

INSPECTION REPORT

TILERY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Stockton on Tees

LEA area: Stockton on Tees

Unique reference number: 111660

head teacher: Mr J Repton

Reporting inspector: Ms C Dutton
15565

Dates of inspection: 2nd – 5th July 2001

Inspection number: 192644
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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	St Anne's Terrace Portrack Stockton on Tees
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Councillor C Coombs
Date of previous inspection:	March 1997

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			Art and design	The schools results and pupils achievements.
			English as an additional language	How well are pupils taught?
				How well is the school led and managed?
				What should the school do to improve further?
1974 1	Trevor Smith	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?
3083 9	Anne Pullan	Team Inspector	English	
			Music	
			The foundation stage	
1499 1	Alan Hardwicke	Team Inspector	Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Design and technology	
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2288 1	George Halliday	Team Inspector	Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Tilery Primary School is an average sized school and admits pupils aged from three to 11. It is situated on the edge of the town centre of Stockton on Tees and serves three main local authority housing estates. The area is one of great social disadvantage. There is a high mobility rate in the area, during the previous year 39 pupils joined the school other than at the usual time of admission and 37 left. There are 256 pupils on roll, 125 boys and 131 girls and of these 77 per cent are eligible for free school meals, which is much higher than the national average. The school has a 26 full time equivalent place nursery class which is presently oversubscribed. There is also a unit for pupils who have specific educational needs and there are twenty places within this unit. Five per cent of pupils have statements of special educational needs and 27 percent are on the schools register. These figures are well above the national average. There are two pupils in the school for whom English is an additional language. Pupils' attainment on entry to the reception classes in 2000 was below the levels expected and in previous years has been well below. The school is part of an Education Action Zone aimed at improving standards.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Tilery Primary School is an effective school. Although standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science are below those nationally and of similar schools, the school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies well and standards are rising. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with national expectations in mathematics and science. They are also in line for reading, writing and speaking but listening skills remain low. Pupils have sound attitudes to their lessons and relationships within the school are good. Teaching and learning is good in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and these pupils make good progress. Teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 2. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs and these pupils make good progress. The strength in leadership and management is provided by the head teacher and he has been especially effective in the monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching and correctly identifying the schools priorities for development. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 and the Foundation Stage is good and so pupils make good progress.
- The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good and they enhance the curriculum.
- The school's promotion of good behaviour is effective and relationships within the school are good.
- The effective implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is beginning to raise standards.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs and they make good progress.

What could be improved

- Attainment in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The curriculum for geography at Key Stage 2.
- Role of the governing body in applying the principles of best value to spending decisions.

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 steady progress since the previous inspection in 1997. The school has effectively implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and have devised strategies to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning and this has had a positive impact on raising attainment. Procedures for assessment and data analysis have been recently implemented but it is too soon to see the impact of this. The subject co-ordinators have developed their role and are now beginning to have an impact on raising standards within their subjects; this is particularly the case for the core subjects and information and communication technology. However some schemes of work for other subjects have not yet been fully implemented and geography at Key Stage 2 does not meet statutory requirements. The school has exceeded the targets set for English and mathematics in 2001 and also exceeded those set for 2002. The school continues to have the commitment and capacity to improve and results at the end of Key Stage 1 show that standards are rising quicker than similar schools nationally.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	E*	E*	E*	E	well above average above A
mathematics	E*	E*	E	D	average B
science	E*	E	E	D	average C
					below average D
					well below average E
					bottom 5% of schools E*

Direct comparisons with national and similar schools are difficult for this school. The school has a unit for pupils with moderate learning difficulties and this adversely affects the results. These results show that when compared with schools nationally Tilery results are well below the levels expected and are in the bottom 5 per cent of schools nationally in English. However, when compared to schools in similar circumstances the results look slightly better but are still well below in English and below in mathematics and science. This is because the inclusion of the test results of pupils in the special unit depresses the school's performance.

The inspection findings show that standards are rising as reflected in the results obtained at Key Stage 1 and that over the past three years standards reflect the national upward trend. Results for 2001, although not included in this report, are better than in previous years. The results at the end of both key stages in 2001 show that standards are rising in English, mathematics and science and the targets set for English and mathematics of 50 percent of pupils attaining level 4 were exceeded.

Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with those expected nationally by the end of both key stages. Indications are that standards are rising due to the high focus given to developing information and communication technology skills but also the teachers growing confidence in delivering the subject.

Standards in religious education are as expected by the end of Key Stage 1 but below those identified in the syllabus used in the local authority's schools by the end of Key Stage 2. This is due to the inconsistency of teaching within Key Stage 2 and the lack of the syllabus being applied rigorously throughout the key stage.

Standards of attainment appear to have 'dropped' in some other subjects, for example geography. This is due to the amount of time and focus being given to the implementation of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy, which have been the main priorities for the school.

Pupils enter the nursery with standards of attainment well below those expected nationally, but they make good progress and enter the school with standards of attainment below those expected nationally.

The school set targets to raise attainment in English and mathematics of 50 per cent of pupils to achieve the national expectation in 2001 and this was exceeded by ten per cent and also exceeded the targets set for 2002.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Pupils enjoy coming to school and have sound attitudes to their work, although they are much better amongst the younger pupils who are enthusiastic and keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils know, understand and follow the school rules well. There is some unsatisfactory behaviour from a minority of older pupils but these are usually well managed by their teachers.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are good and this makes a significant contribution to the quality of education provided.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The majority of pupils attend school regularly and on time.

Independent learning skills are not well developed and pupils have few opportunities to use their initiative. The behaviour of a significant minority of older pupils inhibits the opportunities for pupils to use their initiative and responsibility. Pupils are polite and work well together when given the opportunity.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Seventy-four lessons, or parts of lessons were seen during the inspection. Of these 40 per cent were satisfactory, 44 per cent good and 13 per cent very good and three per cent excellent. There were no unsatisfactory lessons seen.

Children in the nursery and reception classes are taught well and this gives them a good start to their education. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is good and well matched to pupils' needs and abilities. The teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall but there is some inconsistency in teachers' expectations from Year 4 upwards. For example, what the more able are capable of and the standard of presentation expected in some classes.

Teaching of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is good when supported in their classes and in small withdrawal groups.

The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and these are taught well and enhance the teaching of the basic skills. Teachers generally have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach and in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour. All teachers make good use of the resources available to them, this is particularly evident in the teaching of information and communication technology and is having a direct impact upon the standards achieved by the pupils. The weaknesses in teaching are directly attributed to the match of work to pupils' abilities, especially those pupils capable of higher attainment. Lesson aims are not always specific enough and are not always shared with the pupils so as to develop their understanding of what is to be achieved.

Pupils learning is good in the foundation stage and Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. It is better in the lower years of the school as the younger pupils have a more positive attitude to their lessons and are keen to learn. Some older pupils have little self-discipline and do not always concentrate on the lesson and this has a negative effect on their rate of learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Unsatisfactory. Good in the foundation stage and Key Stage 1, but unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2, as the statutory requirements for geography are not met. The range of extra-curricular activities is very good. The school makes good use of visits and visitors to the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. A good combination of in class support and withdrawal groups enables these pupils to make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school has a clear code of conduct, which is reinforced during the school day. The school promotes pupils' understanding of their rights and their responsibilities. The Comenius project enables staff to exchange visits with teachers from other countries and this has a direct benefit for the pupils understanding of other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Teachers know their pupils well and the school has made recent progress in developing procedures for assessing pupils' academic attainment. However, these are new and have not yet had the opportunity to have an impact upon standards achieved.

Tilery Primary School is a caring school that puts the welfare of the pupils in its' care at the forefront of all that they do. Personal and social education is well taught throughout the

school and clear guidance is given for the minority pupils who find it difficult to conform to expected standards of behaviour.

The schools relationships with parents are good and parents think very highly of the school, the head teacher and staff. Those parents that responded expressed a high level of satisfaction with most aspects of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Sound. The head teacher leads the school well and subject co-ordinators are developing as effective curriculum managers. The weakness in management is the lack of an overview of the foundation subjects to ensure coverage and delivery and attainment at the end of Key Stage 2.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors take an interest in the school and have established committees to assist them in their duties. However the curriculum for geography in Key Stage 2 does not meet statutory requirements nor does the school apply the principles of best value fully.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The head teacher and senior management team have led this area well and correctly identified the areas of strength and weaknesses within the school. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in the core subjects has been particularly effective and is beginning to have an impact on raising standards.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Day to day administration of finance is efficient and sound use is made of information technology. Spending is monitored and specific grants are used appropriately.

The school has sufficient suitably qualified teachers and other staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. Support staff are deployed effectively and work well alongside and with the teaching staff. Good systems are in place for the induction of newly qualified teachers and the staff handbook gives basic information about the school. The school's accommodation is good and has ample space for the number of pupils on roll. Both buildings are well maintained and kept very clean and tidy. Learning resources are satisfactory in quality and quantity with the exception of geography. The new computer suite, partially funded by Education Action Zone (EAZ), is an asset to the school and is helping not only to raise attainment in this subject but also to raise the pupils' self-esteem and pride in their 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"> • The way that things have improved since the previous inspection. • The way the school builds children's confidence. • The support given to pupils who have special educational needs. • The school is approachable. • Provision for extra-curricular activities. • That the school 'knows' its pupils well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards of attainment in English and mathematics.

Although only five parents attended the meeting for parents prior to the inspection and only 11 per cent returned the questionnaire, the majority expressed a broad satisfaction with the school and believe it has improved since the previous inspection. The inspection findings confirm the positive views held by the parents and agree that standards of attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 need some improvement.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1 Direct comparisons with national and similar schools are difficult for this school. The school has a unit for pupils with moderate learning difficulties within the school and this adversely affects the results. The national test results in 2000 show that when compared with school nationally Tilery results are well below the levels expected and are in the bottom 5 per cent of schools nationally for English. However when compared to schools in similar circumstances the results look slightly better but are still well below in English and below in mathematics and science. Pupils enter the nursery with standards of attainment well below those expected nationally, but they make good progress and enter the school with standards of attainment below those expected nationally.

2 The inspection findings show that standards are rising and that over the past three years standards are on an upward trend. Results for 2001 although not included in this report, are better than in previous years. The results at the end of both key stages in 2001 show that standards are rising in English, mathematics and science and that there is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. The school has effectively implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and these are having an impact in raising standards in these subjects.

3 Over the last three years the school has made steady improvements in English and standards are almost in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. The exception being in listening skills, which are still below the levels expected. Despite this improvement, by the end of Key Stage 2, standards are still below expectations. In the national tests for 11 year olds in 2000, the school's attainment was very low in comparison to other schools nationally. The school's attainment was also well below similar schools based on the number of pupils eligible for free school meals. However, the standard of work by pupils in Year 6 is higher than these test results would indicate.

