

# INSPECTION REPORT

## DIAMOND HALL INFANT SCHOOL

Well Street, Millfield  
Sunderland, Tyne & Wear  
SR4 6JF

LEA area:Sunderland

Unique reference number:108760

Headteacher: Mrs S Collingwood

Reporting inspector: Mr B MacFarlane  
12411

Dates of inspection: 27 March to 30 March 2000

Inspection number: 192631

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Infant School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Diamond Hall Infant School Well Street Millfield Sunderland Tyne and Wear
Postcode:	SR4 6JF
Telephone number:	0191 5537620
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Ann Pickering
Date of previous inspection:	10 February 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Bruce MacFarlane	Registered inspector	Science.	What sort of school it is?
		I.T.	The school's results and achievement.
			How well is the school led and managed?
			What should the school do to improve further?
			Equal Opportunities
Terry Heppenstall	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Alan Egdell	Team inspector	Geography	Special Educational Needs
		History	How well are pupils taught?
		R.E.	
Kevin Willis	Team inspector	D.T.	Under Fives
		P.E	
Barbara Jordan	Team inspector	English	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Carole Black	Team inspector	Maths	English as an Additional Language.
		Art	
		Music	

The inspection contractor was:

North Tyneside Council

School Effectiveness and Raising Standards Unit  
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London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is three-form entry with 263 full-time pupils (bigger than most primary schools). There are 4% more boys in the school than girls.

Pupils with English as an additional language:	11 per cent (high)
Pupils entitled to free school meals:	23.95 per cent (broadly in line with averages)
Pupils on the register of special educational needs:	14.7 per cent (below average)
The number of pupils for each of these indicators has increased since the beginning of the school year.	
Average class size:	20 (13 in the nursery)

The school is situated in the Millfield area near the centre of Sunderland City. Children enter reception year in the September following their fourth birthday. The nursery admits children in the September after their third birthday. At the time of the inspection, there were 26 children attending the morning and afternoon sessions in the nursery. Eleven per cent of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds which is above the national average. One child in the nursery, and two in the main school, have statements of special educational need. Pupils' attainment on entry to nursery is slightly below the level expected. On entry to reception pupils' attainment is in line with expectations for their age.

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

This is an effective school that provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 in writing are lower than the national averages but in line in reading and above in mathematics. In comparison with results achieved in schools with similar pupils, it is performing well. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. All pupils have a good attitude to the school and their work. The staff work well as a team, and with the governing body to the benefit of the pupils. There is a clear educational direction for the school's work. The school's strengths outweigh its weaknesses and it provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- The headteacher and staff work together well and are committed to raising standards
- The quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in 95% of the lessons observed
- There are effective strategies for the teaching of numeracy skills
- The standards of care for the pupils, including procedures for their welfare, are good
- The school develops well the pupils' enthusiasm for and positive attitude towards school
- Pupils are encouraged to work and learn at home
- There is a wide range of links with the local community
- The school provides well for pupils with Special Educational Needs
- The support for pupils with English as an additional language is good and they make good progress
- There are effective links with the parents
- The strategy for raising standards in writing is having a positive impact on the pupils' learning
- The school makes good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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

- The number and range of extra-curricular activities
- Attendance is unsatisfactory as it is below the national average
- Marking the pupils' work to promote learning
- Omissions in the reports about pupils' progress, the Governing Body's Annual report to parents, and the school prospectus
- Appraisal and new staff induction systems
- Practices in the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning.

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

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

The school has made satisfactory progress in addressing the issues identified at its last inspection in February 1997, although further action is on-going in some areas.

There are now satisfactory schemes of work for all subjects which have been developed in conjunction with the school curriculum planning.

The co-ordinators' roles have been substantially developed to include monitoring and evaluation of standards and progress in their subjects. The systems in place allow the co-ordinators time to monitor the curriculum and analyse the National Test results. There is insufficient monitoring of the teaching in the classroom to ensure consistency and to determine the impact of teaching on learning and standards.

A system for the assessment of attainment against National Curriculum criteria is in place and this is used satisfactorily to monitor the progress of the pupils in all subjects.

The quality of the provision in the nursery is now satisfactory and at times the provision is good. The school has been able to financially employ two nursery nurses for the reception classes for the past two years.

There have also been changes in areas other than those identified as key issues. There has been a clear improvement in the test results at Key Stage 1 in relation to schools of a similar kind. Mathematics continues to be a strong subject and writing a weaker area of English. The school now has strategies in operation which are having a positive impact on writing. There has been no improvement in attendance, even though the school has made a good effort to promote good attendance. The school now has a bilingual assistant who is of benefit to the parents and pupils. The school's religious education syllabus reflects the local syllabus. Information Communication Technology has a greater prominence within the school's curriculum and is well managed with satisfactory standards.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

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

Pupils' results in 1999 were broadly in line with the national average in reading, above the national average in mathematics and below in writing, based on the average of all the levels achieved. In comparison with the results achieved in schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, pupils' performance in 1999 was above average in reading, well above average in mathematics and close to the average in writing.

Taking the results for the last four years, though varying from year to year, overall the school has been performing satisfactorily. In writing and mathematics the girls have consistently performed better than the boys. In reading there has been little discernible difference. Pupil performance in 1999 does not fit with the previous trend in results. Boys' attainment in all the subjects was well below previous levels. The girls maintained their level of performance in English, and exceeded it in mathematics. This lower performance, of boys, compared with 1998 reflects the difference between the pupils in 1998 and 1999.



Over a quarter of pupils in 1999 had been identified as having special educational needs, of these ninety per cent were boys. A minority of the pupils had late birthdays (June to August) and a similar number of pupils have English as an additional language. There was a higher than usual pupil mobility causing changes in the school population, through the year.

The school is setting realistic targets for improvement in English, mathematics and science standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and is making satisfactory progress towards them. Last year in nursery and reception the school put in place strategies to raise boys standards in reading and this year is addressing the issues in writing. Pupils make good progress and standards amongst the under fives are in line with national expectations. The achievement of pupils during their under fives' education and at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory.

### PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have a good attitude to school and their work. They are interested and involved in the work, at times working with great perseverance, as in extended writing.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Overall behaviour is satisfactory. Pupils clearly understand the differences between right and wrong. Around the school they behave thoughtfully towards each other and help to make the school a well-organised community. Most pupils behave well, but behaviour is not consistently good.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships within the school are good. Pupils have confidence in their teachers. They respond well to the program for personal and social development. The school is harmonious and all pupils are treated equally.
Attendance	Attendance is unsatisfactory. It has been below the national average since the last inspection. The school makes significant efforts to improve attendance.

Children under five make progress in gaining confidence and in developing learning skills. Throughout the school politeness is the accepted norm; pupils are considerate to each other and to adults. All pupils co-operate well with each other.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and has been maintained since the previous inspection. In 95 per cent of the lessons observed they were judged to be satisfactory or better. In 47 per cent of the lessons the teaching was judged to be good or better, of this 6 per cent was very good and 2 per cent was excellent. The percentage of unsatisfactory lessons was less than the previous inspection, and is 5 per cent. In the nursery years the quality of teaching is always satisfactory and sometimes good. Teaching in the reception is satisfactory overall, ranging from excellent to a small proportion where it is unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is also satisfactory, ranging from a number of lessons where teaching is very good, to a small proportion where it is unsatisfactory. Teachers are very competent when teaching basic literacy and numeracy skills. In particular, teaching in mathematics is good and this results in the pupils making good progress in the subject.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
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The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is satisfactory. Personal and social education (PSE) is effective in helping pupils progress satisfactorily in their personal development, notably self esteem. Planning for literacy and numeracy is firmly in place. The curriculum is enriched with a sound range of visits and visitors. There are no extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Individual education plans are clear and have measurable targets which assist the learning of the pupils.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Opportunities are created to enhance speaking and listening. Attitudes to work are good. Overall teaching of English as an additional language (EAL) in the school is satisfactory with some evidence of good practice. A varied supply of EAL learning resources is used to good effect.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The provision reflects the aims and values of the school. There is a strong emphasis on the respect and understanding of a range of beliefs and traditions. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong. PSE is effective in helping pupils to make good social, as well as cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Staff take very good care of all the pupils. There has been a recent appointment of a bi-lingual assistant. Provision for health and safety, child protection and supervision is good.

The school promotes equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. The high standard for pupils' welfare, noted in the previous inspection has been maintained and improved in some areas. A significant number of pupils with English as an additional language enter the school with little or no spoken English in other years than nursery. The high mobility amongst the Bangladeshi community has a negative impact upon those pupil's attainment. Since the last inspection the school has developed a comprehensive system of assessments including the use of baseline data, published tests and screening procedures to assess pupils' attainment.

There is clear evidence that parents view the school as good. There is a strong satisfaction with most aspects of the school, in particular pupils' progress. The information provided by the school is satisfactory. However, the school prospectus and the governors' annual report do not fully satisfy DfEE requirements. Parents make a good contribution to the life of the school. Most parents make some contribution to their children's learning through hearing them read and making suitable comments about their progress.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership is effective and management is satisfactory. The headteacher provides sensitive leadership and a clear educational direction for the school. There is a strong commitment to support the personal development of pupils and raise standards. Members of staff are involved in decision making.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are effectively involved in the strategic planning and direction of the school. There is a high level of commitment from all governors. Governors are well aware of the standards in the school and committed to raising standards.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher and other staff have carefully analysed the school's performance in National Curriculum tests and with the governing body set targets for improvement. A good start has been made to the monitoring and evaluation of curriculum; more needs to be done to focus on establishing consistency in teaching and its effect on learning.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory, overall. Teachers plan well for the use of most resources. The deployment and use of the non-teaching staff is not always effective, especially in reception classes. The school needs to maximise the contribution this resource makes to teaching and learning.

The school has an appropriate number of staff, a good range of learning resources and a high standard of accommodation. It has a range of specialist areas. The governing body ensures that money is spent wisely, beginning to applying the principles of best value, for example, in sharing grass cutting costs with the adjacent junior school.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like coming to school</li> <li>• The progress children make at school</li> <li>• The good behaviour in the school of almost all the children</li> <li>• The quality of teaching and the way children enjoy learning</li> <li>• The information provided about the school and the approachability of the teachers</li> <li>• The school's expectation that all children should work hard and do their best</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed</li> <li>• The school is helping children to become mature and responsible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A range of activities outside lessons</li> <li>• More work for the pupils to do at home</li> <li>• The school working more closely with parents</li> </ul>

The inspection team found that the parents' positive comments about the school were justified. The issue of activities which happen outside of lessons still needs to be addressed. The usefulness and the amount of work to do at home are satisfactory and at times good. The school does work closely with parents. It provides opportunities for parents to talk to the teachers and headteacher. There are invitations to parents to help in the classroom as well as find out what is happening; the school is finding out what help parents need to support their children.

