

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **GLYNWOOD COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Gateshead

LEA area: Gateshead

Unique reference number: 108372

Headteacher: Mrs C. Davis

Reporting inspector: Mrs M. R. Shepherd  
11328

Dates of inspection: 15 – 18 April 2002

Inspection number: 193289

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Glynwood Gardens Gateshead Tyne and Wear
Postcode:	NE9 5SY
Telephone number:	0191 4210301
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Reverend B. Howell
Date of previous inspection:	24 February 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs M. Shepherd 11328	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage  Physical education  Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Mr A. Dobson 9928	Lay inspector		How high are standards? How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr M. Mayhew 22197	Team inspector	English Religious education Music	
Mrs A. Patterson 25802	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Art and design	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
Mrs A. Wilkinson- Tilbrook 10068	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Design and technology Geography History Special educational needs English as an additional language	
Mr R. Lund 2746	Team inspector	Mainstream support unit	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Glynwood Community Primary School mainly serves the housing that immediately surrounds the school, with 80 per cent of families living in rented accommodation. Forty-eight children attend the nursery on a part-time basis. Attainment on entry to the nursery is below average, with several children experiencing language difficulties. There are 307 pupils on roll, which is larger than average. Part-time teachers in the morning support single age groups working in sets for literacy and numeracy. In the afternoon there are three mixed age classes between Years 1 and 6. The school contains a Mainstream Support Base, which is a unit for 12 pupils from across the borough with moderate learning difficulties and some emotional and behavioural difficulties. Twenty per cent of pupils are on the special educational needs register, which is average. Four per cent of pupils have full Statements of Special Educational Need, which is above average. Most of these pupils are in the special unit. Two per cent of pupils are from ethnic minorities. There are 0.6 per cent of pupils who have English as an additional language, which is lower than average. Last year the number of pupils moving in or out of the school during the year was lower than usual, but in the current Year 6 a fifth of pupils joined the school at some point after Year 2. The current headteacher has been in post for two years, following a year of two different acting headteachers and deputy headteachers. There have been many changes in staffing over the past four years.

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

This is an improving school. Children in the nursery and reception develop a broad range of skills. Pupils from Years 3 to 6 make good progress; however, standards are still too low. The quality of education is good overall. Governors have a very good understanding of strengths and weaknesses of the school and the headteacher's leadership ensures that standards are rising. Value for money is satisfactory.

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

- Progress of reception and nursery children is good and their curriculum is very stimulating.
- Progress of pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Relationships are very good; behaviour and attitudes are good.
- Teaching is very good in reception and the nursery and good from Years 3 to 6.
- Pupils in the Mainstream Support Base receive a good education.
- Leadership and management are good.
- The curriculum for social development is very good; the curriculum for moral and cultural development is good.
- The school cares very well for the pupils.

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

- Standards are too low in English, mathematics and science.
- The more able pupils do not reach their potential.
- Standards in information communication technology in the junior classes are too low.

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

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

The school was last inspected in February 1997. Since that time there have been many changes in the school. Overall improvement is satisfactory. There has been improvement in the national tests in English, mathematics and science in Year 6. Standards in music in Year 2 have improved, standards in design and technology by Year 6 have fallen. The quality of teaching is better and it is significantly better in the nursery and reception. Progress of pupils with special educational needs is improved. The systems set up to care for pupils' welfare are better. There are effective systems in place for the school to tackle future initiatives.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	E	E	D
Mathematics	E	E	E	E
Science	E	E	E	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The trend in attainment over the past four years is higher than average. The school sets itself appropriate targets. The inspection judges standards of Year 6 pupils as average in speaking and listening and reading and below average in writing, mathematics and science. Standards of Year 6 pupils in information and communication technology and in design and technology are below expectations.

Attainment in the 2001 national tests in Year 2 was well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Teacher assessment in science showed attainment as below average. The inspection judges standards as below average in reading, writing and mathematics and average in science.

Standards of reception children are above expectations in all Areas of Learning<sup>1</sup> and well above expectations in personal, social and emotional development.

Pupils in the Mainstream Support Base make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. More able pupils do not reach their potential.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school and their work are good. They are keen to talk about what they have learnt and are proud of their work on display.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in lessons, around the school and in the playground. Behaviour in assemblies is very good.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good both between pupils and between pupils and adults throughout the school. Personal development is satisfactory.
Attendance	Attendance is below average. A high proportion of families take holidays in term time. Punctuality is good.

Pupils are polite and courteous to adults. They work together well and respect each other's efforts. School clubs are well attended.

<sup>1</sup> Areas of Learning are the government guidelines for the curriculum for children in the nursery and reception.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Satisfactory	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.*

There are excellent features in reception and nursery and both these teaching teams work very well together. There are excellent features in English and mathematics in Years 3 and 4. There is a small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching in English and science in infant classes and in science and design and technology in junior classes. Teaching in the Mainstream Support Base is good with many very good features.

Teachers support pupils with special educational needs effectively. Teachers do not plan in enough detail for more able pupils or challenge them enough in lessons, except in the reception classes where there is a high level of challenge and detailed planning. Teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is good. Teachers do not use computers enough across all subjects of the curriculum.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	This is satisfactory in the infant and junior classes. The balance of time in each school day does not make best use of different activities from Years 1 to 6. The curriculum is very good in reception and nursery. The school uses visits and visitors effectively to extend pupils' experiences.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The curriculum for these pupils is good quality and relevant to their needs. Individual education plans are good. The withdrawal groups taken by teachers and classroom assistants are very good. The Mainstream Support Base provides a stimulating and well-planned curriculum for its pupils, but these pupils are not included enough in lessons in the rest of the school.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. External support is used well and is carefully integrated with the work of the other pupils in the class.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for social development is very good and for moral development it is good. Class rules are used well to reinforce understanding of right and wrong. The school promotes cultural development well, both pupils' own culture and of life in other customs and faiths. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is very effective in caring for its pupils. There are very good systems to promote good behaviour. There are very effective systems for child protection.
Partnership with parents	Partnership with parents is satisfactory. The school provides good quality information.

The school uses assemblies very well to develop social skills. There is a good range of well-attended extra-curricular activities.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership and management of the headteacher are good. She sets clear priorities for raising standards in attainment and behaviour. The deputy headteacher is an effective assessment co-ordinator. Co-ordinators are enthusiastic and have begun to develop their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are determined to raise standards. The leadership of the chair of governors is very good.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school evaluates its performance effectively. The school improvement plan is well presented. Monitoring of planning is regular, but there is not enough monitoring of teaching by co-ordinators.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses staffing resources well to provide smaller teaching groups for numeracy and literacy. Teachers and classroom assistants are organised very effectively to support pupils with special educational needs in withdrawal groups. The administrative officer is very efficient.
Staffing, accommodation and learning resources	Staffing is well matched to the needs of pupils' different age groups and to the curriculum. Overall, accommodation is good. Classrooms are used well for the setting arrangements. Learning resources are satisfactory overall.

The premises manager is very effective. The senior management team does not meet regularly enough. There are not enough reference books or fiction books to support pupils' reading development when they have become fluent readers. There is not enough software to support the use of computers in lessons across the curriculum. The school spends its money wisely.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Fifty-four per cent of parents returned the questionnaire. Twenty-one parents attended the parents' meeting.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The high expectations the school has of their child.</li> <li>• That their child likes school.</li> <li>• The approachability of the staff, including the headteacher.</li> <li>• The good progress their child makes.</li> <li>• The good quality teaching.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities outside the classroom.</li> <li>• The way the school works with parents.</li> <li>• The way the school is led and managed.</li> <li>• The amount of information on their child's progress.</li> </ul>

Inspectors endorse these positive views, but judge that the school could have higher expectations on the way that pupils present their work. With the variety of school clubs available, the provision for activities outside the classroom is judged good. The inspectors, mindful of the role that used to be played by the Friends' Association in arranging social events and fund raising, judge that the partnership as it currently exists is satisfactory. The quality of the leadership and management by the headteacher and the governors is judged to be good and is the major factor responsible for the improvement taking place in the school. The inspectors judge that overall the opportunities for parents to be informed on their child's progress are good. However, targets in pupils' reports could be written in a style that is more useful for parents who want to be involved in their child's learning.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

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

1. Attainment on entry to the nursery is below average, with several children experiencing language difficulties. They make good progress in the nursery because the teaching team work very well together to provide children with a smooth transition between home and school life. By the beginning of reception, children's attainment is at the expected level. The high quality teaching team in reception builds very effectively on children's previous experiences. Progress is good across all aspects of the Areas of Learning and very good in personal, social and emotional development. Children's attainment is on track to be above expectations in each aspect of the curriculum by the end of reception and well above expectations in personal, social and emotional development. Children have high levels of independence and concentration and initiate their own activities with confidence. More able pupils fulfil their potential because the grouping systems in place ensure a higher level of challenge for these children. They read and write simple words and handle numbers confidently.
2. The table below shows attainment in English, mathematics and science.

	<b>National tests 2001</b> Pupils aged 7	<b>Inspection judgements</b> Pupils aged 7	<b>National tests 2001</b> Pupils aged 11	<b>Inspection judgements</b> Pupils aged 11
<b>English</b>	<b>Reading</b> Well below average <b>Writing</b> Well below average	<b>Reading</b> Below average <b>Writing</b> Below average	Well below average	Below average
<b>Mathematics</b>	Well below average	Below average	Well below average	Below average
<b>Science</b>	<b>Teacher assessment</b> Below average	Average	Well below average	Below average

3. Compared with similar schools, attainment at the end of Year 2 in the 2001 national tests was well below average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. Attainment of Year 6 pupils in these tests was well below average in English, mathematics and science when compared with similar schools. The proportion of pupils moving in and out of the school during the school year is a disadvantage for the school. The Year 6 national statistics include the attainment of pupils in the Mainstream Support Base for special educational needs. The number of these pupils taking the tests varies from year to year from seven to three pupils. Their attainment lowers the school's overall performance statistics. However, even after taking these pupils out of the figures, attainment is below average for English and remains well below average for mathematics and science. The school has undergone considerable changes in leadership and staffing since the previous inspection. Since the new headteacher has been in post, standards have been rising and the trend towards improvement in the past four years has, overall, been faster than average. Governors, the new headteacher and the teaching team have been

concentrating on raising standards. The inspection judgements show a continuing rise in standards, but they are still too low. Very good systems are set up to support pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language and they make good progress. However, the needs of more able pupils are not met. The low proportion of pupils reaching the higher standards of Level 3 in Year 2 and Level 5 in Year 6 are bringing down the overall standards in the school.

4. Standards by the end of Year 2 in speaking and listening are average. Progress in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Pupils respond confidently to teachers' questions and listen well, apart from those occasions when teachers keep pupils too long in whole class discussions. Standards in reading are below average. Pupils make good progress in the reading sessions in the literacy lessons, but do not get enough support individually to develop their particular needs. Standards are improving in writing, but they are not yet high enough. Pupils write their own sentences, but do not write regularly enough on producing extended pieces of work, particularly the more able pupils. Pupils' accuracy is improving in spelling and grammar, but they do not transfer these skills effectively enough into their writing when they are working on their own.
5. Standards in mathematics by the end of Year 2 are below average. Most pupils understand the value of tens and hundreds and are familiar with different regular shapes. More able pupils do not have the knowledge and skills expected to reach the higher Level 3 because the work does not match their needs. Standards in science are average. Pupils have a secure knowledge of the different aspects of the science curriculum. Pupils have the expected level of confidence in carrying out investigations and are beginning to make simple predictions.
6. Standards by the end of Year 6 in speaking and listening are at the expected level. Pupils speak in extended answers to questions and in the best lessons speak at length to the whole class. Standards in reading are average. Pupils have the expected level of fluency and expression when they read aloud. They have a good understanding of the books they read, but the small range of stimulating books available for independent reading restricts the range of authors they can read. Standards in writing are below average. Although pupils write in a range of different styles, they do not have enough time to write independently at length and this is reducing their rate of progress.
7. Standards in mathematics by the end of Year 6 are below average. Pupils now make good progress from Years 3 to 6. Most pupils use a range of strategies to solve number problems and use mental mathematics confidently. However, individual pupils are not clear enough about what they need to do to improve. More able pupils are not consistently challenged to reach the higher levels of the National Curriculum. Standards in science are below expectations. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the different aspects of science, but they do not have the expected level of skills of explaining scientific principles in their own words or enough confidence to predict the outcome of investigations.