4 Standards in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with the national average, while at the end of Year 6 they are below those expected nationally. At the time of the school's previous inspection standards were found to be below those nationally at the end of both key stages. The school has therefore been successful in raising standards at Key Stage 1, whilst they have remained the same in Key Stage 2.

5 Over the last few years there has been an improving trend in the national test results at the end of both key stages and indications from the present inspection suggest that this trend will continue. However, inspection evidence shows that there are pupils capable of higher attainment who are not achieving their full potential. This is a result of aspects of the teaching where activities set do not often challenge them.

6 In the 2000 science Key Stage 1 teacher assessments, standards of attainment were below the national average. In the Key Stage 2 national tests, standards of attainment were well below the national average. When compared with similar schools standards are broadly average at Key Stage 1 and below average at Key Stage 2.

7 The results of the inspection indicate that standards of attainment in science broadly meet national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and are below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards are beginning to improve. The principal reasons for this are improvements in planning which make better use of national guidelines; improved

assessment procedures which are beginning to inform planning effectively and more effective monitoring of teaching and pupils' work. As a result pupils achieve good progress in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2.

8 Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with those expected nationally by the end of both key stages. Indications are that standards are rising due to the high focus given to developing information and communication technology skills but also the teachers growing confidence in the teaching of the subject.

9 Standards of attainment meet the expectations of the local authority's 'agreed syllabus for religious education' at the end of Key Stage 1 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards of attainment are below these expectations at the end of Key Stage 2.

10 Although standards of attainment are rising in English, mathematics and science the standards reported in the previous inspection have not been maintained in respect of some of the other subjects, for example geography, art and design and ICT. This is due to the amount of time and focus being given to the implementation of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy, which have been the main priorities for the school.

11 The percentage of pupils with special educational needs, including statements, 27 per cent, which is above the national average. The percentage with statements of special educational needs is well above the national average. The school makes good provision for these pupils and they receive good support from teachers and support staff. As a result pupils make good progress. The school only has two pupils for whom English is an additional language and these have only recently joined the school. These pupils are supported well within their lessons, sometimes by a bilingual assistant, and therefore they make good progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12 Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attitudes to work are satisfactory, although they are much better amongst the younger ones who are usually enthusiastic and keen to learn. Amongst the older pupils, however, attitudes to work are far more variable, with a significant minority often showing little interest or involvement in their work. These pupils often sit passively and 'switch off' completely when the teacher is talking, with the result that response to questions, or participation in discussions, is frequently quite low.

13 On balance, behaviour in and out of class is now generally good. Most pupils know, understand and follow the school rules well. In some classes, however, a significant minority, particularly at Key Stage 2, have little self-discipline but are usually managed well by their teachers. Exclusions are relatively low (3 fixed period) and dealt with properly. Incidents of fighting and aggressive behaviour do occasionally occur, but are handled well and fully documented. Pupils care for their school and treat the building and equipment carefully.

14 Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and staff are good. This makes a significant contribution to the quality of education provided. Pupils are polite, welcoming to visitors and work well together when opportunities arise. In general, however, they do not always fully understand the impact of their actions upon others, although most do show due respect for other peoples' feeling and beliefs. This was very apparent in a Year 5 religious education lesson when most pupils joined in sensibly during a role-play activity to experience a Muslim prayer ceremony. Pupils in the nursery and reception classes are well settled into school life and already starting to develop good work habits. Independent learning skills are

not well promoted and although pupils willingly accept responsibility to carry out tasks around school, there are relatively few opportunities for them to do so.

15 Attendance is similar to that reported at the last inspection, and is close to the national average for primary schools. Unauthorised absence, however, is above the national norm despite the school's best efforts to follow up all unexplained absences. Punctuality is generally good. Almost all pupils arrive on time and are settled in class promptly at the start of sessions.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16 The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. This is a direct result of the monitoring and evaluation of teaching undertaken by the head teacher and the senior management team. Strengths and areas for development are identified and acted upon. Teaching was at least satisfactory in all the lessons seen. It was good or better in 60 per cent of lessons, including 13 per cent where it was very good and in 3 per cent of lessons teaching was excellent.

17 Teaching in the foundation stage is good. Teachers act as good role models for the pupils and relationships are very good. This creates a positive atmosphere for the children to learn in. Activities are set up which interest the children and build upon their own experiences and here they make good progress. Teachers have good subject knowledge in both English and mathematics and these subjects are taught well. The weakness in the teaching in the foundation stage is in the planning as planning for activities that are not directly led by the teacher do not specifically indicate what pupils should be able to do by the end of the session. This results in some lost opportunities for children's development.

18 Teaching in Key Stage 1 is good and sometimes very good. Teachers know their pupils well and respond well to their needs. Teachers cater for pupils of all abilities within their lessons, for example in Year 1 and 2 extension activities with a greater degree of difficulty are provided for those who complete their work quickly. Because of this pupils of all abilities make good progress throughout this key stage. Teachers have good subject knowledge, especially in the teaching of the basic skills and have implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well. These are having a positive impact upon raising standards, whilst also assisting teachers in their planning. Teachers use the structure of these strategies in all lessons and this has a positive effect, especially in the use of a plenary to summarise the main teaching points. Teachers use a variety of strategies to cater for the individual needs of the pupils. For example, in a Year 1 English lesson the teacher's use of such strategies engaged all the pupils interest and motivated them to learn. The strength in the teaching is in the management of pupils and resources. Teachers make very good use of the resources available to them and prepare their lessons thoroughly. For example, all equipment for the lessons are prepared and ready for the pupils at the beginning of the lesson and so no time is lost and this results in a good pace to the lessons.

19 Teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. The management of pupils and resources are good and are a strength of the teaching. There are on occasions some older pupils who exhibit challenging behaviour but this is managed well by all the teachers. Teachers know their pupils well but the school is just beginning to develop strategies for tracking the progress of individual pupils and this is not yet fully implemented and therefore is not used to plan lessons and set targets to ensure that all pupils make the progress they are capable of. Teachers plan different activities for the pupils who need more support but do not always challenge the more able and on occasion these pupils are simply given more work at the same level. For example, further 'sums' of the same degree of difficulty in a mathematics lesson. Although all the teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory or better, scrutiny of pupils' books showed that there are gaps in the teaching of certain areas of the curriculum. For example art and design, geography and music. Progress of pupils 'slowed down' in Year 4 where teachers' expectations varied and were not consistent. For example in the presentation of pupils' work or in the amount of work expected. It is also in this year group (Year 4) that pupils' attitudes to their work begin to deteriorate and this continues through to Year 6. Some of the older pupils tend to sit passively and do not really listen to what the teacher is saying and then do not understand the task and have to ask for clarification.

20 The main areas for development in teaching are within Key Stage 2 where lesson aims are not always shared with the pupils and so they are unclear as to the purpose of the lesson. On occasions these lesson aims are not specific enough and there are too many to be covered in one lesson. At present teachers often focus on what to teach, rather than what pupils should learn. There are instances where teachers' expectations are too low in relation to what the more able are capable of achieving and work is not always sufficiently matched to their abilities and therefore these pupils do not make the progress that they could. In Key Stage 2 classes the teaching does not sufficiently develop pupils' independence. They are not given enough opportunities to choose their own methods or presentation, nor to take increasing responsibility for their own learning. There are some gaps in teachers' subject expertise in art and design, information and communication technology and music where teachers are insecure in their subject knowledge and this inhibits their confidence to teach the subject successfully.

21 Whilst planning has improved in the core subjects, it is still inconsistent in the other subjects. Teachers are often too vague in their identification of learning objectives and the work set is not always sufficiently demanding to challenge pupils of all abilities, particularly the most able. Assessment procedures are often superficial and informal, and do not serve to inform future planning for individuals or groups. Emphasis has rightly been placed on the teaching of basic skills, and the strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy have been effectively implemented.

22 Homework is set for pupils in Key Stage 1 where they take home reading books to read and learn spellings and tables. However this does not increase significantly as the pupils become older. Very little formal homework is set in Key Stage 2, even at the end of the key stage, and this does not prepare the pupils sufficiently well for secondary school.

23 Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2 but they could do better. The Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have had insufficient time to impact upon the attainment and there have been gaps in the teaching of the curriculum. This is due to the schools' focus on literacy and numeracy and insufficient time given to implement schemes of work in some of the foundation subjects, such as art and design and geography. However indications are that the impact of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are having a positive effect that is gradually working its way through the school and standards and rate of learning are rising.

24 All teachers and support assistants are aware of the needs of pupils with special educational needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator liaises closely with all staff. With the co-ordinator's support teachers write individual education plans for pupils in their class. While these give clear indications of targets for pupils to achieve, they do not always show clearly enough what steps teachers should take to help pupils reach their targets. Teachers and support assistants work well together to plan what pupils will learn in lessons so that usually the activities match pupils' needs. This gives support assistants a good focus for the support they give. For instance, in a mathematics lesson in Year 2 the support assistant gave three pupils a lot of help in doubling small numbers so they learned quickly and well. In one lesson in the support unit, however, work was too hard for a group of pupils so even with the help of the support assistant they did not make much progress. Overall the teaching of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is good and these pupils make good progress.

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

25 In the previous inspection key issues for action included aspects of planning and assessment. Planning and assessment procedures were not sufficiently developed to ensure

that work was closely matched to pupils' prior attainment. Whilst these shortcomings have been remedied in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, there is still a need to continue development in the other subjects. The school has responded effectively to national initiatives in literacy and numeracy, and this has meant that curriculum development time in the last few years has been monopolised by these subjects. Planning in the other subjects needs to be refined, so that learning objectives are clear, all pupils are given sufficiently challenging work to do, and there is clear tracking of individual work.

26 At present, particularly where pupils of the same year-group are in different classes, it is not possible to ensure that they are all given equality of access and opportunity. The nursery children who attend in the mornings take part in whole-school activities such as assemblies, while the afternoon children do not, and so these pupils are not fully included.

27 The curriculum that the school provides is unsatisfactory. Whilst the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are fully covered, there are shortcomings in other areas, which mean that the school is not meeting its statutory obligations. The curriculum for geography is not fully in place, so that pupils cannot be provided with the minimum, which the National Curriculum requires. There are also inconsistencies in the delivery of the art and design curriculum. These deficiencies are mainly focused in Key Stage 2. There is a need to give urgent attention to these areas, so that all pupils can receive their entitlement to a fully broad and balanced curriculum.

