigating how sounds can be heard close to and far away and how they can be loud or quiet. In this lesson, the teaching was imaginative and ensured that all pupils made very good progress and greatly enjoyed their work. As pupils pass through Year 2, they learn how to handle a variety of simple scientific equipment carefully and safely and to take part in discussions about scientific ideas. Good emphasis given to teaching pupils the basic skills of carrying out an investigation and of recording their findings in a variety of ways. Higher attaining pupils show appropriate skills in making sensible predictions and are able to carry out a simple, fair test with help from their teacher.
- 85 The teachers of older pupils ensure that they are given opportunities to learn how to handle a wider variety of scientific equipment and resources to develop their knowledge and understanding. They continue to emphasise the basic skills of investigations and the different ways pupils can record their results. The teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively, in well-structured practical activities, to find out information for themselves. This enables them to make effective progress in their investigative skills, as was evident in the work of pupils in Year 6 when they investigated how well different materials conduct heat. There are times when the pace of lessons is slow, as when pupils in Year 4 were investigating simple electrical circuits; as a result, they do not make the progress of which they are capable. There are also occasions when explanations are not as effective as they could be, as in a lesson for pupils in Year 3 on the conditions needed for the healthy growth of plants. The teacher's pronunciation lacked clarity and at times led to confusion. Inconsistencies in the quality of written marking and the standards of presentation expected by teachers in different classes hinder the progress of some pupils. Through the school, there is some use of pupils' skills in using information communication technology to enhance their work, but this is an area for further development. A good example of its use was the way pupils in Year 6 linked a microscope to a computer, to observe and take pictures of the body parts of insects that they had collected from the school's wildlife area. There are not enough opportunities in some classes for pupils to be involved in activities that develop the investigative skills of making evaluations and conclusions based on prior scientific knowledge. By the time they are 11 because of very good teaching in Years 5 and 6, most pupils show good ability to identify the need for a fair test and higher attaining pupils are able to plan and carry one out independently of the teacher.
- 86 The attitudes of pupils are very good and they work well together, listen attentively to the teachers and show a great deal of interest in their activities. They show much curiosity and enjoyment when involved in practical work and are very keen to answer questions. They handle scientific equipment with care and show respect for animals and insects when



observing them in the course of their investigations. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through this subject.

- 87 The curriculum is very good, being broad and relevant, and enabling pupils to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills through carefully structured investigative activities. There is very good leadership. The enthusiastic co-ordinator's clear view of the subject's strengths and weaknesses has enabled her to create an effective action plan to further improve provision. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is very good, as a result of the effective support that they are given. There is appropriate use of literacy skills by children in their report writing and in their labelled scientific drawings and diagrams of structures such as the human heart. A good example of the use of literacy skills is the way in which pupils in Year 2 have made a booklet, with a contents page, to show the dangers of electricity and how a simple electrical circuit works. In some classes, pupils' unsatisfactory handwriting and presentation skills detract from the quality of their work. Pupils also show that they are able to make satisfactory use of their numeracy skills, as was seen in Year 6 science work when making a series of measurements to illustrate the differences in people. The planning procedures effectively incorporate the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority's curricular guidance and provide teachers with clear information about the key learning objectives and skills to be taught. The assessment and record-keeping procedures do not effectively track the progress that pupils make and if the progress is at least as good as that expected. Consequently, there is not enough reliable information to enable the school to set manageable targets for improvement for individual pupils. Resource provision is outstanding and allows for a wide range of practical activities to be carried out. Good use is made of the school grounds, which include a wildlife area, to find out about life processes and living things. There is also very good use made of visits to places such as Washington Wildfowl Park and the Discovery Museum in Newcastle to enhance learning in the subject. The current provision in the subject shows good improvement since the last inspection.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