8. The following table shows standards in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

	<b>By the age of 7 years</b>	<b>By the age of 11 years</b>
<b>Information and communication technology</b>	At the expected level	Below the expected level
<b>Art and design</b>	At the expected level	At the expected level
<b>Design and technology</b>	At the expected level	Below the expected level
<b>Geography</b>	At the expected level	At the expected level
<b>History</b>	At the expected level	At the expected level
<b>Music</b>	At the expected level	At the expected level.
<b>Physical education</b>	At the expected level	At the expected level
<b>Religious education</b>	Not possible to make a judgement	At the expected level

9. Standards are below expectations in information and communication technology because pupils have not had enough time to develop their skills. The building of the new computer suite now ensures that pupils have regular opportunities to improve their attainment and, as a result, progress is now satisfactory. However, pupils do not get enough time to use computers in classrooms and there is not enough software to support the use of computers in lessons in other subjects. Pupils do not get enough time to work with a range of tools or materials in design and technology from Years 3 to 6 and, as a result, have not developed their skills sufficiently.
10. The national tests show that standards have risen since the previous inspection in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. Standards in music by the end of Year 2 have improved, but in design and technology they have fallen by the end of Year 6. Standards in information and communication technology are lower than the previous inspection. However, since the current headteacher has been in school, the resources for this subject have improved and progress is now satisfactory.

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

11. Pupils' positive attitudes, their good behaviour and the very good relationships within the school, observed in the previous inspection, have been maintained.
12. Most pupils enjoy school, which is confirmed by parents and pupils alike. They understand that they are at school to learn and are keen to be involved in lessons. However, the majority of pupils do not have an innate enthusiasm for learning and teachers work hard to ensure that they remain motivated. When teaching is good, pupils are interested, alert and engaged in the subject and work hard. However, in order to ensure this involvement the teachers have to be skilful in giving lessons with pace and using a variety teaching methods. Pupils are keen to talk about what they have learnt. They are proud when their work is on display; however, they do not consistently take a pride in the presentation of their work. The majority of pupils take homework seriously.

13. Behaviour is good throughout the school. Pupils understand the rules well and the high standards that are expected are generally achieved. Lessons are orderly with an atmosphere conducive to learning. An exception is in the new computer suite where in some lessons the combination of a large number of pupils in a relatively confined space together with equipment, buttons and spinning chairs results in inappropriate behaviour. Movement around the school is very orderly. Behaviour in assemblies is very good and pupils show an obvious respect during prayers. Playgrounds have a friendly atmosphere. Pupils play well together and do not seem worried about bullying. They report that staff deal with any incidents, usually name calling, speedily and effectively. Dining is a social occasion in both dining rooms with noise levels that allow easy conversation. Pupils line up in an orderly fashion, are polite to the catering staff and have good table manners. Pupils' moral development is good; they have a good understanding of right and wrong. There have been two temporary exclusions from the school in the last year.
14. Relationships in the school are very good. Pupils get on well with each other and the many adults in the school. Most pupils look upon their teachers as friends whom they can trust. Pupils are courteous and polite to visitors. This was particularly noticeable during an assembly given by the chair of governors and during a talk on drugs given by a visitor to Year 5 pupils. Pupils respect and applaud each other's work as witnessed by their sensitive response to an assembly given by Year 3 pupils. They respond well to opportunities for spiritual development. In lessons, pupils collaborate very well, with many good examples observed during the inspection. For example, small groups of Year 3 pupils helped each other to read instructions and pairs of Year 1 pupils discussed sensibly the advantages and disadvantages of where certain features may occur on an outline map of an island.
15. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. They respect their environment. For example, pupils tidied up classrooms after lessons and kept the corridor clear of coats and bags. There is a very noticeable absence of litter throughout the building and grounds. Pupils enjoy being involved in the running of the school. For example, the older pupils operate a 'buddy system' with pupils in the infant classes. However, the opportunities for taking extra responsibilities are limited. The lack of a range of reference books in the library inhibits opportunities for independent research. School clubs are well attended and pupils show they are aware of the needs of others by supporting a wide range of charities.
16. Attendance has improved since the previous inspection, but is still below the national average. Figures for the current year show that the rate is still improving. Holidays are a significant cause of absence with around 40 per cent of pupils taking at least a week's holiday during the year 2000/01. This is unsatisfactory. Unauthorised absence is similar to that found nationally. Punctuality is good, resulting in prompt and efficient registrations and lessons starting on time.

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

17. Teaching is good overall with seven tenths of lessons inspected at this standard or better. Nearly four tenths of lessons inspected were very good or better. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. Teaching in reception and nursery is very good with excellent features in personal, social and emotional development in both age groups. There are also excellent features in teaching in reception in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Overall, teaching in the infant classes is satisfactory and it is good in the junior classes. There are excellent features in English in Year 4 and in mathematics in Year 3. Just over a twentieth of lessons inspected were unsatisfactory. These were in English and science in the infant classes and in science and design and technology in the junior classes.

18. Teachers manage pupils well in the infant and junior classes and extremely well in the reception and nursery. Teachers have clear expectations of standards of behaviour and ensure that these are carried out in lessons by reiterating them at the beginning of lessons and reminding pupils of why good behaviour is important. For example, before walking a considerable distance through the school for physical education the deputy headteacher outlined the importance of not disturbing other classes along the corridor. Reception and nursery staff emphasise this aspect of children's development across each aspect of the lessons and give clear guidelines of how to behave in different contexts such as in group work or independent play. Some teachers are not yet fully confident in managing pupils in the computer suite, which results in some lack of concentration in some lessons.
19. Teachers work hard to produce interesting resources which stimulate pupils' interest and sustain their pace of working effectively. For example, in the Mainstream Support Base the teacher captured the pupils' imagination by uncovering several genuinely old fragments of coil pots as a stimulus for the pupils to make their own pots. This also supported their understanding of the historical dimension of these artefacts. Teachers use visitors very well to extend pupils' understanding. For example, an expert provided a high quality lesson based on understanding the effects of drugs in some junior classes. Standards of display are high and teachers use them well to celebrate pupils' work and as a reference source for learning. This includes the part-time teachers and the additional literacy support assistant who have their own classroom bases. These staff work hard to ensure that, when pupils work in withdrawal groups or in sets, the learning areas are welcoming and offer opportunities for pupils to extend their skills, for example, through the use of key vocabulary on display.
20. The reception and nursery teaching teams work extremely well together. They organise sessions very carefully to make best use of their expertise. They have a very good understanding of the key learning planned for each part of the day and organise themselves in many different ways in order to provide a careful balance of learning experiences for children. For example, in reception several sessions are divided into three Areas of Learning and children are grouped according to attainment in order to extend the more able and support the less able. In other parts of the day children work in classes, as small groups or individually, which provides a rich variety of learning experiences and ensures good progress.
21. Teachers in the infant and junior classes plan carefully together in teams to ensure that pupils of the same age group, but in different classes, receive the same content of lessons. Teachers regularly review the effectiveness of these lessons and ensure that future planning builds on pupils' progress. Teachers plan carefully for the main focus of learning in lessons, but they do not include enough detail of tasks to extend and challenge more able pupils, which reduces the rate of these pupils' progress. This does not apply to reception planning, where different tasks are carefully identified to challenge the more able children. In infant and junior classes, teachers do not plan for information and communication technology in other subjects and do not organise pupils to use computers regularly in classrooms. This reduces pupils' progress in applying the skills they have learnt in the computer suite.
22. Teachers plan carefully to include visits out of school, particularly in religious education, geography and history. This provides very good opportunities for pupils to learn from first hand experiences, which teachers then use to extend learning in subsequent lessons. For example, pupils visited a Hindu temple in Year 6 and were all able to contribute to the whole class discussion using their knowledge and feelings gained from the visit.
23. Teachers have high expectations of pupils with special educational needs when they are withdrawn from the main class and this ensures a very good rate of progress in these sessions. Expectations of more able pupils are too low in the infant and junior classes and

there is not enough challenge for these pupils to fulfil their potential. Pupils with English as an additional language receive well-structured support and make good progress. For example, an additional support teacher from the local educational authority worked effectively with a pupil making a coil pot from clay and extending the pupils' language as he worked on this task. Pupils from ethnic minorities are an integral part of classes and make good progress.

24. Teachers have good subject knowledge in English, art, history and geography, which allows them to use questioning very effectively in lessons. The reception and nursery teaching teams have a very good understanding of both the curriculum and the characteristics of children in these age groups. Teachers make very good use of the visiting music specialist's expertise because they work with him each week and extend their own knowledge through joining in with his teaching strategies.
25. Teaching of basic skills is excellent in reception and good in the junior classes. Teachers use the literacy and numeracy strategies effectively to extend reading, writing and mathematical skills. For example, teachers use the mental mathematics sessions to challenge pupils to remember their tables and to use them in a wide variety of ways. However, in lessons in some infant classes, teachers do not use the balance of time in these sessions effectively. They spend too long on the whole class sessions and not enough time on group work. This reduces pupils' concentration because there is not enough variety in their learning and they are unable to follow through their understanding with practical tasks.
26. Marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. There are examples of good quality marking in some subjects such as science in Years 3 and 6 and in mathematics and history from Years 3 to 6. However, teachers do not all use these opportunities effectively to identify future targets for pupils.
27. The reception team uses homework very well. Children expect to take their reading books home and the teachers provide clear guidance for parents of how they can support their children's learning. Homework is used well in Year 6 in English and mathematics. It is marked carefully with records kept of the quality of this work.
28. Features of the excellent teaching include the following:-
  - very high expectations of all pupils;
  - very good behaviour management;
  - very good subject knowledge, which is used to extend pupils' thinking very effectively;
  - a fast pace to lessons, using pupils' contributions to extend key teaching points;
  - very well-balanced organisation in lessons to make the best use of whole class discussions combined with group work and individual tasks.
29. Features of the unsatisfactory teaching include the following:-
  - not enough detail in planning to support pupils with different attainment levels;
  - too much time on whole class discussion and not enough on group work;
  - too much new learning for the pupils to handle in one lesson;
  - lack of effective management of pupils' behaviour;
  - ineffective use of the whole class session at the end of the lesson to recap key learning.

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

30. The school teaches all the subjects of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The opportunities and the experiences planned and provided contribute well to pupils' positive attitudes and to their enjoyment of learning, clearly reflecting the school's aims and values. This judgement is the same as that in the previous inspection. Children in the nursery and reception classes are provided with a very wide range of stimulating learning activities. Their very well-planned curriculum covers all Areas of Learning effectively and provides a good start for Years 1 and 2.
31. The school has recognised the need to raise standards in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and has put effective strategies in place. For example, pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 are set by ability each morning and booster classes in Year 6 provide additional support. In Years 1 and 2, pupils work in single age classes during numeracy and literacy lessons in the mornings. There has been a strong and successful focus on raising standards in mental calculation and teachers regularly use time at the beginning of each lesson to improve their pupils' skills. The school has allocated extra time to these subjects in order to raise standards. As a result, these strategies are beginning to have a positive impact. However, the extra time devoted to these subjects has inevitably reduced the overall teaching time available for science and several other subjects, which is having a negative impact on standards in science and design and technology. The school has not fully considered the balance of activities and subjects in the morning sessions and in many classes the length of time spent in literacy, overall, is too long and leads to reduced concentration by pupils.
32. There are satisfactory arrangements for pupils' personal, social and health education through a clearly planned programme. For example, the school has recently formed a School Council that extends pupils' opportunities well to support the work of the school and assume responsibilities. Teachers know their pupils well and make good use of reward systems to encourage pupils to develop confidence and self-esteem. The school makes appropriate arrangements for sex education and drugs awareness. The school values each individual and the curriculum for racial equality ensures that pupils from ethnic minorities make good progress. However, a formal policy is not yet in place. The experiences for pupils with English as an additional language are carefully planned to match the work of the rest of the class.
33. There is an effective two year cycle of topics. Since the appointment of the present headteacher two years ago, the school has worked hard to review and improve its policies and schemes of work in all subjects, particularly the scheme of work for science. Teachers' termly plans are now more closely linked to these schemes, are detailed and thorough and provide an effective framework for them to plan for their lessons. The plans indicate clearly what will be taught in each subject throughout the school. These are used well to create more detailed plans that identify what groups of pupils are expected to learn during each lesson. As a result, teachers' planning is better than it was at the last inspection. Subject co-ordinators carefully monitor this planning on a regular basis to ensure that teachers cover the content of each subject systematically as pupils move through the school. However, although these plans are translated clearly into teachers' weekly plans, in practice they do not meet the different needs of all pupils, particularly the more able. As a result, this group of pupils do not make enough progress. This remains an issue since the previous inspection. The school has not yet identified how information and communication technology can be used in other subjects, which is reducing the progress pupils make in this subject.
34. The quality and range of extra-curricular activities are good. Pupils have opportunities to be involved in sports tournaments and other sporting activities such as badminton, rugby,



netball and football. Both boys and girls take part. Other activities include clubs for French, gymnastics, information and communication technology and homework. The school makes good arrangements to offer opportunities at lunchtimes to provide extra activities such as rounders and line-dancing. There are educational visits to places of interest such as local churches and Shipley Gallery and Year 6 pupils will be going on a residential visit to Dukeshouse Wood. The school has established good links with the community. There is a close link with the local secondary school. Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to spend a week there to give them valuable experience of secondary school routines. The curriculum is extended well in mathematics and very well in the reception classes by sharing good practice with Windy Nook Primary School, which is a beacon school<sup>2</sup>. There are regular visitors to the school, such as the local vicars, theatre groups, an artist in residence, European students and visiting music specialists. These experiences make a further positive contribution to pupils' social, moral, cultural and personal development.

