

INSPECTION REPORT

WEST WALKER PRIMARY SCHOOL

Newcastle Upon Tyne

LEA area: Newcastle Upon Tyne

Unique reference number: 108485

Head teacher: Mrs C Lovat

Reporting inspector: Mr G J Carter
4720

Dates of inspection: 25th - 28th June 2001

Inspection number: 195079

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

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Street Walker Newcastle Upon Tyne Tyne and Wear
Postcode:	NE6 3XW
Telephone number:	0191 2624130
Fax number:	0191 2950019
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs A Charlton
Date of previous inspection:	May 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

OIN	Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
4270	G Carter	Registered inspector	Science	What sort of school is it?
			Equal opportunities	How high are standards?
			English as an additional language	How well are pupil's taught?
				How well is the school led and managed?
				What should the school do to improve further?
11368	K Lee	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
30834	A Lawson	Team inspector	English	
			Music	
			Foundation stage	
19897	A Evans	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Art and design	
			Religious education	
19120	D Pattinson	Team inspector	Information and communication technology	
			Design and technology	
			Special educational needs	
30839	A Pullan	Team inspector	Geography	
			History	
			Physical education	

The inspection contractor was:

Eclipse (Education) Limited
14 Enterprise House
Kingsway
Team Valley
Gateshead
NE11 0SR

Tel: 0191 487 2333

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE.

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	5
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	17
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	17
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	19
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	21
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	25

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

West Walker Primary School has 255 pupils (149 boys/106 girls), aged from 3-11 on roll and is of average size when compared with schools nationally. It is situated in the east of the city of Newcastle in an area associated with high levels of social deprivation. Unemployment is well above the city and national averages. Most pupils live close to the school in housing which is mainly of local authority rented stock. Approximately seventy per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which are very high in comparison with the national average. In 1999 two additionally resourced classrooms (ARCs) were established for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. There are 103 pupils (40 per cent) on the school's register of special educational needs, which is around twice the national average. Four pupils have statements of special educational need, which is a higher proportion than found in similar sized schools nationally. Three pupils speak English as an additional language. The school has a nursery which provides full time places for 39 children. Children enter the nursery with very limited social, language and number skills. The school has recently been involved with other local schools in a Mini Education Action Zone bid in order to attract additional resources. The school and its wider community is also about to benefit from the additional community health facilities provided by a recent successful 'Sure Start' bid. In the last twelve months there have been many changes in teaching and non-teaching staff, including the head teacher and a high proportion of teachers in the school's junior department.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school has a number of significant strengths but standards are not high enough. The good quality of teaching promotes good learning and positive attitudes to learning in pupils. The recently appointed head teacher provides good leadership and management and has identified clear targets in the school development plan for raising attainment. These include raising attainment in pupils' writing, continuing to improve behaviour management techniques, and better use of performance data to raise attainment. Governors support the head teacher and the school well, but do not have the necessary skills or procedures for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs, including those taught in the ARCs, is good. The school is very effective in promoting pupils' personal development and pupils' moral and social development. The school provides good care for pupils. As a result of consistently good teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes, children in the Foundation Stage achieve well in all areas of learning.

What the school does well

- Good teaching helps pupils to learn well and promotes good behaviour and attitudes to work
- The head teacher provides good leadership and management
- The provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage continues to be a strength of the school
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good
- The provision for pupils' personal development, particularly social and moral development, is good
- Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are excellent; those for promoting good behaviour and attendance are very good
- Links with parents and the local community are very strong