28 Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Suitable procedures are in place to identify these pupils at an early stage and individual education plans have well-focused targets to identify small and achievable steps needed for improvement. Support staff are well deployed and work well alongside teachers to give sensitive and well-structured help. Teachers draw up individual education plans for each pupil which help them plan work to match pupils' needs. Pupils are supported mainly in the classroom. Those pupils who require specialist support from local authority services receive it on a regular basis either in small withdrawal groups or individually, for instance from the Learning Support Service, Behaviour Support Service and the Educational Psychologist.

29 Policies and schemes of work are in place for all the core subjects and some other subjects. The school has decided to base these on national guidance and indications are that these will be in place for all subjects by September 2001. Religious education is taught according to the recommendations of the locally agreed syllabus.

30 The provision for pupils' personal and social education is good. Good attention is given to health education, personal hygiene and sex education. Foundation stage and Key Stage 1 pupils are taught to wash their hands before meals, while the older pupils in Key Stage 2 are taught to understand the difference between the medicinal use and misuse of drugs. The development of self-esteem, personal responsibility and care for others and the environment is promoted in various ways within the curriculum, helping pupils towards becoming good future citizens.

31 The school provides a very good range of extra curricular activities, including musical and sporting groups and residential visits, which enriches pupils' learning. Funding from the local Education Action Zone is used to provide a range of sporting and other activities, which are well supported by the pupils. The school has good links with the local community, with pupils going to local old people's homes to sing, visits to local churches, and the work of an artist in residence has enriched pupils' aesthetic experience. The school participates in an international link programme with schools in Finland, Spain and Ireland, and several members of staff have visited partner schools. Developing electronic mail and Internet contacts are enabling pupils to find out about the lives of children in the wider world.

32 At the previous inspection positive comments were made about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural dimensions of education. The school's provision for these aspects remains good. It has a significant impact on pupils' social behaviour, and makes a good contribution to the life of the school.

33 Spiritual provision is good. By considering such themes as 'dedication, honesty and friendship', pupils are encouraged to reflect upon ideas that underpin beliefs from different faiths. The religious education curriculum provides an appropriate range of opportunities for pupils to understand how beliefs in a god are celebrated in different cultures. In other areas of the curriculum; for example, in literature, science and art and design, pupils are given opportunities to explore values and beliefs. The school meets the legal requirements for collective worship in a satisfactory manner.

34 Moral provision is good. The school has a clear 'code of conduct' which is reinforced during the school day. The staff are aware that they are role models for acceptable behaviour and they promote this effectively through the quality of relationships that exist between them and the pupils. Assemblies provide opportunities for different moral themes to be explored; for example, a promise, selflessness and caring. At times good use is made of stories and pupil role-play to explore situations. The inclusion of 'circle-time' (where pupils sit in a circle and discuss topics which effect their daily lives both at home and at school) within the curriculum helps promote these effectively.

35 Social provision is good. The school takes great care to promote all pupils' understanding of their rights and responsibilities. However, it does not provide sufficient opportunities for them to take responsibility for activities within school or to be involved in decision-making. Throughout the day there are opportunities, which help promote social skills and positive relationships. Pupils are encouraged to work collaboratively; for example, when conducting a scientific investigation. Residential visits and other educational outings help promote a sense of responsibility and widen many pupils' horizons. For example, older pupils are able to undertake a range of adventurous outdoor activities at Peat Rig Residential Centre. At both lunchtime and in the 'breakfast club' the staff actively encourages these areas of development. The school supports pupils appropriately in fundraising for a chosen national charity and for the local hospice for children. Each year pupils are involved in helping with school fairs.

36 Cultural and multi-cultural provision is good and includes particular strengths. Pupils have opportunities to visit the theatre and museums. There are visits from local musicians, artists and writers. The Comenius Project enables staff to exchange visits with teachers in Finland, Ireland and Spain. This has brought important benefits of curriculum enhancement to pupils. A range of guests in school has enabled pupils to meet teachers from Zimbabwe as well as visitors from the USA and Canada. The school is seeking to develop its' links with differing ethnic groups within the local community, but this is still at an early stage of development. There are a number of effective displays in school, which celebrate different cultural traditions. The library has an adequate range of books to support this. Since the last inspection the school has successfully maintained the promotion of these values at an effective level of provision.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37 The school has proper concern for the general welfare of its pupils. They are supervised carefully and the day-to-day working practices adopted by all members of staff are good. Arrangements for ensuring child protection are effective. The health and safety policy, however, has not been reviewed formally for several years and, although regular

checks are carried out around the premises, a few health and safety concerns were identified and brought to the head teacher's attention during the inspection.

38 Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are effective. Teachers know their pupils well, and have good relationships with them. Overall, they successfully promote high standards of behaviour both in and out of class, and work hard to raise pupils' confidence and levels of self-esteem. Good use is made of praise and rewards to encourage effort, and significant achievements are celebrated each week during the Friday assembly. Personal and social education is taught well throughout the school. Independent learning skills, however, are not well promoted, and relatively few opportunities are provided for pupils to take on responsibilities around school. Clear guidance is in place to deal with bullying or aggressive behaviour, with all reported incidents being taken seriously and acted upon quickly. However, present systems of planning and record keeping do not allow teachers to ensure that all pupils have equal access to all areas of the curriculum. Particularly when pupils of the same year-group are in different mixed-age classes, the present arrangements do not enable teachers to track clearly enough, nor to take account of the work of the other class, in deciding on topics or work to be covered. This is particularly the case in the foundation subjects, where planning procedures are insufficiently developed. The effect of this can be either that some pupils cover the same work twice, or that they miss certain aspects of the curriculum completely.

39 Registers are marked quickly at the start of sessions but are not always completed properly by some teachers. They are, however, monitored thoroughly and all unexplained absences are followed up, although some parents often do not respond to the school's enquiries. As a result unauthorised absence is above the national norm. Pupils are frequently reminded about the importance of coming to school regularly, and rewarded in various ways when they do.

40 Pupils with special educational needs are supported by good procedures for identifying their needs in the first place and then checking what they know and understand as they learn. Teachers are good at keeping records of pupils' personal development. These good procedures enable teachers to update regularly and effectively the targets pupils work towards. The school makes good use of the services made available by the local authority.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41 Response to the questionnaire sent out before the inspection was relatively low and only a handful of parents attended the parents' meeting. Nevertheless, their views about the school are mostly positive and broadly similar to those expressed at the last inspection.

42 The school remains fully committed to getting parents involved in their children's education and continues to work hard in fostering links with them. New initiatives are regularly introduced and many parents respond well to them by doing what they can to help. Family learning activities, such as visits to the Historic Quay at Hartlepool, or their fathers and children's' computer course, with its focus on fantasy football, are good examples of what has been provided recently. Parents also give good support to other activities, like Christmas concerts and the summer fair, whilst a few of them hear readers in class.

43 The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. Pupils' annual reports are generally informative and there is sufficient on-going correspondence to keep them well informed about school activities and events. There are plans to send out half-termly updates about the targets being set to help their children do better as well as further details of what is being taught in class. The prospectus and governors' annual report are incomplete. Both lack full attendance data, and there is no information in the governors' report to let parents

know about what has been done to address the issues raised at the last OFSTED inspection. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept properly involved from the time the teacher has an initial concern. Parents are closely involved from the beginning of the process of identification of special educational needs and are kept well informed of their children's progress at all stages. All parents take part in the reviews of their children's progress.

44 Good links have been maintained with the local community. Educational visits and visitors to the school widen the curriculum as well as providing pupils with valuable first-hand experiences. Residential stays at outdoor centres and trips to places such as London and Paris make significant contributions to pupils' personal development. Pupils are encouraged to look after, and help improve their local environment through schemes like the Portrack Marshes Project, which they recently took part in. Awareness of the needs of others is raised through collections for charity and occasional links with senior citizens, and there are now established links with several local churches. The school is also outward looking and has made good use of its involvement in the Comenius Project to develop pupils' understanding of other European Cultures.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45 The head teacher is effective and, along with the senior management team, leads the school soundly and has had a positive impact in raising the quality of teaching through careful monitoring. They use the information gained to take appropriate action to ensure that standards of attainment continue to rise. Although standards of attainment are lower than similar schools standards are rising. Areas for development have been correctly identified and appropriate action taken. In this aspect the head teacher and key staff demonstrate clear educational direction for the school.

46 Subject co-ordinators in the core subjects are becoming effective managers and lead their subjects well. They monitor teachers' planning, examine pupils' work and some have had opportunities to observe and work alongside their colleagues. They use the information gained through these activities to identify strengths and areas for development, which are then included in the school improvement plan. However the co-ordinators for the foundation subjects have not had these opportunities and therefore the management of these subjects is not as effective. For example in geography there have been gaps in the teaching of the curriculum and the co-ordinators or the senior management team have not detected this.

47 The school has generally correctly identified the areas for development within the school improvement plan and much of the time has been spent in addressing issues in Literacy, Numeracy and assessment leaving little time to review other subjects. Most of the issues raised in the previous report have been addressed but two still require some attention. For example all subjects are identified in the new school improvement plan over the next two years, but not all have a clear overview of what is to be taught to ensure continuity and progression and this was also the case in the last inspection. The school's main thrust is to raise attainment in English and mathematics and in this they have been successful as standards are steadily rising. The school improvement plan is extensive and provides a useful tool for improving the school. It identifies targets for improvements, who is responsible for carrying out the action and has some 'rough' costing to allow the budget to be allocated accordingly.

48 Teachers and support assistants in the main school and SEN unit understand the requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs and this is reflected in the good progress pupils make. The co-ordinator provides good leadership. The

school fulfils all statutory requirements relating to special educational needs and makes good provision for these pupils.

49 The role of the governing body is satisfactory. The governors are interested and where possible take an active role in the life of the school. They have established committees to oversee the various aspects of the management of the school, such as staffing, curriculum, finance and premises. The governing body consists of experienced members of the local council, educationalists and members of the local community. They have been successful in obtaining additional funding for the school but do not always apply the principles of best value to their spending decisions. Although there is some evidence to show that they are beginning to consider other alternatives rather than always using council services as in the past. (For example the governors chose to take the cleaning contract in-house as they considered this better value for money). However there is no evidence to show that they consider alternative options on all occasions. The principles of best value require schools to compare their costs and quality of education with other similar schools, to look to see if the service is of good quality and whether someone else could do it better and finally to consult with the local community. At the present time the school cannot show that they carry this out. The last audit report identified 20 issues for development there is no evidence to show that these recommendations have been carried out. The monthly statements of spending are not shared with the full governing body and nor are these figures attached to the minutes of the meetings. It is in this aspect, in meeting statutory requirements for geography and minor omissions in the annual report to parents that the governing body needs to address as a matter of urgency.