35. Pupils with special educational needs in the main school have a broad and balanced curriculum that is very relevant to their needs. There has been a considerable improvement in the work planned for these pupils since the previous inspection. There is now a very effective match of work to pupils' specific needs. The use of ability sets enables pupils to be taught in smaller groups in numeracy and to be withdrawn for very small group teaching for literacy support. This impacts very positively on their learning. Good quality individual education plans are in place for all pupils on the register. They are well written with a small number of specific targets that are focused on the individual pupil's particular difficulty. Action to support learning is well defined with activities and resources listed together with alternative teaching methods to enable pupils to make maximum progress. Outcomes and the progress made by these pupils clearly demonstrate a good level of progress over time and the school regularly evaluates the overall effectiveness of the plan. Classroom assistants provide effective support. Where they take small groups for literacy and numeracy they demonstrate very good knowledge of what needs to be taught and very good skills in keeping pupils actively involved in the task. Pupils with special educational needs have equal access to all activities.
36. Since its previous inspection, the school has maintained its overall good quality of provision for promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, although there has been a small change in the quality of individual aspects. The strongest of these aspects is the provision for pupils' social development, which is very good. Throughout the school, a strong and consistent message relays to all the need to build and maintain good relationships. This is manifested in the good range of extra-curricular clubs on offer, for which there is a high level of membership. The staff ensure that pupils of both genders, all ages and abilities, are fully included in the school's activities. Assemblies successfully emphasise the social dimension through the discussion of team spirit. Additionally, staff include pupils well in discussions about social and moral questions, for example, when talking about the difficulties faced by a black child, new to a school with mainly white children. At times, for example in assemblies that are led by a whole class, there is a strong sense of whole-school community.
37. There is good provision for pupils' moral development. Parents are pleased with the values and attitudes that the school teaches their children. Initiatives such as identifying individual pupils as 'Star of the Week' in classrooms are positive steps towards raising pupils' sense of worth and their appreciation of other's efforts. Class rules and aims, displayed for all to see, are well known by pupils, who are taught to distinguish between right and wrong. Adults in school quickly rectify occasional misbehaviour by a few pupils.

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<sup>2</sup> A beacon school is identified by the government to have very good features in their work. The beacon school then supports other schools to improve their teaching and curriculum.

38. The curriculum for cultural development is good. Studies of a range of world religions and their customs and practices successfully teach pupils about cultures of other peoples, whether they live in faraway countries or are inhabitants of the local area. From work such as the recent visits to a Hindu temple and to Durham Cathedral, pupils in the juniors gain insights into how different faiths, of both the present day and from history, promote values of sincerity, understanding and faith in a divine being. The school makes good use of visiting students from other countries, most often the European countries. This gives pupils first-hand knowledge about how life proceeds in other societies.
39. The satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual development is manifest both in religious and secular topics. For example, pupils in a Year 5 religious education lesson were struck by the inherent kindness of the Hindu religion. Similarly, in art and music, pupils are often moved by what they see and hear. For example, pupils reacted with astonishment in one art lesson when the teacher showed them some beautifully decorated pots. Some of the singing in an infant music lesson was a spiritual experience in itself, particularly when the pupils, as one body, added actions to their singing. Studying the 'religious' aspect and commitment of some famous people's lives, such as Sir Cliff Richard and Mahatma Gandhi, motivates pupils to consider spirituality as part of their maturation. However, despite the importance that the school attaches to promoting pupils' spiritual development, as published in the school's aims, there is little evidence that the school plans directly for this aspect of its curriculum.

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

40. The school is very effective in the way it cares for and looks after its pupils. Pupils are safe and secure. Behaviour is very well managed and the importance of good attendance is taken seriously. These judgements show an improvement since the previous inspection.
41. Staff work hard to create a positive school community. Externally the building looks uncared for, but inside it is colourful and stimulating. There is a very friendly and caring atmosphere where adults know the pupils well and treat them with respect. Pupils look upon their teachers as friends. Dining arrangements are symptomatic of the school's attitudes to pupils. Tables have cloths on them and all infants eat with either an adult or a junior pupil on their table. The result is that dining is a far more civilised and social occasion than is found in many primary schools. Supervision throughout the school is good at all times. Playgrounds are friendly, safe and secure.
42. The school has very effective procedures for child protection. The responsible person has been fully trained and staff are very familiar with the latest local authority guidelines. The school has good relationships with the outside agencies. Health and safety are treated very seriously. A governor inspects the premises every term and there is a more formal comprehensive inspection carried out by the local education authority every year. Safety is stressed in lessons when appropriate. The school considers healthy living and eating important. It has been awarded a 'Healthy Schools Award' five times. Exercise is encouraged, fizzy drinks discouraged and salads are always available at lunchtime.
43. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good overall. Registers are well kept and the computerised system is used very effectively for monitoring attendance figures. The school's attendance target of 94 per cent is realistic. Good attendance is promoted by issuing certificates both to classes and individuals. Good and poor attendance records are commented on in the pupils' reports, ensuring that parents are aware of what the school thinks of their child's attendance. Holidays in term time are a significant problem that the school is aware of and has not yet tackled effectively. The school does not have a procedure for contacting all parents on the first day of an unexplained absence.

44. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. The policy is of good quality with a strong emphasis on recognising good behaviour. Teachers have clear guidelines on implementing the policy, including when and how to involve parents. Pupils with significant behavioural problems are identified and very effective use is made of the local education authority's adviser in behaviour support. Very good records are kept of all serious incidents of inappropriate behaviour, including bullying. Pupils are fully aware that the school does not tolerate bullying or racism. There have been no racial incidents in the past year. The school's procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are largely informal but satisfactory.
45. The systems for assessing pupils' levels of attainment are good, which is an improvement on the judgement made by the previous inspection. A useful cycle of assessment has been established by the co-ordinator in English, mathematics and science, which includes the use of statutory and optional assessments and the sampling of pupils' written work. Careful records are kept of pupils' progress in reading and the school is beginning to set targets for individual pupils to achieve in English and mathematics. However, the procedures are not yet sufficiently embedded firmly to enable staff to see what is working well, what needs to be improved and how far pupils have moved towards their targets, which tend to be of a general nature in the infant classes.
46. Teachers are beginning to share aims in learning with their pupils and to assess with them at the end of lessons whether they have met the aims. This approach helps pupils to take more control of their learning and is a positive step. However, teachers are not consistent in their approach when marking pupils' work. At best, teachers identify with pupils what they need to do to improve and then use this target as a guide to measure their rate of progress. At its weakest, marking gives pupils undue praise for their work, an approach that does not urge them to do better. Nevertheless, the school satisfactorily uses assessments in English and mathematics to group pupils in these subjects according to their levels of attainment and to identify those pupils who need closer instruction, often in very small groups. This system works successfully in the main, particularly when teachers plan lessons on the basis of the needs of their pupils according to their levels of attainment.

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

47. The partnership with parents is satisfactory, although not as strong as at the time of the previous inspection.
48. Most parents think highly of the school. This judgement is based on the questionnaire to which over 50 per cent of parents replied, the pre-inspection parents' meeting and conversations with parents during the inspection. Parents particularly like the high expectations the school has of their children, the fact that their children like school, the approachability of the staff, including the headteacher, the progress their children make and the good quality of the teaching. Inspectors endorse these positive views, but judge that the school could have higher expectations on the way pupils present their work and of the progress of more able pupils. Some parents do not think that there is an interesting range of activities outside lessons. The inspectors disagree. They judge that, considering the variety of school clubs on offer, the provision is good. A few parents have doubts about the way the school is led and managed. Again the inspectors disagree. They judge the leadership and management by the headteacher and the governors to be good and the major factors responsible for the improvement taking place in the school.
49. The quality of information provided to parents is good overall. The prospectus and governors' annual report are easy to read and informative. These documents meet statutory requirements, although the most up-to-date statistics are not always used.

Regular newsletters keep parents well informed on the life of the school. Opportunities for parents to meet their child's teachers are satisfactory. However, many parents told the inspectors they would like a meeting in the spring term to review progress. The school had planned one for this year, but has delayed it due to the inspection. The timing of these meetings is not always convenient to working parents. Pupils' reports are satisfactory. They meet statutory regulations and are well laid out. Progress is clearly stated. However, targets are often not written with a view to being useful for parents who want to be involved in their child's learning. Parents report that teachers are always available at the end of the school day to discuss concerns. Some parents do not think they are kept well informed on their child's progress. The inspectors judge that, overall, the opportunities for parents to be informed about their child's progress are good.

50. Parental involvement in the school, while satisfactory, has decreased since the previous inspection. This is due mainly to the demise of the Friends' Association. However, the school has carried out some initiatives to re-establish this association and has clear aims to sustain these efforts. A small core of parents help regularly in the infants. This help is well organised and makes a useful contribution to the pupils' learning. The school expects parents to monitor their child's homework through the homework and reading diaries and this encourages pupils to do their homework. Parents are welcomed to class assemblies, which are followed by coffee and biscuits with the children who performed in the assembly. These events are well attended and very much appreciated by parents. By linking a performance by pupils with the governors' annual meeting, the school achieves attendance levels that would be the envy of most primary schools. A significant minority of parents think that the school does not work closely with them. The inspectors, mindful of the role that used to be played by the Friends' Association, particularly in arranging social events and fund raising, judge that the partnership as it currently exists is satisfactory. No mention of partnership with parents appears in the list of official school aims published in the prospectus.

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

51. The leadership and management of the headteacher are good. She consistently identifies the priority of raising standards of attainment and behaviour and takes effective action to carry this out. For example, standards of attainment over the past two years have improved by the end of Year 6 at a rate above the national trend. The headteacher and governing body appoint new staff carefully and work effectively to get a balance of expertise in the school. The headteacher emphasises the importance of teamwork and there is a shared commitment among the staff for raising standards and improving other aspects of the school's work. For example, the headteacher extended the special educational needs leadership team to include a co-ordinator with a particular focus on behaviour, which has improved standards of behaviour, particularly in the junior classes. The headteacher uses external expertise well to improve the curriculum and teaching in specific areas of the school. For example, she put a new team of teachers into reception who took advantage of the advice from a local beacon school to improve the work of the reception classes. This has increased the progress made by these children across the whole reception curriculum. The headteacher makes good use of specific funding to raise standards. For example, she ensured funding was used to provide a networked set of new computers in the computer suite, which is increasing pupils' progress in this subject. The headteacher organises some opportunities for the deputy headteacher and co-ordinators to work with the staff to develop their subject and area responsibilities. For example, key staff monitor planning carefully and there is a good level of consistency in curriculum coverage across the mixed age group teaching teams. The local education authority advisers monitor teaching effectively throughout the school. However, there is not enough monitoring of pupils' work or of classroom teaching by co-ordinators to provide them with a full understanding of the development of their subjects through the school. This reduces the rate of pupils' progress, overall, because individual teachers do not have a clear

enough understanding of the work that pupils do, either before or after they teach them in their own class.