What could be improved

- Standards achieved by pupils at the ages of seven and 11 in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT)
- Monitoring of pupils' academic progress and use of assessment to inform pupils of their progress
- The role of senior members of staff in the monitoring of teaching and learning
- The role of governors in evaluating the school's performance and using data to improve attainment

and overall provision

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 1997. Since that time satisfactory improvement has been made in resolving the key issues arising. Standards achieved by 11 year olds in statutory assessments in English, mathematics and science remain broadly similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection. However, when comparisons are made with similar schools, the attainment of pupils is close to the average in English and above average in mathematics and science. Standards achieved by pupils in ICT, though still below national expectations, are nevertheless higher, particularly in their handling of data. In geography standards have remained below the expected level, largely because of greater priority being given to English and mathematics, with a consequent reduction in curriculum time. The head teacher has produced a useful and comprehensive policy on monitoring the curriculum and teaching, and she has already begun the process of monitoring teaching. The local authority link adviser has also visited classrooms with the head teacher as part of a self review process. Governors have recently begun to develop their monitoring role through meetings between the link special educational needs governor and the school's special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). The curriculum range of experiences in geography, ICT and design and technology have improved so that they are now sufficiently broad and balanced to meet statutory requirements. The governors' annual report to parents now meet statutory requirements with respect to the reporting of pupils' annual test results.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	E	E	E	C
mathematics	D	E	E	B
science	C	E	D	B

Key

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

Pupils enter the nursery class with very low skills and knowledge in all areas of learning. By the time they leave the reception class they make very good progress, although attainment is still below what is expected for their age. In the 2000 national tests, standards achieved by pupils at the age of seven in reading and mathematics were well below average, but when compared to similar schools, they were close to the average. In writing, pupils' attainment was very low and well below average in comparison to similar schools. In the tests for 11 year olds, pupils' attainment was well below average in English and mathematics, but below average in science. Over a four year period these results have broadly followed the national trend of improvement in English and mathematics. In science there has been a more rapid improvement in standards over 4 years than indicated by the national trend. Inspection evidence is broadly consistent with these levels of attainment. However, there are clear signs that targets for improvement have begun to have a positive impact on pupils' writing and unconfirmed results of the most recent national tests for 11 year olds indicate that pupils' attainment in science is continuing to improve. However, standards do not yet match the good quality of teaching provided. This is attributable to two factors. Firstly, there has been a significant

change in teaching staff, particularly in the junior department. Secondly, there has been a very large increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs. These pupils are placed on the school's register because of their underachievement, and as a result they adversely influence the school's yearly test results. Also, until quite recently, insufficient action was taken to evaluate performance through the use of available data, and to act upon it.

Standards in ICT are below what might be expected for pupils aged seven and 11, although pupils make sound achievement in learning. In religious education, physical education and art and design, both infant and junior pupils achieve well and standards are in line with what might be expected at the age of seven and 11. In geography, history and design and technology standards are below what might be expected at the age of seven and 11. In music standards achieved at the age of seven are similar to what might be expected but are below at the age of 11.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils show good attitudes and are generally interested in their classroom activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils show respect for the views of others and respond well to teachers and other adults. Pupils know what is expected of them and older pupils provide good role models for younger ones.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory and pupils are generally punctual.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching was at least good in a majority of the sixty four lessons seen. Of these, sixty four per cent of lessons were good and 8 per cent of lessons were very good. In the nursery and reception classes teaching is consistently good. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was seen. Teachers plan their lessons well with nursery nurses, learning support assistants, and volunteer parents so that pupils make good progress during lessons and good gains by the time they reach the end of the Reception year. Teachers establish good relationships with pupils and use very effective strategies to manage pupils' behaviour, so that pupils stay on track and concentrate. They use resources well and make good links with other curriculum areas so that pupils find work interesting and relevant. They plan work well with the special needs co-ordinator and learning support assistants to provide effective support for pupils with special educational needs both in lessons and withdrawn groups. Pupils in the 2 ARCs are well taught, and, despite some occasional, challenging behaviour, make progress that is usually at least satisfactory. Pupils with English as an additional language are taught well in small groups or supported very effectively in ordinary classes. Teachers use a good mix of teaching methods so that pupils give their attention and remain interested by the change of