50 Given the very low attainment on entry and very high numbers of pupils with special educational needs, good and sometimes very good teaching, the school provides sound value for money.

51 The school has sufficient appropriately qualified teachers and other staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. Good systems are in place for the induction of newly qualified teachers, and the staff handbook gives basic information for supply teachers, so that they can work effectively with unfamiliar classes. All staff have job descriptions, and these are fully discussed so that roles and responsibilities are clearly understood.

52 Support staff are generally well deployed and make a valuable contribution, not only to the learning of pupils with special educational needs, but also to the life of the whole school. They join in all aspects of the school's activities, including out of school clubs and residential visits.

53 The school office is very efficient, and provides good support to ensure that the school day runs smoothly.

54 Learning resources for most areas of the curriculum are satisfactory in quality and quantity. Those for mathematics and physical education are good, while those for geography are inadequate. Resources are generally well organised, and stored so as to be safe but still easily accessible. Subject co-ordinators see to the replacement of consumable items, and acquire new resources when funding is allocated from the budget, in accordance with the school improvement plan.

55 The school continues to have ample accommodation for the number of pupils on roll. Both buildings are well maintained and kept very clean. Classrooms are suitably furnished and shared areas are used well. Displays are of high quality, attractively mounted and contain significant quantities of pupils' own work. The new computer suite is well equipped and in regular use. Outside, the extensive grassed areas are well tended, although some

parts of the junior playground are starting to deteriorate.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56 The head teacher, governors and staff should: -

1. Raise attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science by:

- Raising teachers expectations of what the pupils are capable of achieving, especially the higher attainers.
- Improving planning to ensure that work matches the varying abilities of the pupils.
- Improving assessments of pupils' progress and using this information to plan suitable work/activities to ensure all pupils make progress.

(Paragraphs: 17, 19, 20, 21 and 38)

2. Ensure that statutory requirements for geography are fully met at Key Stage 2.

(Paragraphs: 27, 109 and 113)

3. Improve the role of the governing body in the overview of the curriculum and applying the principles of best value to spending decisions so that they can ensure that services purchased are economic, efficient and effective.

(Paragraphs: 27 and 49)

In addition to the issues identified above the following more minor weakness should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Give older pupils opportunities for independent learning, including raising their own knowledge and understanding of their own learning. *(Paragraphs: 14, 20 and 38)*

THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS UNIT

The school has a unit for pupils who have special educational needs and there are 20 places available. At the present time there are ten pupils in this unit between the ages of seven and 11 of which nine pupils have statements. Overall teaching in the unit is satisfactory, although on occasions work is not always well matched to the needs of individual pupils and this sometimes results in pupils being given work that is too hard or too easy. Other comments relating to this unit are woven into the main body of the report.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	74
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	13	44	40	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	256
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	190

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	12
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	66

English as an additional language	Nursery	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	Nursery	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	0	39
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0	37

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.2

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	2000	17	19	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	11	15
	Girls	18	19	19
	Total	28	30	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78% (45%)	83% (58%)	94% (61%)
	National	83% (82%)	84% (83%)	90% (87%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	15	13
	Girls	19	19	18
	Total	30	34	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83% (45%)	94% (42%)	86% (48%)
	National	84% (82%)	88% (86%)	88% (87%)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	26	13	39

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	13	16
	Girls	7	7	9
	Total	17	20	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	44% (38%)	53% (32%)	64% (57%)
	National	75% (70%)	72% (69%)	85% (78%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	12	12
	Girls	5	7	8
	Total	14	19	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	37% (27%)	50% (27%)	51% (35%)
	National	70% (68%)	72% (69%)	79% (75%)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	208
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	23.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	218.75

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000 - 2001
	£
Total income	722,945
Total expenditure	726,369
Expenditure per pupil	2,860
Balance brought forward from previous year	21,029
Balance carried forward to next year	17,605

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	480
Number of questionnaires returned	52

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	31	0	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	65	33	0	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	40	2	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	48	31	13	2	6
The teaching is good.	76	22	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	67	25	8	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	82	18	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	29	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	56	37	6	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	55	39	0	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	31	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	37	42	10	8	4

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

57 The school's provision for pupils in the foundation stage is good. Children start at the school in either September or January of the year in which they are four. They attend either a morning or an afternoon session of the nursery class. Pupils transfer to the main school either in September or January of the year in which they are five, with oldest pupils first.

58 When children start school there is a very wide range of ability. However, for the majority of children their attainment in all areas of learning is well below what is typical of most three year olds. They make good progress throughout the foundation stage but by the time they start Key Stage 1 their attainment is still below that which is typical for most five year olds. In the reception classes they benefit from well-planned literacy and numeracy lessons but planning for activities in the other areas of learning could be improved. For example, planning for activities that are not directly led by the teacher do not specifically indicate what pupils should be able to do by the end of the session. This results in some lost opportunities for children's development.

59 Teaching in the foundation stage is good. Teachers and support assistants work well together to support children's learning. This good level of adult support means that children receive adult intervention with their activities when it is needed and this helps them to make good progress. The children are eager to learn and often achieve well when working with an adult.

60 The induction of children into the school works well and includes visits by the nursery staff to children at their home. Before they transfer to main school, children often visit the reception classes and join in some of the activities with the reception children. As a result, they settle in very quickly.

Personal, social and emotional development

61 Children's personal, social and emotional development is very well provided for. Not all of the children have had many opportunities to mix with other children before they start nursery. Staff are very aware of children's needs and ensure that they are, at all times, very good role models. For example, they listen very carefully to what children say so that they give answers specifically for that child. They ensure that they always say 'please' and 'thank you' to the children so that children will copy and treat others politely. Children are given many opportunities to develop the ways that they relate to others in role-play situations. In nursery, children play and learn in 'Goldilock's House' where they are comfortable and familiar with carrying out activities such as setting the table and washing up. Throughout the foundation stage staff constantly build children's confidence and self-esteem with the good use of praise. Children are encouraged to attempt new activities or to improve on what they have done previously. Whenever a child is seen making an effort staff are quick to praise and explain what that praise is for. Consequently, children enjoy coming to school and are eager to learn.

Communications, language and literacy

62 The staff rightly set a high priority on the development of early speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. They provide many opportunities for children to practise their speaking and listening within all activities. However, many children do not listen carefully and their speaking skills are not well developed. For example, after reading together 'The Bear and The Picnic Lunch' children made sandwiches for their own picnic. The teacher

constantly talked to the children about what they were doing and encouraged them to join in the conversation. Very few of them spoke about what they were doing unless directly asked a question. Even then most of them would just nod or shake their head if the answers were yes or no. Children make good progress with their speaking and listening because of the many opportunities teachers give them. However, by the end of the foundation stage their attainment is still below where it should be and many children still do not speak with confidence preferring to copy what others have said.

63 Many children do not enter school with similar experiences of books. Some have had a wide range of experiences but others have had limited opportunities to share books with adults. However, they all enjoy listening to stories and are eager to share books with each other and with adults. Staff read stories well and this motivates the children to join in. For example, when reading about the 'Picnic' in nursery, children were keen to tell the teacher whether or not the family were finding a suitable place for the picnic. Most children know many rhymes and action songs by heart and join in enthusiastically. Higher attaining children in the nursery make sound progress in learning letter sounds and are beginning to use these to identify simple, commonly used words. This good progress continues in the reception class. All children show an enthusiasm for books and all will happily discuss what is happening in the story using the pictures as clues. Most children read simple words accurately and higher attaining children read simple books with confidence. However, reading skills are still below where they should be for children by the end of the reception class.

64 Children make good progress with their writing skills. Many opportunities are given for pupils to write at their own level. For example, paper and pens are always available in role-play areas where children can 'write down' appointment times for the vet or write letters and post them in the class post box. Higher attaining pupils in the nursery make good attempts at writing recognisable letters and know that a sentence needs a full stop at the end. In reception, pupils start by asking the teacher to write for them. They then copy the teacher's writing. By the end of the foundation stage most children write simple words correctly and higher attaining pupils independently write short sentences. Despite this good progress, children's attainment at the end of the foundation stage is below where it should be for their age because of their low attainment on entry.

Mathematical development

65 Children in the nursery daily join in stories and rhymes that develop their understanding of numbers. In addition, many activities are provided that give children the opportunity to explore mathematical concepts. For example, in the sand and water children fill and empty containers and develop a sound understanding of more and less and bigger and smaller. A group of boys playing in the construction area used sound mathematical language when talking about what they were doing. For example, they discussed whether the big or small blocks should be placed at the bottom and decided that the biggest ones should be because they were the heaviest. In the reception class children have a daily numeracy lesson and mathematics is taught well with activities that engage the children's interest. For example, a teacher used a finger puppet to encourage children to count backwards and forwards from 1-20. Children start the school with attainment that is well below expectations. They make good progress in their mathematical development but, by the end of the foundation stage, their attainment is still below where it should be.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

66 Many children enter the foundation stage with a limited knowledge and understanding of the world about them. For example, most children recognise a pear and a

banana but very few know a melon or a kiwi fruit. Teachers in the foundation stage have tried to create an environment that that will stimulate and develop children's curiosity. For example, in the reception classes they have created a display of artefacts that show household items now and in Victorian times, such as a flat iron and an electric iron. As a result, children have a sound understanding that some things change over time. In the nursery, children often have the opportunity to experiment with food. For example, they make 'Angel Delight' and watch how the powder dissolves in the milk or they make toast and realise that butter melts on the hot toast.

67 In their topic on houses the children have found building materials of wood, metal and plastic. They are beginning to understand how plants grow and have planted bean seeds and watched them develop. Outside they have opportunities to play together and develop the skills of co-operation in 'Bob the Builder's building site'. Here the children dress up in hard hats and decide together what they are going to dig or build. The children are relaxed, happy and secure in the nursery and move around confidently. In the reception classes role-play is developed further with children assuming specific roles at 'The Vets'. Children assume roles such as the receptionist who takes the appointments and payments of bills. Others bring their pets in for examination by the vet. The children's computer skills are satisfactory. They use the keys and the mouse to operate the cursor in simple programs that enable them to practise counting and matching skills. Pupils make good progress and by the end of the foundation stage many children are close to attaining the learning goals for their age.

Creative development

68 By the time they reach the end of the reception year, the children's attainment in creative development is close to matching those expected for their age. Children are enthusiastic and keen to take part. There are opportunities for them to regularly paint. For example, nursery children paint pictures about 'People who help us' and children in reception paint recognisable pictures of themselves. The children in reception have designed and made their own houses with doors that open. They use a range of materials to learn about texture and create pictures, collages, prints and patterns. For example, children in the nursery created a large dragon to celebrate the Chinese New Year.