- 88 Standards of attainment for pupils aged 7 and 11 are in line with national expectations and they make good progress. This marks an improvement from the previous inspection when standards were judged to be below. Issues raised then included a lack of experience in printing, fabric and three-dimensional work and of pupils using sketches for producing painting. All of these have been addressed well. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. Following a review by the Local Education Authority, the time allocated to this subject been increased and a lot of work is carried out through cross-curricular links supported by the introduction of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work.
- 89 Younger pupils show a good understanding of dimension and shading when working at observational drawings. A class book on buildings and building materials shows that pupils have considered line and pattern in the environment, and the higher attaining pupils transfer this knowledge to other work in their sketch books. Imaginative use is made of a wide variety of media when presenting collages and computer prints of seaside impressions. Very good teaching in a Year 2 class successfully promoted the pupils' evaluative skills. Emphasis on correct use of language enabled the pupils to understand that words like 'corrugated', 'bumpy' and 'smooth' describe texture. Pupils listened respectfully to opinions of others and sensitively offered suggestions for improvement. The promotion of literacy skills in this lesson through speaking and listening was good. Information technology programmes are also used well, with pupils creating designs and pictures showing good computer skills and an eye for colour.

- 90 The pupils' knowledge and understanding of this subject are further enhanced by the many visits they make around the local environment. They used a walk along the River Wear to collect ideas for their own designs for sculptures suitable to go in the playground, and the clay representations of their designs showed care and imagination. A Year 1 class produced some very good sculptures of the Angel of the North, paying particular care to creating the lines made by the plating. Pupils also understand that sculptures can be formed from many materials, including water. Older pupils produced very good thumbnail sketches of views of Wasdale following a residential visit and used them well when painting a watercolour.
- 91 Teaching overall is good. Work is well planned, with teachers drawing on many resources to motivate and interest the pupils. They use questioning well to encourage the pupils to look carefully at what they are representing. The influence of discussion about other artists and their style of working can be seen in pupils' work. The very good relationships between adults and pupils enable sensitive evaluation of work and promote pupils' understanding of how to improve.
- 92 Work throughout the school is varied and teachers employ a range of strategies that motivate the pupils to use observational skills, imagination and experimentation to develop their creative talents. The co-ordinator leads the subject well and supports colleagues if required. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's curricular guidance is being integrated into the topic work. This procedure is to be evaluated at the end of the year for effectiveness in teaching skills progressively. At present there are no formal assessment procedures, although teachers keep a simple check list of coverage of the art curriculum. A weekly art club for pupils in Year 6 is very popular and reflects the positive attitudes that pupils have to this subject. Resources are excellent and they are used well.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

- 93 Standards of attainment for pupils age 7 and 11 are in line with national expectations and all, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. This reflects an improvement from the previous inspection, when attainment was judged to be below national expectations with design skills unsatisfactory and pupils having a poor understanding of the place of technology in modern life. These issues have been addressed through in-service training. Teachers now have a better understanding of how design can be a more important part of the lesson. The use of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's curricular guidance supports the teachers in their planning.
- 94 Younger pupils are given assignments that require them to design and then make the articles. Class books are an effective way of recording the pupils' work and show how successful they have been in carrying out their designs. They clearly reflect the pupils' experiences, although in conversation they were unsure how their final designs were an adaptation of the originals. Older pupils use their design skills in other areas of the curriculum. For example in history, Years 5 and 6 pupils made clear sketches of hats through the decade, showing proposed materials and method for making. Good making skills are evident in the displays in class. In a Year 5 class, musical instruments created from pupils' designs were successfully used in a rap performance much to the delight of others. In the one lesson observed, pupils satisfactorily assembled alarms designed to protect their valuables, although the limited resources available resulted in little variation and a lack of challenge for the higher attaining pupils.
- 95 Written planning is good and there are clear learning objectives identified. The co-ordinator leads the subject well, although limited monitoring of teaching takes place. Support is given to

colleagues whenever required and in-service training has raised teachers' awareness of how to use design sheets with the pupils. This has also promoted teacher confidence and broadened their expertise. There are no formal assessment procedures. Teachers record their observations at regular intervals during the year but this does not effectively record pupils' progress in skills, knowledge and understanding. Resources for the subject are very good and are used well.