**OTHER INFORMATION**

The governing body is responsible for drawing up an action plan within 40 days of receiving the inspection report, showing how the school will tackle the improvements needed. This action plan will be circulated to all parents at the school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The pupils' standards in the end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests in 1999 were broadly in line with the national average in reading, above the national average in mathematics and below in writing. This is based on the average of all the levels achieved.

2. The percentage of pupils reaching the national standard, at Key Stage 1, Level 2 or above, was below the national average in reading and mathematics, and well below in writing. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was close to the national average in reading and writing, and was well above in mathematics. In the teacher assessments for science in 1999, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or above was in line with the national average and the percentage reaching Level 3 or above was below the average. Teacher assessments in 1999 show a similar picture to the tests.

3. In comparison with the results achieved in schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, based on the average of the levels achieved, pupils' performance in 1999 was above average in reading, well above average in mathematics. It was close to the average in writing.

4. Taking the results for the last four years, though varying from year to year, overall the school has been performing satisfactorily. In writing and mathematics the girls have consistently performed better than the boys. In reading there has been little discernible difference. Pupil performance in 1999 does not fit with the previous trend in results. The girls maintained their level of performance in English, exceeded it in mathematics and the boys' attainment in all the subjects was well below previous levels. This lower performance, due to the boys' attainment, than that shown in 1998 reflects the difference between the pupils in 1998 and 1999. Over a quarter of pupils in 1999 had been identified as having special educational needs; of these ninety per cent were boys. A minority of the pupils had late birthdays (June to August) and a similar number of pupils had English as an additional language. All of which is a greater proportion than previous years.

5. The school is setting realistic and sufficiently challenging targets for improvement in English, mathematics and science standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and is making satisfactory progress towards them. The writing strategy is having a positive impact on the pupils' performance.

6. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils' attainment on entry to the nursery is slightly below that expected for their age in all areas of learning. Pupils use of language varies from monosyllabic answers to complete sentences. They join in number rhymes and identify various sized circles. Many select their own tasks and can concentrate for a length of time.

7. At times pupils make good progress and standards in reception are in line with national expectations. Standards of personal and social development are high. In mathematics pupils count successfully to 30 and record numbers to 20. Some high achievers combine sets of numbers in addition and with some thought count to 100. The high level of attainment is due to some excellent teaching.

8. Attainment in reading overall is meeting standards expected for children of this age. Children's speaking and listening skills are in line with expectations. Most children in reception are keen to read and many have a basic sight vocabulary. The texts read are not always at an appropriately challenging level for the reader and expectations of the pupils as readers are sometimes too low. Low attaining children use picture cues to help name animals, otherwise their strategies for reading are limited. High attaining readers sight read familiar words, often self correct their mistakes and talk about the text. Most children write their names and some use upper and lower case appropriately. Many children reach the Desirable Learning Outcomes for five year-olds before the end of reception year and make

progress in the Key Stage 1 curriculum. The best example is in science where the pupils are learning about the difference between melting and dissolving.

9. Inspection findings are that by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in English and mathematics are broadly in line with expectations for their age. In mathematics there is some disparity in attainment, teaching and presentation of work between classes in a year group. This explains the difference between the inspection judgement on attainment and the above average test results in 1999, although a considerable number of pupils were judged to perform above national standards.

10. Pupils reach the level expected in speaking and listening. Most pupils respond confidently to adults and are happy to talk about their work; for example, in PSE lessons they respond readily in discussion about feelings and celebrations. Standards of reading are in line with expectations for seven year olds. Higher attaining readers in year 2 read accurately, with expression and all have satisfactory de-coding skills. In year 2 standards in writing are in line with expectations. Writing is usually organised and clear, with most pupils using basic punctuation and having clearly formed handwriting. Spelling in year 2 is in line with expectations and some pupils show high levels of accuracy. The school's writing strategy for raising standards is in place and provides extra time for extended writing. This higher performance in writing than that shown in the 1999 tests reflects the impact of the writing strategy and the difference between last year's end of Key Stage 1 pupils and those presently in year 2.

11. Pupils have a secure grasp of number skills, know their 2, 5, and 10 times tables and can apply that knowledge to finding the price of quantities of food. Higher attaining pupils have good strategies to manipulate numbers. Where attainment is high in mathematics, support staff are used effectively and the time is deployed well between teaching and learning so that each area of the strategy is appropriately applied. There are variations in the children's attainment in different aspects of mathematics and accordingly the school has set targets to raise the attainment in shape and space. The high mobility of some pupils with English as an additional language impacts on their standards.

12. In science standards are in line with the national average. Pupils have a secure body of scientific knowledge of external features of the human body, flowering plants, materials and their properties, forces and light. Inspection evidence shows that at the end of Key Stage 1 the teaching of investigations is good and is a strength in science. The scheme of work does not always allow higher attaining pupils access to the appropriate curriculum; the school has organised a pilot program to address this issue.

13. Standards in Information Communication Technology are in line with those expected nationally at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils use programs to produce charts for analysis of science data, for example, changes in the weather. They are learning about the limitations of computers. Higher attaining pupils use full stops, capital letters and are able to explain how to save and print their work. Standards are in line with those reported in the last inspection. A variety of computer programs ensure pupils see the relevance of technology in their world and in subjects including, mathematics, art, geography, science and English.

14. Standards in religious education are in line with those set in the Locally Agreed Syllabus. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are aware of all the main faiths, including some of the stories, festivals and symbolism associated with them.

15. Standards of pupils' work are similar to those found nationally in art, design and technology, history, geography, music and physical education. Throughout the school, literacy and numeracy skills are applied and developed satisfactorily. Numeracy skills are developed even in registration where pupils are required to add and subtract to calculate the total number of pupils in the class. In science and design and technology number skills are of the expected standard.

16. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. Their work is targeted through individual education plans. The school uses these well in all subjects to make

learning specific and relevant to the individual pupil. These pupils are well supported in the classroom. Higher attaining pupils are appropriately supported, especially in literacy and numeracy, and make satisfactory progress. Pupils with English as an additional language receive good support, with their needs recognised. Overall progress is good, although for some pupils their linguistic development does hamper one particular area of mathematics, that of problem solving. This was noted in the last inspection.

17. Attainment of children under five is satisfactory in terms of the progress made between entry to the nursery and their fifth birthday. Satisfactory progress is made in speaking and listening skills. They make sound gains in a breadth of areas because teaching is often good, although progress is, at times, not sustained when they move to the reception classes. On these occasions the activities undertaken by the children are unrelated to previous teaching, their progress is not monitored and support staff are not successfully deployed.

18. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory at Key Stage 1 in English, mathematics and science, with progress being maintained through appropriate challenge. Achievement in year 2 is better than year 1 and this is when teaching has greater rigour and purpose. There is overall a good picture of pupils' performance in the end of key stage tests by comparison with schools who have pupils from similar backgrounds. Effective gains are made in other subjects on the basis of the standard of work at the end of the key stage.

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

19. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. The majority of pupils talk enthusiastically about school and enjoy their lessons. This has a very positive impact on their learning and attainment. Pupils make good contributions to class discussions and most work well in groups or independently. Many have an enthusiasm for learning. Of the 103 questionnaires that were returned by parents prior to the inspection, 99 per cent comment that their children like coming to school and a similar number agree that the school expects the pupils to work hard. This high standard has been maintained since the previous inspection.

20. Children under the age of five are encouraged to develop positive attitudes to work. The children are sensitively encouraged and supported to develop concentration and interest in the many activities provided for them.

21. Pupils in year 1 show maturity and common sense in handling living things in science lessons. In year 2 many pupils have the confidence to answer more complex questions and listen attentively to others in literacy. Most pupils, including those with special needs, work hard and concentrate to the best of their ability.

22. Overall behaviour is satisfactory. Pupils of all ages play well together. There have been no recent exclusions but this sanction would be used in extreme circumstances. Although most pupils behave well for most of the time a few can be boisterous which can distract from the teaching and learning taking place. Teachers, who have high expectations of good behaviour manage any issue appropriately. Pupils are courteous and they are trustworthy and the building and each other's possessions are treated well. For example, during the inspection, a member of staff was happy to leave irreplaceable personal possessions for her pupils to inspect without supervision. Around the school they are thoughtful to one another, which leads to a positive atmosphere.

23. The personal development of pupils is satisfactory overall. They form good relationships with each other and like and have confidence in their teachers. Continuous encouragement through well planned personal and social education lessons and thoughtful assemblies build self-esteem and give pupils a chance to think about the importance of respect and care for others. For example, in an RE lesson, there was meaningful discussion and role play surrounding the story of the good Samaritan. They co-operate well and the pupils from ethnic backgrounds are fully integrated into school life.

Pupils work well in harmonious groups of different gender and background. All pupils are treated equally, for example, pupils with physical disabilities work well in games.

24. Pupils have a good response to the school's well-organised programme of personal and social education, which contributes to their personal development. However, organised opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take responsibility are not always effective. All pupils are expected to carry out tasks to help around the school but not all, for example holding the doors open before playtime, are highly regarded by the pupils.

25. Attendance is unsatisfactory. It has been consistently below the national average since the previous inspection. Also, there has not been the trend of improvement which has occurred nationally. Unauthorised absence is above the national average. The school makes significant efforts to improve attendance but these are offset by poor support from some parents. For example, holidays in term time are a problem although the practice is actively discouraged. High levels of pupil mobility, causing changes in the school population, add to the difficulty. Punctuality is also unsatisfactory but this does not significantly disrupt registration periods, which start promptly and proceed efficiently. Lessons are able to start on time.

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

26. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and has improved since the previous inspection. In ninety five per cent of the lessons observed, teaching is satisfactory or better. The small percentage of unsatisfactory teaching of just less than five per cent is below that indicated in the previous inspection report. In forty seven per cent of the lessons the teaching is judged to be good or better, of this, six per cent very good and two per cent excellent. The quality of teaching observed is better at Key Stage 1 (61 per cent good or better) than reception (40 per cent good or better), and best in year 2 (71 per cent good or better).

27. Teachers are very competent when teaching literacy and numeracy skills for children in an infant school. They carefully follow the strategies adopted for teaching them either in designated lessons or in other areas of the curriculum. In physical education, design technology and mathematics teaching is good while in all of the other subjects seen during the inspection teaching is satisfactory. Teachers use a variety of resources and provide the pupils with good access to equipment to build up skills appropriately.

28. In the nursery classes the quality of teaching is always satisfactory and sometimes good. In the classes much of the teaching is directed at developing the early skills of reading, writing and number through all of the areas of learning.

29. Teaching in the reception classes is satisfactory overall; it ranges from excellent to a small proportion being unsatisfactory. When teaching is excellent or very good even these very young children are able to sit and listen well, an example being a history lesson where pupils sit with rapt attention. Characteristics of good quality teaching are that time is balanced between teaching and learning and there is a clear understanding of the needs of young children.

30. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, insufficient attention is made to the timetabling of various subjects. At times the pupils are unable to switch from lively interactive lessons to a quiet and thoughtful one. A few lessons have the tasks that are pitched at a too low level to maintain the progress in learning. An example of this is when children were given work concentrating wholly on initial sounds rather than more challenging phonological skills. In some lessons time is not well used and there is an imbalance between teaching and learning. The use of the shared sector in the reception block is also an area of concern. The class teachers do not always provide the children with sufficient direction or learning focus to keep them on task. Although classroom assistants work very hard in the area they are not always successfully deployed by the teachers to meet the lesson objectives. In many cases parents are used well to support learning in the classroom. The best examples of this when



parents had clear guidance as to their role in children's learning and were given very good, supportive written documentation. In a few isolated cases, the effect of teaching assistants and parents is lessened during the opening teacher exposition in lessons where they became passive bystanders.

31. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs or those who speak English as an additional language is good. A combination of withdrawal and in class support allows these children to make valuable gains in their knowledge and as a result they are able to access the curriculum and make good progress.

32. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is also satisfactory, ranging from a number of lessons where teaching is very good, to a small proportion where it is unsatisfactory. Teachers generally have a good understanding of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies that have been adopted by the school. In particular teaching in mathematics is good and results in pupils making good progress in the subject. Teaching is stronger in year 2 than year 1, though good teaching did occur in both year groups. During science lessons teachers expect the pupils to think about the problems. In year 2 they manage to combine the investigative element of science whilst imparting the necessary knowledge in a way that is exciting and challenging for pupils. Inevitably, the progress made by pupils is good in this instance. Physical education and design technology are taught well and religious education has a significant minority of teaching that is good. Only one lesson of history was seen during the inspection and teaching in this lesson was excellent. In all other subjects teaching was satisfactory, though good teaching was observed in all areas.

33. Teachers generally plan work effectively and thoroughly so that overall pupils make sound progress in lessons. Good progress is made in mathematics. However, in many instances teachers do not plan with clear assessment criteria in mind and therefore they cannot use the information generated by their assessments to plan the next stage of learning. Teachers generally have good classroom management skills within classes and as a result classrooms are orderly places where pupils learn effectively. In those few instances of unsatisfactory teaching observed, poor behaviour and off task noise did have a detrimental effect on both the pace and content of the lesson. Pupils know the routines of each classroom and are sufficiently independent to access tools and materials as they need them. Teachers use an effective range of teaching strategies to keep pupils' interest and build up their concentration levels. Computers are used to support lessons in an appropriate way such as the construction of simple maps in geography using a graphics programme.

34. Marking of the pupils work is often linked to presentation and aspects of literacy. Books are marked regularly. The quality of the marking is inconsistent across subjects and among teachers. The effectiveness of marking as an assessment tool to help pupils evaluate and improve their own performance is not maximised.

35. Homework is a regular feature of each class and its use is becoming more consistent in reinforcing the knowledge and skills being taught. Most pupils take books home regularly and this contributes to the good progress in reading made by most pupils. The home school reading diary is an excellent means of communication between home and school.

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

36. The curriculum meets statutory requirements, including the provision for religious education. The school offers a satisfactory range of learning opportunities for all pupils at Key Stage 1 and for the under fives.

37. In the early years the curriculum for under fives is satisfactory. The staff plan thoroughly and cover all of the appropriate areas of Desirable Learning Outcomes. Much emphasis is given to personal and social development and language and literacy. The learning environments provided for children under five are well organised, stimulating and attractive.

38. The school has improved the curriculum through an annual audit and the development of schemes of work which have their basis in learning outcomes for short, medium and long term planning. Planning for literacy and numeracy is firmly established. It reflects well focused objectives for learning and is sufficiently detailed to ensure good learning opportunities. The implementation of the numeracy strategy is leading to high levels of good learning. Planning for science, information technology and religious education is satisfactory. In the core subjects assessment is being used effectively to inform planning and target setting. For the foundation subjects of the curriculum planning is sound. In the best lessons there are clear links to pupils' prior learning and to other areas of the curriculum.

39. The curriculum is enriched by a satisfactory range of visits and visitors to the school. Pupils make many visits in the local area, including a bookshop and a café, as they study their own heritage and locality. Year 2 pupils visit Durham Cathedral. Pupils in year 1 are participating in a road safety project with other schools and parents. Recent visitors include a Sunderland footballer who visited a numeracy workshop. These links with the community have a beneficial effect on pupils' experience of learning. There are no extra curricular clubs or activities offered to the pupils to develop their interests and skills and to enhance the curriculum. In this area of provision the school has not made progress since the last inspection.

40. The school promotes equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. The policy for Special Educational Needs (SEN) complies fully with the principles of the Code of Practice. Provision for pupils with SEN is good. There is an effective combination of withdrawal groups and in class support which is helping pupils to make good progress. Individual Education Plans are clear and sufficiently specific in respect of measurable targets which assist good learning. Pupils with English as an additional language are also well supported and benefit from a range of provision which includes small group teaching for literacy and where appropriate individual tuition for language learning. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress. This provision could be even more effective if mathematical vocabulary learning was included in the teaching programme.

41. The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good and reflects the aims and values of the school. This is a strength of the school. Pupils' spiritual development is good and is fostered through well planned assemblies, acts of collective worship and religious education lessons. Lessons on topics such as Easter, Lent and spring as well as events in history, the enjoyment of movement in physical education and the wonder of dissolving in science are used to deepen pupils' understanding. Respect for and understanding of a range of beliefs and traditions are included through the celebration of a variety of festivals and learning about ceremonies such as the Muslim naming ceremony. The provision for pupils' moral development is also good. They understand the difference between right and wrong. The majority of pupils respond well to the school's behaviour policy and understand the classroom rules. Their efforts to behave well are recognised through a range of rewards, particularly the Star Pupil award and the certificate which is sent home to parents.

42. The provision for pupils' social development is good. Personal and social education has been introduced throughout the school and is effective in helping pupils to progress satisfactorily in their personal development, notably self esteem, and to recognise the effect of their behaviour on other people. Pupils are encouraged to think of others and they benefit from regular contact with elderly residents in the locality. Teachers and pupils enjoy good relationships and pupils are often supportive of each other. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. The curriculum offers opportunities for pupils to learn about other areas of the world, important people from the local area, and to study music and art from a variety of cultures, for example Mehndi patterns.

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

43. The high quality of care has been maintained since the last inspection and improved in some areas. The good relationship between the class teachers and their pupils is an important element in the care provided for pupils. One significant improvement has been the appointment of a Bengali speaking assistant who makes an important contribution to a range of welfare issues by allowing effective communications with the school's ethnic minority parents.

44. Induction procedures in nursery are good and the children settle quickly and happily into the routines of the classroom. Children in the nursery and reception classes are very well cared for in a calm and pleasant atmosphere. Staff consistently reinforce good work and behaviour with praise. Good records are kept of the children's progress and any learning or social difficulties are identified at an early stage and systems put into place to support each child.

45. The overall provisions for the welfare of pupils are very good. These include the clear arrangements to provide suitable standards of health and safety, child protection and supervision. There are good, clearly stated arrangements to inspect the school and governors play a proper role. Liaison with outside agencies is good. Child protection arrangements are comprehensive. There is a designated teacher and a policy which gives guidance and appropriate levels of training for all staff. Lunchtime supervision arrangements are well organised and supervisors are confident in their roles, for example, in the use of accident procedures.

46. Arrangements to promote attendance are good and they are outlined in a policy. There are proper systems to monitor attendance, to communicate with parents and to investigate any concerns. Good attendance is rewarded. Registers satisfy legal requirements. The Education Welfare Officer visits the school regularly and provides good support. Temporary absence in the course of the school day is properly recorded. The school sends a letter to parents when an absence without a known cause is reported.

47. The procedures to promote positive behaviour are good; details are given in a clear and comprehensive policy. They are based on shared rules which are reinforced by rewards and sanctions; good behaviour is emphasised throughout the school. The systems are used consistently by teaching staff and the lunchtime supervisors, who have had training in behaviour management. Pupils know the rules and the consequences of good and bad behaviour. Rewards and the associated public recognition at the parents' class assembly, for example, the weekly awards of "Star Pupil" are much valued.

48. Since the last inspection the school has developed and uses a comprehensive system of assessments. These include the use of baseline data, published tests and screening procedures to assess pupils' attainment. In the nursery regular good observational records are made of the pupils' work which becomes part of a record of achievement. This work contributes to the monitoring of pupils' progress, to inform the grouping of pupils for SEN work and to identify areas for further development. On the medium term planning sheet teachers identify the focus for assessment. These cover all subjects and are the focus for short term planning. However, in many instances teachers do not implement their plans with clear assessment criteria or share them with support staff. This weakness results in them not making full use of day to day assessment to inform future teaching. The school has moderated files of work in the subjects of English, mathematics and science which provide a consistent approach to assessment and standards in each year group.

49. The school has developed and introduced systematic procedures to assist in the tracking of attainment of all pupils to ensure they are making satisfactory progress in literacy and numeracy. This is a recent initiative and early indicators would suggest that it is having a positive impact upon pupils' attainment.

50. The school has good arrangements to provide personal support for pupils. The programme for personal and social education, which takes the form of directed class discussions, provides a good monitoring opportunity. The teachers' personal knowledge of their pupils is an important element in the provision. This is enhanced by the pupils' confidence in the staff to deal with their problems.

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

51. There is a good partnership between the school and home. This has an impact on pupils' attainment that is profitable and on the quality of their learning experience. There is very clear evidence that parents like the school. Consistent views on this point were expressed at a range of meetings with them and in the results of the parents' questionnaire. There is very strong satisfaction with most aspects of the school and, in particular, with their children's progress, the way their children like school, the school's high expectation for them, the teachers' and the school's approachability. The range of out-of-lesson activities is the least satisfactory aspect as perceived by parents; they also have some reservations about homework. The overall position regarding the school's relationship with parents is essentially unchanged since the previous inspection.

52. The information provided by the school is satisfactory and practical. A good feature is the range of information to help parents support their children's learning at home. For example, the school provides guidance about the operation of homework initiatives, advice about support strategies and targets for mathematics so that their children's progress at home can be monitored. There are regular, imaginatively presented Newsletters with special editions relating to numeracy and literacy. However, the school prospectus and the governors' annual report do not fully satisfy DfEE requirements and the style of the prospectus is unsatisfactory for a wide readership. The school prospectus does not include the school's address and telephone number. The governors' annual report does not include details about the parents' meeting, the membership of the governing body, resolutions from previous meetings and details about the election of parent governors. The school has indicated that these matters will be addressed for the next editions. Most parents know that they are always welcome to talk to teachers if they have a specific concern or simply wish for more information.

53. Information about pupils' progress is also satisfactory. The pupils' progress reports are detailed, although the quality varies according to the class teacher. Most emphasise achievement but the best offer some constructive criticism. None give an indication of what pupils should do to improve. Furthermore, the reports do not comment upon and clearly distinguish between all curriculum subjects as required by the DfEE. Good information about some aspects of progress is also contained in homework "diaries". There are satisfactory arrangements for parents' evenings to discuss progress and these are well attended. Staff are also available for ad hoc meetings with parents before and after the school day and this is much appreciated. There are satisfactory provisions for the parents of children with special educational needs to attend review meetings and most take advantage of the opportunities.

