

INSPECTION REPORT

RED ROW FIRST SCHOOL

Red Row, Morpeth

LEA area: Northumberland

Unique reference number: 122197

Headteacher: Mrs. Brett

Reporting inspector: Mrs M. Hulme
Registered Inspector's OFSTED Inspector Number: 3609

Dates of inspection: 19th – 22nd June

Inspection number: 193232

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
School category:	community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Red Row Morpeth Northumberland
Postcode:	NE61 5AS
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr John Lunn
Date of previous inspection:	February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs M. Hulme	Registered inspector	Areas of learning for children under-five	What sort of school is it?
		English	What should the school do to improve further?
		Art	How well are pupils taught?
			How well is the school led and managed?
Mr S. Vincent	Lay inspector	None	How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr J. Barley	Team inspector	Equal opportunities	The school's results and pupils' achievements.
		Mathematics	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
		Geography	
		Music	
		Physical education	
Mr T. Aldridge	Team inspector	Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Science	
		Information technology	
		Design and technology	
		History	
		Religious education	

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6 - 9
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10 - 13
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13 - 15
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15 - 17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17 - 18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	18 - 19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	19 - 21
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	21 - 22
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	23 - 26
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27 - 39

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is smaller than other schools. There are 129 pupils on roll and a further 15 full-time places in the nursery. There are 30 children admitted to the reception class each year. All statutory age pupils are white and 38 per cent are eligible for free school meals which is much above the national average for First Schools. There are 33 pupils on the special needs register and a further seven pupils in the nursery. Of these there are seven statutory age pupils with statements of special educational need and one pupil in the nursery. The total of eight statements is well above the national average. Children mainly come from a large council estate at Hadston and families are experiencing the frustrations and social deprivation that goes with high, long term unemployment. Over the last four years, the assessments undertaken by teachers when children enter the school well over 50 per cent have low achievement for their age and poor social skills.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. The new headteacher is working very hard, supported by staff and governors to provide a supportive and caring place for children to learn. The energy and enthusiasm of the headteacher is leading developments that are changing the way the school has been seen in the past, seeking continual improvement and refusing to accept complacency. The majority of pupils now have good attitudes to their work and behave well. The good quality of teaching is ensuring that standards are as good as they can be and there is very effective support for those who need it. The effective teamwork provides the right educational direction for the school that results in a range of very good learning opportunities. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Overall, the quality of teaching is good and in 38 per cent of lessons it was very good.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership, gives a firm steer to the work of the school and is effectively supported by staff and governors.
- Children have positive attitudes towards learning and school life and behaviour is good
- The school is very good at developing pupils' moral understanding, and social responsibility;
- Very good adult support is provided for children with special educational needs;
- The school takes very good care of its children.

What could be improved

- Pupils' performance in National Curriculum tests;
- Writing skills and the presentation of written work;
- Some aspects of lesson planning for more able pupils and children under five;
- Staff training in special educational needs to provide more focused individual education plans.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Very good improvements have been made since the last inspection. Procedures for monitoring curriculum development and teaching have been established. Teachers were not encouraged to be out of their own class too frequently as pupils have difficulty in making good relationships and it was found to be too disruptive. Therefore the monitoring of planning, work scrutiny and analyses have had a higher priority than lesson observation but this has been done, records kept and priority given to literacy and numeracy. A policy on teaching and learning has been implemented. The development planning includes governors earlier in the process and provides links to cost implications. All governors' visits now have a focus and they have greater involvement in the curriculum. Registers are now marked correctly with pupils who are late counted as absent resulting in a lower attendance rate. The school has implemented an assertive discipline policy and provided training for all staff resulting in better management of lessons. Big improvements in information technology in the last two years are extending pupils' expertise, particularly in the use of Internet. Better identification of children with special educational needs has extended the level of support provided.

STANDARDS

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

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

The results of National Curriculum tests for children at Year 2 were at their lowest point in 1998 when the school was in the bottom five per cent of all schools for writing and mathematics. This was because the class had almost 50 per cent of pupils on the special educational needs register, including several with emotional and behavioural problems. In 1999, there were improvements but the school lacked children who could reach the higher levels and there were still several children with special educational needs. This year there are improvements again with 17 per cent of children gaining the higher level in reading and 14 per cent gaining the higher level in mathematics. This is good given the low starting point that children have when they enter school and that the current Year 2 class has over 30 per cent of children with special educational needs. In all other subjects children are reaching the standards expected for their age at Year 2. Generally Year 4 pupils are making satisfactory efforts to achieve sound standards but with over 40 per cent of children with special needs it is only being achieved by the very effective efforts made by teachers. Pupils' progress tends to be mainly good but in some classes it is very good, particularly in literacy and mathematics.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Overall good. Majority make good efforts and work diligently to try to succeed
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Mainly good. No exclusions in the last year. Although there are some instances of unacceptable behaviour, when this happens it is dealt with very effectively
Personal development and relationships	The very good relationships between teachers and pupils motivate many children to work hard and do their best. Pupils show good co-operation, take care of equipment and willingly take responsibility for tasks allocated by teachers
Attendance	Below average but procedures to encourage attendance are good.

The very good relationships between teachers and children have resulted in the good attitudes that pupils have towards their work. This is a strength and forms the foundation for good learning. The good behaviour is a key factor in the sustained work and good efforts. Most children come willingly to school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-9 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Very good	Good

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

Overall, the quality of teaching is good with 98 per cent of lessons being satisfactory or better. Just one lesson was unsatisfactory. There is now a higher proportion of very good teaching and two lessons were excellent. This is an improvement since the last inspection when only 87 per cent of lessons were satisfactory, only three per cent were very good and 11 per cent were unsatisfactory. Overall, the quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good. English and mathematics teaching is very good in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 and 4. The implementation of national strategies for literacy and numeracy has had a positive effect on the teaching of these subjects. Teachers show good technical knowledge that is resulting in children acquiring the essential skills they need. The school gives priority to all children having equal access to all learning opportunities in lessons and this is good. Teachers generally plan work in lessons that is appropriate for the stage of learning but sometimes the starting point for more able children is too low. Particular strengths in teaching include, good subject knowledge, very good teaching of basic skills, effective planning with clear objectives for learning, very good management and discipline, very good use of support staff, good use of time and effective use of resources. Weaknesses relate to the teaching in the nursery where the planning needs improving and sometimes there is ineffective use of the teacher's time. The good teaching has a positive effect on pupils' learning: which shows itself in their good efforts, as they understand tasks, the good acquisition of skills and knowledge; efforts to persevere and complete work and their ability to work independently.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of learning opportunities are pertinent to the needs of the children. The good continuity and progression through the school is an improvement since the previous inspection.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Overall, provision is good. The work designed especially for them, together with the very effective adult support, enables them to make good progress but the targets in individual education plans are sometimes too imprecise.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall provision is very good. This is a significant strength of the school and provides a very secure and stable background for learning. The very good staff role models and clear codes of behaviour help children develop a mature understanding of their moral and social responsibilities.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The welfare of the children is of paramount importance to the school. Staff show a very caring attitude and the school does all it can to keep children from harm.

Parents and carers hold very positive views about what the school achieves for their children and the way in which they are involved. All areas of the curriculum meet statutory requirements. The range of extra-curricular activities including visits and visitors to the school enhances the curriculum. The attention given to the care of its pupils is a strength. The concern which adults show for pupils is based on the very good relationships that exist between them

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The very good ethos created by the headteacher and supported by the school community effectively supports learning. Very good teamwork. The right tasks have been identified for the future. There is sound management of special educational needs but training is needed for the co-ordinator and staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good understanding of strengths and weaknesses results in effective fulfilment. Improved involvement in planning and curriculum is ensuring good levels of expertise and organisation.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has a good view of its work and its analysis is successful in helping staff understand what works well and why.
The strategic use of resources	Good. This results in gradually improving standards, an attractive learning environment and very good quality of education.

There are sufficiently, suitable qualified teachers with a range of expertise and experience who are appropriately deployed. The teachers are very well supported by the non-teaching staff who bring a wide range of expertise to their work. The accommodation is well cared for and much has been done to enhance its surroundings and interior to make it a stimulating and interesting place for children to learn. Learning resources have been improved and presently they are adequate

The headteacher is an effective and caring leader and very well supported by the staff and governing body. There is good delegation and contribution of staff with responsibilities. However, the headteacher's class responsibility for 50 per cent of the week limits the monitoring of teaching that she can undertake. Governors take a keen interest in the school's performance, show interest in how this is perceived locally, make good use of assessment analysis and target spending to improve standards.