## **GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY**

- 96 Standards of attainment in geography and history for pupils aged 7 and 11 are in line with national expectations and they make good progress in these subjects. This maintains the judgements made in the previous inspection.
- 97 A discussion with pupils from a Year 2 class reveals that they know that history is about events and people from the past and they can relate their knowledge of the Great Fire of London and the Plague with understanding. They were able to explain why the fire spread so quickly and could compare the building materials used for houses then and now. They are beginning to understand how these past events affect our lives today. They also know about famous people from the past, including George Stephenson, and discuss how fast the 'Rocket' could travel compared to today's trains. Their skills in comparing and contrasting the past are reflected in a large wall display on holidays and the seaside.
- 98 The current topic for Years 5 and 6 pupils is 'Britain since 1940' and pupils display good knowledge of how fashions have changed. In a very good lesson, the teacher's questioning skills helped pupils to share their knowledge from previous lessons and build on their understanding of how to glean facts from photographs. A wide range of resources motivated them well when discussing the similarities and differences of wedding attire, and a photograph of the school taken in 1967 stimulated good small-group discussion of what had changed. Discussion, group work, writing on a white-board and listing differences from two interviews about this era encourage pupils to record their findings. Recording of work was a minor issue from the previous inspection. This has improved and the higher attaining pupils now carry out independent research for their topic. They also use their notes from outside visits to write down their observations more fully. However, there is still room for development as, in some classes, pupils' handwriting and presentation skills are unsatisfactory. Visitors coming to the school enhance the subject. This was seen in a Year 5 class when an actress in Tudor dress delivered a wealth of facts in an entertaining way, which captured the pupils' imaginations.
- 99 In geography the younger children learn about their immediate environment, studying the facilities that exist and the types of houses they live in. In a good lesson in Year 1 pupils used maps and the globe to locate countries and to discuss how 'Barnaby Bear' could travel to them. They successfully located Italy and Sicily and knew that a passport is needed to travel abroad. The lesson effectively developed their knowledge of the transport needed to move around this country and around the world. As an extension to their topic on mountains and mountain ranges of the world, pupils in Years 5 and 6 met with two Duke of Edinburgh volunteers who helped them understand what is needed in order to camp safely in the mountains. The teacher prepared the pupils well for the visit, setting time targets for them to write their own prioritised list of equipment. She also encouraged them to justify their choices, a good strategy for developing their thinking skills. The school has good links with local industry and uses them well in order to develop the pupils' citizenship skills. The school is part of a pilot scheme run by the Young Enterprise Initiative Board, and a series of lessons on trade and marketing has taught pupils the rudiments of supply and demand and the import and

export business. The culmination of these lessons was the presentation of well-prepared advertisements to sell their own imaginative products.

- 100 The quality of teaching overall is good with teachers using the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's documentation to guide their planning. Clear learning objectives are given at the beginning of most lessons and the good teaching, particularly in a Years 5 and 6 class, constantly challenges the pupils to evaluate what they have learned in the lesson. High expectations of behaviour are evident and the pupils respond well. This was seen in the Year 5 and Years 5 and 6 lessons when the pupils met with the visitors. Pupils ask sensible questions and listen politely to others.
- 101 The two subject co-ordinators lead the subjects well. They use their good subject knowledge to support staff when necessary and organise the excellent resources needed for each unit of work. Monitoring of teaching has taken place to ensure that teachers are encouraging pupils to develop their recording and thinking skills, an improvement since the previous inspection although further development is needed. Literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills are well developed through this subject. For example, in history, the pupils use time-lines to broaden their concept of number, and in geography pupils in Year 6 produce graphs using information and communication technology to show the average monthly rainfall in the Lake District. The implementation of the guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's is being evaluated to judge the impact on pupils' learning. Assessment and record keeping procedures are developing satisfactorily. Written marking however, is not used consistently to inform pupils of why their work is good and what they need to do next to improve.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