69 Children regularly experience singing activities; they memorise counting and action songs and learn to sing them tunefully. Opportunities are given for children to use percussion instruments to try and keep the rhythm of the song or rhyme.

Physical development

70 The children in the foundation stage have regular opportunities to explore a range of activities in outdoor play and they also have regular time for physical activities in the hall. For example, children in nursery regularly have climbing apparatus on the grass, although this is only available in good weather. In addition they have access to wheeled toys which they thoroughly enjoy using. In the reception classes pupils have regular physical education lessons where apparatus is set up for them to explore going through, over and along. These help them to make good progress in gaining co-ordination and to develop social skills as they play games. They handle equipment safely and enjoy their physical activities. These reinforce some aspects of the children's personal and social development and they learn to work well in pairs and groups. The children use their manipulative skills in practical situations to make models using construction kits or play dough. Most show sound control and are developing satisfactory co-ordination over time. Children's attainment in their use of their bodies and using equipment is satisfactory but their use of small physical skills such as cutting, sticking and holding a pencil is not as well developed.

ENGLISH

71 Over the last three years the school has made steady improvements in English standards. Despite this, by the end of Key Stage 2, standards are below expectations. In the national tests for 11 year olds in 2000, the school's attainment was very low in comparison to other schools nationally. The school's attainment was also well below similar schools based on the number of pupils eligible for free school meals. The school's test results are adversely affected because the school has a unit specifically for pupils who have special educational needs. Pupils come from other areas to attend this unit but their scores are included in the school's results making them lower than they would be otherwise. The standard of work by pupils in Year 6 is higher than these test results would indicate.

72 Pupils start Key Stage 1 with attainment in English lower than would be expected for their age. They make good progress throughout the key stage and by the age of seven are attaining standards that are very close to expectations. In the national tests for seven year olds in 2000 the standards achieved were below those of most other schools. When compared to similar schools these results are much better. Results in writing are similar to what other similar schools achieve but their reading results are better than this. However, these results are from a year ago and standards have improved since then.

73 Pupils start Key Stage 1 with speaking and listening skills that are below those of most five year olds. Teachers are very aware of this and provide many opportunities for pupils to develop these skills. For example, all classes have well resourced role-play areas. Pupils visit 'Tilery Travel Shop' or 'Mr Frost's Ices'. In these areas pupils take on the role of shoppers and shop keepers. They have to ask clearly for what they want and the shopkeepers have to reply correctly. Teachers and support assistants become involved in these areas also 'in role', developing well pupils' skills of verbal communication in a very enjoyable way. Teachers encourage pupils to listen carefully to them and each other. As a result, pupils make good progress and standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are almost in line with expectations. The picture is not the same in Key Stage 2. Pupils develop their speaking skills well and are given many opportunities to express themselves. For example, sessions at the end of most lessons are used to give pupils the opportunity to describe what they have learnt during a lesson and for others to comment upon their work. However they do not make the same progress in their listening skills. Many pupils are 'passive' listeners. This means that they sit quietly while the teacher is talking and do not misbehave but do not pay sufficient attention to what the teacher is saying. As a result, if the teacher asks them a question or when it is time to complete tasks many pupils do not fully understand what they are doing and explanation or instruction has to be repeated.

74 The teaching of reading is good. Teachers show a good understanding of reading skills and provide well-structured and focused activities that develop pupils' skills. As a result, pupils make good progress in this area of English and, by the end of Year 6 their attainment matches what is expected for their age with most pupils reading accurately, fluently and with expression. Within the literacy hour the time allocated to teaching reading skills is used well. For example, in a lesson in Year 1 the teacher used phonemes (units of sound) well to show how words can be 'built'. The phoneme 'oa' was taught and pupils learnt how its sound was used in words like boat, goat and coat. Pupils' skills are developed well throughout the school so that by Year 6, the teaching of reading has progressed to pupils reading a piece of text and explaining why a character feels the way they do and they relate some of the stories' events to their own circumstances. In Key Stage 1, teachers correctly devote a lot of time to developing pupils' enthusiasm for reading as well as their reading skills. Books are on display and referred to in all classrooms and corridors. Good quality displays reflect pupils' studies of books. For example, famous storybook characters such as 'The Giant' or 'The Big

Bad Wolf' are displayed with word clues such as 'Fee Fi Fo Fum' and pupils have to find the story the characters are from. This develops in pupils a sense that books are fun and are to be enjoyed. Consequently, pupils are keen to read and willingly look at and read books for pleasure. This enjoyment of books is further developed in Key Stage 2, so that by the time pupils are in Year 6 they have a good knowledge and understanding about the types of books they like to read and why. For example, a book review by a boy in Year 6 described how he had enjoyed 'Beowulf – an exciting story about a monster which comes from darkness, attacking its victims in deadly silence.' There are two well-resourced non-fiction libraries in the school. These are used well by pupils to research information for their studies in subjects such as history. Pupils have a good understanding of how to use the contents and indexes of books to locate specific information.

75 Results in the national tests at the end of both key stages show that the school does not achieve as well in writing as it should. In particular, pupils capable of higher attainment are not achieving sufficiently well. The school has identified this and improving pupils' writing has been a specific focus. The co-ordinator has led and developed training to improve teachers' knowledge and understanding of the teaching of writing and improvements in standards have been made. However, the teaching of writing is not consistent throughout the school. In Key Stage 1 writing is taught well, as a result pupils make good progress and attainment by the end of the key stage is close to what is expected for pupils' ages. In Year 2 the teacher's use of targets helps the pupils to have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve their work. It also helps the teacher to provide activities that match pupils' needs. For example, pupils' work shows that they have made good progress in how to write a story. They show a developing awareness of structuring a story to make it interesting and use of punctuation is becoming more accurate. The good teaching and progress continues in Year 3 but standards dip in Years 4 and 5. There is currently some very good teaching in Year 4 but standards in pupils' books indicate that this is a recent improvement. In these classes the presentation of pupils' work is very untidy and little work is completed within the allocated time. Pupils are given sufficient opportunities to write at length but there is little development from one piece of work to another. Teachers conscientiously mark the pupils' books but pupils are not given opportunities to revisit and improve that marked work so they continue to make the same mistakes. Assessment is not used effectively to identify particular aspects of pupils' work that require improvement. For example, developing story endings or character development that unfolds as the story progresses is not targeted or developed sufficiently within the literacy hour. In addition, there is insufficient development of pupils' knowledge of how to write for a variety of purposes. For example, much written work in subjects such as history and science is copied or is an exercise in supplying the missing word. Consequently, pupils' ability to independently choose how to record a piece of work is well below where it should be. Pupils make better progress in Year 6. The marking of pupils' work clearly indicates where improvements are needed and this is used as a focus for their next piece of writing. There is a good variety of stimuli used for writing and this develops pupils' creativity well. For example, when writing ghost stories one pupil wrote, 'Cautiously the children entered the gloomy house'. However, the story ending was disappointing 'About a year later the house was pulled down'. Despite the better progress, pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 is still below where it should be.

76 The subject has a very knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator. Much has been done to improve standards in English and there are clear plans as to how to improve it further. The school has identified English as a priority for continued development.

MATHEMATICS

77 By the end of Key Stage 1 standards are in line with those expected nationally, while at the end of Year 6 they are below. At the time of the school's previous inspection standards were below those found nationally at the ends of both key stages. The school has

therefore been successful in raising standards in the Key Stage 1, whilst they have remained the same in Key Stage 2.

78 Over the last few years there has been an improving trend in the SATs results at the end of Key Stage 2 and indications from the present inspection suggest that this trend will continue. In the latest test results the number of pupils achieving the higher level is well below the national average, but there is no significant difference between the performance of girls and boys.

79 When they start in Key Stage 1 pupils know the names of numbers to 10, and can count and use them with appropriate adult help. They are learning to use and recognise simple relationships and patterns, and can use everyday language to describe what they are doing. By the end of the key stage pupils have developed their knowledge and understanding of mathematics at a good pace through practical activities, exploration and discussion. Teachers have worked hard to introduce the National Numeracy Strategy, and pupils develop their mental calculation skills through interesting number games and exercises at the start of each numeracy hour. Pupils' develop their problem-solving skills well, can explain their working out clearly and are beginning to use correct mathematical vocabulary. Progress over the key stage is good.

80 Pupils in Key Stage 2 do not continue to build systematically upon the progress they made in Key Stage 1. Progress is uneven, with better learning taking place in the later years. Examination of pupils' workbooks gives a clear picture of the progress made, and shows that there is variation in the demands which teachers make, and the standards they expect. Standards of presentation and neatness also vary from class to class, with higher expectations in the Year 5 and 6 classes. Standards are improving at the end of the key stage but the benefits of the more structured approach provided by the National Numeracy Strategy have not yet had time to show in the national tests.

81 The school provides a broad and balanced mathematics curriculum, although there is a marked emphasis on basic number work. The other areas of the curriculum, such as shape, space and measures, handling data, and using and applying mathematics are all given adequate attention, but would benefit from further development.

82 The quality of teaching is satisfactory in both key stages. Not every teacher was observed teaching numeracy in Key Stage 2, due to unscheduled timetable changes. In many lessons during the inspection the teaching was good. Teachers have introduced the Numeracy Hour well, and this has brought a better structure to the teaching of mathematics throughout the school. Teachers plan clear aims for each lesson, but these are not always shared with the pupils, so that they know what is expected. At present teachers often focus on what to teach, rather than what pupils should learn. They generally show good subject knowledge, and are good at explaining ideas to pupils, so that they can develop their understanding. In many lessons teachers encouraged their pupils to take pleasure in the work, and to show enthusiasm and enjoyment. Throughout the school teachers also give good attention to basic numeracy skills, not only in mathematics lessons, but whenever opportunities arise in other subjects, such as when Year 2 pupils weighed and measured out ingredients, and counted the number of buns made when making chocolate buns in a design and technology lesson.

83 The best teaching had high expectations, both of pupils' behaviour and of the standards of work, and a brisk pace of working was sustained at all stages of the lessons. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, pupils learnt ways of adding two numbers. The teacher managed the class very well and the good working relationships helped all the children to learn well. The teacher gave pupils opportunities to use correct mathematical language, for instance when she asked "What's the proper word for 'makes'?". Pupils immediately replied

“Equals”. Year 6 pupils learned about percentages. There was a very good atmosphere when pupils were working sensibly in groups. They concentrated well, and when the teacher asked them about the work they had been doing they answered thoughtfully and reviewed the lesson’s work well. Pupils were keen to please the teacher, to do their best and pupils of all abilities learnt very well.