activity or pace. Although teaching in English is good, the teaching of literacy skills across other subjects is not yet effective. Mathematics and science are taught well, and numerical skills are soundly taught in other subjects. Only one lesson in ICT was observed and teaching was satisfactory. The quality of marking is unsatisfactory and teachers do not yet keep individual pupils informed of targets they should aim for in order to improve. As a result pupils have insufficient knowledge and understanding of their own achievement and progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, which is relevant to pupils' needs, including those with special educational needs. The curriculum for personal, social and health education is good. The strategies for teaching literacy across other subjects are ineffective and the range of extra curricular activities is unsatisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision, including that for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, is good. Pupils from the two ARCs are appropriately integrated within the school.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	These pupils are well supported either through additional classroom support, or within smaller, withdrawn groups. They have also benefited from the early intervention and support from members of the local authority's support service.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision is good. The provision for moral development is good and for social development is very good. Teachers provide good role models and use opportunities well in lessons, assemblies and lunch times to promote pupils' development in these areas.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has good procedures for ensuring the welfare, health and safety of pupils. There are excellent procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' personal development, and very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and attendance. Procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' academic progress are unsatisfactory.

Links with parents are good. Generally, parents are very satisfied with the school and what it provides for pupils. They support it well through the community association and various activities, but many aren't sufficiently involved in children's learning at home.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	The head teacher provides good leadership and management. She has identified clear targets for improvement in the school development plan. Key staff share the head teacher's commitment to succeed. However their roles in monitoring and evaluating teaching and the curriculum are not sufficiently developed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its statutory duties and supports the school well. However governors do not have suitable strategies for evaluating the effectiveness of the school and setting targets for improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The head teacher has begun to use information from national tests to evaluate the school's success and set realistic targets. This is already having an impact on the quality of writing for infant pupils.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes effective use of the resources available. Specific grant has been well used to provide classroom assistants for infant pupils and those with special educational needs.

The quality and range of accommodation and learning resources is satisfactory. The computer suite, which is soon to be furnished and equipped, will very much improve the provision. Although there has been a recent high turn over of staff, there are now sufficient suitably qualified teachers to teach the curriculum. Classroom support staff are well used to support and enhance pupils' learning across the age range. Governors are beginning to make use of the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching is good • The school is well led and managed • Behaviour in the school is good • The school has high expectations of pupils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework given to pupils • The range of extra curricular activities • The lack of peripatetic music provision

Inspectors agree with parents' positive comments. They also share parents' view that the range of extra curricular activities is too narrow and that the lack of peripatetic music tuition is unsatisfactory. However they consider that there are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to do work at home.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

How high are standards?

1 Children enter the nursery with very low skills, knowledge and understanding in all areas of learning. This is confirmed by the application of tests when they start in the nursery. However, tests taken by children at the end of the reception year show that pupils have made good progress over the two years in nursery and reception classes, even though standards achieved are below what might be expected in all areas of learning, except physical development. This results from good teaching and support from nursery nurses, support assistants and volunteer parents.

2 Since the last inspection, standards in English and science have remained broadly similar, but the standards in mathematics have fallen slightly. Standards are still not high enough. In English and mathematics standards achieved by seven and 11 year olds are well below average and in science they are below average. In the statutory tests for seven and 11 year olds in 2000 in English, mathematics, and science the attainment of pupils was well below national average. When compared to similar schools, attainment of pupils was broadly in line with the average in mathematics but below in English and science for pupils at the age of seven. The attainment of 11 year olds, when compared to similar schools, was in line with the average in English and above average in mathematics and science. In the same tests, boys attainment compared to that of girls is significantly lower than the national picture, although this has not been borne out in classroom observations. Over a four year period standards in English and mathematics have followed the national trend of improvement, but in science the rate of improvement has been greater.