54. Parents make a good contribution to the life of the school. The Parents' Association provides substantial funds for the school's use and there are two or three regular parent helpers in each class. Also parents give good support to school events such as weekly class assemblies. A small minority of parents are unhappy with the amount of homework that the school provides. The school makes significant efforts to encourage parents to help with their children's learning at home; these include reading, spelling, tables and any project work, for example observing carefully photographs of themselves when they were younger. The response is good and most parents willingly contribute by, for example, hearing their children read and as well as making written comments. The usefulness and the amount of homework are satisfactory and at times good. This has a positive effect on pupils' attainment, particularly in their early reading skills. During each year parents are aware, in broad terms, what their children will be learning during the year and how they can help.

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

55. The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and key staff are effective and satisfactory. The headteacher provides sensitive leadership and a clear educational direction for the school. She is fully supported by all staff, not only those with management responsibilities, in her commitment to school improvement and the raising of standards for all pupils. She places importance on the involvement of staff and the governing body in a dialogue on these matters and they greatly appreciate this. There is a strong commitment to developing pupils' language skills so that they have better access to the National Curriculum. In this way, the leadership promotes high standards. Since the last inspection other needs have been identified and targeted, for example, the environment, the recent variance of boys' achievement and science standards.

56. The school's aims and values are well reflected in its work. The school does take account of the needs of all pupils. This is important in the context of the number of pupils – 15 per cent last year - who join the school through the key stage. Expectations of behaviour are high and there are appropriate expectations of standards of work in the great majority of lessons. The key stage national test results show a trend of improvement with respect to similar schools. The school does set out to give each pupil the opportunity to achieve their personal best. The values of the school as a community in which pupils "work and play together" is evident in all aspects of school life. It is reflected in pupils' good attitudes to school and relationships. It is also clear in the very good care for pupils' personal wellbeing and the good links with parents and carers.

57. The school is continuing to develop its assessment of pupil performance through an individual pupil tracking program. Early indicators would suggest that it is having a positive impact upon pupils' attainment. The weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection in February 1997 have been effectively dealt with. There is satisfactory identification of priorities in the school development plan (SDP) for development related to improving the quality of education and raising standards.

58. The head teacher is the acting Early Years co-ordinator and the school is looking to appoint another person internally to continue to move this area forward. Staff have a responsibility for at least one subject area. They meet in year teams to update each other on planning and pupil information. These are not always effective supporting pupil learning; for example, in the Early Years planning meeting teachers identify the educational reasons for role play but there was no record of which children were to be sent to the shared section in the reception area and their subsequent learning experiences. The quality of experience in this reception practical area is satisfactory but evaluation and reporting on the pupils' learning to the teachers is too ad hoc.

59. Co-ordinators are becoming increasingly involved in the management of the subjects. The headteacher's management planning cycle provides a clear agenda through the year; the summer term reviews standards and the autumn addresses curriculum issues. At present all subject co-ordinators review teachers' planning and resources for their areas. During the last year there have been two reports produced by the headteacher and co-ordinators for English and mathematics. These are useful documents indicating areas for development to raise standards; the lack of an accompanying action plan minimises their effect on the pupils. All the outcomes related to teaching issues are yet to be implemented, for example, maximising the use of time to allow each part within the literacy and numeracy strategies to fully impact on the pupils' learning. Further detailed monitoring and evaluation of teaching, with a detailed action plan for its impact on pupils' learning, will support the school's effort to raise standards. This would also allow the balance between teaching and learning in the classroom to be monitored. This aspect in the monitoring of standards is a weakness and helps to explain some of the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. It would additionally identify teachers in need of support and the actions taken to help them overcome their difficulties could be linked to in-service plans.

60. Procedures for the induction of new staff to the school are developing. The long term supply teacher receives appropriate support and mentoring. The school's strategy for appraisal is yet to be fully implemented. The deputy head manages the in-service training element well; ensuring resources

used provide value for money. Specific time is provided for discussions with staff and these cover both professional and personal development. They are clearly linked to the training required to implement the school's development plan.

61. The overall involvement of the governing body in the strategic management of the school is satisfactory. There is a high level of commitment from all governors. The governing body takes seriously its responsibility for the school. It is influential in directing the school's priorities, together with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. Governors are well aware of the standards in the school and are involved in target setting to raise standards. They have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, for example, raising the standard of writing of English for all pupils and continuing to make positive links with the community. The strategy to take action with a member of the senior management team on a specific area of the SDP is beneficial in monitoring the work of the school and providing an independent overview. The school enjoys funding levels that are higher than the national average for schools of similar type. The SDP has costs associated with it, funding is allocated in order of priority to raise standards, literacy and numeracy having the greatest amount of funding.

62. The special educational needs governor takes an active interest and she meets regularly with the special educational needs co-ordinator to be updated on the school's provision. A governor has been identified who has responsibility for English as an additional language, indicating the importance the school attaches to all its pupils. The governors have been involved in the recent numeracy evening for parents; this was found helpful by parents to support their children. Statutory requirements are not met for all the items required for inclusion in the school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents.

63. Governors are aware of the need to obtain value for money and have good procedures for ensuring that best financial value is obtained. The school administrator is appropriately experienced and is rigorous in her determination to support this. The school's overall administration arrangements, and the day-to-day control of its finances, are good, with effective use being made of the information available from the school's computerised management system. The outcomes for the school's most recent financial audit have been implemented.

64. The school has an appropriate number of teaching staff whose qualifications and training meet the demands of the Early Years and Key Stage 1 curriculum. All staff have appropriate job descriptions. There is a satisfactory deployment of teaching staff who have a keen interest and appropriate expertise in the subject they manage. The school is about to appoint an Early Years co-ordinator. This should allow the head teacher, who is caretaker co-ordinator, to gain a greater overview of the school as a whole.

65. The school has enhanced the provision of support staff since the last inspection and there are sufficient to meet the demands of the curriculum. However, the deployment of the non-teaching staff in reception classes would benefit from a further review to ensure that the contribution they make to the teaching and learning is maximised. The school benefits from the EAL support teacher and the bilingual support assistant. Both are making an effective contribution and developing strategies to enhance standards and improve levels of communication with parents.

66. The standard of accommodation is very high with very good internal provisions. There is adequate classroom space with shared areas for each year group. There are good facilities for the effective delivery of the curriculum. The school benefits from a number of specialist areas that enhance the quality of education. These include a good sized hall with a stage, a shared library area with the junior school, a specialist drama room, shared areas for practical activities and a medical resource area. There are good security arrangements. Teacher's plan for the use of the accommodation available but the management of the pupils learning in the shared areas is not always monitored for effectiveness. The accommodation is maintained to a high standard and it contributes significantly to the overall learning environment. However, there is no grassed area which is suitable for sporting activities.

67. The school makes efficient and good use of the learning resources available. They are stored well both centrally and in classrooms; in either place they are easily accessible. The school makes a substantial effort to obtain external funding. Good use is made of the visits into the local community and these enrich the curriculum. Overall the school is effective. When taking into account, the satisfactory improvements since the last inspection, the pupils' attainment on admission, the progress made in most subjects, the positive leadership and effective management and the trend in standards achieved the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

68. In order to improve the quality of education offered by the school the headteacher, staff and governors should:

1) Further develop the practices for monitoring and evaluating to ensure the effectiveness of teaching and learning by:

- i. addressing the deployment and the use of the time of all support staff;
- ii. matching the level of support provided and the needs of the pupils;
- iii. ensuring the quality of teaching in all classes and all subjects is consistent;
- iv. balancing the time between teaching and learning;
- v. managing the pupils' learning in the shared practical section in the reception area, particularly the feedback on pupils' learning and to inform future teaching and support (Paragraphs 17, 26, 30, 33, 48, 59, 60, 66, 82, 90, 98, 102, 108, 115, 118, 123, 139, 146, 152, 156)

2) Amend the deficiencies in the following:

- i. report to parents about the pupils' progress - comment upon what pupils should do to improve and distinguish between all curriculum subjects;
- ii. Governing Body's Annual report to parents - include details about the parents meeting, the membership of the governing body, resolutions from previous meetings and information about the election of governors;
- iii. school prospectus - add the school address and telephone number. (Paragraphs 54, 134, 158, 53, 63)

3) Continue to aim for higher attendance by communicating directly with the parents especially addressing the issue of absences without a known cause. (Paragraphs 25, 46)

4) Develop and implement systems for teacher appraisal. (Paragraph 61)

5) Improve the marking of pupils' work by:

- i. ensuring a consistent approach between teachers;
- ii. setting sharply focused targets for improvement. (Paragraphs 34, 90, 100, 109, 128, 133)

#### **69. OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL**

Formalising the induction programme for new teachers to the school. (Paragraph 61)  
Including out of school activities for the pupils. (Paragraphs 39, 118, 145, 152)

#### **PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS**

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

Number of lessons observed	91
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	120

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2%	6%	39%	48%	5%	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**

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	2000
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	263
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		60

FTE means full-time equivalent.

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR– Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	49

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	33

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	23
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	25

**Attendance**

**Authorised absence**

	%
School data	6.7
National comparative data	5.4

**Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.8
National comparative data	0.5



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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	56	47	103

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	38	34	43
	Girls	44	42	43
	Total	82	76	86
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (86)	74 (81)	83 (83)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87(84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	34	42	48
	Girls	44	43	46
	Total	78	85	94
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (78)	83 (89)	91(91)
	National	82 ( 80)	86 (84)	87 (85)

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

***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	1
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	18
Chinese	
White	156
Any other minority ethnic group	

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

***Teachers and classes***

**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.7
Average class size	26.3

**Education support staff: YR – Y2**

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	137

***Exclusions in the last school year***

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

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

***Financial information***

Financial year	1998
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	£
Total income	560176
Total expenditure	551642
Expenditure per pupil	1757
Balance brought forward from previous year	5046
Balance carried forward to next year	13580

**Qualified teachers and support staff:  
nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.6

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	33

Number of pupils per FTE adult	12.4
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	317
Number of questionnaires returned	103

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	73	29		1	
My child is making good progress in school.	74	25	3		1
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	42	4	1	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	50	12	6	3
The teaching is good.	67	31	1		4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	55	37	5	3	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	32	1	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	31			4
The school works closely with parents.	52	37	6	4	4
The school is well led and managed.	53	36	5		9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	38	3		2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	28	16	9	26

## **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**

#### **UNDER FIVES**

70. The provision, teaching and curriculum for children under five have improved since the previous inspection. At the time of the inspection, there were 26 children in the morning and 26 in the afternoon nursery classes. In the reception year, there were 31 children under five. On entry to the nursery the ability of the children is slightly below that expected of children of their age in all areas of learning. At the age of five the majority attain the standard expected of them for their age and they are soundly equipped for the National Curriculum. Children make satisfactory progress in the nursery and the reception classes and particularly good progress is made in developing personal and social skills. Children with special educational needs are taught well and the staff focus in on their needs, provide effective individual education plans and match work to the children's ability levels with skill and care. Consequently these pupils make as rapid progress as their peers. The sympathetic and caring staff provide excellent role models for the children.