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 standards and progress achieved • The good standards of behaviour • The good teaching • The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best • The way the school works with parents • That the school is well led and managed • The school is helping their children become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No aspect was raised as an area for improvement by more than one parent

Although the school sent out 159 questionnaires, only 20 were returned and only two parents attended the parents' meeting prior to the inspection. The views of parents and carers are expressed through the above table and inspectors agree with these statements.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Although children under five enter the school with low levels of achievement for their age, by the time they leave the reception class the majority have laid the foundation for the National Curriculum and standards are satisfactory for all areas of learning. Children have made very good progress particularly in literacy skills.
2. Red Row First School has a much higher than average percentage of pupils with special educational needs and the level of ability on entry is clearly well below average. Also the Headteacher is relatively new in post and many of her initiatives have not yet impacted into higher standards. However in this year's National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds there are clear signs of an improvement, particularly in mathematics where 14 per cent of pupils reached Level 3 this year. There is a growing optimism that the analysis and targeting that has been introduced is beginning to pay dividends. Standards of work seen during the inspection and in the scrutiny of pupils' written work confirm the improving standards. The majority of work at both key stages is broadly in line with expected levels. The 1999 test results show a marked improvement on the previous year and early signs are that this year's results will continue to show further improvements and will be close to the levels of 1997 when the last inspection took place.
3. Test results for Year 2 pupils last year indicate that in reading, writing and mathematics results were well below the national average but when compared to schools of a similar context, reading and writing are broadly average and mathematics is below average.
4. Teachers' assessments for science last year indicate that overall; standards are well below average. Standards in some aspects of science such as the experimental and investigative, and physical processes are better, but still not reaching an acceptable level for age. In lessons, strengths relate to children's use of scientific vocabulary and extending their understanding, such as the meaning of a 'fair test'.
5. In reading, the school had a much larger proportion of pupils achieving Level 2A, 55 per cent against a national average of 16 per cent, but no pupils gained the higher Level 3. Similarly in the writing test no pupils reached Level 3 but the numbers reaching Level 2B or above was close to the national average. Results from this year's tests indicate that the school has achieved Level 3 in reading and mathematics but has not yet achieved Level 3 in writing. However this has been targeted for the present year and the are indications from written work and lesson observations that this too is improving.
6. In Key Stage 1 standards are generally in line with expectations for age in all other subjects although there is insufficient evidence to make judgements on music. No judgement can be made about standards at the end of Key Stage 2 as the school has no Year 6 pupils, but at Year 4 children are doing as well as they can, given the high number of pupils with special needs. At this stage the majority of pupils' attainment in all other subjects is satisfactory for their age.
7. Target setting for individual pupils and for groups is now well established and the analysis, which generates these targets, is effectively used to agree challenging but realistic targets with the local education authority.

8. In information technology children are making good headway in their word-processing skills and program robotic toys to travel a pre-determined path. The use of graphics in information technology is used well in both art and mathematics.
9. Standards in religious education are broadly inline with the expectation of the locally agreed syllabus. Strengths in the subject come from children's understanding of why Christians regard Jesus as a special person and a growing knowledge of stories from the Old Testament. Their knowledge of other world faiths is less well developed.
10. In art, particularly good use is being made of the techniques used by other artists to improve their own work and a greater use of sculpture and information technology is resulting in exciting and good quality outcomes.
11. In design and technology there are particularly good attempts to find links with other subjects such as using the inspiration of literacy through the story of 'The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch' to design and make a lighthouse and use scientific knowledge of control boxes to light the bulb.
12. In geography, children are good at identifying features of the local area from aerial photographs and this skill is further developed at the junior stage when pupils identify features on ordnance survey maps and give reasons for those features. Throughout the school very good use is made of the locality and in particular the local Country Park for environmental studies.
13. In history children have a growing understanding of chronology and are making gains in knowledge about famous people from the past and know such civilisations as that of the Romans and how they influenced life in this country.
14. By the time they leave the school pupils have a good understanding of formal notation in music and are able to express their feeling about different types of music and musical instruments.
15. In physical education pupils are improving skills in using balls, becoming more accurate. They are learning to control a ball using a bat or racquet. They are becoming more confident in the water. Another very good feature of the physical education programme is the wide range of out of school clubs that is available to pupils.
16. The progress made by pupils identified as having special education needs is good. They are helped to meet the targets in their individual education plans by the very good support given by the extra adults in the school who work specifically with them.
17. The school recognises that it still has a long way to go in raising standards further. The very good support for special educational needs, good teaching, the careful targeting of pupils and the detailed audits of test results are all beginning to have an impact and there are indications that further improvements in standards should result from these strategies.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

18. The good understanding by staff has resulted in pupils' attitudes to the school being good overall. In some lessons, attitudes were very good or excellent, particularly in the infant classes. Given the emotional and behavioural problems that many pupils have when they enter school, this is a major success and a testimony to the work of teachers and support staff. In the infant classes pupils are very keen to learn. They

participate with enthusiasm in discussions rising to the challenges provided by teachers. Many pupils in the Year 3 class have similar attitudes but in the Year 4 class some pupils find difficulty coping with challenge and quickly become emotionally distraught. However, these situations are dealt with effectively by the teacher, with very good support from classroom assistants, who between them ensure that the situation is always kept firmly under control.

19. In most classes pupils concentrate well. They listen carefully to teachers and are confident in offering their own opinions, although sometimes they are carried along by their own enthusiasm and tend to call out rather than take turns to respond. Behaviour in and around school is generally good. Pupils play well together at playtimes and lunchtimes, encouraged by well-trained midday staff who engage the pupils in a variety of games. There is no evidence of oppressive or aggressive behaviour. There have been no exclusions.
20. Pupils are generally well behaved around school. They enter assembly sensibly and quietly and listen to stories well. They are quick to recognise the achievements of others as was seen in the good work assembly when a whole series of awards were given out for effort and good behaviour. In lessons pupils work together well, sharing ideas and finding common solutions. Relationships throughout the school are very good. This is an important factor in the school's success improving the challenging behaviour of some children. Teachers and support staff set very good examples for pupils to follow. They show respect for the pupils who show respect for them in return.
21. One of the major successes of the new headteacher has been the transformation of the external environment of the school. This has been enhanced by a series of flowerbeds, rockery, water feature, and outdoor play area for the under-fives, playground games and a picnic area. She has involved all the school community in these projects and consequently the pupils have come to respect and protect their own work.
22. Although attendance levels are below the national average the school is doing everything to improve attendance and lateness. It is particularly working on reducing unauthorised absence. The school enjoys very effective relationships with several agencies including the education welfare officer who makes regular visits to the school. Another successful venture has been the breakfast club which is encouraging pupils, who might previously have been late, to come to school on time. This club is also providing very good opportunities for personal development and for one to one meetings with parents and pupils.
23. Pupils are learning to respect the feelings and values of others particularly through their work in religious education but also in general discussions in several other subjects. They are encouraged to express their own feelings in music, art and literature. The school recognises that further opportunities need to be developed for pupils to appreciate the cultural diversity of the world in which they live.
24. Pupils are taking more responsibility around the school culminating in their "work experience". This involves them in applying in writing for a variety of jobs around the school such as secretarial assistant, computer assistant or caretaker assistant. They are allocated jobs on the strength of their application and each Friday fulfil their duties. In addition to this the older pupils have regular responsibilities on a daily basis. A school council is in the early stages of development, which intends to use children's views in decision making.

25. The good attitudes that the pupils display are a significant feature of the improving nature of the school and are a tribute to the leadership of the headteacher and to the dedication and hard work of the staff.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

26. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. There has been a considerable improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. Almost all teaching is now at least satisfactory but last time the overall teaching was satisfactory in only 87 per cent of lessons and there were 11 per cent of lessons where teaching was unsatisfactory. More teaching is now judged to be very good, and only one lesson was unsatisfactory.
27. The criticisms made of teaching at Years 1 and 2 about weak management and organisation are no longer true. Pupils are now very aware of what is expected of them and they are always very well managed. There is now a good balance between direct teaching and group or individual activities. There were criticisms made of Year 3 and 4 in a few lessons related to work not being well matched to pupils' prior attainment. Again this has been remedied but occasionally group work was too general for the different stages of learning. The main group activity was not always extended for faster learners or modified for those children working at a slower pace. There is good practice in some classes and greater consistency is now required.
28. The teaching of children under five is good at the reception stage and satisfactory with some shortcomings at the nursery stage. At the last inspection the teaching of children under five in both the nursery and reception class was judged to be satisfactory overall and sometimes good. There was particular praise about the ways that priority was given to the acquisition of language and social skills and the contributions made by support staff to children's progress. Provision for the development of social skills is still good and the high quality contributions of the nursery nurse and other support staff continue to contribute well to children's development in all areas of learning.
29. However, the planning of sessions to ensure good language development and appropriate activities for all areas of learning, together with the use of teacher time is better in the reception stage than in the nursery. The outdoor area, which is a well-developed resource, is not used as well as it might be for extending children's physical development. The planning of sessions lacks clear objectives for learning for each activity that relate directly to the areas of learning. The amalgamation of these two classes next term is an appropriate time to review planning.
30. The good teaching is having a very positive impact on children's learning. In almost every lesson there were very good relationships between the teacher and the children. This resulted in good attitudes to work and pupils who were willing to make the efforts to learn.
31. This was particularly well used in some mathematics lessons. The well-developed relationships made it possible for the teachers to provide mental sessions with increasing challenge as in two lessons when children acquired the understanding and skills related to doubling numbers. Teachers instil confidence in pupils and more precisely in their ability to succeed.
32. Teachers are keen to see that all children have access to all learning opportunities regardless of their stage of learning. To do this well, teachers must deploy support staff effectively. This is seen as particularly important in those classes where there

are large numbers of children with a variety of special educational needs. In one class where the teacher had taught the pupils for two years to provide security and consistency, an art lesson was underway with children expected to use a medium new to them in creating their representations. The teacher used his knowledge well to demonstrate the technique of using charcoal but even explaining how to hold it caused consternation in some children. Those with emotional problems are easily moved to tears when the task seems too hard or they cannot achieve instant success. This proved to be the case for one child but the very good supporting adults dealt appropriately with this incident, allowing the teacher to carry on working with the rest of the class. The very good management and discipline shown by the teacher resulted in, at least, satisfactory attitudes to their work and some pupils concentrated well, producing good outcomes that were better than might be expected. The teacher knows the class very well and is aware that praise from him is not always well received by individuals and pupils' appreciation of the work of others is unusual. Despite all the difficulties with which he works there is a determination to provide high challenge for all stages of learning and in this the teacher is successful. By the end of the lesson everyone had learned how to use charcoal successfully and a few had produced some good outcomes that were displayed, improving their self-image.