- 102 By the time that they are 11, the pupils achieve standards appropriate for their age and have made good progress through the school. This shows good improvement since the last inspection.
- 103 The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and expertise, and are able to set challenging and motivating work that is well matched to the abilities of all pupils. In Year 1, there is strong emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills in the subject. They are taught that computers can be used to make words and pictures and to assemble text, and also to control movement. As they pass through Year 2, pupils very effectively learn how to change the type and size of text and to retrieve, process and display information. Lessons are well prepared and place good emphasis on giving pupils opportunities to learn and practise the basic skills of the subject. As they enter Years 3 and 4, the progress slows down. This was evident in a lesson in Year 4 on developing a branching database, when the inability of the teacher to manage the misbehaviour of a significant minority of pupils hindered the progress of others. The progress for pupils in Years 5 and 6 accelerates again and is very good as a result of the teaching of the co-ordinator, who has very good subject expertise and is able to set exciting and motivating work for her pupils. This was evident in a lesson in which pupils were evaluating the multi-media presentations that they had prepared. In this lesson, the teacher was able to use questioning in a very effective way to challenge pupils' thinking and help them improve their presentations. By the time that they are eleven, pupils are able to use information technology to enhance many aspects of their work in subjects such as English, mathematics, science, history and geography. This is because information and communication technology is naturally integrated into classroom activities. In these activities, the pupils are able to use information and communication technology (ICT) confidently and appropriately, to organise and

present their ideas. This was evident in a Year 5 literacy lesson, when pupils were using a word processing programme to help them to change prose text into free verse. These pupils have also used ICT effectively to create a series of images to show rotational symmetry in mathematics. Pupils in Year 6 have made a variety of good quality graphs to show the average monthly rainfall in the Lake District over a year, as part of their work in geography.

- 104 The pupils' attitudes to learning in ICT are positive and when working in pairs on the computer, they collaborate well, which supports their social development. They treat equipment with respect and show interest and great enjoyment in their work.
- 105 A very good curriculum enables pupils to develop their skills across many subjects through carefully structured activities. There is very good leadership, with the expertise of the co-ordinator having a positive effect on standards that pupils attain. Pupils with special needs make very good progress because of the extra support that they receive. Planning procedures are effective in enabling teachers to set work that is appropriately challenging to all pupils. Assessment and record-keeping procedures are developing but as yet do not include effective tracking procedures to measure pupils' progress and enable teachers to set them targets for improvement. Resources are very good, each classroom having a bank of computers for pupils to learn and practise their skills in the subject.

## MUSIC

- 106 Standards of attainment for pupils at the ages of 7 and 11 are in line with the national expectation with a minority of pupils attaining above the level that is expected. Pupils receive a broad and balanced musical education and show great enthusiasm for the subject. Music has a prominent place in school and is highly valued.
- 107 The quality of teaching of pupils aged 5-7 and 7-11 is very good. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject are enthusiastic and plan very effectively so that the work is imaginative and challenging. Pupils are told at the beginning of lessons what they will be learning and this helps them to focus their attention and enables them to assess how well they have achieved.
- 108 In Year 1, pupils are encouraged to develop their listening skills through games. For example, a 'magic box' was passed around the circle whilst the pupils sang. When the song ended the pupil that was holding the box opened it, chose a card and then selected an appropriate instrument to respond to the word or symbol on it. This activity successfully developed the pupils' understanding of the musical concepts of fast and slow, loud and quiet. In Year 2, pupils make very good progress in developing their singing skills and the ability to play a variety of tuned and untuned instruments. They are taught to use the correct musical vocabulary and learn new words such as 'ostinato'. Pupils are encouraged effectively to explore musical ideas in their own compositions. For example, in Year 3, good use of questioning enabled pupils to improve their own performances of accompaniments to singing games. In Year 4, the majority of pupils understand the difference between pulse and rhythm and are able to compose their own singing game. In Year 5, pupils find out about Tudor music by making effective use of the Internet and a CD-ROM. As a result of a visit by two musicians who performed on Tudor instruments, the pupils were able to demonstrate good knowledge of musical instruments from this period of musical history. Pupils worked hard to improve their singing of 'Greensleeves' by improving breathing and posture, and were able to invent simple rhythmic patterns on drums to accompany their singing.