3 There are a number of reasons why standards have remained fairly static, when inspection evidence indicates that teaching across the age range is good. Firstly, since the last inspection the number of pupils with special educational needs has increased by twenty five per cent and the number of pupils with statements of special educational need has increased four fold. In 1999 two new units (additionally resourced classrooms, or **ARCs**) were established in the school to provide up to twelve places for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The high proportion of boys within the large special educational needs group of pupils (2:1) accounts for the under performance of boys in comparison with girls. Also, in 2000 there was a high turnover of key teaching staff, including the head teacher, at a time when the deputy head teacher was seconded as a consultant teacher within the local authority. These significant staffing changes, which were preceded by a period of low teacher morale, had an inevitable impact on the continuity of provision for pupils and overall standards. Nevertheless, inspection findings indicate that the present good quality of learning is having a positive impact on pupils' learning, particularly in English, mathematics and science, although this has not had sufficient time to raise standards.

4 Standards in reading at seven and 11 are well below average and similar to those levels attained in the statutory tests. This results from the weakness in the way the school currently monitors pupils' reading in both the infants and juniors, and, consequently, is not able to set realistic targets for individual improvement. Though standards in writing are still well below average, the decisive action taken by the co-ordinator in identifying writing as a target for improvement in the school development plan has begun to reap benefits. As a result, early indications from this year's statutory test for seven and 11 year olds indicates that writing standards are improving significantly. Strategies for teaching literacy are being well used in English lessons, but literacy skills are not developed sufficiently in other subjects. As a result, poor reading, spelling, handwriting and punctuation skills have an adverse effect on attainment in many subjects.

5 Standards in mathematical skills and knowledge and understanding are well below average for

pupils at the age of seven and 11 and reflect the national test results. One significant factor inhibiting pupils' achievement in mathematics is their low level of reading skills. This is particularly so in problem-solving tasks, where words and their mathematical meanings have to be clearly understood. Many junior pupils struggle with simple computation because they have poor knowledge and recall of simple multiplication tables. However pupils use numeracy skills, such as bar charts and line graphs, successfully in other subjects, such as science and geography.

6 Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below the levels expected nationally for both seven and 11 year olds. Although these standards are similar to those at the time of the last inspection, some improvements in standards have been achieved. The subject was recognised as a priority for teaching in the school development plan, with the result that pupils now have more knowledge and understanding of word processing, data handling and control than they had four years ago. However, the impact of the recent training of teachers and the whole school targets in data handling and word processing have not yet begun to have sufficient impact, largely because of the lack of a dedicated computer room with networked personal computers.

7 Pupils achieve well in their knowledge and understanding of religious education, and standards are similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection. They are in line with what is required by the Agreed Syllabus for seven and 11 year olds. Seven year olds have a sound knowledge of some bible stories and 11 year olds can relate old testament and new testament stories to the time before and after Christ's life. Through topics such as 'friendship' in infant classes and comparisons between Christianity and Islam in Years 5 and 6, pupils spiritual, moral and cultural awareness are enhanced. Standards achieved by seven and 11 year olds in physical education and art and design are similar to those that would be expected nationally. In geography, design and technology and history, standards are below the expected levels for seven and 11 year olds. Standards in these subjects were below the expected levels at the time of the last inspection and have not improved because of the greater priority given to improving pupils' literacy and numeracy. As at the time of the last inspection, standards in music are commensurate with expected levels for pupils at the age of seven, but below those expected for pupils at the age of 11.

8 Most pupils with special educational needs make sound progress towards the targets set for them. A number of reasons contribute to this. Most teachers ensure that work set is carefully matched to their needs, many pupils receive regular help from a small group of dedicated support staff, and the special educational needs co-ordinator provides additional, effective support in English and mathematics by withdrawing groups to provide focused teaching.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9 Pupils show good attitudes to their work, which enables them to learn well in class and make steady progress over time. These good attitudes are achieved as a direct result of the good teaching, high expectations and consistent drive by adults to encourage pupils to behave well in lessons and so give themselves the opportunity to learn. Similar findings were reported at the time of the last inspection, and these aspects remain a strength of the school. Most pupils listen carefully in class, are interested in their lessons and try hard to do their best. For example, due to very good teaching in a science lesson, Year 5 and 6 pupils became highly involved in an investigation to find the best insulating material. They concentrated well throughout and the classroom had a purposeful buzz of activity. Most pupils attend school regularly and on time and parents are in agreement that their children like school. Older pupils say they enjoy school because their teachers make it "fun" to learn.