84 In some lessons seen the more able pupils were given work which did not challenge them enough, so that they quickly finished and became bored. In Key Stage 2 classes the teaching does not sufficiently develop pupils’ independence. They are not given enough opportunities to choose their own methods or presentation, nor to take increasing responsibility for their own learning.

85 Assessment in mathematics has developed well alongside the introduction of the Numeracy Strategy, and systems are now in place to track and record pupils’ progress as they move through the school. The practice of target setting has begun, and the school has plans to develop aspects of assessment and target setting as part of its’ school improvement plan and these are to be implemented in September 2001.

86 The subject is effectively co-ordinated and resources are distributed around the school so that classes have all that they need conveniently to hand. The co-ordinator is experienced and well-qualified, and has a good vision of the subject and how it can be taken forward. The mathematics co-ordinator has visited other classes to observe work and to discuss aspects of the subject with other teachers. She has a clear picture of work throughout the school, and has been able to assist and discuss ideas and problems with other members of staff. The monitoring aspect of the co-ordinator’s role is well developed.

SCIENCE

87 By the end of Key Stage 1 standards of attainment in national tests in 2000 were below the national average and by the end of Key Stage 2 standards of attainment were well below the national average. When compared with similar schools standards are broadly average at Key Stage 1 and below average at Key Stage 2. The trend over time is that standards in tests are below the national average at the end of each key stage but improving faster than most schools nationally.

88 The results of the inspection indicate that standards of attainment broadly meet national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and are below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards are beginning to improve and more pupils are attaining the standards expected for their age, with more achieving the higher levels. The principal reasons for this are improvements in planning which make better use of national guidelines; improved assessment procedures which are beginning to inform planning effectively and more effective monitoring of teaching and pupils’ work. As a result pupils achieve good progress in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2.

89 By the end of Key Stage 2, all pupils cover a suitable range of work. Pupils study microorganisms and have a sound knowledge of the effects of bacteria on food; for example they observe the effects of yeast. They identify different factors that contribute to a good health, such as diet and exercise. Pupils are aware of procedures to preserve foodstuffs. Most pupils can describe the growth of plants, naming their component parts. They can identify the principal organs in the human body and know their functions; for example, that the heart circulates blood. Pupils are aware of differences between materials and that they vary in their suitability to perform certain functions; for example that plastic is more flexible than wood. Pupils recognise that objects can be moved using ‘push/pull’ forces. They know that magnets attract certain metals and that electricity can provide power for a variety of

functions. Pupils know how to construct a simple circuit. They know that some materials are better conductors than others, they recognise the importance of insulators for electrical safety.

90 Most pupils are able to carry out experiments, under supervision, in different areas of science. However they do require considerable guidance and many lack the skills to work independently. Whilst understanding the importance of a fair test a considerable number of pupils have difficulty in understanding those factors which make it fair. Pupils usually recognise the outcome of an experiment, but do not always possess sufficient scientific knowledge and understanding to explain why something occurs. For example, they struggle to explain gravity, though they recognise its' effect. When experimenting with light, they recognise the effect of a mirror to reflect an image, but have difficulty in explaining why a periscope works. Pupils also have difficulty in recording their work with sufficient accuracy or detail. Written explanations often lack clarity or fail to fully explain the process being studied. Diagrams do not always clearly show the process being described; for example, an electrical circuit. Throughout Key Stage 2 most pupils make satisfactory progress, they steadily improve their overall knowledge and understanding of science. Pupils with special educational needs achieve good progress because of the support they receive from learning support assistants.

91 By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils are aware that animals and plants survive in differing habitats. They can recognise different categories of plant life; for example flowers; fruits, vegetables and seeds. They can name some common species of animals and comment successfully on their habitats. They know that a good diet contributes to good health. Pupils are able to distinguish between natural and man made materials; for example, silk and plastic. They know that water changes to a vapour when heated. Pupils recognise different forms of power; for example, experimenting with air power and magnetism to move objects. Higher attaining pupils have a clear view of forces, commenting on gravity and distinguishing between push/pull forces successfully. These pupils are confident when making predictions in experimental work; for example, they correctly suggest what will happen to ice when it is heated. Most pupils develop their vocabulary well and present their work in sufficient detail to indicate a sound understanding of the science they study. Through the key stage, most pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve good rates of progress and improve their overall knowledge and understanding of science.

92 Over time, pupils' progress shows that teaching is good in Key Stage 1. During the inspection the quality of teaching observed was always satisfactory and in some lessons good. An excellent lesson was observed in Year 1 where pupils were studying the effect of pushes and pulls. Where teaching is excellent there are clear aims and very good subject knowledge. This ensured pupils made very good progress in their understanding of forces, by using simple tests to investigate these. This consistent teaching ensures that learning for all pupils is always satisfactory and often good. In Key Stage 1 there is careful attention given to promoting a subject vocabulary. Discussion is used well. Good questioning ensures pupils observe carefully; for example, shadows, and draw sensible conclusions. Most lessons are carefully planned and use resources well. Good use is made of the 'planning house' approach to provide pupils with a consistent structure for investigative work. This reinforces their understanding of test procedures effectively.

93 Over time, pupils' progress shows that teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 2. During the inspection the quality of teaching was satisfactory, with examples of good teaching in a few lessons. For example, in a lesson on light good use was made of a range of resources to promote investigative science well. Pupils had ample opportunities to test ideas and learning was good because the objectives were achieved and pupils were able to see for themselves the outcome of their experiments. Most lessons are carefully planned and the teaching staff have a secure knowledge of science. However, some experimental

work is over directed and this limits opportunities for independent learning. In some lessons there is insufficient focus on 'why' an experiment achieves a particular result. On occasion, teachers' management of pupils does not ensure that pupils pay sufficient attention and this can result in passive responses and a lack of attention. This impacts upon the quality of learning.

94 The school offers all pupils a suitable curriculum that meets statutory requirements well. It ensures that all pupils make sound progress by using the national guidelines. These ensure topics are re-visited and developed, enabling pupils to consolidate their knowledge and understanding well. The curriculum includes sections dealing with health education and it ensures that the school policy on Sex and Drugs Education is adhered to. There are clear safety guidelines in place and science safety is also taught. For example, pupils learn about electrical safety in the home. The co-ordinator provides good leadership. She has a clear view of priorities and carries out regular monitoring observations of lessons and the standards being achieved. Her own teaching of science has had a major impact on the rise in standards at Key Stage 1. Science resources are sufficient and used effectively, however there is insufficient use of information and communication technology to support the curriculum. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory in Key Stage 2 and good in Key Stage 1.

ART AND DESIGN

95 At the end of Key Stage 1 standards in art and design are in line with national expectations but at the end of Key Stage 2 they are below. The school's main priorities have been to raise attainment in English and mathematics and the result of this is that insufficient time has been allocated to the art and design curriculum. This has meant that there have been 'gaps' in the teaching of the subject and therefore pupils have had insufficient opportunities to develop their artistic skills.

The curriculum for art and design meets statutory requirements. However, in Key Stage 2 there are very few opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of three-dimensional work and the curriculum offered is limited, with much of the work undertaken being observational drawing. The curriculum for Key Stage 1 is broader and therefore pupils' skills develop at the rate expected. The school has adopted the national guidance for the subject but this is not being fully implemented and there is no overview of the subject to ensure consistency and progression of skills and development across the school. However, art and design is used well to enhance other subjects of the curriculum such as in information and communication technology where reception pupils use the colour magic program to write their name and in Year 1 to investigate symmetry in mathematics.

96 At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils observational drawing skills are varied but with some exceptional work seen. For example in a Year 2 class one child was able to use pastels to depict the shades and tones of the colours of anemones to such an extent that the drawing gave the impression that it had been done by someone much older due to the detail included. Other pupils are able to select their own choices of media to suit their purposes when completing their work on enlarging extracts from cereal boxes. In the same class pupils weave using paper and a variety of textiles to create different effects and draw objects from nature with some accuracy.

97 By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have limited art and design skills due to the restricted curriculum although, as with Key Stage 1, art and design is used well within other subjects. For example in mathematics in their work on patterns in Years 3 and 4, in history silhouettes of the Blitz in Year 6 and models of Viking ships in Year 3. Pupils have only just

begun to use sketchbooks and many do not have the skills to apply themselves to the task in hand. For example in a Year 4 lesson on still life, pupils kept changing the poster they were copying from to find an 'easier' one. In Year 3 pupils study the work of Kandinsky and compare his work against their own computer generated designs undertaken in their information and communication technology lesson. They then recreate this design using block printing or painting.

98 Pupils' attitudes to their art and design lessons are good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1 pupils are enthusiastic about their work and keen to experiment with paint and other media. They work well and apply themselves well to the tasks in hand and co-operate with their group when working together. In Key Stage 2 attitudes vary. In some of the older classes pupils are 'passive' and just sit when the teacher is explaining the task and then ask for clarification, as they have not listened to the instructions. In the younger classes pupils are interested in their art and design activities and the majority are able to sustain concentration throughout the lesson.

99 The teaching of art and design is satisfactory. However inspection evidence shows that art and design is not taught consistently throughout the year. Teachers make good use of resources and use them well to stimulate and interest the pupils. Their subject knowledge of art and design varies from unsatisfactory to good, but most staff do not feel confident in teaching specific art skills. Therefore pupils do not make as much progress as they should. Teachers are beginning to use the national schemes of work to help them in their planning, but at present they are just selecting the units that appeal to them and there is no overview to ensure coverage of all aspects. However, when teachers use the recommended programmes of study pupils generally achieve the levels expected. This indicates that standards will rise when teaching is consistent and builds upon pupil's previous attainment. At present there are no assessments carried out to identify what pupils know, understand and can do in relation to art and design.

100 The school has been focusing upon the core subjects of English and mathematics and so no time has been allocated to the development of art and design since the previous inspection. However the co-ordinator has already written an action plan, which identifies developing a scheme of work and the teaching of skills and techniques as priorities but this has yet to be incorporated into the school improvement plan.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

101 At the end of both key stages standards are in line with national expectations. This is the same outcome as in the previous inspection, and the school has therefore maintained satisfactory standards. Pupils are given a succession of interesting, practical activities, which include opportunities to plan and evaluate, as well as making objects. Very little teaching of design and technology was seen during the inspection, but scrutiny of pupils' previous work, displays around the school, and discussions with pupils all contribute to the view that teaching is satisfactory.

102 Over the last few years there has been concentration, in line with national initiatives, on literacy and numeracy, and so time for development of other subjects has been limited. Despite the consequent limitations, the school has nevertheless been able to maintain a satisfactory curriculum for design and technology.