52. The deputy headteacher works hard and is an effective assessment co-ordinator. However, she does not have enough regular time during lessons to carry out her responsibilities. The leadership and management of special educational needs are good, with the three co-ordinators working well together to gain an overview of the work of the school and to implement changes consistently. Many of the subject co-ordinators are relatively new to their responsibilities due to the many staff changes. However, they are enthusiastic and are keen to extend their role in order to further raise standards. They have introduced some very good quality schemes of work to support teachers. For example, the history and geography co-ordinators work very well together to fine-tune the themes in place in these subjects. The leadership and management of the reception classes are very good. The senior management team work hard within their areas of responsibility. However, it does not meet regularly enough to provide a shared overview of the school's work or to lead and communicate initiatives to all staff.
53. The governing body has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors are determined to raise standards throughout the school. They make very good use of the local education authority to keep themselves abreast of developments both within the school and in national educational issues. They play an important role in shaping the development of the school and expect to play their part in producing the school improvement plan. The leadership of the chair of governors is very good. He works regularly in the school and the pupils enjoy his visits. For example, he produced a PowerPoint<sup>3</sup> presentation in an assembly, which had a real impact on pupils' understanding of how computers can improve communication.
54. The school's finances are in good order. The school improvement plan is directly linked to the budget and has the major aim of raising standards. It is well presented and has clear targets that can be measured to allow monitoring of their progress. It identifies key personnel responsible for each section and includes clear action plans from all of the co-ordinators. Financial reserves are satisfactory to meet the governors' reasonable aim of being able to maintain staffing levels at a time when pupil numbers are fluctuating. The principles of best value are generally applied in a sound manner, although more consideration could be given to consulting with parents on major developments in the school. The school buys in support from the local education authority budget office and this money is well spent. Budget planning and financial management in the school run smoothly. The school's administrative officer is very competent and operates a well-run office. Accurate information can be found quickly. She handles the school's finances very efficiently making very good use of the computer systems available. However, computers are not used consistently throughout the school to save time in managerial tasks. For example, special educational needs administration is computerised efficiently, but the headteacher does not have a direct link between her own computer and administrative systems, which reduces the efficiency of her access to computerised information. The headteacher and governors are kept well informed about the state of the finances. The school has recently had an audit and has received a draft of the report. The draft recommendations are not causing any concerns and some are already in the process of being implemented. The school benefits from a number of specific grants; the money from these grants is being used satisfactorily for the purposes for which they were intended.
55. The school has effective performance management systems in place, despite the many changes and responsibilities in staffing since the systems were put in place. The school ensures an effective balance between using outside and internal sources of expertise to

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<sup>3</sup> A Power Point© presentation involves using a computer to project images, sounds and key texts on a screen to support a presentation to an audience.

develop the skills of staff. The needs of individual teachers are matched well to whole school needs. For example, the learning support assistant has carried out the training for additional literacy and uses this expertise very effectively with small groups to improve basic skills in reading and writing. Staffing expertise is well matched to the needs of the different age groups and to the curriculum. The accommodation is good overall. The premises manager plays an important role in improving standards of accommodation. The cleaning team ensure a good standard of cleanliness. The two halls and the computer suite are used efficiently. The school uses all the classrooms effectively to support the different setting arrangements in the mornings. The external state of repair of the buildings is poor. The governors and headteacher have a clearly organised plan to improve this weakness over a number of years and the building work has already begun. The amount of learning resources is satisfactory overall. However, there are not enough reference books, either in classrooms or in the library, which reduces opportunities for pupils to develop skills in using non-fiction. Neither are there enough fiction books to provide a stimulating choice for pupils once they have become confident readers. There is not enough software for computers to support the development of information and communication technology skills in lessons in other subjects.

56. The judgements of this inspection are similar to those of the previous inspection. However, this does not take into account the difficulties encountered by the governors, current headteacher and current senior staff. They have had to compensate for the impact of the inevitable uncertainty resulting from two different acting headteachers and deputy headteachers.
57. Children enter the nursery with attainment below expectations, particularly in language skills. Children's progress is good in the nursery and reception. Although last year's national tests show attainment of Year 6 pupils as well below average in English, mathematics and science, standards have risen above the national trend over the past two years and pupils' achievement is now good. The quality of teaching and leadership and management is good. The cost per pupil is above average. Taking all this into account the school gives satisfactory value for money.

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

58. In order to improve pupils' progress the governors, headteacher and staff should:-

(1) raise standards in English from Years 1 to 6 by:-

- planning more reading and writing tasks, both in English and in other subjects, which support pupils' literacy targets;
- reviewing the allocation of time given to teaching writing skills in order to build in more opportunities for pupils to practise them;
- raising teachers' expectations for the quality and accuracy of work that pupils can produce;
- ensuring that all teachers consistently make good use of marking, both to identify with pupils what they need to do to improve their writing and to set them targets against which they and the teachers can measure their progress;
- extending the range of reading and reference books for pupils to use;

*Paragraphs 2- 4, 6, 17, 29 and 79-89*

(2) raise standards in mathematics from Years 1 to 6 by:-

- raising teachers' expectations for all pupils to reach their potential;
- ensuring that planned activities are put into practise to challenge all pupils, particularly the more able;
- ensuring each pupil understands what s/he needs to do to improve;

- organising the written work more effectively in Years 1 and 2 in order to track progress more easily;
- linking pupils' attainment more closely to the National Curriculum and setting individual targets more effectively;

*Paragraphs 2, 5, 7, 17 and 91-94*

(3) raise standards in science from Years 3 to 6 by:-

- increasing opportunities for pupils to write and talk about scientific understanding in their own words;
- increasing opportunities for pupils to develop skills of prediction;
- increasing the amount of time spent on this subject;
- matching assessment more closely to the National Curriculum and improving pupils' understanding of what they need to do to improve their work;

*Paragraphs 2, 7, 17, 97-98 and 100-101*

(4) increase the progress of more able pupils from Years 1 to 6 by:-

- identifying these pupils more effectively on entry to school;
- raising teachers' expectations for these pupils;
- providing more challenging tasks for these pupils in lessons;
- tracking these pupils' progress more effectively;

*Paragraphs 3, 23, 33, 80, 83, 85-86, 94-95, 100-101 and 129*

(5) raise standards in information and communication technology from Years 4 to 6 by:-

(a)

- improving the organisation and management of activities in the ICT suite so that all pupils learn effectively;
- producing a comprehensive scheme of work to develop ICT across the curriculum;
- improving the range of software to support better work in other subjects;
- ensuring that all computers throughout the school are used regularly and effectively;

(b)

- using information and communication technology consistently for managing systems.

*Paragraphs 8-10, 18, 21, 33, 106, 118, 123, 125-129 and 131-132*

In addition, governors should address the following minor issues:-

- provide enough time for the deputy headteacher and co-ordinators to monitor classroom teaching and give them training to carry out this role effectively; extend the role of the senior management team;

*Paragraphs 51-52, 96, 102, 113, 119 and 150*

- balance the amount of time for different subjects more effectively each day from Years 1 to 6;

*Paragraphs 25, 31, 82, 106 and 111*

- extend the opportunities for pupils from the Mainstream Support Base to work with the rest of the school;

*Paragraph 63*

- consider ways of discouraging parents from taking their children on holiday in term time.

*Paragraphs 16 and 43*

## MAINSTREAM SUPPORT BASE

59. The quality of education in the Mainstream Support Base (MSB) is good. A class teacher and a child-care assistant run the unit efficiently, working very well together. Pupils spend most of their lesson time in their classroom, but are fully and successfully integrated into the life of the school for assemblies, break times, dinner times and social activities. They join mainstream groups for physical education and music. There was insufficient information about the work of the unit in the last inspection report to be able to make any judgement about improvements since then.
60. Pupils' attainment is significantly below the national expectation and so it is not appropriate to report on standards. However, in their learning and in their personal and social development, pupils make good progress against their individual targets during their time in the unit. By the end of Year 6, in literacy, higher attaining pupils undertake some independent writing in sentences and know how to sequence events. They read stories without help and know where to find information in books. They listen and respond well to questions. Lower attaining pupils write over dotted letters to form sentences, listen to questions and respond with help. In numeracy, higher attaining pupils add and subtract numbers up to 100. They know how to tell the time and count in tens and recognise different shapes and lines of symmetry. Lower attaining pupils add and subtract numbers up to 20 and recognise different shapes. In science, higher attaining pupils know about different kinds of rocks and how they are formed and understand the differences between solids, liquids and gases. They know the importance of a healthy diet and the effects of exercise on the body and about different animal habitats. Lower attaining pupils know that rocks are different, observe the difference between solids, liquids and gases and know which foods are healthy. They know that heartbeat is affected by exercise. Pupils of all attainment levels make good progress in other subjects.
61. Teaching is good overall, with many very good features. Of the seven lessons observed during the inspection, 100 per cent were good or better. This successful teaching centres on very good group organisation. The lessons are well planned and there is plenty to do, with a wide range of activities, carefully chosen to stimulate the pupils and to maintain their interest. The group is well managed with clear routines and high expectations of behaviour. As a result of this, the pupils behave well, and often very well, in lessons. They are polite and considerate to each other and take great pleasure in each other's achievements. For example, they were clearly pleased when one of them was awarded a sticker for good behaviour. Their social development is promoted by an emphasis on taking turns and taking responsibility for an aspect of class life. For example, pupils took turns to give out drinks and fruit. The outstanding feature of the teaching is the very positive co-operation between the teacher and the child-care assistant. They liaise with each other very well and have complementary expertise. Often one of them will be working with a group and the other will come in with a question to involve a pupil who is not currently engaged. They provide very good role models and the pupils respond by behaving very sensibly. This aspect of teaching reinforces the pupils' positive moral development very well. Every opportunity is taken through careful questioning to reinforce the pupils' speaking and listening skills and through encouraging the pupils to respond and the use of mature vocabulary and key words. However, information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to reinforce basic skills, enable access to other subjects or for individual research. Relationships are very good and there is a happy buzz of activity and a very happy atmosphere in lessons. The pupils, several of whom have very disrupted backgrounds, feel safe, secure and valued. The unit classroom is a real haven for the pupils, many of whom have had extremely unsettled experiences of schooling prior to admittance. Standards of display are very high and the pupils' own work is paramount. The teacher and child-care assistant are very well experienced, although they have not so



far undertaken any formal training in working with pupils who have learning difficulties or emotional and behavioural difficulties. The classroom is well resourced, although there is not enough software to support learning and for research. There is not enough use of information and communication technology

62. The pupils undertake a wide range of learning activities and what they do is linked well to what the pupils in the mainstream classes experience. The pupils have clear targets for learning and for personal and social development which link to their targets within their individual education plans. Work in the classroom is supported very successfully by visits to places of interest; for example, the pupils have produced a wealth of written and art work following their visit to Durham Cathedral. The pupils' spiritual development is extended well by their 'circle time' activities. For example, they reflected on music and expressed how they felt and where they might be while it was playing. The pupils are encouraged to reflect on the diversity of cultural heritages within our society through celebrating events such as the Chinese New Year.
63. Pupils integrate very successfully into the life of the school and take a full part in breaktime and lunchtime activities, assemblies and extra-curricular activities. They join mainstream classes for music and for physical education. However, the amount of integration for most pupils is currently unsatisfactory. There are no assessment procedures or targets in place for the planned integration for individual pupils in the unit into mainstream classes and this has implications for equal opportunities. Although the school's senior management team is very supportive of the work of the unit, its future development does not feature in the current school improvement plan.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	80
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	45

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	4	27	25	19	5	0	0
Percentage	5	34	31	24	6	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	24	307
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	89

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	12
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	67

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.6
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	27	19	46

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	19	20
	Girls	16	15	15
	Total	34	34	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (76)	74 (83)	76 (90)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	23	24
	Girls	16	17	16
	Total	36	40	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78 (83)	87 (79)	87 (88)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	27	23	50

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	14	18
	Girls	19	11	21
	Total	34	25	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68 (60)	50 (58)	78 (76)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	13	15
	Girls	12	13	13
	Total	20	26	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	40 (58)	52 (67)	56 (65)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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	1
Pakistani	4
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	247
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

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

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.1
Average class size	27.9

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

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	198

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	21
Number of pupils per FTE adult	12

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0.5
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.5
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000-2001
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	£
Total income	659,942
Total expenditure	705,062
Expenditure per pupil	2131
Balance brought forward from previous year	58,934
Balance carried forward to next year	80,323 <sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Governors and the headteacher reduced their surplus last year to increase staffing levels. The surplus for the current year is within the government guidelines.