10 The behaviour of pupils is good in and around school. Most pupils behave well in lessons, responding well to the high expectations of staff. In the playground there are moments of rough play but, due to the very good management by staff, only occasionally does the behaviour of a few pupils become

unsatisfactory. Pupils line up promptly when the bell rings as they are keen for their class to win points towards the class awards. There were three exclusions, including two for a fixed term, reported in the year prior to inspection. This year there has been an increase in the number of exclusions. These have been used appropriately to deal with instances of challenging behaviour in a small number of pupils and to ensure the safety of others in school.

11 There are good relationships in school. Pupils respond well to the care shown by staff and their effective use of praise to motivate and encourage them. Pupils show respect for the views of others and are friendly and polite. Good routines are established so pupils know and understand the expectations set by their teacher. For instance, in the nursery and reception class, children are happy and confident because of the very good relationships with adults and the consistent routines throughout the day. Older pupils have few opportunities to show independence in lessons but the new school council, "The Kids' Council", is a very good initiative for them to be involved in decision making in school. In a meeting of the Council held during the week of the inspection, chaired by the head teacher, class representatives were involved in a lively discussion about school meals, and the 'fairness' of the present system for receiving second helpings. Older pupils are pleased to act as role models for younger pupils "to show them how to behave well" in school. Pupils acting as lunch time monitors for younger pupils in this way take their responsibilities very seriously.

12 Most pupils with special educational needs have a positive attitude to their work. They are keen to make progress, eager to please and enjoy succeeding. Most are well behaved, and respond well to the encouragement they receive, which helps to boost their confidence and enables them to take pride in their achievements. Pupils in the ARCs sometimes display more challenging behaviour. However, they often respond positively when reminded of what is expected and when integrated in mainstream classes.

13 Attendance is broadly in line with the national level and punctuality is good.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

How well are pupils taught?

14 Since the last inspection, teaching continues to be a strength of the school. The proportion of good and very good teaching has increased and the number of unsatisfactory lessons reduced to fewer than one in sixty. Such improvements are especially notable, given the turnover of a high proportion of junior department teachers within the last year.

15 In both the nursery and reception classes, teaching is consistently good and ensures pupils receive a secure foundation to their learning. Teachers in these classes plan their lessons very well, with very clear objectives and good links to longer term plans. They effectively deploy nursery nurses and other adult support to support pupils' learning, particularly lower ability pupils and those with special educational needs. In the infant and junior departments, teaching is good. In all lessons seen in the infant classes it was at least satisfactory and in three quarters of lessons seen it was good and sometimes very good. With the exception of one lesson, teaching in the junior department was satisfactory or better in all lessons, and in five out of ten lessons it was at least good.

16 In most lessons, teachers use a good mix of teaching methods. They skilfully capture pupils' attention at the beginning of lessons, and as a result, pupils listen well and eagerly take part in lessons. At the beginning of a Year 5/6 science lesson about the insulating properties of different materials, the teacher used a digital thermometer and heat-sensitive probe, with a volunteer pupil, to demonstrate the effect of various layers of clothing on body heat retention. Pupils watched and listened attentively, and as a result were eager to begin their own investigation with different layers of various materials. In another Year 5/6 art and design lesson the teacher provided a variety of tasks, using different materials, well matched to the abilities of different groups, to record the pupils' first hand experience of a visit to the centre of Newcastle city. She had

ensured that all pupils were working effectively in groups, following an informative introduction, where lesson aims and working methods were made clear. Good links had been made at the outset to the pupils' work in history, which ensured that the tasks were interesting and relevant.