103 During a topic on the Great Fire of London, for example, Year 1 and 2 pupils planned and made models of houses. They developed their skills of using tools and materials, joining them effectively, and looking for ways to improve. As part of their preparations for an assembly, Year 2 pupils made chocolate buns. They worked in a small

group, supervised by a support assistant. They weighed, mixed and prepared the ingredients and discussed issues such as how many buns would be needed, why it was important to wash their hands, and how some people could be allergic to ingredients such as nuts. There was good social development as they worked together, sharing and taking turns, and taking pride in the finished buns.

104 In Key Stage 2 pupils continue to develop their design and technology skills, although at present this development is not sufficiently systematic, so that there is not sustained improvement of skills from one activity to another. In a Year 3/4 topic on the Victorians, for example, pupils made dolls dressed in the costumes associated with different occupations, such as a banker and a maid. The finished products were of good quality, and showed increased skills in areas such as choice of appropriate materials, and the overall appearance of the finished products. However, as the subject is not taught consistently skills are not developing at the rate that they could.

105 The organisation of topics and curriculum time means that there are sometimes long periods between activities, so that teachers have to go over previous ground to remind pupils of techniques and skills before they can move on. Many activities include opportunities for planning and evaluating, and some good displays have been produced to support learning. The ways in which teachers plan their work varies, and in some cases aims for lessons are not made clear. A more standardised approach to planning is needed. Where interesting practical activities are chosen pupils are well motivated and involved, and the teaching stimulates pupils and promotes good learning.

106 Pupils generally enjoy the work, and are often good at co-operating and sharing, for instance when choosing and using tools. There are occasions, however, particularly in Key Stage 2, when pupils are not given enough opportunities to work independently, make their own choices, and to take responsibility for what they have done.

107 The curriculum at present ensures that all areas are given suitable coverage, although there is no method in place to track the development of skills so that when pupils learn different skills, they have opportunities to practise and reinforce them, so that they are not forgotten if the time is long between one activity and the next.

108 The subject co-ordinator is suitably qualified and experienced, and has a clear overview of the subject and how it needs to be developed. Staffing and accommodation are both good, and the school has good resources, which are well organised and readily available. Assessment procedures are largely informal at present, and the outcomes of assessment cannot therefore be used to plan the next steps in learning.

GEOGRAPHY

109 Standards of attainment meet national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. However, standards of attainment are well below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2 and pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. There are a number of reasons for this. The school is not meeting the statutory requirements for this subject at Key Stage 2. It is not planning sufficiently well enough to ensure all pupils have access to the National Curriculum and so fails to promote a rigorous study of geography. The subject is taught intermittently and does not lead to any sustained written work. There is not enough geography taught. An analysis of exercise books in Years 3 and 4 showed gaps in written work of between two and three months. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 do not have exercise books and the school did not put forward any written work from these pupils at the onset of the inspection.

110 These factors have led to poor standards of attainment and unsatisfactory rates of progress for pupils in developing their geographical knowledge, skills and understanding of the curriculum. The oldest pupils in Key Stage 2 have varied mapping skills. Higher attaining pupils know how to calculate four figure co-ordinates, but are insecure in other tasks; for example using scale and symbols. They have insufficient knowledge and understanding in local and regional geography. For example, pupils have little understanding of the geography of Teeside or on related issues such as industry, transport and the environment. Pupils find it difficult to comment on contrasting regions of the world. They have insufficient knowledge and understanding of areas with contrasting climates to our own and have limited knowledge of the United Kingdom's climate. Their ability to discuss the impact of human activity upon the environment is quite limited and they are unclear of the school's role in contributing to environmental improvement locally. The older pupils with special educational needs also make unsatisfactory progress.

111 Where lessons were observed the standard of teaching was good, because on these occasions staff managed pupils well and provided stimulating activities. For example, in Year 3, a discussion on contrasting building materials around the world led to good rates of learning and enthusiastic responses. In a mixed Year 3 and 4 class, subject knowledge was good and this led to challenging activities and good rates of learning on weather conditions. Unfortunately it is clear that such teaching does not occur sufficiently often to maintain suitable standards throughout Key Stage 2. For example, mapping skills in Year 5 are under-developed.

112 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils acquire sufficient knowledge, skills and understanding in geography to meet National Curriculum requirements and achieve satisfactory standards. Higher attaining pupils have good mapping skills for their age and comment briefly, but effectively on contrasting locations. They are able to locate features on a map by using a compass. Other groups of pupils know how to use a compass, can draw and label a map accurately and describe features seen on the way to school. All pupils were able to contribute to a discussion contrasting Stockton with life on a Scottish island. For example, they were able to comment on traffic, occupations and scenery. Progress is satisfactory, pupils steadily acquire an understanding of the environment around them and develop different skills to describe it. Only one lesson was observed in Key Stage 1 and here the standard of teaching was very good. It was well planned with work set to match different abilities and provide challenge for higher attaining pupils. The role of the learning support assistant was effectively planned so that she had an independent role working with a group of pupils. As a result, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, made good advances with their learning; for example, improving their knowledge of geographical vocabulary well.

113 At present the co-ordinator is on long-term sick leave, however the leadership in this subject is unsatisfactory. The Key Stage 2 curriculum has not been sufficiently well planned or monitored throughout the school year. Therefore, these pupils have not received their full entitlement to the National Curriculum in geography. As a result, the Key Stage 2 curriculum is unsatisfactory, with only a poor range of learning opportunities provided. Procedures for monitoring and assessing progress are also unsatisfactory for this group of pupils. The Key Stage 1 curriculum is, however, satisfactory. Resources are inadequate throughout the school and the amount spent was very low in the period to April 2001. The school is now seeking to rectify this situation by providing a substantially increased geography budget, however this is yet to have any significant impact. This subject has declined since the time of the last inspection.

HISTORY

114 Standards of attainment meet national expectations at the end of both key stages. Pupils' achievement in history is satisfactory throughout the school.

115 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils cover an appropriate range of work, studying different periods of history. They make some effective comparisons between social conditions in the Victorian era and today. They have an adequate knowledge of events during Queen Victoria's reign, this helps consolidate their understanding of chronology. Good use is made of a visit to a local museum. Pupils compare their own school experiences with those of Victorian children. This helps them develop their empathy skills through 'joining' a Victorian schoolroom. Pupils progressively develop their research skills as they move through the key stage. For example, they study the 1930's and 1940's to identify changes that occur in wartime. They develop their empathy skills again by discussing the experiences of wartime evacuees. However, their subsequent written work is too brief and lacks substance. Pupils improve their understanding of past civilisations by studying the Aztec Kingdom. They use some effective research skills, including the Internet, to discover why it was overthrown. In moving through the key stage, all pupils make satisfactory progress in acquiring knowledge skills and understanding, as they study such subjects as the Roman invasions and the Tudor monarchs. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress, including those in the support class, where they benefit from both working alongside the Year 6 class and then receiving intensive support.

116 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' develop their understanding of change over time through studying different periods of British history. They are able to explain why the 'Great Fire of London' spread so rapidly and they hear first hand accounts of this event from Samuel Pepys' diaries. In discussion pupils display a sound knowledge of these events and recognise that such documents are important sources of evidence. In studying the story of Florence Nightingale, pupils are able to make comparisons with the past and recognise similarities and differences between the hospitals then and now. Higher attaining pupils comment on the early photograph of Florence and know it is an important source of evidence. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make satisfactory progress.

117 During the inspection the standard of teaching was good. From the scrutiny of work, discussions with pupils and displays of work, it is clear that this subject is taught to a good standard over time in both key stages. Strengths in the teaching include secure subject knowledge and good questioning skills. Resources are used imaginatively and these help pupils develop a degree of independence in their learning. For example, in Year 2, photographic evidence was used effectively to promote discussion. In Year 3, a lesson on the Vikings was carefully resourced and this enabled pupils to work independently and collaboratively. In Year 4, pupils were able to experience wartime rationing by handling and weighing out different ingredients. Areas for development in teaching include the need; to ensure tasks set provide alternative tasks for pupils of differing ability; to continue to promote more written work, where standards are comparatively weaker than in oral work. Writing requires further development, especially where pupils are first engaged in discussions that require them to empathise with people of different eras. The good teaching is promoting effective learning, pupils possess a sound understanding of history across differing eras, however, their knowledge and understanding is not always sufficiently well consolidated over time. Most pupils work hard, collaborate well and enjoy this subject.

118 The curriculum meets statutory requirements and benefits from using national guidance. Assessment procedures are beginning to develop well. The co-ordinator provides good leadership. She is enthusiastic and is successful in maintaining the place of this subject within the curriculum. She successfully bids for resources, this ensures that all topics are adequately resourced. Overall, there is satisfactory progress since the last inspection in standards and teaching.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

119 At the end of both key stages, attainment in information and communication technology is as expected for their ages, but this is within a limited range as the school does not yet have the software to teach the control and sensing units of the scheme of work. The previous report stated that standards in information technology were good and above the national expectations and that work in information technology was a strength of the school. Although the standards of attainment are not as high as previously, inspection evidence shows that standards are rising fast. This is due to the increase in the amount of resources purchased by the school, the assistance given by the Education Action Zone teachers, additional funding, New Opportunities Fund training undertaken by the staff and also through the support given by the local education authority information and communication technology support staff.

120 The school has recently implemented the national scheme of work for the subject and this is being reviewed. The scheme currently follows a one-year cycle, yet there are two mixed ages classes within the school. This means that in its present format some pupils repeat work already covered. The school is aware of this inconsistency and a new draft scheme of work has already been developed and is to be implemented in September 2001.

121 Pupils in both key stages are making good progress in developing their information and communication technology skills. In Year 1, pupils are able to use a word bank to correctly label diagrams. They 'log on' to the computers themselves and most can 'shut down' and 'log off' without assistance. Pupils create diagrams using the 'click and drop' technique and they know that the mouse controls the pointer and most use it with a sound degree of eye and hand co-ordination. In Year 2, pupils use the computer to record their findings of the class's hair colours and favourite foods onto a simple pictogram.

122 By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils use the computer to create simple presentations using 'Powerpoint'. A few create a set of slides using simple sounds and animations from the program, but do not really consider the intended audiences in their presentations. They use 'Publisher' to create simple adverts linked to their work in literacy and the Aztecs in history. In Year 5, pupils log on and insert text boxes and pictures into their work. They also change fonts and styles and colours of the text, although not many understand the use of the icons to justify or line up their text or the purpose of the 'undo' key. In Year 4 pupils use the information given by the teacher in their geography lessons to enter data about weather and climates into a bar chart. Year 3 pupils use the computer to support their work in art and design on patterns and use the 'Colour Magic' program to create their designs and then print them off.