33. Good teacher knowledge and effective use of resources are often used well together to extend understanding. In a Year 3 class children were listening to music and relating sounds to visual images. The useful introduction helped children to understand what the teacher hoped they would learn and her very skilful questioning caused pupils to explain their own views of music and emotions. An effective choice of *Peter and the Wolf* was made for listening and immediately pupils began to see that music communicates just as do words or pictures. As they tried out various instruments to relate them to an image they co-operated well, sharing ideas but some boisterous behaviour had to be handled firmly. Relationships were firm but relaxed and this kept children at their work. The very good pace allowed for levels of participation by every child. The subject generated enthusiasm and resulted in a successful lesson. Children had a deeper understanding of how music can create a picture and influence which emotions are experienced. They have extended their knowledge of instruments and their musical vocabulary.
34. There is very good teaching of the basic skills in literacy and numeracy lessons and the skills acquired are emphasised in other subjects. Teachers are making good efforts to help children improve their writing and this is very evident at Year 1 where they have already begun to join letters. Although they have not learnt how to make all the joins necessary they are quickly picking up which letters can be joined. Their keenness leads them to try to extend what they have learned in their own writing. In some classes the need for good presentation is emphasised but the range of written work provided for analysis showed that a consistent approach to joined writing is not cemented in place as yet. In the numeracy sessions, teachers exploit the very good relationships they have with pupils to keep them on their toes during mental sessions and take them along at a cracking pace to the next task. In one class the teacher used imaginative techniques to help children remember ways of counting on from any given number. In this same class, role-play was used effectively to introduce work on subtraction with a brick seller taking stock of what was left when builders depleted his stock. The teacher's vigilance enabled her to spot anyone losing interest very quickly and change her approach to revive interest.
35. All teachers deploy their support staff very effectively. These additional adults now have a good understanding of what teachers are trying to achieve. Some teachers capitalise on the specialist skills of support staff exceedingly well to capture the interest of children and raise standards. The support for children with special educational needs keeps them engaged in their tasks and challenges them to

complete their work. Many would not achieve this in literacy and numeracy sessions without this support, particularly when the teacher is working with a focus group.

36. A good example of how support staff are used was seen in a lesson with children under five. In the reception class children learn quickly when given first-hand practical activities but in order to achieve well children need adult input. This is often provided by support staff and in one session was used very effectively with a group of children engaged in a baking activity. A clear explanation was provided of what children were to do which immediately captured their interest and made them willing to prepare well before starting the operations of measuring ingredients and mastering tools. As the adult posed questions, made comments and consolidated previous learning, the children extended their use of language and gained an increasing awareness of the need to observe health and safety aspects related to cooking. The adult's warm, caring relationships with the children encouraged them to make good efforts, co-operate well in the group and take turns. This learning was evidently seen as fun. The good teaching had resulted in new knowledge and skills in more than one area of learning. By the end of the session they had recognised and named ingredients, talked about what they were doing, recalled the stages of baking, measured ingredients with some support, observed change as some items were added to others and saw a sloppy cake mixture change to biscuits by using heat.

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

37. Inspection findings show that all pupils are offered a good, broad and balanced curriculum which provides them with a wide range of opportunities pertinent to their needs. The statutory requirements to teach the National Curriculum are met in full. Overall, the school has good planning in place for all subjects. This is well structured and provides good learning opportunities. This enables all pupils to gain in appropriate knowledge and understanding and make good progress. Policies and schemes of work ensure that pupils progressively develop appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding. In many subjects, these are based on the current guidelines from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and are being revised in preparation for the revised National Curriculum to be introduced in September 2000. The planning for daily lessons is clear and often shared with pupils. However, this does not always have a high enough starting point for more able pupils in their group work.
38. Teachers plan carefully together, which ensures that there is good continuity and progression across the school, which is a significant improvement since the last inspection. The curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is a good with specific activities clearly identified according to individual needs.
39. The time allocated to all subjects is appropriate, in line with national recommendations and enables pupils to be taught in sufficient depth. In the past two years the school has concentrated on the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy which has been effectively introduced and has helped to raise standards in English. Similarly, since September, the National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully introduced across the school and teachers have adapted their teaching styles well to the new challenge with a resultant improvement in standards. Target setting has been successfully introduced for all pupils, linked carefully to learning and progress in English and mathematics, in order to further raise standards. The school has not lost sight of other curriculum areas and worked hard to ensure a balanced curriculum. Around the school there are stimulating displays, which further enhance

the curricular opportunities offered to pupils and enrich their learning. All pupils have full access to the opportunities on offer and this is managed well by the school.

40. The school's provision for extra-curricular activities is very good with reading, sporting and musical activities, and a parents/children computer club. The curriculum is well enhanced culturally with a good range of visitors into the school, such as theatre groups and musicians, and visits to places of interest in the local area and further afield. Good use is made of the local environment, especially in science, history and geography.
41. Overall, the school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinators are effective and work hard to support the large numbers of pupils on the register. Pupils' statements are regularly reviewed and the school makes good efforts to put the provision outlined into effect. However, the teachers have had no training in writing the targets for children's individual education plans and sometimes these are not sufficiently precise to measure success. Pupils with special needs have equal access to extra-curricular activities and receive a broad and balanced curriculum through the extra staffing provided. The contributions and support provided by these staff are a key factor in children achieving as well as they do.
42. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. Pupils undertake a range of responsibilities in all classes, such as taking registers and tidying up, which effectively supports their personal and social education. Year 4 pupils have very good opportunities to take on additional responsibilities including helping at lunchtime, collective worship preparation, and help in the nursery and about the school. Pupils apply in writing for these responsibilities and interviews are held. Health and sex education is effectively provided through the science curriculum.
43. The overall provision for pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. This is a significant strength of the school and provides a very secure and stable background for learning. The promotion of spiritual and moral values is implicit across the whole school day and is a significant part of the school's ethos.
44. There is good provision for pupils to develop their knowledge and insights into values and beliefs and all that work in the school are valued. Pupils are given many opportunities to consider their own values and attitudes and reflect and express themselves on spiritual matters. Assemblies provide an opportunity for thought, prayer, quiet reflection and celebration. Pupils have the opportunity to develop a sense of identity and community spirit sharing common experiences. A short prayer is said before lunch in classrooms to further develop this. In religious education lessons they learn about other religions and the chance to develop an understanding of tolerance. The school regularly celebrates a range of Christian festivals such as Harvest, Advent, Christmas, Candlemas and Easter. Acts of collective worship are planned around themes but an accurate record of what has been covered is not maintained and this is an area recognised for development. Daily acts of collective worship meet legal requirements.
45. Provision for pupils' moral education is very good and pupils are taught about what is acceptable and what is not. Religious education, assemblies and personal and social education lessons emphasise the need for good moral values. Pupils are given many opportunities to develop a sense of right and wrong and examine their actions. Good codes of conduct are displayed in classrooms and in the hall and reference is made to these during lessons. The school has very clear assertive discipline procedures and bullying policy. These are very effectively shared with pupils and parents, ensures that all are aware of the school's expectations and that there is a consistent approach. The school has developed very good reward systems to encourage good

behaviour. Fund raising activities, such as a sponsored walk for the National Children's Homes, encourage them to consider others less fortunate.