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 54%

Number of questionnaires sent out	331
Number of questionnaires returned	178

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	40	6	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	38	55	3	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	29	54	8	3	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	47	10	4	6
The teaching is good.	41	47	6	2	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	46	20	4	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	52	36	4	4	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	49	45	1	1	4
The school works closely with parents.	31	38	25	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	26	47	11	6	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	49	7	0	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	35	19	10	12

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

**AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

64. Children enter the nursery in the term that they are three years old. Parents appreciate the choice of either the morning or afternoon session and children continue this part time attendance until the end of the summer term. Children enter the nursery with attainment below expectations, with several children experiencing language difficulties. They make good progress in all the Areas of Learning because the nursery teacher and nursery nurse work very effectively together and provide a well-balanced range of experiences. Progress in personal, social and emotional development is very good because children have a rich variety of experiences every day to extend these skills. The teaching staff work closely with parents to ensure a smooth start to children's schooling.
65. The great majority of children in the reception class have benefited from the school's nursery education. In the reception class there is a high quality teaching team of two teachers and two nursery nurses. Both teachers in this team have only been teaching in this age group for a year. They have responded extremely well to the support of the local beacon school. Together with the two nursery nurses, the teachers have developed a complex and highly effective organisation across the different parts of each day for the reception children. Each lesson is considered carefully to make the most efficient use of staff to promote learning and match the individual needs of each child. This includes several sessions each day when children are organised into three groups based on their attainment levels to work on communication, language and literacy, mathematical development or creative development. This ensures that individual needs are met and that more able children fulfil their potential. Children are on track to reach levels above expectations in all Areas of Learning by the end of the reception year, except for personal, social and emotional development where the standards are well above expectations. Children with special educational needs and from ethnic minorities make very good progress. The teaching team in reception builds very successfully on the personal development established in the nursery. The education provided in both the nursery and reception is an improvement on the previous inspection.

**Personal, social and emotional development**

66. Teaching in this area of the curriculum is very good with excellent features in both the nursery and reception classes.
67. In the nursery, children gain confidence in choosing an activity because the teaching team provides a sensitive structure to develop this skill. For example, children take turns to hold a 'magic pencil' and decide what they are going to do. The adult then gives extra guidance in how to carry out the task such as 'Remember to find out how many pigs are in the pots', which supports children very well in making the best use of the stimulating tasks. The teaching team builds the confidence of children very effectively through a wide range of strategies. They work sensitively with individuals in group work, helping them to sustain their concentration. For example, children worked hard to make several pizzas and persevered until they had put tomato sauce and cheese on each one, because the nursery nurse praised their efforts so effectively.
68. In reception, children have a high level of independence. They move quickly to the activity of their choice because the teaching team discusses the range of activities very thoroughly at the beginning of each week. Children concentrate for long periods because the tasks are so interesting. They expect to share resources because they are regularly reminded of the importance of sharing and are given lavish praise when they do so. They follow the teaching team's example of celebrating good effort. For example, a child said proudly 'I

am a superstar!' when he managed to program a floor robot to go in the right direction. They use their initiative to try out new ideas independently.

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

69. Teaching is very good in the nursery. The teaching team uses a very good range of opportunities to support children's development of speaking and listening skills. They value the children's contributions and use questioning very skilfully to support children in expressing their thoughts and feelings. For example, at the end of the day children played a game which required them to say something special about a child whose name had been pulled from a magic box. The teaching team use stories very effectively to support learning across a range of activities, which extends children's understanding of characters and structures of narratives. For example, children thoroughly enjoyed the story of 'The Pig In The Pond' and then talked about the story as they investigated some plastic pigs frozen in ice cubes and put different numbers of pigs in their own ponds. Children develop simple skills of drawing letters of the alphabet because they have opportunities to practise this skill independently or in small group work. They understand that writing conveys meaning because they have opportunities to write during different activities. For example, in outdoor play a child used her notebook to record an incident while she was in role as a policewoman.
70. Teaching in reception is very good with excellent features. The teaching team take every opportunity to extend children's speaking and listening skills for communication and thinking. The very effective organisation of children into three groups ensures that at the beginning of most sessions children get turns in contributing to whole class discussion because there are fewer children to each adult. The teaching team values every contribution that each child makes and supports every individual in extending their speaking. For example, when a child encountered a new name 'Jeffrey', the teacher gave him plenty of time to say it several times in different ways, because he loved the sound that this name made. Children develop very good basic skills in reading and writing because all group tasks are directed at different levels of attainment. A third of children confidently write and read simple three letter words and use the term phoneme correctly, which is well above expectations for their age. Children have a very good understanding of story structures and characters because the teaching team use stories regularly with groups and combine this with high quality individual support for children and careful records of their progress. Children expect to write in a range of contexts because there are many opportunities in the many different role play areas such as the travel agents or the flower shop. This is carefully combined with group work set at the children's own levels, which ensures that all children reach their potential. For example, a more able pupil wrote the word 'shop' independently by sounding out the phonemes and then remembering that 's' and 'h' make the sound 'sh'.

### **Mathematical development**

71. Teaching of mathematical development is very good in the nursery. The teaching team takes every opportunity to extend children's confidence in handling numbers across different activities. For example, children counted the number of pizzas they had made. The teaching team also works systematically with groups to extend their use of numbers through interesting tasks such as counting pigs or putting them in order of size.
72. Teaching of mathematical development is very good with excellent features in reception. Teachers use resources extremely well, which maintains children's attention very effectively and provides a variety of ways of reinforcing the learning. For example, children sang a song several times changing the numbers of teddies in a train, put teddies into different carriages, had a race with three different coloured teddies and then worked on individual tasks identifying which colour teddy came first, second or third. All children

have a secure knowledge up to the number six and a third of children handle numbers above ten confidently, adding two numbers accurately.

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

73. Teaching in the nursery is very good. Children thoroughly enjoy carrying out investigations in the independent tasks because they are so interesting and because the teaching team encourages them to extend their thinking through asking the children challenging questions. For example, a more able child explained that the ice cubes were melting because the water in the water tray was warm. Children work confidently on computers because they have many opportunities to develop keyboard skills and are often supported by an adult.
74. Teaching in reception is very good with excellent features. Children develop confidence in carrying out investigations and construction independently because independent tasks are carefully structured each week and children are encouraged to take advantage of the many different resource areas around the reception bays. For example, two children produced highly imaginative vehicles, a car with axles and a helicopter, both completely on their own. Children take a great interest in their experiments. For example, a child suddenly noticed that his bean plant had grown over the weekend and was absolutely delighted, 'Oh, wow, look at my bean!' Children work very confidently on computers and program floor robots confidently because adults are carefully organised to support the development of these skills.

### **Physical development**

75. Teaching in the nursery is very good. Children play regularly both outside in the purpose built area or on the soft play equipment in the hall. They develop confidence in working on large apparatus because the teaching team gives them extremely sensitive levels of support. For example, a child was extremely hesitant about going down the slide and with the gentle encouragement of the nursery nurse he succeeded and turned straight round to have another try. Children use tools well such as knives for spreading tomato sauce or glue brushes because they have regular opportunities to develop these skills.
76. Teaching in reception is very good. The teaching team works very effectively together to provide a rich and varied programme both outdoors and in the hall. Children hop, jump and skip confidently across a range of different activities. They have a good awareness of their place in relation to the rest of the group. For example, they all formed a very straight line after the teacher asked them to stand with 'neat feet'. They use tools and equipment confidently because they get many varied opportunities to use them to complete independent tasks.

### **Creative development**

77. Teaching in the nursery is very good. Children use a variety of materials confidently because they are given support to carry out their plans. For example, a child produced a beautiful card based on 'Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star' in silver and gold. Children have regular opportunities to play in the different role play areas and the teaching team use outdoor play effectively to extend children's imaginations. For example, the children wore police outfits and helped to guide the traffic of the tricycles.

Teaching in reception is very good. Children are given clear guidance in the structured tasks, which increases their skills in selecting materials. For example, the colour of the teddy's jumper was discussed carefully and children then selected these colours correctly for their paintings. There is a wealth of different role play areas and children sustain their imaginative play because



there is a rich range of resources to extend their imaginations. For example, in the travel agents children were keen to get some bookings and to use the correct forms.

## ENGLISH

78. The table below shows the main judgements about English for the pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

At age 7	National tests 2001	Inspection judgement	Comments
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### Reading

Percentage at Level 2, the expected level	Well below average	Below average	The school needs to give more time to develop pupils' reading skills
Percentage at Level 3, above the expected level	Well below average	Below average	

### Writing

Percentage at Level 2, the expected level	Well below average	Below average	Pupils need more opportunities to practise and develop their writing skills
Percentage at Level 3, above the expected level	Well below average	Below average	

### Speaking and listening

Percentage at Level 2, the expected level	Below average	Average	Most teachers use good strategies to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills
Percentage at Level 3, above the expected level	Average	Average	

At age 11	National tests 2001	Inspection judgement	Comments
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### English

Level 4, the expected level	Below average	Average	There is improvement in the juniors, but more still needs to be done
Level 5, above the expected level	Below average	Below average	

79. Pupils make satisfactory progress over their time in the school, but overall results in national tests, especially for 7-year-olds, are lower than they should be. Compared with similar schools, attainment in the 2001 national tests for 7-year-olds was well below average in reading and writing. In a similar comparison, attainment in English for 11-year-olds was below the average. The trend in 7-year-old pupils' attainment in reading and writing since the previous inspection has varied considerably, but results have always been below, or well below, the national average. For 11 year olds, over the same period, average attainment in English has risen steadily from well below average, to below average in 2001. For pupils this age, the results at the end of the current year are likely to match the national average for the number of pupils who score the expected Level 4, and above, but below the national average for the number of pupils who score the higher Level

5. While there is always a majority of pupils who achieve the nationally expected Level 2 at age 7 or Level 4 at age 11, too few achieve the higher than expected Level 3 or Level 5 to bring the school's overall averages up to the national averages.
80. There are signs that the good use of the literacy strategy in the juniors is having the desired effect on standards. However, the quality of its application in the infants is not consistently high, with the result that these pupils do not learn as well as they could, particularly in writing. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, overall, because of additional adult help in infant lessons and in intensive instruction in withdrawal groups.
81. The atmosphere of class discussions is positive and encouraging and pupils across the school learn to play a confident part in responding to teachers' questions. This is particularly noticeable in the first part of most literacy lessons, when teachers introduce new ideas or skills that they have learned, in part, in previous lessons are revisited with pupils. Higher attaining pupils often give extended answers to questions and show how they have listened and thought about their answers. Most other pupils speak thoughtfully and are attentive to their teacher's instructions. Consequently, pupils seldom misunderstand what teachers say and carry out their tasks with certainty. There are times, however, when pupils' ability to listen gradually declines. This is usually because lessons are too long and because some teachers try to move pupils' learning on too quickly by asking them to consider too many unrelated ideas. As they move through the school, pupils give more extended answers to questions. They respond well to the more frequent training in good and very good lessons to speak at length to the class in the review section at the end of lessons. Teaching assistants give frequent opportunities for lower attaining pupils to take an active part in small 'additional literacy support' groups. These arrangements work well and the pupils concerned confidently respond to the assistants' instructions and questioning.
82. Pupils make steady progress in reading, although progress is better in the juniors than it is in the infants, where pupils do not have enough time to read with adults on a one-to-one basis. This is despite the good use that teachers in the infants make of the allocated group reading phase of the literacy lessons. These pupils are taught how to use letter sounds to make sense of unfamiliar words and some pupils can apply this skill to uncommon words. A Year 1 girl, when reading aloud, used her knowledge of the letter blends 'ar' and 'ed' learned previously to work out 'start' and 'dropped'. Similarly, a higher attaining Year 2 girl worked out the words 'perhaps', 'sign' and 'inspected'. Nevertheless, too few pupils in Years 1 and 2 are sufficiently competent in their reading to reach the higher than expected levels of attainment. Many parents help to improve their children's reading confidence by hearing them read at home and most pupils generally like reading. The classrooms have useful displays of key words needed for improving spelling and reading. Pupils are taught how to gain meaning from text in their guided reading groups, where pupils at a similar level of attainment read the same book together and, with the teacher's help, talk about it. These sessions are often well taught and help pupils to acquire the necessary skills. The highest attaining pupils in Year 2 know how to look for information from books and so have the potential for more independent study, though they need more training in reading at this more demanding level. Those pupils who have special educational needs, or who require additional help with reading, are successfully helped to learn new strategies for finding out words new to them.
83. Overall, by the age of 11 most pupils reach the expected level in reading and several attain the higher than expected level. They are reasonably fluent and expressive in their reading and have good ways of working out unknown words such as 'environment' and 'meditation'. Pupils have a good understanding of the books they read and give insightful comments on the characters and plots. Most enjoy reading and some give succinct reasons for preferring particular authors. However, the range of authors they describe is

somewhat limited and the books they choose are often too easy for them. This is partly due to a lack of a suitable choice of reading books in the library, a factor that the school is trying to improve.