- 109 The quality of singing is good throughout the school. Pupils are able to sing rounds confidently and are very enthusiastic about their singing. Many pupils are given good opportunities to sing solos. Pupils sing with clear diction; the majority sing in tune and make a good quality of sound. However, improving tuning and developing a wider range of dynamics are areas for improvement.
- 110 Pupils have the opportunity to learn to play the descant recorder and make good progress. They play very well in tune and are able to perform in two-part harmony. In order to develop these skills further, an area for development would be to introduce the treble and tenor recorders to enable children to play in three and four part harmony. Some pupils have the opportunity to learn to play brass instruments and make good progress. They are used very effectively to accompany singing in assembly and church. They perform with good articulation and intonation.
- 111 The music curriculum is enhanced by extra-curricular activities such as the choir and school productions. Several musicians have visited the school to perform on Tudor instruments, the glass harmonica, the harp and flute. Year 6 pupils have benefited from the very good opportunity to attend a 'pop' concert with an anti-drugs message and a concert on multi-cultural music.
- 112 Music makes a very good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. For example, children sang with good expression in the church service and had good opportunities to work together to provide sensitive accompaniments. It also makes a very good contribution to literacy, for example, through the words that are read in hymns and songs and the independent research that is undertaken on the computer. Music contributes satisfactorily to numeracy in that pupils have to count beats, understand note values and recognise patterns.
- 113 The co-ordinator provides very good leadership, supports staff effectively and monitors the subject very well. The school has a good policy and programme of work. A satisfactory system of assessment is in place to monitor pupils' progress and attainment. Resources for music are excellent. They are very well cared for, stored efficiently and used very well. The school benefits from a room designated for music activities. Information and communication technology skills are effectively being developed through music. For example, good use was made of the Music Explorer software, the Internet and CD-ROM for research purposes.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

- 114 As only games lessons were seen, it is only possible to make secure judgements on this aspect of the subject. By the time that time they are 11, the pupils attain standards that are in line with the national expectation, having made good progress and achieved well through the school.
- 115 The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils' behaviour and of what they can achieve. The planning of lessons is thorough, with clear learning objectives, which are effectively shared with pupils and linked to challenging activities. This was seen in a lesson for pupils in Year 1, when they were practising the skills needed for activities in the school's sports day. Teachers set good examples by dressing appropriately for physical education lessons and, as a result, are able to demonstrate techniques in an effective way. A suitable emphasis is placed on the teaching of basic skills. For example, in a lesson for pupils in Year 6 on developing their netball skills, the teacher taught attacking and defending skills effectively and then let pupils practise them in small group situations. In this lesson, the pupils were able to demonstrate the ability to move in a variety of ways, with a

suitable awareness of space, and with good control of their movements. In an athletics lesson for pupils in Year 5, the teacher's high expectations of her pupils' behaviour, and of their performance, ensured that they had a high work rate and made good progress in their jumping skills. As they pass through the school, boys and girls have equal access to a wider range of activities. This gives them confidence and many opportunities to learn from each other. Pupils in Years 4 and 6 are able to develop their swimming skills at the City of Sunderland College pool, and by the time they leave school, most of them are able to swim 25 metres. By the time that they are aged 11, most pupils are able to practise, improve and refine their skills in small game activities, to a satisfactory standard. They can follow instructions, watch others carefully in demonstration, and use it well to improve their own performance.