46. The school provides a very good range of activities to develop pupils socially and this is reflected in their very good attitudes to one another both in the classroom, lunchtime and at play. The pupils work well together, help each other and listen to each other both in and out of the classroom. The weekly celebration assembly, at which the whole school shares work from each class listening and watching carefully, is a very good example of corporate social development. The sharing of work by the pupils helps considerably in building their self-confidence and an awareness of others. A school council has recently been established with two representatives from each class which meets monthly and discusses issues brought from classroom meetings. Additional responsibilities for older pupils helps them become reliable and trustworthy, more independent and it develops self-esteem. The very good range of extra-curricular activities, and contacts with other schools further develops social skills.
47. Overall, provision for pupils' cultural development is good. The pupils are taught to appreciate their own culture throughout all areas of the curriculum. This is achieved and emphasised by visitors to the school such as theatre groups and lifeboat-men. Visits to the Roman wall, local farms, and other places of historical and geographical interest extend cultural development. Multi-faith work figures highly in religious education, and music lessons, art and English all make significant contributions to an understanding of varying cultural traditions and beliefs. The school has successfully developed close links with community organisations to further enhance the curriculum. However, pupils are given insufficient insights into non-western cultures and this is an area recognised by the school for further development.
48. Relationships with associated schools, are very good and movement between schools is carried out smoothly with the least possible disruption to pupil's learning. Teachers meet regularly to discuss curriculum issues and provide support for the benefit of the children. The community makes a strong contribution to pupils' learning in several ways. A number of local business and retail organisations have provided valuable support with enhancing the school environment and providing equipment. The school has good links with a local newspaper through 'Newspapers in Education' and has regularly won the competition to produce a newspaper during the past four years. Newcastle football club has also been involved by providing coaching sessions in the school as part of 'Football in the Community'.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

49. The school provides very high levels of care for its pupils. Staff show great concern and a commitment to give pupils the best standards of welfare and support possible. The very good relationships, which exist between adults and pupils, provide a firm foundation.
50. The essential legal requirements for child protection and health and safety are all carried out very thoroughly, including arrangements for medicines and first aid. In addition, care is shown in many other ways, such as the provision of a Breakfast Club and snacks and milk during the morning. Teachers and support staff all show a very good understanding of the personal needs of each individual child in their care and make great efforts to give the support they need.
51. The school has made great efforts to create a safe and happy environment and has succeeded well in this aim. All staff have had training in behaviour management and

there is a very effective behaviour policy. The pupils create their own classroom rules and they know what is expected of them. Teachers and support staff have all played a part in improving behaviour during breaks and at lunchtime, by the introduction of positive play activities. An enjoyable time seems to be had by all! Pupils enjoy the rewards of merits and certificates and understand the sanctions for poor behaviour. As a result, the school is an orderly, calm and pleasant community.

52. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. The school works closely with the Education Welfare officer and registers are now marked correctly. Initiatives to improve punctuality, such as the breakfast club are working well.
53. The school has very well organised and effective methods for assessing pupils' academic and personal development. As a result, teachers know and understand their pupils very well. The gathering of information begins in the nursery and is followed by baseline assessments on entry into the reception class. As pupils progress through the school, their progress is carefully tracked by the use of both statutory and additional tests in English, mathematics and science. Teachers also keep their own records of how successfully pupils complete each module of work, or topics. There are portfolios of work, built up during their time in school, which give visible evidence of standards and rate of progress. There are very thorough assessments of pupils' personal development - their social skills, behaviour and attendance.
54. Assessment information is used very effectively to help individuals, or groups of pupils, with the overall objective of raising standards. The data shows clearly where problems exist and is used extensively to predict the results which pupils are likely to achieve in the future. As a result of this analysis future lesson planning is under constant review to ensure it is relevant and suitably challenging and attainment targets are set for groups within each class. The pilot scheme, operated in Year 2, has been sufficiently successful to be more widely extended. The school builds effectively on existing assessment procedures to identify pupils with special educational needs and to comply with the Code of Practice. Individual education plans are drawn up in consultation with teachers, parents and outside agencies if they are involved. However, some of targets are not specific enough which makes it more difficult to measure success. Pupils' performance is regularly reviewed and recorded and the school alters the stage at which pupils are placed or removes them from the register as appropriate. These procedures are effective in monitoring pupils' progress and deciding on their placement on the register, in accordance with the policy and the Code of Practice.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

55. Parents and carers hold positive views about what the school achieves for their children and the way in which they are involved. However, the number of questionnaires returned was small and only two parents attended the pre-inspection meeting. From this limited evidence parents appear to be very satisfied with academic standards, the values which the school promotes, the quality of teaching and the approachability of the school.
56. Parents are given a very good range of information about the school and their children's progress. As they join the nursery and the reception class, parents are welcomed with a good range of literature that explains the organisation of the school and the curriculum. Most information about the work of the school is conveyed to parents in newsletters. These cover a wide range of news and, in addition, there are class letters dealing with matters specific to them and giving a considerable amount

of information about forthcoming topics and studies, so that parents can prepare themselves to give help. There are many opportunities for parents to attend assemblies and there are additional meetings to explain important developments, such as the National Numeracy Strategy and aspects of the curriculum. The pupils' annual reports have been redesigned and now provide a clearer picture of pupils' attainment and progress against their targets. Progress is discussed with parents at the termly consultations and teachers are very willing to make themselves available for informal contact at the start and end of the day. Regular termly reviews for pupils with special educational needs are held to which parents are invited. Teachers ensure that parents are kept informed of pupils' individual targets although copies of letters are currently not filed with pupils' records.

57. The school has very strong links with parents and these are successful in some respects. Parents give good support to the social life of the school; they support trips and visits; they attend assemblies in increasing numbers, there is some fund-raising by a dedicated handful of parents and most parents attend the consultation meeting each term. However, and in spite of the best efforts of the school so far, parents are reluctant to involve themselves in the more formal aspects of the work of the school. Very few feel able to offer their help in the classrooms; meetings to explain or involve them in the curriculum are not well attended and homework is not regarded with as much importance as the school would wish; attendance is below national averages. Nevertheless, the school continues to strive to encourage all parents to feel they can make a significant contribution in all areas and that they can also have a partnership in their children's academic future.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

58. One of the main reasons for the successful improvements achieved by this school is the caring and purposeful leadership of the headteacher and the very effective support provided by the senior teacher and subject co-ordinators. This is no mean achievement in a school with a high percentage of children with emotional and behavioural difficulties and where the head has a class responsibility for 50 per cent of each day and there is no deputy to assist her. The headteacher has a clear view of the type of education the school should provide which results in a firm steer to the school's work. Through her personal example, in lessons, assemblies and just by being around the school, the headteacher successfully promotes the development of very good relationships and encourages as wide a range as possible of learning opportunities. The success of the school's aims in promoting a caring community where children are encouraged to develop their personal, social and academic skills is very evident every day. The whole school team is committed to these aims and it influences the children, who are generally well behaved and try to have a positive attitude about school life.
59. Responsibility for the daily work of the school and the management of the curriculum is delegated to teachers and they have responded very well by attending appropriate training, producing schemes of work, regularly scrutinising work and analysing daily assessments and those related to national tests. There has been limited time available for monitoring the teaching and learning at first-hand with the exception of literacy and numeracy. Teachers are not encouraged to be out of their classes too frequently as pupils have difficulty in making good relationships and it has been found to be too disruptive. They have made good contributions to planning to ensure that children learn skills and acquire knowledge systematically. However, in some classes, some aspects of lesson planning have shortcomings. Currently it lacks an extension to group tasks that would give the faster learners a higher starting point. Teachers have had no training in writing children's individual education plans and the

targets are too broad. More precise targets would allow children to progress in small steps and success could be measured more easily. The headteacher delegates effectively and allows staff to get on with the work for which they are responsible but provides help and support when necessary. However, the headteacher can make little time available for staff to carry out their responsibilities owing to her own high teaching commitment and a budget that severely limits opportunities to use supply cover. She expects good quality contributions from staff and if weakness is identified she expects it to be remedied.

60. Governors contribute to the effectiveness of the school well. They work hard and are well organised and thorough in their approach. They are open to new ideas and are willing to adapt. They have trust in the headteacher. They expect accountability and get it. The headteacher has a positive view of the governors who are active, questioning and supportive. Most governors are able to make regular visits to the school and some are very industrious supporting the school in a wide range of activities. Reports of what individual governors do in school are discussed at full meetings of the governing body resulting in everyone being fully informed about the life of the school. This has been particularly helpful in their involvement in monitoring the teaching and learning. Such opportunities were used effectively to form a view about how well the National Literacy Strategy had been implemented and what further support is still required by teachers. Their more recent work in scrutinising the written work of children has provided more familiarity with the English curriculum and the need for a consistent approach if standards are to improve. They are keen to see that they do.
61. The headteacher recognises the importance of consultation with parents who she seeks as effective partners with the staff and governors in the education of their children. Governors work hard to do their best for parents and try to respond quickly to suggestions or concerns.
62. The headteacher and governing body have a good oversight of financial planning and therefore can plan strategically ahead. They take opportunities to bid for additional funds. Specific funding, such as that for special educational needs is spent well. Money is spent wisely according to identified priorities but expenditure is high in such areas as support staff. However, this is used very effectively and currently is a necessary expense given the nature of the children's difficulties. By monitoring the budget, the headteacher and governors ensure that funds are used well.
63. There are sufficiently, suitable qualified teachers with a range of expertise and experience who are appropriately deployed and who are well supported by visitors to the school. Particularly effective use is made of the skills and expertise to support those children with special educational needs but the co-ordinator has received no training and this is an urgent requirement. She manages special educational needs soundly although she currently has many other roles and needs the support she receives from the other staff to monitor this aspect effectively. There is a named governor for special educational needs who meets regularly with the co-ordinator. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is a regular feature of governing body meetings. The plan to unite the reception class and nursery as an early-years unit is very good and will allow the wider use of the specialist skills of the reception teacher. The accommodation is well cared for and much has been done to enhance its surroundings and interior to make it a stimulating and interesting place for children to learn.
64. There are satisfactory procedures in place for the induction of staff new to the school, staff appraisal is in place and influences the training undertaken by teachers. The training for the literacy and numeracy initiatives has improved the teaching and good

use is made of the contributions from those outstanding teachers in the Local Education Authority who visit the school and share their expertise.