84. Standards of writing are improving in both the infants and the juniors, but there is some way to go, especially in the infants, where standards are not high enough. Pupils in the infants write their own sentences and some write at an adequate length, but more able pupils, who can write long stories, are not sufficiently encouraged to do so. When they do, and they plan their writing carefully, then their work is usually of high quality, as in some work undertaken about 'The Enchanted Gourd', a story that originated in Africa.
85. Pupils in the juniors are developing the coherence and structure of their writing because they are given guidance on how to do this. This element of writing is often the focus of the best marking, seen in Years 5 and 6, where the teachers appreciate the content of pupils' work and then set reminders and give advice about how they could improve their writing. Pupils write in a range of styles and for a range of purposes and some of their work is of particularly high quality. This happens when they have opportunities to plan, draft and redraft their work and to apply the skills that they have learned in their literacy lessons. Unfortunately, there are not enough examples of such work or occasions for pupils to write at length. Indeed, the school needs to reconsider the amount of time it gives to teaching literacy skills, when more time could be given for pupils to practise their writing skills, in English and other subjects.
86. Standards in spelling and handwriting in the infants are improving because pupils are given plenty of practice, but they do not always transfer what they have learned to their independent writing. Sometimes, teachers give praise too easily to pupils when their writing shows little, if any, improvement and sometimes when it is worse than on previous occasions. This gives pupils the wrong impression about what standards are acceptable. In the juniors, a higher proportion of pupils take pride in the presentation of their work and some teachers make a point of asking for high quality handwriting. Indeed, such strategies as a recent handwriting competition are effective in improving the presentation of work in all subjects.
87. Teaching is good in the juniors, with some very good and excellent teaching. It is satisfactory overall in the infants, where some lessons are unsatisfactory. Overall, 29 per cent of teaching is very good or excellent, while 14 per cent is unsatisfactory. Lesson planning is strongest in identifying the broad targets appropriate for all pupils, but it is less specific in setting out expectations for pupils at different stages of development. Some teachers are skilled at reading out texts dramatically, as in a good Year 2 lesson, so capturing pupils' interest and demonstrating good speaking skills. In the very good and excellent lessons, the teachers' subject knowledge is particularly evident and they challenge all pupils to think about and analyse texts and ideas clearly. For example, in a lesson about persuasive language, the teacher of a very good literacy lesson in Year 6 analysed with pupils the text of a promotional leaflet. Technical terms, carefully chosen so that the pupils could understand, came thick and fast. She captured and held pupils' interest by referring, for example, to an emotive description in the leaflet about a snake being 'nature's perfect killing machine' and asking 'How dramatic is that?' It is in exciting lessons such as these that the pupils learn most. Such teaching includes a range of effective strategies to promote learning. An excellent lesson in Year 4, for example, involved the teacher and pupils in role-play, with the result that the text they had read came alive. The feedback to pupils after the role-play activity was particularly worthwhile. It gave them added incentive and effective vocabulary ideas to write in the first person about their experiences. The teacher's high expectations of her pupils meant that they all made considerable effort and stayed focused on their tasks.
88. Where lessons are unsatisfactory, it is because of four reasons:

- the pupils spend too much time sitting listening to the teacher and have too little time for independent work so that any writing tasks are brief and/or unfinished;
- the teacher tries to introduce into the lesson too many skills or ideas;
- the end of the lesson is not used to reinforce with pupils what they have learned in the lesson;
- the tasks are too complex, with the result that lower attaining pupils do not understand the work and make little progress.

89. The leadership of the subject is good and the co-ordinator and staff have done much to improve the school's provision for the subject. Many of the staff have taken part in further training and the school makes good use of external advice to enhance its effectiveness. However, the management of the subject requires improvement to ensure that all teaching is of at least satisfactory quality and to see that agreed strategies are implemented consistently across the school. Currently, the co-ordinator has no opportunity to monitor directly the work across the school, or its effectiveness. For example, literacy lessons are generally too long and this means that pupils have too few opportunities to improve their writing skills through practice.

## MATHEMATICS

90. The table below shows the main judgements about mathematics for the pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

<b>AT AGE 7</b>	<b>Tests 2001 National comparison</b>	<b>Inspection judgement</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Level 2, the expected level	Well below average	Below average	Most pupils now make better progress, but more able pupils are not challenged enough.
Level 3, above the expected level	Below average	Below average	

<b>AT AGE 11</b>	<b>Tests 2001 National comparison</b>	<b>Inspection judgement</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Level 4, the expected level	Well below average	Below average	Individual pupils are not clear about what they need to do to improve their work
Level 5, above the expected level	Well below average	Below average	

91. In comparison with similar schools, the school's results were below the average for 7 year olds and well below that of 11 year olds. Standards in Year 6 in the national tests have improved since the previous inspection. The school has undergone a period of management and staff changes over the last two years and this has had an unsettling affect on the quality of teaching in the school. There has now been a period of stabilisation within staffing. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic about promoting higher standards and has led the staff well in the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. As a result, all teachers work hard to raise standards and teaching and learning have improved, although teachers are aware that standards are not yet high enough. The strategy of setting pupils according to their mathematical abilities is supporting the raising of standards well. This arrangement helps teachers to plan work that more closely matches pupils' learning and so improves the progress that they make. However, insufficient attention is being paid to increasing the challenge for the more able pupils. The result of this is that they do not make the progress that they should. As a result, standards are rising but they are still not high enough. Pupils with special educational needs receive effective support and make good progress in the targets set for them in

Years 1 and 2 and very good progress from Years 3 to 6 because teachers plan effectively to meet their needs.

92. Year 1 pupils enjoy mathematics and participate readily in a range of activities. They work with tens and units, know how to make pairs of numbers and identify odd and even numbers. They extend their mathematical language well. For example, they use terms such as 'twos', 'largest' and 'smallest', 'more than' and 'less than'. They recognise half-past the hour on a clock face and the more able pupils learn to recognise a quarter past. One pupil's understanding of this task was illustrated by his clear explanation, 'I know a quarter to the hour because it is three quarters of the clock face'. By the time they are 7 years old, less able pupils make totals of at least nine and judge whether this is more or less than five. Average and more able pupils understand the concept of tens and units to 100 and arrange numbers in even sets of two to 10. They are familiar with a range of two-dimensional shapes and they measure using both non-standard and standard measures, such as metres and centimetres. They collect and classify information such as favourite food or numbers of letters in their names and present their findings as a block graph. However, although most pupils are now making good progress, planned tasks for the more able do not provide sufficient challenge. As a result, these pupils do not make the progress they should.
93. In both Year 3 classes, pupils work hard and apply their understanding to solve a range of progressively demanding problems. For example, in the higher-ability set, pupils were observed extending their skills in adding near multiples of 10 to a two-digit number by adding the nearest multiple of 10 and adjusting their answer. One of the more able pupils commented, 'Problems in words are hardest of all but they're really good when you find the maths!' In the lower-ability set, pupils attempt similar tasks with extra resources to support them so that most pupils made good progress. In Years 4 and 5, pupils develop their multiplication and division skills and work with thousands. They identify equivalents of simple fractions. They collect, organise and interpret data using tally charts and bar graphs. In Year 5, the more able pupils work confidently with different aspects of multiplication problems. By the age of 11, most pupils have a range of strategies which they use enthusiastically to solve number problems. They understand written methods of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of numbers to 1000. They understand negative numbers and work with equivalent fractions and decimals. Both Year 6, teachers set stimulating tasks. For example, pupils were observed extracting data from a holiday spreadsheet and answering a range of questions to solve challenging problems. However, from Years 3 to 6 more able pupils do not consistently achieve their potential and individual pupils do not have enough understanding of what they need to do next to achieve the higher levels of attainment. Teachers reinforce numeracy skills effectively through work in other subjects, for example in science and geography. However, there is little evidence of pupils' use of information and communication technology to support their work in numeracy.
94. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2. It is good overall from Years 3 to 6 because teachers plan more effectively for each ability group. As a consequence, the best lessons have a sharp focus and the teaching is clear and authoritative. However, where planned tasks are not always put into practice they do not match the needs of the more able pupils and so these pupils do not make the progress they should. The National Numeracy Strategy is successfully established and a clear emphasis has been made on the teaching of mental activities at the start of each lesson. As a result, pupils' rapid recall of number facts is strong. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils' behaviour and their use of time and they have established very good relationships with their pupils. Consequently, pupils behave well, enjoy their lessons and so make good gains in their learning. Teachers and classroom assistants are responsive to pupils' individual needs and readily give explanations. This promotes pupils' involvement and positive attitudes towards mathematics. Teachers use questioning

effectively to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding of their work. For example, in the higher-ability set in Year 3, the teacher asked, 'How did you reach that answer?' and gave sufficient time for pupils to explain their methods clearly. Teachers clearly explain how pupils should present their work and most pupils respond with neat workbooks. In the most successful lessons, teachers encourage pupils to explain the methods they use in reaching conclusions and completing tasks. They successfully use the results of their observations, marking and regular assessments to ensure that tasks are complete and that pupils are making progress. The quality of marking is good overall from Year 3 onwards. It is best in Years 3 and 6 where teachers identify clearly what pupils have learned and what they need to do next to improve. The quality of marking is not as good in Year 1 and Year 2. Pupils' worksheets are not clearly organised in date order so that it is difficult to track progress over a period of time. Although these worksheets are marked regularly, there are few comments to inform pupils of what they have achieved or what progress they have made. All teachers bring pupils together at the end of each lesson for a worthwhile recall of what individual and groups of pupils have achieved. Teachers use this opportunity well to praise pupils' efforts and boost their confidence.

95. The mathematics curriculum is well planned and the National Numeracy Strategy has been effectively implemented. However, there are few links with information and communication technology. A good feature of the provision is the clear emphasis on mental and investigative mathematics. Results of the national tests and school tests are carefully analysed and the school has begun to set individual targets to track pupils' progress as they move through the school. However, these are not always linked to the National Curriculum levels to more accurately measure progress. The experienced and enthusiastic co-ordinator has monitored teachers' medium term planning, but does not have a sufficiently clear overview of pupils' attainment and progress throughout the school. This is because she has not yet had the opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching in the school.

## SCIENCE

96. The table below shows the main judgements about science for the pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

AT AGE 7	Teacher assessment in 2001 National comparison	Inspection judgement	Comments
Level 2, the expected level	Below average	Average	Pupils have the expected level of knowledge across the science curriculum and carry out investigations at the expected level.
Level 3, above the expected level	Below average	Average	

AT AGE 11	SATs 2001 National comparison	Inspection judgement	Comments
Level 4, the expected level	Well below average	Below average	Pupils have a satisfactory level of knowledge, but are not confident enough to explain scientific principles or to predict outcomes of investigations.
Level 5, above the expected level	Well below average	Below average	

97. Inspection findings are that the standards attained by 7 year olds in science are average and pupils are making sound progress. This matches the judgement at the time of the previous inspection. Teacher assessment of the attainment of pupils aged 7 in 2001 also matched the national average. Inspection findings of standards of 11 year olds are below the national average, but pupils are making sound progress. These findings are lower than the previous inspection when they were achieving average levels of attainment. The results of pupils in the 2001 National Tests were well below the national average. There has been considerable change in staffing in the past two years and insufficient time is allocated to teaching science. These factors have had a considerable affect on pupils' progress, but the school is now working hard to address these issues. Therefore, although attainment is below average, pupils from Years 3 to 6 now make sound progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress within the targets set for them.
98. Seven year olds develop a secure understanding in the three knowledge aspects of the National Curriculum of living things, materials and processes. Year 1 pupils understand that a circuit has to be complete for a bulb to light when connected to a battery. They know that to have healthy bodies, they need to eat balanced meals and exercise their muscles regularly. By the end of Year 2, pupils know what a plant or animal needs to grow and illustrate their understanding by recording clearly in charts or tables. Pupils make satisfactory progress in conducting their own simple investigations and are beginning to predict the possible results of an investigation.
99. In Year 3, pupils know about weather conditions such as the evaporation of water in warm or dry conditions. They have learned that condensation occurs when water vapour or steam turns back into water droplets. Year 4 pupils consider the effect that drainage has on decomposing matter. They identify different types of rocks and record their findings clearly in diagrammatic form. By the age of 11, pupils have a growing knowledge and understanding in all aspects of science. Year 5 and 6 pupils know that food chains are used to describe feeding relationships in a habitat. They know that the sun is the key source of energy and that green plants derive their energy from this source. Through a range of investigations they understand that sounds are made when objects vibrate and

that pitch changes by altering the size or tension of objects. They know that sound travels better through solids than gases. They have conducted experiments to find out whether particular materials are insulators or conductors of electricity. However, more able pupils do not receive challenging enough work to allow them to reach the higher Level 5 by the end of the year. Scrutiny of previous work indicates that pupils have a secure grasp of the correct terminology needed to describe an event or experience. However, although pupils record their experiences, they do not have enough opportunities to express these in their own words or to make predictions about what might be the outcome of their experiments.

100. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with good features, but there are also some unsatisfactory features. The good teaching has a positive effect on pupils' learning. These teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding of the subject and use this to provide a broad range of activities that deepens pupils' knowledge and understanding. The intentions of the lesson are made clear at the start and for this reason pupils respond well to questions and activities and all know what they have to do. These teachers have high expectations of their pupils' behaviour, set a steady pace and provide tasks which match the needs of different abilities. As a result, these pupils enjoy their lessons, work hard and make good progress in their learning. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, pupils are uncertain about what they are intended to learn. Too much time is spent in introducing the lesson so that pupils become restless. The lack of use of relevant textbooks to support pupils' learning means that they do not have sufficient opportunity to research work in class. Expectations are not high enough of what the more able pupils are capable of doing, so that they do not make the progress that they should. All teachers regularly mark their pupils' work. Marking is of a high quality in Year 3 and Year 6 and includes constructive comments to help pupils understand the progress that they make. Pupils are proud of their written work and they present it neatly.
101. The co-ordinator manages the subject very well. She is adapting the scheme of work to more closely match the needs of the pupils in the school by making good use of teachers' expertise and medium term planning. She provides valuable help to teachers to support their planning. This revised scheme includes good links with other subjects such as history, geography and design and technology. However, although she monitors teachers' plans, she does not have the opportunity to monitor teaching throughout the school. There are adequate resources to meet the needs of the subject, but these are not used consistently in some classes to support pupils' learning. Assessment is not related closely enough to the National Curriculum levels to compare pupils' standards with national expectations. As a result, the co-ordinator does not have a clear overview of the standards in the school. There is a variety of visits to such places as the local farm, the planetarium and the local museum. Year 5 pupils have visited the local secondary school to work on a two-day science and design and technology project. These experiences provide valuable opportunities to extend pupils' learning and further enhance their social, moral and cultural development.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

102. By the ages of 7 and 11, pupils' standards of work match the level expected for their age and they make satisfactory progress. This mirrors the judgement of the previous inspection.
103. In Year 1, pupils create colourful collages of faces linked to their design and technology topic. They think carefully about shades of colour and use a range of materials to create effective portraits. By the end of Year 2, pupils further develop their shading techniques, for example, in their observational drawings of musical instruments. They discuss the size and shape of these instruments so that they can apply this knowledge to their drawings. They distinguish clearly between light and dark by carefully using their drawing pencils to shade appropriate areas of their work. Pupils are beginning to use language associated



with art and design. When discussing their work, they proudly recall the various stages of their work and are able to explain how they have managed to scale their drawing to fit the page. They explore pattern by printing in primary colours. As a result, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory gains in their learning.

104. In Year 3, this satisfactory progress is built upon successfully. Pupils demonstrate clearly that they are confident in working with clay to produce some fine clay coiled pots. They enthusiastically discuss how they find the task both challenging and exciting and so develop their knowledge and understanding of three-dimensional art. No teaching was observed from Year 4 to Year 6. However, scrutiny of earlier work, teachers' plans and discussions with pupils allow judgements to be made of pupils' attainment. In Year 4, following a visit to Durham Cathedral, pupils have used collage to convey their own impression of the stained glass windows. They have painted in the style of various famous artists, such as Monet and Turner, making good use of chalk and water-colour paints. Some of these paintings illustrate fine examples of the development of perspective. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils have carefully selected appropriate shades and textures of a variety of materials. They have further developed collage skills to emulate the work of, for example, Van Gogh and David Hockney. By the end of Year 6, pupils have experienced a broad range of working in two dimensions. However, art is taught in a two-year cycle, so that these pupils have not yet experienced working with three-dimensional art. There are satisfactory links with other subjects such as geography where pupils have based their printing work on the style of Indian and African patterns. Some use has been made of information and communication technology to research examples of symmetrical designs and these have been successfully copied. However, this aspect of the curriculum is still in its infancy. In all classes, pupils make satisfactory progress in observation of finer detail and mixing and matching colours.
105. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was good because teachers have good subject knowledge and plan well for their pupils. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and set challenging tasks so that pupils produce their best work and enjoy their lessons. There are very good relationships between teachers and pupils and this has a positive effect on their learning. However, because the allocation of teaching time is too low, insufficient time is available on developing pupils' skills in working with, for example, three-dimensional projects and pupils do not make the progress that they should in this aspect of the subject. Teachers do not use information and communication technology enough as a design tool or to give an alternative medium for pupils' imaginative work.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

106. Pupils' attainment in design and technology at the end of Year 2 is in line with national expectations. Standards in the infants have remained similar to those identified in the last inspection. However, by the time they leave the school in Year 6, pupils' attainment is below national expectations. Currently, older pupils in the juniors are not achieving as well as they could and this represents a decline in standards. This is due to the lack of time given to teaching the subject and a lack of coverage of the curriculum. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have only limited knowledge across a narrow range of experiences and this has had a detrimental effect on their progress.
107. Overall, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills in most aspects of the subject as they move through the school. They investigate familiar products, for example bird feeders in Year 6, and demonstrate a good understanding of the links between planning and making. In their designs they list the materials they require and make suggestions on how to proceed. However, progress in learning how to select and use a wide range of tools and techniques for making products is unsatisfactory across the juniors.

108. In Years 1 and 2 there are good opportunities for pupils to use different types of materials, such as paper, card, wood and a wide range of different textiles. They design, make and evaluate a range of attractive photograph frames from salt dough and wood. They discuss and demonstrate clear knowledge of features of these frames and explain what makes them stable structures. There is an appropriate focus on food technology that is linked effectively to health education. For example, pupils in Year 1 designed and made plates of 'healthy food' and in Year 3 they evaluated 'healthy' sandwiches.
109. In Years 3 and 4 there are good links with geography in the topic on volcanoes where pupils use recycled and modelling materials creatively. The project on slippers in Year 6 demonstrates how well pupils take the users' views into account. They show clearly their awareness of the various constraints of the textiles they use. There are attractive displays of work throughout the school, but in Years 5 and 6 pupils are very constrained in the range of materials they use. For example, in a science project on sound, pupils made sketches of their ideas for making musical instruments. They clarified and developed these designs but in making their instrument they were restricted to the use of paper and card. There are very limited opportunities for pupils to use electrical and mechanical components, food, mouldable materials, plastic or wood. Also, despite the very wide range of good quality tools in the school, there are few focused practical tasks planned to enable older pupils to develop a suitable range of techniques and skills.
110. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. There is a suitable emphasis on designing, selecting appropriate materials and evaluating finished items. Investigations are well planned and the majority of teachers have a satisfactory knowledge of the subject. There is a calm and well-ordered start to lessons and teachers use effective questioning to ensure that pupils fully understand the task. However, there are times when the teaching is unsatisfactory as a result of poor classroom management. Too much time is spent with pupils sitting on the carpet and listening to the teacher; this results in a lack of opportunity for practical work.
111. Most pupils have a positive attitude to learning and they co-operate and share well. However, in some lessons behaviour deteriorates when activities are not well matched to pupils' abilities. This results in a lack of commitment to concentrate on the task.
112. The co-ordinator has clearly identified areas for development and improvement. The school has recently adopted some of the national guidelines provided by the Qualification and Curriculum Authority. However, the current scheme of work is incomplete and cannot fully support planning or be used as the basis for teaching and learning across all aspects of the subject. This has a negative impact on pupils' progress. The co-ordinator regularly monitors teachers' planning, but there has been little opportunity to evaluate teaching and learning across the school. This means that the co-ordinator has had no opportunity to disseminate good practice or to tackle any weaknesses in teaching or the curriculum.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

113. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations and the school has maintained the standards described in the previous report. As they move through the school, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. However, progress in lessons is often good.
114. Younger pupils look closely at features of the local area, for example landscapes and weather, and consider different ways to make the environment better. By starting with the immediate environment pupils in Years 1 and 2 look at different features of the school and the immediate environment. They draw simple routes and are given good opportunities to develop early planning and mapping skills. They know that India and Africa are a long way

away and that the weather is often hot. They accurately describe the kind of clothes that are suitable for people to wear in hot and cold climates. They know the difference between physical and human features and compare and contrast a very small island with their own environment.

115. By the end of the juniors, pupils have each completed a comprehensive project on water. They are knowledgeable about the water cycle and have considered the importance of water for many vital purposes. They effectively use and interpret maps and talk confidently about the effects of climate and pollution; these activities have a positive effect on their social and moral development. In Years 5 and 6 they carefully examine the issues of drought and flooding and explain their views on environmental change. They have completed extended topics on Egypt in Years 3 and 4 and Africa and India in Years 5 and 6. This has enabled pupils to compare and contrast different life styles and conditions. Pupils in Year 6 talk with confidence about how life in an African village compares with that of life in the UK. Good use is made of field trips and where possible each topic has a suggested visit related to the work, for example older pupils have compared Gateshead and Corbridge and talk with enthusiasm about the project.
116. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are positive. They listen attentively in class and are ready to contribute to discussions. Behaviour in class is usually good; it is only when the younger pupils are expected to sit on the carpet for too long that they lose concentration and this impacts negatively on their learning.
117. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are well organised with a good range of activities that keep pupils interested and well motivated. Comprehensive planning ensures that tasks are well matched to pupils' abilities. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and question pupils effectively drawing on their past knowledge of physical and human geography. They give clear explanations and encourage pupils to use appropriate geographical vocabulary. Teachers maintain good relationships and have high expectations. Older pupils are expected to work co-operatively in pairs and this often results in focused, good quality discussions. The limited written work that was seen indicated that teachers rely too much on work sheets and marking does not consistently outline to the pupils what it is they need to do to improve. Not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to use information and communication technology to support their learning.
118. The two co-ordinators have a very good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and have a complete overview of the areas taught to pupils. They have clear targets for developing the subject further and have worked hard to produce a comprehensive humanities scheme of work. They have taken on board the national initiatives to help further the development of the subject and are committed to raising standards. There is regular scrutiny of planning and pupils' work, but currently no opportunity for the co-ordinators to gain a clear overview of how well teachers are teaching and how well pupils are learning.

## **HISTORY**

119. The satisfactory standards in history that were identified at the last inspection have been maintained throughout the school. Pupils at 7 and 11 years of age attain standards in line with those expected nationally. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in their learning as they move through the school.
120. In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn effectively about the passing of time. They compare toys from the past with those that are played with now and have developed an accurate time line sequencing toys in chronological order. They confidently compare aspects of Victorian school life with their own experiences and research their own family tree.

121. As part of their humanities topic on mountains Year 3 and 4 have looked closely at how mountains were formed. They have looked at changes in transport over time and the changes since motorways were developed. They have studied the Romans as invaders and know how the changes that the Romans made affect our lives now. Older pupils have a secure knowledge of life in Tudor times and discuss knowledgeably the difference between rich and poor families. They are less secure about the life and legacy of Queen Victoria and the effects of the industrial revolution. Pupils in Year 6 have completed a comprehensive project on World War 2 and talk confidently about the how the war affected everyday life and the impact on families. They have a secure sense of chronology and appreciate how books, photographs, videos and the Internet are used as different information sources to support historical enquiry.
122. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. There is effective and detailed planning of the subject. At the time of the inspection no history was being taught, but discussion with pupils indicates clearly how much knowledge they have retained on each of the topics they have studied. Each topic is outlined with clear guidance and many have been particularly well researched. Marking of pupils' work indicates that teachers write supportive and informative comments that are useful in taking pupils' learning forward. Overall, teachers do not place sufficient emphasis on developing historical research skills. There are too few planned opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology in their learning or to dramatise events in order to bring activities to life.
123. Pupils' attitudes to history are positive. They talk with enthusiasm of the work they undertook on Egypt. They are keen to investigate and undertake research and are eager to discuss their work in history.
124. The two co-ordinators are very committed to extending the curriculum in history. They are enthusiastic and very well organised. They have a complete overview of the areas taught to pupils and have developed a comprehensive humanities scheme of work. They have worked hard to devise clear targets for developing the subject further and regularly monitor teachers plans and scrutinise pupils' work. Currently, there are no opportunities for them to observe teaching and learning directly. Overall, there are sufficient resources to match the needs of the current topics, but there are few books in the library. Although the co-ordinators provide a list of web sites for teachers to use, the subject is constrained by the limited use of information and communication technology and a shortage of computer software to support pupils' learning.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

125. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology at the end of Year 2 is in line with national expectations. However, by the time they leave the school in Year 6, pupils' standards are below national expectations. This is due to a lack of resources and limited focus on the subject until two years ago, when the current headteacher addressed major weaknesses in this subject. The introduction of the computer suite has ensured that all pupils are now making satisfactory progress because they have regular opportunities to practise their skills and are being taught computer skills regularly. However, the lack of regular use of computers in previous years has resulted in the older pupils missing out on their development. These pupils have not had time to compensate for this. Standards in this subject are more demanding than the previous inspection, where pupils were reaching the expected standard in Year 6. Until two years ago the school was not keeping up with the additional requirements in this subject.
126. There are suitable opportunities for all pupils to develop skills, knowledge and understanding in most of the strands of this subject. However, there are very limited

opportunities for pupils to use simulations such as adventure games, explore spreadsheet programs or collect data and develop and explore databases.