- 116** The pupils' attitudes to learning are positive, showing enjoyment and enthusiasm in their activities. They co-operate well and recognise the need for safety when using equipment. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in physical educational activities and they also make good progress. The curriculum is very good, being broad, balanced and relevant to all the pupils. The management of the subject is satisfactory, with the co-ordinator being able to advise and support her colleagues in an appropriate way. The programme of work is successful in ensuring continuity and progression of pupils' learning, but recording and assessment procedures are underdeveloped. This means that teachers do not yet have a clear view of pupils' attainment in the subject. A very good programme of extra-curricular activities, including competitive team games, enriches the subject curriculum. The resources are very good, as is accommodation that includes a good-sized hall and extensive playing fields. The school has successfully addressed the weakness indicated in the last inspection report by providing a better range of large apparatus, and current provision shows good improvement since then.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

- 117** By the ages of 7 and 11 pupils attain the expectation of the locally agreed syllabus and some exceed it. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school.
- 118** The quality of teaching of pupils aged 5-7 is very good and good for the pupils aged 7-11. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan very thoroughly. Clear learning intentions are shared with the pupils at the beginning of lessons and re-visited to assess how well they have been achieved. Expectations are appropriately high and focussed on pupils making thoughtful and respectful contributions to discussions.
- 119** In Years 1 and 2, pupils have studied the Buddhist religion and how and why Buddhists meditate. For example, as the pupils sat in a circle and looked at a statue, a candle and incense sticks were lit to involve the children in the experience of meditation. They were invited to think good things about themselves and others. The pupils were very interested in the activity of meditation and behaved very sensibly. They were able to sit still and meditate in silence for about five minutes. The majority of pupils were able to empathise with the need to feel good. There was very good spiritual and moral development in these lessons. The pupils listened attentively to the story of 'Kisa and the Mustard Seeds'. At appropriate times the children were invited to express their own feelings and ideas. This story was used very effectively to develop the pupils' understanding of the inevitability of death. In Year 4, pupils recalled the story of the Sikh festival of Baisakhi and explored the theme of sacrifice by comparing this story with the Christian story of Abraham from the Old Testament. The pupils considered reasons why people through the ages have made sacrifices and explored their motivations for

this. The pupils were given good opportunities for critical thinking and discussion. They were keen to share their ideas with the class. In Year 6, pupils learned that charity is an obligation for Muslims as one of the Pillars of Islam. A very good explanation of the concept of Zakat was given. Very effective use of questioning challenged pupils' thinking. Pupils behaved very well, showed good levels of concentration and were keen to answer questions. They were able to appreciate different views and opinions and showed a good understanding of the concept of charity and the needs of others.

- 120 By the age of 11 pupils know about the religious beliefs, festivals, practices, symbols and places of worship associated with Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism. Visitors to the school talking about their religious beliefs and showing religious artefacts enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding. For example, a practising Hindu recently visited and there was a very positive response to this input from the pupils. The religious education curriculum is enhanced positively by very good use of visits to different places of worship, for example to Christian churches and a Jewish synagogue.
- 121 Pupils make good use of their literacy skills when carrying out research into different religions and when recording their ideas in writing, for example, what makes them sad and how they can help someone who is feeling sad. Recording skills are under-developed in some classes and unsatisfactory handwriting and presentation skills detract from the quality of the pupils' work. Good use is made of pupils' numeracy skills. For example, pupils were asked to calculate 2.5per cent of their yearly pocket money when studying about the Muslims' obligation for charity. Information and communication technology makes a valuable contribution to the subject, especially for the pupils aged 7-11 years of age who use various web sites to find out information to enhance their learning. Religious education makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Assemblies also make a good contribution to moral, social and cultural development. However, there are too few opportunities for children to reflect and too few planned opportunities for pupils' spiritual development. The daily act of collective worship meets statutory requirements.
- 122 The co-ordinator provides good leadership and supports staff very effectively with planning and use of resources. There has not been any opportunity to monitor the subject. This will take place during the next academic year. A good policy and programme of work for religious education fulfil the recommendations of the locally agreed syllabus. There are no consistent procedures yet in place for assessment and record keeping. The quality of written marking is inconsistent and teachers do not clearly identify why work is good and what is necessary to improve the quality of the work. Resources for religious education are excellent. There is a good range of books, videos, recorded music and religious artefacts. They are well cared for, stored efficiently and effectively used.