65. The expertise of additional adults who support teachers in the classroom is a vital part of this school. They contribute very well to the good teaching because they intervene in instances where there are emotional and behavioural problems and use their expertise well to prevent teachers having to constantly stop what they are doing to resolve problems. Their support roles are carefully considered and by providing the right level of support the children with special educational needs are enabled to make good progress.
66. Learning resources have been improved and presently they are adequate. The library is an attractive place for children to choose books and work when supervision is available. The information technology suite is enabling larger groups of children to extend their skills and then put them to good use in the classroom. The outdoor area, has been improved with the support of parents and children, and is a wonderful resource for many subjects. The school now has an allotment where it is planned to seek the help of the community in its development. The outdoor area close to the nursery has been developed very successfully and enhances the opportunities to extend children's creative and physical development. These specialist areas contribute effectively to the range of learning opportunities provided by the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

67. The headteacher, staff and governors should now
- **Continue the work to improve pupils' performance in National Curriculum tests as the school is doing now by:**
 - a. assessing pupils' work regularly and identifying weaknesses
 - b. ensuring pupils' understand the marking comments and act on them;
 - c. providing practice in the type of activities pupils are provided with in tests;
 - d. providing appropriate support to those experiencing difficulties, particularly those with special educational needs.
 - **Continue the work of improving children's writing skills and the presentation of written work in all subjects by:**
 - a. analysing weaknesses in the scrutiny of work as teachers and governors do now;
 - b. introducing joined writing at the time recommended by the National Literacy Strategy;
 - c. having a consistent approach to way all written work is presented.
 - **Improve procedures for special educational needs by:**
 - a. providing training for the special needs co-ordinator;
 - b. Providing better guidance for staff in writing more precise targets for children's individual education plans
 - **Improve some aspects of lesson planning to ensure that:**
 - a. Group activities are extended to provide a sufficiently high starting point for faster learners;
 - b. The planning of sessions for children under five have objectives for learning that relate closely to each area of learning

OTHER ISSUES THAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

68. When compiling the action plan the school should give consideration to some minor aspects that are listed below:
- keep records of themes of worship to show that they are broadly Christian;
 - extend pupils' insights into non-western cultures to make better provision for cultural development
 - reducing the level of unauthorised absence.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	47
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	21

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	34	49	11	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	15	129
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A	49

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR– Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	7	33

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	1.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	14	8	22

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	11
	Girls	8	8	7
	Total	16	16	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73	73	82
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	11	11
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	15	18	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	68	82	82
	National	82	86	87

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	129
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5.56
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	25.8

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	84.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	7.5
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	99/00
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	£
Total income	286,348
Total expenditure	292,074
Expenditure per pupil	2,056
Balance brought forward from previous year	11,133
Balance carried forward to next year	5,407

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	159
Number of questionnaires returned	20

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	35	5	5	0
My child is making good progress in school.	55	45	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	30	70	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	50	5	5	5
The teaching is good.	80	20	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	65	30	0	0	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	80	20	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	25	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	75	25	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	75	25	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	70	30	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	70	25	5	0	0

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

69. Children enter the school at the age of three and attend the nursery class on a part-time basis until they are four, when they move into the reception class and attend school full-time. In both classes, all children under five experience a suitable curriculum that lays the foundation for the National Curriculum that begins at Year 1. The school expects both classes to provide a range of opportunities that closely relate to the areas of learning for children under five and which enable them to achieve the knowledge, skills and understanding they need for the statutory curriculum. Teachers assess children when they enter school to find out what they can do and this shows that many children have poor learning skills for their age. The nursery provides a calm, friendly atmosphere giving priority to the development of children's personal and social skills so that they are ready for more structure to their learning at the reception stage.
70. By the end of the reception year most children are achieving satisfactory standards in all the areas of learning. They have laid a good foundation for the National Curriculum and have already started work on the early stages of literacy and numeracy, following the routines recommended by both national strategies.
71. In the nursery, children make satisfactory progress in language and literacy. Teaching is sound. Children have opportunities to look at books, listen to stories, use writing tools to make marks and trace over patterns, recite familiar rhymes from memory, learn letter sounds and use the imaginative play area currently set up as a hospital. Given the poor starting point when they start school, talking to children about what they are doing is important for language development. The tendency for adults to stay at one task means that several activities are not used as well as they could be because they lack the adult input needed to maintain children's interest. More effective use could be made of teacher time.
72. In the reception class children make at least good progress and some do better. Literacy sessions are working well and children understand the routines. The teaching is very good. In one lesson, children looked carefully at the big book and talked about the title. They realised that no author was named and could make suggestions for this. They are establishing a good understanding of how to find their way about books as they found the contents page, used their alphabetical knowledge to find the topic they wished to read and then the page number. Evidently they love and enjoy books. They make sensible and interesting comments about what they see in the pictures. They use their memory of the shared text well as they read sentences and when discovering a missing word are eager to suggest what it may be. The excellent relationships that exist between teacher and children make them keen and confident to come to the flip chart and write the missing word. Their efforts are appreciated by others who respond with clapping when they get it right. Although the teacher has the same learning objective for the whole class and wants them to develop the same skills, she uses her knowledge well to provide group tasks that allow for the different stages of learning. For example, they are learning about patterns in words, particularly those that have 'it' in them. Some cut out pictures of objects and stick them in books, others highlight words from a list and select those that have no letter *i*, in them. Some children use simple dictionaries to find words and their meanings.

73. Children make satisfactory progress in the nursery in developing their mathematical understanding and teaching is satisfactory. Children are given opportunities to sort and match objects and learn about shape through their play. They are introduced to positional words such as *on*, *in front* and *behind* through focused teaching using a range of small play equipment. Children play with water and learn to fill and empty a range of containers. When children move to the reception class teaching is good. As with literacy, numeracy sessions have been introduced gradually in the reception class. Again the excellent relationships result in good efforts. Children love the television programme used effectively by the teacher to support learning about time in relation to hours and key points in the day. There is excited comment about what they see and the teacher skilfully uses discussion about the school day to follow up the programme and probe understanding. They recite rhymes about digital time and some children can read digital time and beat out the number of hours on a tambour. When questioned they are accurate about *one less* or *one more*.
74. A good range of experiences helps children to make sense of the world around them and to appreciate their part in it. The teaching of this area of learning is satisfactory in nursery and very good at reception stage. Teachers encourage children to take part in activities that extend their knowledge and understanding as they use construction materials effectively to build models and use the computer to gain good control of the mouse to move objects on the screen. The water area is very popular and in the nursery children fill jugs and pour them into containers, they are engrossed with blowing bubbles by using tubes. They enjoy experimenting and exploring but make no further progress since there is a lack of adult involvement. At the reception stage the use of water generates considerable excitement. Children predict whether objects will float or sink, try them out and then sort them in appropriate sets. The teacher uses such resources as seaweed, plastic bottles, large balls of ice and wooden objects very effectively to provide first-hand experiences that make them think and extend their understanding. They use the information to select materials that will make a boat that floats and are involved in practical activity and purposeful play. There is skilful use of questions such as, "Why does this happen" and, "Will this work". Tasks are tackled with enthusiasm, there is very good concentration and effort resulting in gains in knowledge, skill and understanding.
75. Physical skills are developing well and teaching is generally satisfactory in the nursery. The children are confident in their movements and opportunities are provided for them to cut and fold paper, to build with construction kits, to explore materials including sand and water and to manipulate puzzles. Children gain confidence in using a range of writing and drawing tools. They enjoy outside play activities but have too few opportunities to use this very good resource. Teaching is unsatisfactory when children are taken to the hall for physical education lessons using apparatus that is already out but inappropriate for the age group. This is unsatisfactory as groups of children sit inactive for periods of time and there is much emphasis on folded arms and legs crossed. The reception children are at a stage of development when they are ready to take part in physical education sessions in the hall and outdoors. This is undertaken successfully.
76. Teachers provide a satisfactory range of activities for children's creative development in the nursery. This gives them opportunities to begin to learn the appropriate techniques for music making, painting, collage, printing, story making, imaginative play and drawing from direct observation. The teachers' good knowledge is used well to plan carefully but the wider range of experiences for creative play is much more effectively developed at the reception stage. At this stage children mix their own colours and experiment with those for an underwater representation. They draw underwater creatures using a range of materials in their creations. They make good creative efforts and explain what they have achieved.

77. Overall, the teaching is good. Although the teaching in the reception class is good and sometimes very good it remains no more than sound in the nursery. The main weaknesses relate to planning and ineffective use of teacher time. The activities do not plan for the involvement and intervention of adults so do not ensure that the children make gains in knowledge and skills for each of the areas of learning. Planning does not include sufficiently precise learning objectives that allow adults to assess progress through observation and use this information when planning the next lesson. Sometimes, teacher time is not used as well as it might be. The planning for use of the outdoor area does not always ensure that it promotes children's physical development.
78. Teachers take time to make classes for children under five inviting and interesting places for children to learn. Emphasis is given to literacy and numeracy in the displays and work areas. The displays are particularly exciting in the reception class and ensure that children are interested, concentrate hard and enjoy learning.
79. The leadership of the foundation curriculum is good but the early years co-ordinator has had no involvement in the monitoring of teaching and learning in the nursery. The new early years unit that will unite the nursery and reception children in one class is a new challenge for the co-ordinator. She is already working on new planning to incorporate the needs of both age groups and that of the early learning goals that must be in place by next term.