127. Because of the limited range and use of hardware and software in the past, pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 are at similar levels in their confidence in loading and retrieving files, finding and interrogating information. In control technology in Year 6 pupils understand the importance of clear instructions and the role of control in everyday equipment. 'Logo' and programmable robots are used well to help pupils develop knowledge of directions and angles. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 successfully access electronic mail and are learning how to send an e-mail to a friend. In Years 5 and 6, pupils effectively combine text and graphics. They are beginning to develop their research skills, successfully searching and retrieving information from the Internet, but there is very limited use of this to support work in other subjects.
128. Overall, the teaching is satisfactory across the school. Teachers have satisfactory and sometimes good subject knowledge and technical skills. Planning is clearly focused on what it is that they want pupils to learn, but there is no detail to show how more able pupils will be suitably challenged. They give clear instructions and pose effective questions building on work from previous lessons. In one Year 3 lesson, teaching was very good. The regular monitoring of pupils and sensitive intervention ensured that all pupils were able to achieve the target the teacher had set. Lessons in the computer suite are not always well organised. In large classes there are limited opportunities for all pupils to have direct access to a computer. Many teachers expect pupils to work in pairs with their 'computer buddy', but this is very difficult where there are three pupils to each computer. In the juniors many pupils have limited information and communication skills and require considerable support. In some classes there is not a good balance between direct teaching and opportunities for pupils to practise these skills. This results in a lack of commitment to the task by some pupils. In classrooms teachers make limited use of computers. In some lessons they are used to support pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, but these are in the minority. Overall, teachers miss many opportunities to use information and communication technology to support pupils' learning. For example, computers are not used effectively for investigating and evaluating in science or in history to research information and record it in interesting ways.
129. The computer suite is used well to support pupils' learning out of school. The computer club provides appropriate extension opportunities for pupils in Year 6. They use this after school facility effectively to produce a termly magazine. There is also a useful e-mail club for pupils in Years 5 and 6 who do not have access to computer facilities at home.
130. Pupils generally have positive attitudes to information and communication technology. They are very interested in developing their knowledge and skills and many show enthusiasm and readiness to learn. In lessons where the classes are smaller they co-operate well when working in pairs. Relationships are good, but pupils do not always and listen attentively to the teacher in the larger groups.
131. The co-ordinator is committed to moving the subject forward. She scrutinises teachers' plans and pupils' work, but currently is not able to undertake any monitoring of teaching and learning. Two useful policies have been developed on teaching information and communication technology and accessing the Internet and electronic mail. Further work needs to be done on developing a comprehensive scheme of work to support teaching and learning, including using computers in other subjects. Overall, there is a suitable range of resources, but a limited range of software to support this.

## MUSIC

132. At the time of the previous inspection, the standards achieved by pupils aged 7 were below expectations. This is not now the case because pupils have more regular opportunities to play instruments and to perform. This means that they gain confidence in their own ability to play music. Similarly, pupils in the juniors, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress and reach levels of expertise normally expected of pupils their age.
133. The school has made considerable efforts, since the last inspection to raise the profile of music in the school. Firstly, it makes good use of a range of resources available to it. For example, a music specialist employed by the local education authority works closely with class teachers in lessons to give pupils from across the school regular access to musical experiences and opportunities to compose and to perform. Secondly, the scheme of work adopted by the school provides a firm platform and a range of experiences on which pupils build their knowledge and expertise. Thirdly, specialist instrumental instruction in brass and strings for some junior pupils and subsequent performances in assemblies enhances the quality of school activities. Nevertheless, although the teaching of music adequately fulfils National Curriculum requirements, there is room for more pupils to be actively engaged in music on a more regular basis. For example, most pupils do not have opportunities to learn the fundamentals of musical notation.
134. Singing is a strong feature of lessons in the infants. It was possible to observe only one lesson in this age group, but in this the quality of teaching was good and pupils' singing consequently improved well. They know a good range of songs by heart and delightedly sing their favourites with gusto and a firm sense of rhythm. By the end of the lesson, the singing of 'Mornintown Ride' by pupils from Years 1 and 2 reached high quality because the teacher used a good range of strategies to improve the quality of their performance. These strategies included humour, the development of percussion instrumental accompaniment by some of the pupils and the teacher's own piano playing skills. Pupils of this age follow simple visual instructions to help them to vary the dynamics of their singing. By the end of the lesson, most recognised the signs for 'crescendo' and 'diminuendo' and some could recall the terms.
135. Two lessons observed in the juniors gave a good insight into the standards that older pupils in the school achieve and the quality of teaching, which is good overall. Year 3 pupils successfully appraise recorded music and discern how rhythm and beat can express different moods. They develop good skills of performance and learn about the differences between beat and rhythm when they cleverly use chopsticks to tap out fast and slow accompaniment to tunes. Indeed, with the very good guidance of the teacher, some pupils can perform a more complicated rhythm within a fast tempo and produce work of high quality.
136. By Years 5 and 6, most pupils take a real interest in music from around the world. They recognise, for example, that Indonesian gamelan music is used for ceremonial occasions and then enthusiastically try, in groups, to compose similar music. Most understand how to use a pentatonic scale because the good teaching provides clear guidance and they use resources well. A notable feature of lessons in the juniors is the way pupils spontaneously respond to each other's performances by clapping, which spurs them on to higher quality work.
137. Current teaching in the school is good and is enhanced by the good partnership in lessons between the class teachers and the visiting specialist teacher. This means that pupils can learn effectively in larger groups than might normally be expected. It also means that class teachers can pursue with pupils the development of their musical skills and knowledge in lessons when the specialist teacher is not present.

138. The co-ordinator for the subject is relatively new to her role. She has very few opportunities to monitor lessons across the school because she is based in the reception class. Nevertheless, she is a skilled music practitioner herself and takes every opportunity to advise her colleagues and to provide opportunities, such as in assemblies and end-of-term concerts, for pupils to perform. Termly visits from a local education authority team of musicians further enhance all pupils' learning of musical skills and knowledge.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

139. Attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 is at the expected level. This includes standards in swimming. These standards are the same as reported in the previous inspection. However, the school is in a good position to raise these standards, particularly in the junior classes, because there is a new co-ordinator who is in his first year at the school. He has good subject knowledge and is increasing the rate of progress in games because he has introduced a range of new extra-curricular activities. Teachers cover a well-balanced programme of work. The co-ordinator has introduced new schemes of work throughout the school, which give a good level of detail for each lesson. Teachers are now using these schemes, but they have not yet had an impact on standards.
140. In Years 1 and 2 the teaching is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy this subject and co-operate well. They respond well to challenges to experiment with different ways of carrying out their tasks. For example, they try different ways of moving through a hoop and persevere until they have produced an interesting sequence of movements. More able pupils initiate imaginative sequences. Pupils perform confidently in front of the rest of the class because the teacher praises their efforts. Pupils have the expected level of skills in working with bats and balls, with more able pupils controlling this equipment skilfully. Some time is wasted because pupils change into their physical education kit too slowly, which reduces the overall time for developing skills.
141. Teaching in the junior classes is good. The expertise of the co-ordinator is used well because he teaches the oldest pupils as well as his own class. Boys and girls work very well together and expect to play a full part in all games, including rugby and netball. Pupils have good skills of ball throwing in winter games because they have had a season to develop these skills. They pass and catch rugby balls accurately on the move and co-operate well in small team activities. Pupils do not yet have this level of skill in rounders, because they have not yet had a full season to develop their expertise. Pupils organise themselves well into teams and have a good understanding of the role of defending or invading. Pupils make good progress in lessons because teachers structure tasks carefully to extend their learning. For example, in a Year 5 lesson pupils practised their batting and bowling techniques and then moved into a simple team game for four to develop their fielding skills. Teachers use lessons effectively to extend pupils' personal development because they emphasise these aspects during lessons. This is particularly good in Year 5 where the teacher awards the 'Freddy Trophy' every lesson to the person or team who showed this development the best. Pupils greatly value this award.
142. Teachers use assemblies well to celebrate pupils' achievement in physical education. For example, in a class assembly, all pupils performed a good quality dance routine as part of their presentation to parents and the rest of the school. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities both after school and at lunch times. These clubs widen pupils' opportunities to extend their skills. For example, pupils from Year 6 to Year 2 thoroughly enjoyed their line-dancing club and performed a sequence of different movements using a good sense of rhythm and moving to the beat of the music well. There are good opportunities for pupils to extend their social and cultural development because they take part in a good range of tournaments and events in the region. These include rugby,

football and netball tournaments and an athletics competition in the Gateshead International Stadium.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

143. No specific lessons in religious education took place for the infants during the week of the inspection, so it is not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching for this age group. Neither is it possible to judge pupils' standards in the infants because there was not enough work available to securely do so. However, all junior classes had lessons and inspectors observed four of them. From these, teaching is judged to be good overall in the junior classes. Pupils made at least good strides in their learning because teachers ensure that the work is interesting, focused and pitched at the right level of difficulty for the pupils.
144. By the time they reach the end of Year 6, most pupils achieve knowledge and understanding of the subject that matches the level normally expected of pupils of this age and in accordance with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. From reading samples of pupils' work from across the school, especially of pupils in the juniors, and from talking to pupils in Year 6, it is clear that the school teaches a balanced range of topics.
145. The teaching of the subject in the juniors is good because teachers plan lessons that make pupils think and reflect on their own experiences. There is good use made of visits to religious places to inspire pupils, after which teachers successfully exhort pupils to discuss what they have seen and learned. For example, in a good lesson in Year 6, nearly all the pupils could recall the key features of a Hindu temple because they had been well prepared for the visit and the teacher sensitively inspired pupils to recall their experiences. Notably, one pupil said, 'I felt strange because I have never been anywhere like it and I didn't know how to act'.
146. Pupils at 11 years have a satisfactory understanding of the variety of religious beliefs and practices. From visits to a range of Christian churches, including Durham Cathedral and the Hindu temple, and subsequent discussions, they learn about different customs and cultures. The difference between the clothing of a Catholic priest and a Baptist minister is one such distinction that pupils recount accurately. One Year 5 pupil expressed clearly her interest in this work saying, 'I love finding out about religions and cultures because it helps me to understand different people'. The Hindu caste system is one custom that pupils find particularly interesting. Consequently, the programme of learning in the juniors contributes well to pupils' cultural development.
147. Older pupils have sound opportunities to practise their literacy skills, for example, when they write independently about famous religious people. They write discerning pieces about Mother Theresa and Mahatma Gandhi. A strong sense of history and commitment is promoted when pupils in Year 4 consider the lives of religious figures from history, such as that of Saint Cuthbert. Stories from the Bible are brought to life when pupils in Years 5 and 6 write, in a reporting style, about how Jesus raised Jairus' daughter from the dead.
148. Pupils are attentive in lessons and take a real interest in discussion. They listen carefully to their teachers and to each other and many offer interesting opinions about what they learn. They know that the Bible is divided into two major sections and can relate some important stories from the New Testament; but their knowledge of other sacred books is limited.
149. The subject co-ordinator is relatively new to his post and is keen to introduce a useful assessment system that will identify clearly and easily pupils' progress and the effectiveness of the curriculum. However, he has little opportunity to monitor the work across the school and, for example, was unable to provide information about the teaching



of the subject in the infants during the course of the inspection week. There is a good collection of religious artefacts available for teachers and pupils to use, but there are not enough reference books available for pupils to develop research skills effectively.