71. Children in the nursery are settled and challenging teaching provides just the right balance between free choice and structured activities. There are good relationships between staff and children. The children make good progress in their personal and social development. For example, in the Nursery the staff work hard and provide many activities to allow the children to work in groups and to get them excited about learning. They listen in large group times and the majority respond to question and answer sessions. They co-operate in small group activities; for example, they take turns in games and share resources with each other. Children are encouraged to play well together, for example, in the home corner and shop, to improve their awareness of the needs of others. They are able to select their own activities and many see tasks through to completion. Children in reception classes show an increasing level of confidence and independence. They are able to sustain lengthy activities with adult support; at these times children complete the tasks set for them. When adult support is not available pupils often remain on tasks for a shorter length of time not always achieving the objectives set.

72. By the age of five most children attain the Desirable Learning Outcomes in language and literacy. In the nursery, children's use of language varies from monosyllabic answers to complete sentences. They listen and take part in story sessions. They have awareness that print carries meaning. Teachers ask questions in such a way that learning can be fully extended. In the book area they willingly show an interest in books and children browse freely. The school has introduced specific texts for boys to encourage reading. When in the writing area they are developing pencil control and trace pictures with a degree of accuracy. They are making marks on paper to represent their signature. They understand that print carries meaning.

73. Most children in reception are keen to read and many have a basic sight vocabulary. The texts read are not always at an appropriately challenging level for the reader and expectations of the pupils are sometimes too low. Low attaining children use picture cues to help name animals or read their books; otherwise their strategies for reading are limited and they do not recognise the pattern of repetitive language. High attaining readers sight read familiar words, often self correct their mistakes and talk about the text. The majority of children in Reception are developing positive attitudes to reading.

74. By the age of five most children attain the Desirable Learning Outcomes in the mathematical area of learning. Children in the nursery are developing their mathematical knowledge through a range of activities. In nursery, children count forwards and backwards from 1 - 5, join in number rhymes confidently and identify numbers that come before and after a given number. The more able pupils correctly place randomly selected numbers on a number line. They identify various sized circles from a range of 2D shapes and explain that circles have no straight sides.

75. In reception, pupils count successfully to 20, then 30 and identify and record numbers up to 20. They know how many more or less there are when comparing two groups. Some high attaining children combine sets of numbers in addition form, for example  $2+2 = 4$ , using appropriate numerical signs. High level attainment was observed in one reception class. Children could find out how many were left on the team after the dice that was rolled told them how many had been 'sent off.' They were able to apply this knowledge to a new situation. This high level of attainment is directly attributable to excellent teaching. Children are animated, challenged and focused. They develop good attitudes to numeracy and show great perseverance.

76. By the age of five most children attain the Desirable Learning Outcomes in their creative development. Opportunities for this area of learning occur in a range of experiences in both the nursery and the reception class. The children in the nursery have a variety of art experiences. They mix shades of colours and make repeating patterns with appropriate adult support.

77. In reception they use string to paint to print. They are able to explain their reasons for choice of colour and makeup of their composition. They make satisfactory representations in observational artwork using paint. The children in the reception class are able to clap simple rhythms, use rhymes to support other areas of learning for example, numeracy. They are able to count simple beats to music. They develop a range of actions for the nursery rhymes which they know well.

78. By the age of five most children attain the Desirable Learning Outcomes in their physical development. The outdoor environment accessed by the nursery children offers a range of experiences for the development of imaginative and physical skills. This is used in a regularly timetable daily session. The reception class children are able to develop skills in physical education lesson using the school hall and the nursery garden. They are able to jump, use a variety of movements to move around and they are aware of different body parts. Throughout these activities they are able to make sensible decisions. The development of their skills in using their hands in the nursery and reception class is through a wide range of activities; for example, working with dough they cut, mould, draw and paint.

79. By the age of five most children attain the Desirable Learning Outcomes in their knowledge and understanding of the world. In the nursery they are gaining an understanding about caring for others through the topic on babies. They are able to talk about baptism and they are aware of how different buildings are used for different purposes. In the reception classes they are able to experience an understanding of the past through the Miner's Cottage role-play area. Here an adult in role supports the children's learning, for example helping to play games from the past. As part of the daily routines of the nursery and reception classes weather charts are completed with an appropriate range of vocabulary being used. Children are able to access simple programmes on the computer to extend their learning. Children in both the nursery and reception class are able to show an understanding of how to use the mouse to access and control simple programmes. In reception they make good progress in using scientific terms confidently. They talk about their families and where they live and show a keen interest in the world around them. When they make toasted sandwiches they use the language about changes confidently, for example when chocolate and cheese melts. They chat confidently to adults about their favourite things. In the reception technology work good skills were being developed in focused practical tasks and then used in design and make activities. Children by the age of five are developing an understanding of the design process.

80. The quality of teaching in the nursery is satisfactory and sometimes good. When it is good there is an appropriate balance between teacher direction and pupil involvement in learning activities. There are clear tracking records to ensure that children are engaged in key learning activities over a period of time. Resources are well used including the deployment of other adults and visitors to the nursery. For example, during the period of inspection the children were exploring the theme of babies and a parent with a young baby was invited into the nursery to answer childrens' questions in small group time.

81. The quality of teaching in the reception classes is satisfactory overall. The teaching observed ranges from excellent teaching in history and numeracy to unsatisfactory in some lessons related to literacy and RE. On such occasions pupils, through the timetable, are not provided with time to move from a lively interactive lesson to a quiet and thoughtful one. A few lessons have the tasks pitched at a too low level. An example of this is when children were given work concentrating wholly on initial sounds rather than more challenging phonological skills. Good teaching was observed in design technology, where the teacher built upon the previous work and provided clear expectations for the lesson, which was supported by another member of staff. Where teaching is good or better, teachers have a clear understanding of the needs of young children. Planning reflects clear objectives that are achieved in the time available. Learning routines are well established. Questions are used to challenge children and increase the rate of progress in learning. Where teaching is less than satisfactory in the reception classes time is not well deployed between teaching and learning. Teachers' demonstration is prolonged leaving less than satisfactory time for children to work independently to practise, consolidate or extend their learning. On occasions children are directed into the shared practical area, where often activities are unrelated to the previous teaching, and they lose the focus of the lesson. It is difficult for teachers to track and monitor children's progress against the set lesson objectives. On such occasions support staff are not successfully deployed during teaching time even though some pupils would benefit from their input at that time. They are not directed to follow through with related activities or use report back mechanisms that monitor progress. Good relationships exist between staff, children and their parents.

82. Documentation shows that a broad and balanced approach exists for curriculum of under fives. The planning of activities, new provision in the nursery, good liaison between the staff contributes much to the work with children under five. Parents' very positive comments about the teaching are justified by inspection evidence.

83. The learning environments provided for children under five are well organised, stimulating and attractive. Displays support, extend and reinforce learning. Resources for each session are well organised of sufficient quantity and of a good quality to support learning.

84. The school uses a variety of screening and assessment procedures both in the nursery and reception class to show individual attainment and plan future work. A portfolio of work assessed against the Desirable Learning Outcomes has been established and is a useful tool to support teacher assessment. Useful achievement files exist for children in the nursery and reception classes. Teachers and support staff work together as a team. The support staff and teachers meet weekly to discuss any matters relating to the work of the reception classes. These meetings have no formal agenda and minutes are not kept.

## **ENGLISH**

85. The result of National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 show that the number of pupils reaching the expected level 2 in reading and writing was below the national average. Standards in reading are higher than standards in writing. The number of pupils reaching the higher levels in reading and writing is in line with the national average. Over the past three years standards in reading have remained constant but have fallen in writing. As a consequence the school has introduced a strategy for raising standards in writing. This involves additional time and support for writing outside of the literacy hour. Early indications are that the strategy is having a positive effect, as the products of these sessions show standards that are in line with the national average for writing. Girls perform better than boys in all aspects of English. When compared with similar schools, pupils' results for 1999 were above average in reading and in line with the average in writing.

86. Inspection findings are that by the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment in English is in line with expectations for their age. Teachers are clear about the objectives they are working to in literacy lessons and they use a range of teaching methods. Pupils reach the level expected for their age in

speaking and listening. Most pupils speak confidently to adults in the classroom and most are happy to talk about their books and their work. In year 2 pupils listen attentively to their teacher and others during the literacy lessons. Standards of reading are also in line with expectations for seven year olds. Higher attaining readers in year 2 read expressively and with attention to punctuation. They can talk about plot and character and express their preferences for certain books and authors. These competent readers have good phonic knowledge and can use it to help them read accurately. Average attaining readers try hard to use expression and in addition to decoding they also use context and picture cues to help them read. They do not generally know the distinction between fiction and non fiction. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational need recognise some words and use several strategies to help build unfamiliar words although they read at levels below those expected for their age.

87. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' standards in writing are in line with expectations for their age. The highest attaining pupils can write using appropriate punctuation, including commas; they spell well and make good use of connecting words and phrases and occasionally, adjectives and adverbs. Average attaining writers are also achieving some clear, well constructed writing with basic punctuation, in the additional writing sessions. Spelling at year 2 is in line with expectations and some children show high levels of accuracy. Most pupils in year 2 have legible handwriting, well spaced and with well formed letters. In extended writing lessons at year 1 about half the pupils demonstrate writing in simple sentences with the appropriate sequence for a successful narrative, using traditional or well known stories such as "The Hungry Caterpillar" as the model.

88. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in literacy and in writing lessons and are able with help to construct a simple sentence. They make good progress in reading and spelling through well focused teaching about phonics and in writing through carefully differentiated tasks which enhance their sight vocabulary for reading and known vocabulary for writing. A significant number of pupils with English as an additional language enter Diamond Hall Infant School with little or no spoken English. Good opportunities are created to enhance speaking and listening skills in the literacy hour and personal and social education. Overall progress is good when compared to baseline assessment, although there are pupils at the extremes of the range.

89. The school has adopted the National Literacy Strategy and an hour a day is set aside at Key Stage 1 for literacy. Teachers plan this time carefully and in accordance with the recommendations of the strategy. The four elements of the hour are generally well managed and organised and the pupils are benefiting from clear teaching. Occasionally pupils spend too long listening to the teacher at the expense of completing independent tasks satisfactorily and confirming their learning through a plenary session. The pace of learning is sufficient to ensure that the number of pupils who secure a level 2 for reading and writing in the end of Key Stage tests is likely to be close to the national average. Teachers at Key Stage 1 talk to pupils about their work and give good guidance on how it could be improved, particularly in extended writing sessions. Even greater improvement could be made through improving marking which currently does not suggest to pupils how they could improve their work.

90. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work in English. They settle quickly into the lesson and understand how to work independently. Year 1 pupils demonstrate their ability to use the word wall and word bank without adult help and this is helping learning to progress at a good rate.