ENGLISH

80. When children enter the school their literacy skills are poor for their age. Many have speech problems and find it difficult to communicate. Occasionally, children do not speak at all and indicate their needs and wants by pointing, grunts or one-word responses. This year, the assessments made by teachers on entry to school showed that children had low levels of achievement with 60 per cent of them below what is expected for their age and the rest no better than average.
81. The National Curriculum test results for 1999 showed that by Year 2 reading and writing was well below average. Percentage results for this class of 22 pupils seemed low compared with other schools nationally but the percentage difference is the equivalent of two pupils. The 27 per cent who did not reach the acceptable Level 2 were all pupils with special educational needs.
82. The reading result was disappointing as teachers had hoped to have 27 per cent at the higher level but children were confused over the comprehension and interpreted the questions as relating to them rather than the text. When this was realised, teachers took action to remedy the weakness, and this year there is an improvement with 17 per cent reaching the higher Level 3.
83. The test results for writing, last year, show that no child reached the higher Level 3 and this led to written work being scrutinised by staff and governors. This revealed two weaknesses – a lack of consistency in handwriting and joined writing. At the next scrutiny there were improvements and a more consistent approach was seen with a consistency of style but joined writing was being introduced later than that recommended by the National Literacy Strategy. Although there were still no children reaching Level 3 in writing during the National Curriculum tests this year it is likely to change next year. The written work seen during the inspection shows that further attention has been given to the writing and Year 1 children are already learning to join their letters together and doing it well. Samples of children's writing from September through to May show that progress is at least good and sometimes it is very good.

For example, a slower learner, who could only form letters but not spell any words (working towards Level 1), had progressed to writing that communicated meaning in a narrative form, used appropriate vocabulary, formed clearly shaped letters, spelt simple words correctly, had begun to develop a sequence of sentences and have handwriting that was consistent in size (Level 2C). Another child who is a faster learner began the year using writing that communicated meaning with ideas developed in a short section but without punctuation. Letters were clearly formed and some common words were spelt correctly (Level 1). By May, this child had progressed to narrative writing that communicated meaning in a lively and interesting way with plenty of detail, descriptive phrases and sequences of sentences to extend ideas. The use of punctuation included: capital letters, full stops, question marks and speech marks (Level 2A with many elements of Level 3).

84. The Year 4 class with its high percentage of children with special educational needs is just succeeding in reaching standards that are at an acceptable level for their age. However, there are a significant group who are not reaching that level. Despite the good teaching and very effective use of support staff, pupils do not always succeed in completing their work during a lesson - they are easily distracted and upset. The teacher's very good management and discipline, together with a relaxed atmosphere enables them to do as well as they do. This is a class that will need very careful management and improved concentration if the majority of pupils are to reach Level 4 at Year 6
85. Some improvements have been made since the previous inspection. The co-ordinator has had time to monitor the teaching and learning and findings have been shared with staff resulting in greater consistency and better teaching of English. As governors have had involvement in this process they now have a greater appreciation of the teachers' work and the difficulties of teaching a subject, where communication is of the utmost importance, to a class, such as Year 4, where there is both reluctance and learning difficulties that hamper progress. An understanding of how the effectiveness of teaching impacts upon standards is now well developed. Opportunities for children to evaluate and develop ways of improving their work have now improved and begin at the Reception stage with a simple 'plan, do and review' programme. The previous inspection regarded the progress for pupils with special educational needs as satisfactory in relation to their individual targets but the staff have had no training for writing the individual education plans and some targets are too broad for pupils to achieve measurable success. However, progress for these children in achieving the lesson objectives is at least satisfactory and when the teacher has the assistance of a supportive adult the progress is better as they are kept at their work and have few distractions.
86. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. It is mainly very good in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 and 4. This is a very good improvement on the last inspection when the teaching of English was mainly sound in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory with some good teaching in Key Stage 2. The National Literacy Strategy is having a positive impact on teaching and lessons are well structured with some very good teaching of basic skills. This good teaching shows many strengths and few weaknesses. It has a positive effect on children's learning.
87. Teachers plan lessons very carefully to make them interesting and by sharing the objectives with the children there is a clear understanding of what everyone is trying to achieve by the end of the lesson. Children know what they are going to do and understand the tasks. No matter what the pupils' stage of learning, teachers try to include challenging work. In one class of younger pupils, that had 24 per cent of children with special needs, the class had read from the big book about the 'Sea of Tranquillity'. Understanding the meaning of 'tranquillity' was the first hurdle but this

was achieved and questions were well thought out to draw all pupils into the discussion. These children were able to talk about astronauts and space travel and showed a good understanding before retelling a story in the correct sequence. Later in the week they were selecting words for their own stories and recalled some words from the text with one child writing, "I landed on a bold and ordinary planet". They were now aware that some words are more interesting to use than others and good use was made of their imagination as they discussed what it would be like to wear a space suit and travel in a rocket. They showed confidence as they made comments about what they read, for example, Bay of Rainbows must be a place on the moon as it has capital letters. The teacher's good knowledge and love of language stimulated the responses and there was eager and excited description of a fishbowl helmet. This teacher's very good relationships with the class got the best out of the children, allowing sufficient time for them to talk and listening carefully to what they said before moving on. By the end of the week, children could retell a story in sequence, pick out significant incidents, consolidate their understanding of sentences, extend their vocabulary and write their own account of a walk in space using the big book text.

88. Children are motivated by the very good relationships they have with teachers and make good intellectual efforts to respond to challenges that many find quite difficult. In a class with 32 per cent of children with special needs, the teacher was introducing the class to tongue twisters, a particularly challenging topic for those in the class with speech problems. They made good efforts to read from the big book and the teacher used her knowledge and skill well to explain how to recite a tongue twister using rhythm. Explanations were very clear and the text was used effectively for some good direct teaching of two-syllable words, blending letter sounds, using words ending in 'er' and picking out those using the letters 'b' and 't'. The whole class was learning about words that create humour and sound effects in poetry. The teacher had high expectations and children knew it. In groups and pairs they worked industriously and when they had exhausted their own knowledge they turned to dictionaries for help – learning was fun! By the end of the lesson they were really eager to share their own efforts at writing a tongue twister and understood that this form of writing is a different technique to writing stories.
89. The planning of a literacy session for a class with a high percentage of special needs children is not always easy to achieve given the range of needs. However, teachers work hard to provide lessons that are still based on the recommendations of the National Literacy Strategy and include interesting activities that challenge a wide range of pupils with learning difficulties. At the same time they are providing a secure situation for those emotionally disturbed and firm boundaries for those who like to challenge the authority of the teacher. In one class where almost half the children have special educational needs, the teacher had planned for pupils to read together from the text of *'Dangerous Trainers'*. His good subject knowledge and particularly good understanding of the pupils provided the right approach and method. The teachers' very good management and discipline was an essential factor in preventing disruption and children shouting out. This enables them to take part in changing punctuation to suggest expressive reading. Group tasks are modified or extended according to their stage of learning and this enables them to achieve success. When two pupils are word-processing and one has a problem the other pupil goes to his assistance – a big step forward. Although pupils work satisfactorily at group tasks, they have a tendency to talk unnecessarily but this is not tolerated for long and attitudes to learning improve. The teacher has incredible patience and his dedication in keeping the same class for two years has provided a consistency that these children need and from which they are benefiting.
90. Although planning is good and staff are aware of the need to make group work appropriate for their stage of learning there are two weakness. In some classes the

targets in children's individual education plans are not specific enough and lack the measurable small steps needed by those who have special educational needs. When group activities are planned those tasks allocated to faster learners do not always have a high enough starting point and are less challenging. Both weaknesses restrict the progress that pupils can make.

91. There is good leadership providing clear direction for the subject and the monitoring now covers all aspects. Children are making at least good progress and this is sometimes very good given the poor starting point. Although concerns have been expressed about the appropriate time to introduce the full literacy hour, the co-ordinator has correctly assessed the need for a gradual introduction to the reception children, linking the work closely to that required in the language and literacy area of learning for children under five. By the time they reach statutory age a good foundation has been laid for the National Curriculum and children are familiar with the routine of the literacy sessions. Good advice and support is provided for all staff.

MATHEMATICS

92. Although the results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in mathematics show standards to be well below national averages evidence from lessons and from scrutiny of pupils work indicate that standards are in line with national expectations. The present Year 2 class has over 30 per cent of pupils who are identified as having special educational needs and despite this over 70 per cent have achieved Level 2 or higher in this year's tests with 14 per cent achieving the higher levels. These results are broadly in line with schools of a similar context. The increase in the numbers achieving Level 3 is particularly encouraging as last year there were none. This improvement is due largely to the headteacher, who has done a detailed audit of last years results and has altered the teaching programme to compensate for identified weaknesses, as well as targeting individual pupils and groups for further improvement. Given the attainment on entry to the school pupils have made good progress to be close to national expectations. At the age of nine the majority of pupils are on course to achieve national expectations.
93. Since the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy the school has heavily emphasised number skills and progress in this area is particularly good. For example, pupils in the Year 2 class show good development in their ability to double numbers. At the beginning of the week they were capable of simple doubles such as doubling ten. By the end of the week most had developed the skill of doubling three-digit numbers and could also halve four-digit numbers. Pupils also have a good understanding of place value, which they use for solving mental and written problems. They have good recall of 2, 5 and 10 times tables.
94. By the age of nine pupils have made good strides in their understanding of rotational symmetry and in their ability to add fractions. Less well developed is the area of data handling.
95. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 and 4. There was no unsatisfactory teaching in either key stage and an excellent lesson was seen in both. In all but one lesson the mental session was taken at a brisk pace with the best teachers increasing the challenge as pupils became more confident. This sustained pupils' interest. In one lesson, in Year 2, pupils demanded harder examples as their confidence and competence increased. The teacher responded accordingly much to the enjoyment of the pupils who relished the extra challenge.