123 Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make just as much progress as other pupils' since they are well supported by teaching assistants, often on a one to one basis.

124 Pupils' attitudes to their information and communication technology lessons are good in both key stages. Pupils are interested in their work and most work sensibly on the computers and work together well when required. For example they take turns when programming the 'Roamer' and do this sensibly and fairly. Most concentrate well on the tasks set and maintain this concentration throughout the lesson. There is some inappropriate behaviour, mainly from a minority of older boys, but the teachers manage this well and it does not disrupt the learning of the other pupils. The behaviour of most pupils in lessons is good. They behave very well and carry out the tasks set with a minimum of fuss.

125 The quality of teaching in information and communication technology is good and teachers make good use of the resources available to them. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection and almost two-thirds was good. The recent training undertaken by staff has enhanced their confidence and knowledge in the subject and this is apparent in the lessons seen. Lessons are planned well and most adhere closely to the scheme of work. Teachers share the lesson aims with the pupils and this helps them to understand the purpose of the lessons, but also why and when it is appropriate to use certain programs. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology across the curriculum and it is used to support most other subject areas. A few staff still lack the confidence and expertise to teach specific information and communication technology skills but these teachers are often well supported by teaching assistants who are able to demonstrate the necessary skills. Support assistants are deployed very effectively in these lessons.

126 The co-ordinator is effective in her role and has good subject knowledge to support and lead the rest of the staff. She has devised a new scheme of work and organised training for the staff with the support of the local 'cluster' group. This has enhanced the profile of the subject within the school and in turn the delivery of the curriculum. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to purchase software and equipment to enable development of the full curriculum, such as sensing, and this has been identified in the current improvement plan.

127 Resources for the subject are very good for hardware but lacking some software to deliver the full national programs of study. The school is consistently upgrading their equipment and they make good use of the funding provided by the National Grid for Learning and the Education Action Zone to enhance the resources available to pupils and staff.

MUSIC

128 Pupils start Key Stage 1 with attainment in music below expectations for their age. Throughout both key stages they make good progress and so, by the end of Key Stage 2, attainment matches expectations. Many teachers in the school are not particularly confident with music teaching. The school has identified this and, over the last year, has employed specialist music consultants to work alongside classroom teachers. These specialists have developed with the school a comprehensive scheme of work that covers all areas of the music curriculum. They have also demonstrated music lessons in which teachers have fully participated. As a result, pupils have received high quality teaching and teachers have learned a great deal. This has greatly improved teachers' knowledge and confidence in this subject.

129 Some teachers in the school had sufficient musical expertise to conduct their own lessons. This, combined with the use of specialists, has resulted in pupils developing well their musical skills but also developing their appreciation and enthusiasm for the subject. For example, in a lesson in Year 3 pupils listened well to the Andrew Lloyd Webber song 'Any Dream Will Do'. They followed carefully the teacher's directions and instructions to sing the song with a view to developing it for performing to others. The very good teaching resulted in pupils standing and breathing correctly so that they sang tunefully with good control and change in pitch. In all the lessons seen, pupils were given experiences that not only developed their musical knowledge and understanding but that were also fun. For example, pupils in Year 2 used percussion instruments to produce 'storm music'. The very lively and enthusiastic teaching inspired the pupils to produce a lively performance. Very good use of cards to indicate whose turn it was to play captured the pupils' attention and they thoroughly enjoyed making thunder, rain and wind sounds.

130 Hymn practices are also a time when pupils develop their musical ability whilst

enjoying what they are doing. Pupils in Key Stage 1 sing enthusiastically with good rhythm, diction and volume. Percussion instruments are played well by a selection of pupils during the chorus of some of the hymns. Teachers show a good understanding of the types of hymns that appeal to young children and choose ones where pupils can join in the actions. In Key Stage 2, pupils sing in three part rounds and show knowledge of a good range of hymns. Staff are very good role models. They all join in enthusiastically which pupils appreciate but also gives pupils good leads to follow.

131 The subject is well led by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator. The subject's strengths and areas for development have been clearly identified. The co-ordinator has ensured that the subject has developed well over the last year but has clear plans about how to develop it further.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

132 Standards are in line with those found nationally at the ends of both key stages. At the time of the school's previous inspection the outcome was the same, so satisfactory standards have been maintained. Pupils make good progress throughout the school, and the attention that teachers give to the social aspects, such as working together as members of a team and sharing, make a good contribution to pupils' social development. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have learnt many skills and can use them in a range of situations.

133 All areas of the curriculum are given appropriate coverage, although the school has identified gymnastics and dance as areas for development. Swimming is provided at the local pool and pupils make sound progress by the end of Key Stage 2 in this aspect. Representatives from the school were invited to take part in the opening ceremony of this new facility for the town.

134 In Key Stage 1 pupils use their natural enthusiasm for movement to develop their skills in movement and co-ordination. They enjoy working individually, in pairs, and groups, and take part in lessons involving a range of activities, such as catching, jumping and skipping. Year 1 pupils, for example, develop their ball skills, they work in pairs, throwing and catching, and counting how many times they can catch the ball in succession. They enjoy the activity and work well, but they are not given enough opportunities to comment on each others performance, or to suggest ways to improve.

135 Once they are in Key Stage 2 pupils continue to develop their skills. Year 3 and 4 pupils play 'Kwik Cricket' as a means of developing their throwing and catching skills. The game was new to them, but they quickly learnt the rules. They joined in with enthusiasm, and put their newly acquired skills into practice, such as hitting a ball accurately and developing their fielding skills. Some initially found it difficult to work as members of a team, but, as they became more involved, they strove to do their best for their teams, and competed well, in a spirit of friendly competition.

136 The teaching of physical education is satisfactory throughout the school, but in both key stages teachers do not give pupils the chance to watch each other's performances and comment on ways to improve. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge and teach the required skills with enthusiasm. Good use is made of visits from teachers from the local secondary school, who take lessons as part of the school's links with partner institutions. During the inspection week such a visit took place, with the teacher focusing on developing pupils fielding skills for cricket. This was well received by the pupils, and made a useful contribution to the development of their cricket skills. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and develop their skills at an appropriate rate.

137 The subject co-ordinator is developing a good overview of the subject. He has updated the subject documentation in line with recent national guidelines. Resources are good, although some, particularly floor mats used in the hall, are in poor condition and in need of replacement. Planning and assessment procedures are inconsistent and need to be made more systematic. The school has very good facilities for all aspects of the physical education curriculum. The hall, field and playground are all large and well maintained. Activities undertaken as part of the school's regular residential visits, such as orienteering and adventurous activities, also make valuable contributions to the curriculum. Extra-curricular activities offered to the pupils are very good and enhance the curriculum.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

138 Standards of attainment meet the expectations of the local authority's 'agreed syllabus for religious education' at the end of Key Stage 1 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards of attainment are below these expectations at the end of Key Stage 2.

139 By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils do not have sufficient knowledge and understanding of Christianity to meet the requirements of the syllabus. They know that religious belief encourages people to accept moral positions and make decisions about their behaviour. Most do not have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the principal teachings of Christianity to link Christ's ideas with moral positions. They are not clear when ideas were expressed; for example, they have difficulty in recalling the occasion of the 'Sermon on the Mount'. They know few parables, although they are aware of Christ's reputation as a worker of miracles. Whilst knowing of Christ's crucifixion, they have insufficient knowledge of the events leading to it. They know the story of the resurrection, but do not recognise its major significance to Christians.

140 Most pupils' knowledge and understanding of Islam and of Hinduism are sufficient to meet the requirements of the syllabus. Pupils recognise a number of similarities and differences between the differing faiths studied. They know Christians and Muslims both worship the same god, but use a different name. Pupils recognise a number of rituals and stories from different faiths. They know how Muslims prepare for worship and recall familiar Hindu stories, such as of Rama and Sita. There is substantial written work on Mosques, the life of Muhammad and Islamic religious practice, but less work on Hinduism.

141 Most pupils demonstrate a mature and sensitive approach to potentially unfamiliar customs and beliefs. They achieve satisfactory progress because of this, being able to recognise and respect the validity of differing beliefs and their place within society.

142 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils understand the importance of prayer and worship to individual belief within different faiths. They know that prayer is used as a form of praise, to give thanks and to seek help. Pupils demonstrate an ability to write simple prayers independently. Pupils are able to recall some Christian teaching. They know the purpose of major festivals such as Christmas and Easter. Higher attaining pupils recall and describe special services they've attended. When asked, one pupil explained the candle at the Christingle service represented "Christ is the light of the world". Pupils are aware of the importance of ceremony and can distinguish between weddings, funerals and baptism. They have sufficient outline knowledge of Islam to recall its fundamental vocabulary, such as 'Muslim' and 'Muhammad'. Most pupils recognise that there are special occasions and places that Christians and Muslims are involved in because of their belief in a god. They are aware that there are adults and children in their school from both faiths.

143 The standard of teaching in both key stages is satisfactory, with a number of good

lessons observed during the inspection. A strength in teaching at Key Stage 1 is the careful organisation of tasks and the sharing of responsibilities between teacher and learning support assistant. This ensures that all pupils are well supported and make sound progress. It also helps promote more appropriate tasks for differing groups of pupils in mixed age classes. In Key Stage 2, strengths include the opportunities provided for pupils to gain an experience of how faiths are practised. For example, in a lesson where pupils replicate religious postures and so become more aware of their significance in prayer. Some good opportunities are promoted for pupils to discuss issues, such as the comparisons between different faiths. However opportunities are missed to establish links between moral behaviour and religious teaching.

144 An important area for development is to ensure that pupils are more carefully taught the principal stories from Christianity, so they can relate these more readily to contemporary ideas on morality and behaviour. For example, work seen during the inspection on contemporary responses to a mugging was not linked to the story of the 'Good Samaritan', or indeed to any similar story from another faith. The teaching in both key stages leads to satisfactory learning. Most pupils recognise the influence of religious thought upon social change and development. They respond positively and enjoy this subject. However, there is a very small minority whose immature behaviour shows a lack of understanding and respect for differing viewpoints.

145 The curriculum offered meets statutory requirements. However, some areas of planning in Key Stage 2 do not sequence topics sufficiently well to assist the consolidation of pupils' knowledge and understanding. Assessment procedures do not clearly indicate how planning is altered once current learning has been evaluated. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop the monitoring of pupils work in Key Stage 2 to increase her knowledge and understanding of pupils' progress. Currently there are inconsistencies of approach at Key Stage 2 in the way pupils' work is presented and retained. There are some useful artefacts and good use is made of local churches and their staff to enrich curricular provision. Since the last inspection, standards have been maintained in Key Stage 1, but are lower in Key Stage 2.