91. The teaching of literacy at Key Stage 1 is good or very good in half the lessons and satisfactory in the other half. Teachers make effective use of the National Literacy Strategy in planning work. They are confident and secure in their subject knowledge. They teach the basic skills of reading and phonics knowledge well. Teachers use a variety of resources effectively and choose texts for shared reading which motivate and interest the pupils. Class management skills are good and expectations of good behaviour are high. Most pupils behave well in literacy lessons. Teachers' questioning skills vary and at times questioning is not sufficiently open ended to elicit thinking and considered responses from pupils. Pupils are expected to read at home and they have reading bags and home school diaries. This is working well and is a strength of the school. Many parents clearly enjoy being closely involved



in their children's reading and this is reflected in the positive way the diary is used for comments and as a record of reading.

92. The school recognises that it needs to sustain a focus on improving writing while continuing to maintain good levels of success in reading. Improving writing is a target for development and is being addressed successfully. The co-ordinator and headteacher have effectively supported this strategy through in-class support. The monitoring of literacy and feedback to teachers that has already taken place, along with the on-going scrutiny of pupils' performance and progress, places the school in a sound position to continue improving.

## **MATHEMATICS**

93. Results of the National Curriculum tests indicate that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is above national average when compared to all schools and well above when compared to similar schools. This is an improvement from the previous inspection. In 1999 girls performed well and out performed boys, who did not match national expectations. Evidence from inspection including lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with staff indicates that attainment is overall in line with national expectations. There is some disparity in attainment, teaching and presentation of work between classes in a year group. This explains the difference between the inspection judgement and the above average test results in 1999, although a considerable number of pupils were judged to perform above national standards.

94. In reception, pupils count and record numbers successfully up to 20. Some high achievers combine sets of numbers in addition using appropriate numerical signs. They are able to apply this knowledge to new situations. This high level of attainment is directly attributable to excellent teaching. Children are animated, challenged and focused. They develop good attitudes to numeracy and show great perseverance. Year 1 pupils recall number facts to 10 and subtraction to 5 with increasing speed. They collect appropriate data about their favourite crisps and record it in graphic form. They understand how to double numbers and use a variety of strategies to find numbers that are nearly double.

95. In year 2 pupils know their 2, 5 and 10 times tables and can apply that knowledge to finding the price of 2 apples priced 10p each. Pupils develop good strategies to manipulate numbers. The higher achievers are able to explain their strategy when performing subtraction. They are developing an understanding of division as a reverse procedure of multiplication and can identify multiples. The school works hard to maintain its standards. The school's analysis shows that for some English as an additional language pupils linguistic development hampers achievement particularly in problem solving, also the high mobility of some of these pupils impacts on standards of attainment.

96. Throughout the school good progress is made in number work and this accelerates in year 2. Test results show that pupils attain well in number and algebra and in using and applying number but less well in shape, space and measures. Scrutiny of work supports these findings. The school is aware of this and there are targets to improve standards. The majority of pupils use a good range of mathematical vocabulary to explain the mathematical process they have used. One very articulate EAL pupil ably solves problems using multiplication and division and understands the term 'array.' There is some variation in quantity of work produced; boys complete less work than girls of the same ability. Presentation, an issue from the last inspection, is variable which leads to inaccuracy. Pupils have a purposeful attitude particularly in year 2. Eager to begin, they co-operate remarkably well with partners and persevere with their tasks. In plenary sessions they proudly share their strategies with classmates, learning to respect the efforts and opinions of others.

97. Teaching is good. It ranges from satisfactory to very good. All planning conforms to the National Numeracy Strategy and National Curriculum guidelines. Teachers provide good opportunities for rapid mental work, set challenging learning targets and time is allocated for plenary sessions. In some less effective lessons time becomes an issue when teachers' explanation is long and laboured.

Independent work and plenary sessions become rushed. When teaching is good lessons are well paced, include a variety of activities for pupils of varying needs, stretch the more able whilst still supporting the less able through direct and specific questioning. Plenary sessions are well used to explain the process of learning and problem solving. When teaching is very good, instant feedback is given and pupils are encouraged to try as hard as possible. They are given adequate time to develop their strategies to the full and further challenges are set for those who complete work early. All teachers use learning resources to advantage.

98. There is a strong focus on mathematics in the school and additional time has been allocated to allow pupils to use and apply their numerical knowledge to solving problems. The school scheme is a thorough working document that supports teaching and learning. Computer programs such as 'Count' and 'My World' ensure pupils see the relevance of technology in their world to enhance their learning experience. Historical time lines are displayed in classrooms. Number rhymes are rehearsed in music and in art, pupils create designs based on regular and irregular shapes. Attractive displays not only enhance the learning environment but promote the use and understanding of mathematical vocabulary. Links with Sunderland Football Club bring additional interest to the recently launched mathematics initiative.

99. There is a comprehensive assessment system. From nursery onwards both test results and teachers' predictions contribute to the school's tracking system. Targets are set that are exacting but enable mathematics to be exciting and fun. The school has a target to achieve the Basic Skill Mark. In the main the pupils' record of achievement highlights progress in numeracy but not shape, space and measures. Marking is variable. Homework bags that include books and prompts for learning e.g. order toys according to size have been purchased through the Scarman Trust. A recent development includes targets compiled in booklet form for each pupil to share with their parents. There are prompts for parents and fun activities for their children to complete.

100. A maths circus, whereby parents could share a mathematical experience with their children in school brought some very positive response from those who attended. The bi-lingual assistant ably translates information for parents into Bengali both verbally during consultation evenings and in written form.

101. Mathematics is a strength of the school and the co-ordinator is an excellent role model for the school's future development. She has conducted a thorough audit that identifies a clear educational direction for the school. This informs the school development plan. She ably supports colleagues in their teaching of mathematics and the numeracy strategy. Resources are plentiful and very well managed. Through a recently developed monitoring system she has been allocated time for monitoring of teaching and learning. At this point no formal written action plan has been produced.

## **SCIENCE**

102. Teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 showed that the number of pupils attaining Level 2, the expected level for all seven year olds, was in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 was below the national average. Standards in science have therefore remained broadly similar since the last inspection. When compared to similar schools pupils are achieving above the average at Level 2, and at Level 3 below the average. As a consequence of the school's analysis of the pupils' national assessments results it has organised a project to address the issue of higher attaining pupils. This includes changes to the curriculum and teaching approaches.

103. Inspection evidence based on lesson observations, discussion with pupils, scrutiny of the work shows that the pupils' attainment is in line with the national average by the end of Key Stage 1.

104. In reception the pupils can discuss the importance of safety when using hot water to melt chocolate. When they are experimenting with materials they use their senses appropriately. They have a good vocabulary and describe items clearly. They are encouraged to think and explain ways to dissolve

jelly quickly and how best to make it set. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to sort materials into groups that act as conductors and insulators. They have satisfactory knowledge about the parts of a plant. They have a good knowledge about the differences between living and non-living things. In year 1 they use simple pieces of equipment, for example, a magnifying glass, when describing the differences between small living creatures. In year 2 most pupils understand and some can discuss the importance of safety when using electricity. In simple investigations most pupils are beginning to understand some of the reasons for making a test fair. Higher attaining pupils demonstrate a clearer understanding by using prior knowledge when devising investigations which pose questions such as 'Will different size ice cubes melt at the same time?' Pupils with special educational needs take a full part in the lessons, make good progress and are given good levels of support. Teachers use science to provide pupils with English as an additional language practical activities that builds up their vocabulary.

105. The pupils' progress is sound in relation to their prior attainment. This progress is shown by the improvement in pupils' knowledge of materials and their properties. For example, year 1 pupils know that a material is 'see through' whilst in year 2 pupils extend this knowledge by grouping materials according to their chosen criteria. By the age of seven most pupils have begun to record a simple investigation accurately. They make predictions about materials that can be changed during an investigation. The sample of pupils' work indicates that they are given very similar tasks with little attempt to provide suitable challenge for groups of pupils with different levels of ability.

106. The pupils' behaviour in science lessons is satisfactory overall. There is a positive atmosphere for learning. Younger pupils demonstrate a keen interest and try hard to respond to questions. Good classroom management and control support pupils as they begin to develop their ability to work with a partner sensibly during practical investigations. Older pupils demonstrate a very good response to their science lessons. The introductions to the lessons gain their interest and enthusiasm and so they are motivated and often engrossed as in the discussions about predicting changes.

107. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with examples of good teaching at Key Stage 1. In the lessons seen during this inspection the quality of learning was enhanced by the effective use of questions and the good interactions with pupils. Open-ended questions challenge the thinking of all pupils. However, direct questions are also used to challenge the pupil's ability to answer. Pupils are frequently involved in speaking about science and teachers develop the pupils' use of language in science. The presentation of the written work is variable. Teaching is good when there is a combination of the investigative element of science linked to the pupils' knowledge of the context, as in dissolving jelly. This provides exciting and challenging activities. Inevitably, the progress made by pupils is good in this instance. Good teaching occurs when teachers' plans contain clear assessment criteria and they are shared with the pupils at the beginning of the lesson. This provides the pupils with an overview of what is to be achieved. At times these criteria are shared with support staff who use it well. There is little opportunity for the information generated by their assessments to be used by the teacher to plan the next stage of learning. Overall, the quality of the teaching which requires the pupils to think about the problem, plays a positive role in promoting pupils' good progress.

108. The co-ordinator has worked hard to develop the policy and the scheme of work. The scheme is effective in supporting the continuation of the curriculum from the early years, in particular investigative skills. This is an improvement since the last inspection. A useful portfolio of work, levelled and annotated, records progress across the school. This effectively supports teachers in their assessment of pupils' work. Recording of data in charts and use of measurement also encourage the development of numeracy skills. The use of information technology to support the pupils' work is underdeveloped. Marking of the pupils' work varies from class to class. There is little evidence of the majority of comments providing information for the pupils on what further steps need to be taken in order to make progress. The co-ordinator monitors the planning within the subject. She has not recently had the opportunity to gain an overview of the subject through visiting classrooms to assess teaching and learning. However the co-ordinator has informally visited classrooms. The subject makes

a sound contribution to the development of pupils' oral and literacy skills, as they develop their ability to explain their investigations, answer questions and record their observations.

## **ART**

109. During the inspection few opportunities were available to observe art lessons. However planning documents, work on display and portfolios were scrutinised. By the end of Key Stage 1 standards are satisfactory and in line with expectations with some work exceeding expectations in year 2. Since the last inspection the school has maintained its standards in art.

110. In reception pupils mix primary colours to achieve orange and green and predict how colours might combine when mixed together. They recognise regular patterns and use the work of Gustav Klimt and Aboriginal prints as a source of inspiration to develop their own creative work. This makes a sound basis to work from in Key Stage 1.