96. Teachers have a very good knowledge of the National Numeracy Strategy, which they use to provide appropriate and challenging tasks. In the best lessons, planning was detailed and objectives were shared with pupils. Occasionally, there was no detail of the way the task would be altered for the higher and lower attaining pupils and sometimes the starting point for the more able needed to be set at a higher level. This is not always necessary as was seen in the Year 4 lesson taken by a leading mathematics teacher. In this lesson the majority of the teaching used a question and answer technique but such was the skill and knowledge of the teacher that all pupils made good progress and their learning was constant.
97. In every lesson there were very good relationships between the teacher and the children. This resulted in good attitudes to work and pupils who were willing to make the efforts to learn. In Year 2, the well-developed relationships made it possible for the teacher to provide increasing challenge as children acquired the understanding and skills related to doubling numbers. They listened carefully and once understanding dawned they were eager to respond to her questions, even forgetting the rules about shouting out. This was soon remedied and the lesson moved on quickly with the teacher using the children's own mistakes to illustrate teaching points. The good relationships enabled her to do this in a way that they found secure and non-threatening. The very positive response from the teacher encouraged the children to greater efforts and as they moved into group activities there was no disruption and pupils immediately set about the work they had to do. At the follow up to this lesson their recall of one- and two-digit doubles had improved and they had a good understanding of two and ten times tables and understood that changing numbers around in a multiplication sum does not change the answer. Later in the week their knowledge was still being used well during a bus journey to swimming. They questioned everyone within earshot about doubling, even using three-digit numbers, and recited such tables as $2 \times 10 = 20$ and $10 \times 2 = 20$ to exhaustion.
98. The teachers' very good relationships with pupils enables them to understand each child's needs well. This is particularly important in some classes where a large percentage of pupils have special needs. For example, in the Year 4 class over 40 per cent of children have special educational needs including five with statements of need and another four who attend a psychiatrist's clinic for their emotional problems. In this class the teacher has a very good knowledge of the pupils which he uses extremely effectively. He knows clearly which pupils he can push to do better and those who would react badly to the pressure. In this and other classes very good use is made of well-trained additional adult help. These adults will very often intervene to deal with a problem before it gets out of hand and disturbs the concentration of others.
99. In the best lessons teachers have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and including the way they set out their work. Although the school has identified this aspect quite recently the standards of presentation in mathematics are still variable throughout the school. Pupils are now enjoying mathematics, which is very evident when their concentration and behaviour is excellent.
100. The co-ordinator has only very recently taken responsibility for the subject and has had little opportunity to influence improvements in the subject as yet. However, she has attended two intensive training courses for numeracy and has organised training sessions for other staff. Although the subject has been monitored well by the headteacher and governors, the co-ordinator, who works with the nursery class in another building, has found it difficult to include time to monitor the teaching and learning in other classes during the day. This is to be resolved when the co-ordinator moves to another class next year. All other aspects of monitoring the subject are completed effectively.

SCIENCE

101. Teachers' assessments for seven-year olds in 1999 indicated that their attainment was well below the national average although the number of pupils achieving Level 2 and above was average when compared to similar schools. Inspection evidence indicates that there has been a significant improvement and that many pupils in the current Year 2 class have achieved the level expected for their age in most areas of the science curriculum. However, differences and fluctuations in performance are not necessarily significant because the published data does not take into account the percentage of pupils with special educational needs or the movement of pupils into the school. There is no noticeable difference between the performance of boys and girls.
102. Strengths in science include pupils having a good understanding of scientific vocabulary. For example, they use terms such as 'opaque' and 'translucent' as they carried out an investigation to discover the power of different torch beam. Pupils showed good gains in knowledge and they explained clearly the life cycle of a butterfly, the difference between man-made and natural materials, the different parts of a plant and their purpose, and the meaning of 'fair' testing. However, they need more time to develop their knowledge of the use of investigations.
103. Standards in science have been maintained since the last inspection when they were considered to be satisfactory. This is because the school has improved the quality of assessment procedures, closely monitors pupils' progress, carried out careful analysis of end of key stage assessment, and made effective use of support assistants.
104. Overall, the standards of Year 4, despite good teaching, are only just meeting that expected for their age because over 40 per cent of the class have learning difficulties and were well below average in teacher assessments two years ago. Most have developed a sound understanding of friction and know animals, plants and creatures need different habitats to survive. Many have had to work very hard to achieve this. They find work on investigations and recording them particularly difficult and frequently have to resort to the use of a science-planning sheet that has been devised to provide them with support.
105. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils with special educational needs make the same equally good progress as their peers. The good teaching results from the use of good methods of presenting the subject in a clear and logical way, very good management of pupils, and using questioning well to challenge and assess pupil's knowledge and understanding. Planning is sound but does not always provide extended activities to challenge the few faster learners. Most teachers have good subject knowledge which is used effectively to provide pupils with interesting and challenging tasks, extending their knowledge and understanding through first hand experiences. In their marking of pupils' work, teachers acknowledge that tasks have been completed and sometimes provide supportive comments. However, they do not always provide sufficient indication as to where or how they need to improve their scientific skills. All staff have established very good relationships with their pupils to ensure they do their best. The good use of time and deployment of support staff is improving pupils' learning. Teachers celebrate pupils' achievements very well in displays of their work that motivate and interest their pupils. Most pupils are beginning to take a pride in presenting their work well and enjoy talking about their achievements. Teachers take care to emphasise the use of literacy skills when pupils record what they have done and there are links established with mathematics in measuring and data handling.

106. The leadership of the subject is good and the co-ordinator is actively involved in helping to raise standards. There is clear guidance that indicates to teachers what to teach and when, based on the nationally recommended schemes of work giving good quality and range of learning opportunities. Good assessment systems have recently been introduced and these are used well to monitor pupil's achievement. The co-ordinator carefully monitors the subject through planning which is undertaken jointly by teachers to ensure continuity and progression across the school. Resources are used well by staff to provide relevant and challenging activities

ART

107. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection – one in Year 2 and one in Year 4. However, there is sufficient evidence to show that standards are in line with that expected for their age and a few pupils in Year 4 are doing better. The achievement at Year 4 is particularly good for a class where there is almost half the children with special educational needs of which a high percentage are behavioural and emotional problems. The school's greatest success in the subject has been the use of specialists' skills. Year 4 pupils have an opportunity to work with professional artists at the National Trust Wallington House and sculpture work in sand is being developed with the help of a local architect. A project using the local community is now underway using the school allotment where the school plans to combine art, science and geography to help children appreciate art in nature. Information technology is now being well used to produce graphic work and some high quality representations of shells are the result of making good use of the digital camera.
108. Few art lessons were seen in the last inspection but at that time standards were judged as satisfactory although there was some criticism about art skills mainly being developed through topic work. This is not the situation now and although art is used to support themes it is mainly taught through the study of art as a subject. A new scheme of work identifies which elements of art are taught by each year group every term and there is clear evidence that this being followed. Pupils are generally making good progress.
109. As few lessons were seen no overall judgement is made about the quality of teaching. However, in those lessons seen the teaching was good. In both lessons, particular strengths shown include: the very good relationships with children, careful planning for children's stage of learning with clear lesson objectives shared with the class and very good management and discipline. In Year 4, children work independently but find it difficult to co-operate in a group and the smallest difficulty can cause disruption. Those who cannot succeed immediately are reduced to tears. The deployment of staff, assisting the teacher, was exceedingly good because they knew just when to intervene and how to resolve behaviour that could have been disruptive but was well contained. Pupils made good efforts and produced some good work using charcoal, a media new to them, and their self-esteem was raised by teacher comments about their work during and at the end of the lesson.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

110. Standards are satisfactory in design and technology with pupils at Year 2 and Year 4 achieving at levels usually expected by the age of seven and nine respectively. This is similar to the standards for this subject in the previous report.
111. The school works hard to link activities in design and technology with those in other subjects. In a particularly worthwhile project, Year 2 children designed and made a

lighthouse as part of a science topic and used a control box to make the bulb light. Year 4 pupils were well motivated as they undertake the task of making a book with flaps for younger pupils using literacy and information technology skills. They make clear designs and identify the need for such things as large clear print. Pupils work well together to prepare their designs and produce a range of interesting design features for the book covers and contents.

112. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers make good use of group work, motivate pupils well, and classroom assistants are used effectively to teach skills and allow pupils to discuss and evaluate their work. The teachers make good use of the resources available and have high expectations of the pupils' achievement. Lesson plans have clear learning objectives and design and technology is used well to support learning in other subjects such as science. As a result, most pupils respond well in lessons, are interested and show good concentration as they undertake tasks. They plan their work carefully choosing appropriate materials. They try hard with cutting and joining so that work produced is of a good standard. Through good teaching they know what they have to do and are keen to produce their best work. They use equipment safely and work collaboratively sharing suggestions and strategies. Boys and girls work well together and this supports their learning.
113. The school has clear guidance in place to support the subject. Teachers use this to plan carefully together to ensure continuity of skills and knowledge as pupils progress through the school. The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of the subject and has provided a clear sense of direction. He has clear ideas about further improving the provision through greater use of monitoring and assessment. A review of the curriculum is currently being undertaken in line with the revised National Curriculum requirements.

GEOGRAPHY

114. Standards in geography are in line with national expectations for pupils aged seven and nine and this maintains the standards achieved at the previous inspection.
115. Strengths in geography show that by seven, pupils are very familiar with their local area and use maps, plans and aerial photographs to identify features. They enjoy suggesting how the locality may be improved and express their likes and dislikes of different features. Very good use is made of the local Country Park and pupils have been involved in a sponsored walk to raise funds for an initiative about environmental issues. Older pupils enjoy developing their awareness of the world through the study of maps and climate. They are able to successfully build on the work learned previously on local features to identify features on Ordnance Survey maps and are able to account for those features.
116. Teaching is mainly very good and never less than good. Teachers offer children interesting and challenging activities, which motivates them initially and sustains their interest. Lessons have a clear purpose and teachers are particularly skilled in using questions to draw out previous learning and to clarify pupils thinking. Teachers use a range of appropriate management strategies to maintain good order as pupils' enthusiasm runs out of control and they shout out. In the Year 4 class where pupils present very challenging behaviour patterns the teacher has to call on his considerable skills to maintain reasonable progress. Fortunately all teachers know the pupils well and this enables them to deal with each pupil as an individual and to set appropriate expectations for each one. The co-ordinator has only recently taken responsibility for the subject and has had limited time to have an impact on it.

HISTORY

117. Few lessons were seen but there was sufficient evidence to show that overall, standards are in line with those expected for pupils of this age. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Year 2 pupils' write in detail about Grace Darling as part of the integrated science topic and showed a good understanding of her life. They understand the passage of time and distinguish between aspects of past life and that of their own. Effective teaching has enabled Year 4 pupils to identify some of the features of past civilisations such as the Greeks and relate some of the myths and legends. They make reference to past visits to the nearby Roman wall and talk enthusiastically about Roman life.
118. Insufficient lessons were seen to make an overall judgement about teaching but in those lessons seen it was good. Teachers' planning is thorough and ensures the pupils make progress. They plan effectively together to ensure progression of skills and knowledge. The school makes effective use of nationally agreed planning and the curriculum is currently under review to ensure new requirements in September are met. At the present time, school resources are adequate but limited in that there are few artefacts although the school makes good use of the local authority lending library. Good use is made of the local area and visits are made to the places of interest and various nearby museums where pupils undertake role-play to improve their knowledge and understanding of past periods in history. The co-ordinator provides effective support and monitors planning but has no time to monitor teaching.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

119. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection but it is clear from talking to teachers and pupils, looking at planning and the quality of pupils' work on display, that learning is good and pupils' standards in information technology are at least in line with that expected for their age.
120. The previous report found that pupils attainment was satisfactory overall but this is no longer the case as attainment is better by the end of Year 4. This is an improvement on the findings during the last inspection because there has been an increase in the level of teachers' knowledge and expertise and expectations of what pupils can achieve.
121. Teachers use their knowledge well and by the time pupils are seven, most have well-developed word-processing skills. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to use a database and print out their work using pictographs, line, bar and pie charts. Pupils confidently program a robot and use a control box. In mathematics, they use their skills effectively with a graphics program to create pictures and select appropriate tools for the task such as 'spray and fill' when making symmetrical pictures. Their knowledge and understanding of the benefits of using information technology in the wider world is extending well.
122. By the end of Year 4, pupils are encouraged to make effective use of the Internet to find information and print it out. In mathematics they confidently enter and handle information in databases and have a good understanding of line and bar charts. Most pupils have a growing awareness of the use of information technology and control in the wider world such as in supermarkets, banking, industry and in home appliances.
123. The co-ordinators show good leadership, provide high quality help to colleagues, and are effective. They have supported colleagues by leading training sessions and monitor planning to ensure that all areas are covered. However, there is currently no

monitoring of the teaching and learning. Assessment procedures, to ensure progression of skills and knowledge, have only recently been introduced and have not yet had time to take effect. The school has recognised the need for further training to improve teachers knowledge and understanding, and this is a feature of the school improvement plan. The school is well equipped and particularly good use is made of the digital camera. The school has a very good reputation for information technology and has previously won awards for the quality of its desktop publishing and quality of its newspaper produced by Year 4 pupils.

MUSIC

124. It was only possible to observe music in Years 3 and 4 and therefore no judgements have been made for Years 1 and 2. Standards are in line with that expected for age and have been maintained since the previous inspection. By the time they leave the school, the pupils have an understanding of formal notation and know the time value of notes. They are able to express their feelings in response to different types of music and instruments and are able to give reasons for their opinions.
125. In the two lessons seen teaching was very good in one and satisfactory in the other. In both lessons learning objectives were shared with pupils giving them a real sense of purpose. Teachers had good subject knowledge, which they used effectively to sustain pupils' interest. In the Year 4 class, where there is a large proportion of pupils with emotional and behavioural problems, the teacher did well to maintain the pace of the lesson by keeping very firm but effective control of the class. He was helped in this task by the very good support given by the extra adults in the class. Both teachers enjoy very good relationships with the pupils, and this keeps them busy ensuring that at least reasonable progress is maintained throughout.
126. The co-ordinator has less time than he would like for the subject but nevertheless has produced a musical play about the Pied Piper Of Hamlyn and is regularly involved in the production of a "Geordie Night" in which pupils sing traditional songs of the area and dance traditional dances. This makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development. There is also a recorder group. Despite the lack of time the co-ordinator does very well in promoting the subject throughout the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

127. Because of time-table arrangements it was only possible to observe physical education lessons in Key Stage 1 and therefore no judgements have been made for teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 although evidence for planning and other documentation indicates that a full programme of physical education is followed. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection and are in line with that required for seven-year-olds. Particular strengths were seen in the use of ball skills with most pupils able to throw and catch a ball with increasing accuracy and beginning to be able to use a bat or racquet to control a ball. Pupils are becoming increasingly confident in the water and some are well on the way to learning to swim.
128. The quality of teaching is very good overall and never less than good. Lessons are well prepared and pupils are kept active through well-planned activities. Constant reference is made to the impact of exercise upon the major organs of the body as was demonstrated by the Year 2 teacher who asked pupils to feel their heart beat after the warm up exercise to illustrate how the heart was beating faster. Pupils in the Year 1 class knew that exercise improved muscle strength. Lessons begin with a suitable warm up and finish with an appropriate cool down. Pupils are well motivated

by the teaching and participate fully in the activities provided. By the end of the lessons pupils have developed their skills well and have enjoyed the experience.

129. The co-ordinator is only part-time at present but has already made a major contribution to the development of the subject. She has introduced several out of school clubs for all ages and is introducing several more in the near future, which will include mini-soccer for girls, short tennis, quick cricket and basketball. In addition to this the co-ordinator has produced a very detailed and helpful policy and scheme of work which outlines a programme of skill development and offers teachers some model lesson examples to assist them in their planning.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

130. Attainment in religious education is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 2 and Year 4 and this is similar to the last inspection when both attainment and progress were said to be satisfactory. Pupils make satisfactory progress.
131. By the age of seven, most children have a sound awareness that Christians regard Jesus as a special person. They have a sound knowledge of festivals such as Harvest, Christmas and Easter and bible stories to do with caring and sharing such as the story of the 'Feeding of the Five Thousand'. These facets are valuable contributions to the school's overall provision in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Good use is made of taped stories to provide variety and interest. Pupils develop an understanding of sharing and co-operating through well-known stories such as the 'Little Red Hen' and 'Billy Goats Gruff'
132. By the end of Year 4 the good dramatisation of such stories as 'Blind Bartemaeus help pupils to understand that Jesus had an impact on those around Him. They have a sound understanding of stories from the Old Testament such as Noah, Moses and the Exodus and that the Bible is a special book for Christians. They understand the reason for shared values and relate this to school life. Their awareness of other faiths is less well developed and this is an area recognised by the co-ordinator for further development.
133. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and relate stories well, which motivates pupils to listen and be involved. In Year 4, these are often dramatised which provides greater understanding and more interest and pupils learn more quickly. Given the number of children with emotional and behavioural problems this is quite an achievement and a contributory factor in this success are the teachers who manage pupils well and the atmosphere in classrooms is harmonious and relaxed. Pupils enjoy the lessons and most behave well.
134. The co-ordinator provides sound support to colleagues and monitors planning although there is currently no monitoring of teaching and. Resources are limited but the school makes good use of the local authority resources library.