111. In Key Stage 1 pupils develop a range of pattern work. This includes regular and irregular patterns and Mehndi patterns. They recognise the links with Bengali traditions and ceremonies. Where good standards of work are observed, as in year 2, high quality observational drawings of houses are used as a basis for further developmental work in design technology. Across the Key Stage pupils reflect upon the work of other artists and cultures including their own traditional culture. They use this as a source of inspiration rather than as something to replicate. This approach enhances their personal levels of creativity.

112. Overall pupils' response is good. Equipment and resources are used carefully and pupils enjoy the immediate feedback and praise at the end of their work. They enjoy reflecting and talking about their work. They are keen to be involved in learning activities and sustain concentration throughout that part of the session. Achievement is celebrated through sensitive display. However pupils' work is not always named and that dilutes their sense of achievement.

113. Only two lessons were observed. Taking full account of discussions, observations, planning and scrutiny of work, overall, standards in teaching appear to be satisfactory. There is some variability with teaching ranging from unsatisfactory to good. The good teaching was observed in year 2.

114. Overall planning is secure ensuring progression in skills and experience. Daily planning reflects this guided approach when used wisely. Teaching is good when expectations are appropriate and resources are well chosen and used to focus pupils' attention on the learning objectives. These factors impact positively on achievement. Teaching is less satisfactory when teachers spend too long on convoluted explanations and learning objectives are not well matched to pupils' needs. This reduces time for pupils to engage in activities long enough to develop their own creativity and improve upon their work. Use of support assistants' time is also variable. There are occasions when support staff are not well briefed or prepared and time is not used to best advantage; when they are well used their skilful questioning techniques exact maximum response.

115. Rate of progress is satisfactory accelerating as pupils move towards the end of Key Stage 1. A good range of activities is used to develop pupils' awareness of the work of other artists, cultures, genres and times. Art is well used to develop the skills of all pupils including those with special needs. EAL pupils have valuable opportunities to develop activities that reflect their own Bengali culture. External agencies such as Artists in Residence have been used to develop a Sunderland Banner. Links with the partner school are being established through joint projects and displays in the library. Good use is made of Information Communication Technology to promote learning.

116. Art makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are allocated time to reflect upon their work at the end of each half term. Art is used as a vehicle for other subjects and moral links are established through work on religious festivals such as Easter and Eid. Social skills develop well in group activities where pupils learn to share, take

turns and show respect for equipment. A very strong contribution is made to cultural development through enhanced displays using artefacts, books, prints and posters alongside pupils' own work.

117. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable, very well qualified, well able to support her colleagues and has made a significant contribution to this curriculum area. Resources are varied, of good quality and are very well managed. Portfolios that include samples of work and photographic records are kept to assist pupils' own evaluation. Meetings are held to moderate these samples and assess levels. Other assessment, record keeping and reporting formats are not yet assimilated into the school scheme. The co-ordinator has identified this as a planned development. Monitoring is at an early stage and currently includes sampling of work to check for progression. Time has not been allocated to monitor teaching. There is no provision for extra curricular activities.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

118. During the period of the inspection there were limited opportunities to observe direct teaching in all year groups of technology in Key Stages 1. Other inspection evidence was obtained from displays in classrooms and scrutiny of work in the school.

119. In reception they develop skills through focused practical tasks and then apply them to design and make activities. This provides a good basis for key stage 1 work. By the end of Key Stage 1 standards are satisfactory and in line with expectations. Pupils are able to show an awareness of the design process. In year 1 they are able to design and make room settings for a house. They plan according to a prepared sheet. They are able to use measuring skills in the making process. They have appropriate cutting skills and they are able to join two materials together and can give clear reasons for their selection of materials. In year 2 they are able to apply design and making skills with their knowledge and understanding gained from focused practical tasks. When designing and making puppets they were aware of the key methods that they could use to develop the plain puppet in to a character. Their designs were appropriate and realistic. Pupils have a clear understanding of a useful finished product. Pupils were able to evaluate their designs using appropriate vocabulary. At the end of the lesson an appropriate plenary enhanced, consolidated and extended the learning that had taken place. Pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs take a full part in the curriculum and make good progress. The school has maintained its standards in design technology since the last inspection.

120. Pupils' attitudes to design technology are good. They collaborate well on tasks. They share equipment willingly. Pupils were able to agree and accept responsibilities in group work. They responded well to time limits. They persevere and remain on task through to completion. Due regard is given to health and safety. Pupils were enthusiastic about all aspects of their work.

121. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good. It is based upon clear and detailed planning which builds upon previous learning. Expectations are clear. Effective use is made of question and answer sessions to review and evaluate work. Teachers' interaction with pupils is good and extends learning. The time and pace of lessons are well managed. Effective use is made of the resources available including the deployment of other adults in Key Stage 1. Teachers clearly show a good understanding of the subject knowledge.

122. The management of the subject is good. There is a recently updated scheme of work which gives good support for the teaching of design technology across the school. The co-ordinator has a clear plan for the development of the subject during this academic year. Through the co-ordinator's monitoring of the planning she is aware of the impact of the new scheme of work upon progression. The co-ordinator has not recently had the opportunity to gain an overview of the subject through visiting classrooms to assess teaching and learning. However the co-ordinator has informally visited classrooms. The resources for design technology are good. The school has a well-organised central store for technology.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

123. Only two lessons of the subject were observed during this inspection. Evidence was obtained from a comprehensive survey of displayed work, teachers` plans, pupils` recent and current work and from discussions with teachers and pupils. Pupils attain the standards expected for their age and there are examples of good work in each year group. From this evidence it is clear that pupils make satisfactory progress in geography. The school has maintained its standards in geography.

124. Pupils in the reception classes understand the need to refer to important features of the landscape when giving directions. They use this knowledge to produce a useful map of the route from their homes to school. Year 1 pupils make a good study of the local environment and produce simple but imaginative maps showing the main features in the area. They also use literature, such as *Goldilocks* and *Dogger* as a starting point to construct simple maps with keys. They develop a knowledge and understanding of the different kinds of weather through regular observations. Pupils record their findings using pictures and words creatively to illustrate features such as sunshine, rain and clouds. Year 2 pupils continue these themes and produce detailed maps showing the main features noted during their visit to different parts of the immediate locality.

125. It is evident from the examples studied that teachers plan their work in geography in some detail. They are clear about their learning objectives and the work is pitched at the right level for pupils. In the few lessons seen the pace of the work was appropriate and teachers manage children well, even those who present challenging behaviour. Teachers use a variety of questioning techniques and are quick to give pupils positive feedback. Pupils make steady progress within individual topics and over the key stage as a whole.

126. Pupils with special educational needs are given good levels of support and take a full part in the curriculum and make good progress. Teachers use lessons in geography to give pupils learning English as an additional language, practical activities that build up their vocabulary.

127. Assessment in the subject is just developing and there is no formal record of what pupils have understood or can do. Marking is usually limited to recognition that work has been completed. There are few developmental comments to indicate how pupils can make further progress. The sample of pupils` work indicates that they are given very similar tasks with very little attempt to provide suitable challenge for groups of pupils with different levels of attainment.

128. Pupils` work in geography is valued and is carefully displayed in classrooms and around the school.

129. The curriculum co-ordinator manages the subject well and has a clear overview of the curriculum. The policy and guidelines provide teachers with the necessary guidance and support, though the school acknowledges that local geography is much more developed than far away places. These are to be reviewed when the new National Curriculum is introduced. The subject audit is a good management tool where developments can be celebrated and future initiatives can be stated clearly. There is a good supply of easily accessed resources for the subject to be taught effectively. A good range of visits are arranged to extend pupils` learning beyond the classroom such as the Year 2 trip to Durham and the Cathedral as part of the cross curricular topic on St. Cuthbert.

## **HISTORY**

130. Only one lesson of history was observed during this inspection. Evidence was obtained from a comprehensive survey of displayed work, teachers` plans, pupils` recent and current work and from discussions with teachers and pupils. From this evidence it is clear that pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in history. Pupils attain the standards expected for their age and there are many examples of good work in each year group. The school has maintained its standards in history.

131. Pupils in the reception classes use a range of historical artefacts connected with wash day and a beautifully re-created miners' cottage to further develop their factual knowledge, chronology and understanding of changes over time. In year 1 children can recap factual information of famous people such as Grace Darling and Florence Nightingale. They are able to discuss how the role of nurses has been directly influenced by events in the past. In Year 2 a detailed display in the shared area shows that children are able to write and draw pictures and diagrams to detail how their lives are substantially different from children at various stages of recent and not so recent history. They are able to collect first hand data by using a grandmother as a primary source of information and then in appropriate words and pictures. Accounts show accurate observation, detailed analysis and good understanding of change over time.

132. It is evident from the examples studied that teachers plan their work in history in some detail. They are clear about their learning objectives and the work is pitched at the right level for pupils. Pupils make steady progress within individual topics and over the key stage as a whole. Pupils with special educational needs take a full part in the curriculum and make good progress. Teachers use lessons in history to give pupils learning English as an additional language, practical activities that builds up their vocabulary. Assessment is not a strong feature in history. While work is marked conscientiously, this is done more for giving praise and rewarding effort than for pointing the way to further achievement. In classes, however, a good range of questioning styles is used effectively to establish what the children know, understand and can do. Pupils' work in history is valued and is carefully displayed in classrooms and around the school.

133. The history co-ordinator has recently left the school and her work is being covered on a temporary basis by the headteacher. She manages the subject well and has a clear overview of the curriculum and her audit showed appropriate areas to be developed. The main focus of these developments is in connection with the implementation of national guidelines and in particular the development of the famous people and events aspect of the subject. Local history and those aspects of history directly related to the child are very strong. There is a good range of resources connected with these local history aspects which have a very positive effect on teaching and learning. The policies and guidelines for history provide teachers with the necessary guidance and support but do need to be extended to ensure that all aspects of the new curriculum are fully covered. The reports to parents are unsatisfactory because they do not always mention the subject. These are to be reviewed when the new National Curriculum is introduced.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

134. Standards in Information Communication Technology (ICT) are in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. The school has committed specific times during the day for ICT activities for the pupils; these coupled with very sound teaching have a direct benefit on the pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. The majority of the weaknesses identified in the last report no longer apply. Teaching is satisfactory overall with some good elements; the teachers are now more confident in their delivery and the content. Classrooms are equipped with computers, Information Communication Technology is now well integrated into teaching and is being used regularly to support the majority of other subjects of the curriculum. Information Communication Technology resources are in the process of being identified in science.

135. Evidence was gained from scrutiny of work, assessment tests, teachers' planning documentation, observations of teachers and pupils, and by talking to pupils and the co-ordinator. In the reception classes pupils operate a programmable toy to guide its movements either forwards or backwards. They learn to use the mouse to drag pictures in matching games and draw simple patterns and pictures with a graphics program. They have an understanding of a few keyboard functions such as the enter key to make things happen and arrow keys to move things. When observed pupils can operate a listening centre competently and are aware of the importance of technology in their every-day lives.

136. Year 1 pupils are developing both keyboard and screen related skills and are making sound progress. They open programs in a variety of ways and can talk about how to save and print. They are aware of the advantages and limitations of computers as in the inappropriate size values of the rubber and pencil offered by the computer paint programme. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils work independently on the computer and have a good range of ICT language; higher attaining pupils have a broad knowledge of the function keys. Pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs take a full part in the curriculum and make good progress. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are well supported and use appropriate programs. The pupils use ICT skills and knowledge in other subjects. They use programs to produce charts for analysis of geography data, for example, changes in the weather. Paint programs in art allow the pupils to develop feelings for colour and patterns. Pupils produce work using full stops, capital letters supporting their developments in literacy. The pupils solve problems when they are controlling the Roamer in activities that require a specific geometric shape to be followed.

137. Pupils show a very positive and mature attitude when working on computers; they enjoy using the equipment and behave well. They show interest and enthusiasm and are keen and willing to learn. Most pupils readily take turns on the keyboard and show good spans of concentration. At the end of the task they indicate to the teacher that the computer is now available for the next pupil.

138. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good features. Teachers plan for information communication technology opportunities in their medium term plans. The subject knowledge of the teachers is secure and they are confident when handling hardware issues. For example, a teacher dealt with a printer problem, whilst asking questions about the print menu. In most classes teachers supervise pupils on the use of the machines well and enable them to develop confidence in their operation. The skills are taught consistently. Good teaching is characterised by a good variety of questions which make the pupils think about the computer and the program. In year 2 the pupils have to give reasons why printing is slow and are required to use correct vocabulary. Overall, satisfactory use is made of the support staff, although, at times, there is insufficient guidance to helpers so their skills are under used.

139. The subject is well led and well managed. The co-ordinator gives clear directions to raise standards. The policy and scheme of work are comprehensive and a good support for the staff. The use of core assessment tasks for each year enables the teachers to focus teaching and have a positive impact on the pupils' learning. There are some up-to-date resources for information communication technology in all classes. The Information Communication Technology displays around the school of the pupils' work, through a variety of subjects, celebrate their achievement and provide a good sense of progression.

## **MUSIC**

140. Few opportunities were available during the inspection to observe music lessons. However, music was also observed during collective worship. Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 are satisfactory. The standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

141. Pupils throughout the school are able to sing simple songs from memory. In reception pupils sing *'Miss Polly had a Dolly'* with enthusiasm and spontaneity. In assembly and in lessons observed pupils sing unaccompanied and in unison. Their singing is tuneful and sweet on occasions but lacks tone or texture. Pupils are aware of dynamics and when hand signals are used as a prompt they sing with appropriate tone and pitch, tapping and clapping purposefully.

142. In year 1 the majority of pupils keep a steady beat and play follow the leader successfully. By year 2 they identify irregular rhythms. Pupils listen attentively to a good range of music and offer interesting, evaluative and reflective comments. Pupils respond well when given the opportunity to make music. They enjoy identifying and keeping time to dancing music and make appropriate



comparisons with marching time. They are keen to play the part of the conductor. They assist and support each other in keeping time and English as an additional language pupils join in singing when linguistic skills are sufficiently developed. In the sessions observed pupils consolidated activities.

143. Overall teaching is satisfactory. Planning closely reflects the programmes of study set out in the school scheme of work. Where lessons have a clear structure, the pace of the lesson is improved and this successfully supports learning. In lessons observed at Key Stage 1 and in assemblies, pupils are not sufficiently challenged and low expectations hamper achievement. Planning suggests that by year 2 pupils are more appropriately challenged and involved in their learning. Where teachers have good strategies for gaining and retaining attention pupils stay on task and attend carefully. Pupils are seldom used to demonstrate their abilities or promote the quality of performance through improved breathing technique, posture or tonal quality. On occasions praise is over generously given. There is a good range of instruments available. In assembly one pupil kept time on a tambourine.

144. Posters displaying musical vocabulary and poetry set to music, connect well with literacy skills. A display of interesting musical instruments develops pupils' awareness of world wide music making. Currently there are no external agencies involved in school or extra curricular initiatives. Opportunities are created for reflection at the end of some lessons and during assembly. One pupil volunteered that the '*Ladysmith Black Mambazo Choir*' stopped his mam from feeling lonely. Pupils are trusted to care for instruments and CD players in the music area. During assembly one special educational needs pupil was ably assisted to clap in time. Cultural opportunities arise when listening to a range of music from other cultures and from their own cultural traditions.

145. The recent scheme of work identifies a list of concepts to be taught that ensures progression from term to term and year to year. The mix of musical topics has no specific reference to year groups. Some guidance is given on teaching composition or notation. Assessment strategies are yet to be employed. Parents are invited into class assemblies from time to time and end of year productions. The co-ordinator has recently developed the music room which is well managed. The more recently completed school audit reflects only generic concerns. Little reference is made to developing teaching and learning skills or improving standards of attainment. Whilst she acknowledges the enthusiasm of the staff the co-ordinator needs to develop her subject specific knowledge. The co-ordinator has not had an opportunity to gain an overview of the subject through observing teaching.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

146. At Key Stage 1 attainment is in line with national expectations. The school has maintained standards since the last inspection.

147. In the reception class children are able to develop skills in physical education lessons using the school hall and the nursery garden. They are able to jump, use a variety of movements to move around and they are aware of different body parts. Throughout these activities they are able to make sensible decisions about where and how to move.

148. At Key Stage 1 it was only possible to observe work in the areas of dance and gymnastics. In dance pupils are developing rhythm and poise. They successfully control their movements, showing changes in speed, direction and levels. They are able to develop a sequence in their work and respond well to percussion and music. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. In gymnastics they are able to develop a sequence moving from a rocking movement into a roll. They are able to transfer this routine into using different body parts. They improve their work through practice and show refinement in their performance.

149. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are consistently good in PE lessons. They participate with enthusiasm and a good degree of co-operation. They are attentive to instructions, keen to demonstrate and try hard to refine their performance. All pupils are dressed appropriately. Behaviour during lessons is good.

150. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers use a well constructed published scheme to support their teaching and meet the National Curriculum requirements. Lessons are well structured to support the development of skills across the key stage. Effective use is made of pupil demonstration to highlight key teaching points, they discuss the work being done, and these examples help pupils make effective progress. The pace of lessons is good and enables pupils to practise and develop skills within the time available. Teachers also demonstrate effectively. They also give clear signals, move around the room well to endorse instructions, encourage and praise pupils. Teachers have clear expectations in terms of behaviour and effort and share good relationships with their pupils. Satisfactory support is given to pupils with English as an additional language.

151. A new scheme of work is now in place and all aspects of work are appropriately covered. This has addressed an area for future development in the last inspection. The management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has a clear plan for the development of the subject during this academic year and the focus will be the development of dance. The co-ordinator monitors the planning. Other evaluations of the work in physical education are under taken at the termly subject link meetings which has a representative of each year group. The co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to gain an overview of the subject through observing teaching and learning. The school makes no provision for extra curricular activities in physical education. The hall is satisfactory for movement and the floor is well cared for. The school has a good range of resources for gymnastics and the development of games skills. The school lacks its own grassed area and this is a disadvantage.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

152. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in religious education matches that which is expected for pupils of this age. Lessons, scrutiny of work and discussion with pupils show that pupils have an effective working knowledge of the themes in the Locally Agreed Syllabus. They have skills that enable them to relate what they learn in religious education to their own life and experience. This fully meets the requirement for pupils to learn about and from religion. The school has maintained its standards since the last report.

153. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress in developing an understanding of Christianity, Islam and Buddhism. They improve their understanding of right and wrong, learn moral values such as friendship, forgiveness and respect for others. As a result, relationships in the school are mostly good. For example, in discussions around the topic of Easter, pupils knew that a feature of the life of Jesus was forgiving others and they related the idea well in friendly, caring attitudes to others. The development of pupils' spiritual, moral and social values is a good feature of religious education teaching in the school. They learn to appreciate that the festivals and celebrations of Christianity can be compared with those of other religions. For example, in a year 1 lesson, pupils learned about the customs of Islam and how the festival of Eid-Ul-Fitr celebrates the end of Ramadan. A very positive feature of the religious education curriculum is the way it is brought alive by using artefacts and parents to explain the customs and beliefs of others. Multi-faith displays are used to good effect around the school. Good use is made of pupils' language skills when they write poems such as new life in Spring that show their understanding of the message of Easter. Good links between RE and personal and social development are also created. For example, pupils show they are aware of the need to be concerned about themselves and others in comments such as *'I feel happy when I help people,'* and *'Grown ups can feel sad sometimes too.'* Whole school assemblies make a significant contribution to pupils' awareness of the importance of ceremony and custom to religious belief. For example, in a school assembly about the loaves and the fishes, pupils were made aware of the needs of others and how they can help.

154. All pupils make good progress in religious education. They cover a wide range of work and build up their knowledge and understanding from one year to the next. Open-ended questions challenge the thinking of all pupils. However, teachers also ask direct questions, adapting them to challenge the

pupil's ability to answer. This successfully involves all pupils, including those who have special educational needs and English as an additional language. Pupils enjoy listening to stories and discuss what they know following the story. They talk about how the story makes them feel, or how it relates to their own life. They work willingly and concentrate well, listening to and reflecting on what others contribute.

155. The quality of teaching is satisfactory with a large minority being good. Teachers' planning is satisfactory with clear learning objectives for all pupils that ensure they are given work appropriate for their abilities. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and use the recently introduced scheme of work, prepared by the co-ordinator, effectively to ensure that the Locally Agreed Syllabus is followed. Lessons are planned effectively, behaviour management is mainly good and tasks are provided to challenge pupils' thinking at the different levels of attainment. However, care must be taken that a balance is maintained between direct teaching of the tasks and written work pupils are expected to do. Care must also be taken to ensure that the place of the subject on the curriculum is not compromised by it being time tabled after a boisterous lesson. When this did happen the children were unable to concentrate, behaviour became unacceptable, little learning took place and as a result teaching became unsatisfactory.

156. Teachers' planning shows that they have satisfactory expectations of their pupils and place importance upon creating worthwhile experiences for them where they are given opportunities to develop their self confidence and explore their feelings. For example, in a year 1 lesson, religious artefacts were used very well to focus a discussion on the importance of Easter to Christians. All teachers use resources well and ensure that the blend of question and answer, co-operative and individual work improves pupils' attainment and progress. Teachers use the planned themes for whole school assemblies to make a good contribution to the subject and they encourage pupils to think about festivals celebrated by Christians and followers of other faiths. Visits to places of worship such as Durham Cathedral and visitors such as the local vicar to school enrich the teaching of religious education.

157. The curriculum is broad and balanced and the Locally Agreed Syllabus and scheme of work provide a helpful structure for teachers' planning of lessons. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and has a clear understanding and overview of the subject and there are detailed long and medium term plans. Resources are good. The co-ordinator monitors planning and pupils' work and shares expertise with all the staff in meetings. The reports to parents are unsatisfactory because they do not always mention the subject. The school benefits from visitors from the local church.

158. The subject makes a positive contribution to art, music and to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of pupils' education.