17 Most teachers develop good relationships with pupils, which helps them to manage pupils' behaviour very effectively. In a Year 2 music lesson in which pupils were learning about the notational representation of musical pitch and tempo, the teacher ensured that pupils had her full attention so that they could take a full part in the clapping tasks that were to follow. In another mixed Year 1/2 English lesson, pupils discussed characters in the shared story. The teacher used encouragement and praise skilfully to involve as many pupils as possible and boost their confidence. As a result they maintained interest and responded well throughout the discussion. In one of the mixed Year 3/4 classes the management of pupils is less successful than in other junior classes. This results in time being lost, and, on one occasion pupils' learning was unsatisfactory.

18 Teachers make good use of time, classroom support and resources to maintain an effective and lively pace to lessons. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, the teacher started the lesson with a brisk mental arithmetic session to enliven pupils' interest, with the result that a high proportion of pupils responded to questions and showed real interest in learning. She made good use of flip chart and flash cards to maintain interest, and during the group session used a good range of interesting and practical games to consolidate pupils' understanding of coins and giving change. As a result, pupils remained attentive and were eager to succeed. In a reception class literacy lesson the teacher made very good use of other adults to support group activities that were well matched to pupils' needs. Lower ability and special needs pupils were well supported by the nursery nurse in their 'word matching' activity, whilst a well briefed volunteer parent worked competently with pairs of pupils using a matching word sound game on the computer. Pupils were encouraged by this support and consequently tried hard to achieve well in their tasks.

19 Literacy skills, though well taught in literacy lessons, are not consistently well taught across all other subjects. In many lessons opportunities are provided for pupils to enhance their speaking and listening skills through lively and interesting introductory and plenary sessions. Good reinforcement is given, though not consistently, to key vocabulary in some subjects. For example in a Year 5/6 science lesson the teacher made good reference to the meanings of 'opaque' and 'transparent' when discussing the outcome of a class investigation on the effect of light on grass. However, there are too few opportunities for well planned writing tasks, particularly where linked to independent reading and library research skills.

20 On the other hand, better opportunities are provided within other subjects than mathematics to develop numeracy skills. In science and geography, pupils have sound opportunities to record numerical data in both bar and line graphs. In physical education pupils are encouraged to record their athletic success in such events as long jump.

21 At the time of the last inspection, the quality of teaching in ICT was described as satisfactory. On the basis of only one lesson seen, comparisons with the previous judgement are not possible. However, the lack of a suitable networked computer room so that regular, time tabled class provision can be established, is hindering the development of teaching and learning in this subject. This is because insufficient time on the computer is available for pupils to develop their skills and understanding when only one or two computers are available per classroom. In many lessons ICT is not effectively planned for and makes too little contribution to the enhancement of pupils knowledge and skills in many subjects. Where small groups of pupils are taught, by volunteer parents, on a regularly planned basis, as in the reception and nursery classrooms, pupils are attentive and enthusiastic learners.

22 The small number of pupils with English as an additional language is effectively taught in class or, quite regularly, in smaller groups supported by the SENCO or a Learning Support Assistant. They are encouraged well to make use of the limited English vocabulary they possess and are making sound gains in

the language.

23 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. This is because most individual educational plans are targeted carefully to meet their precise needs. Teachers employ a wide range of strategies, usually successfully, to motivate, involve and challenge pupils. Most consistently apply and carefully monitor the progress pupils are making towards achieving their targets. Records are conscientiously maintained and regularly updated to enable teachers to carefully track progress. In the two ARCs for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, teachers employ a wide range of strategies, usually successfully, to motivate, involve and interest pupils. Teachers and their well briefed classroom assistants work very effectively together. All adults are patient, supportive, sensitive and persistent, and have established positive relationships with the pupils with whom they work. These approaches ensure that pupils make sound progress over time. However, the challenging behaviour which many of these pupils exhibit means that progress is not consistent, and, as a result, some lessons are more successful and productive than others.

24 With the exception of the reception and nursery classes, teachers do not give sufficient attention to the marking of pupils' work. Although there are some examples of very helpful comments in some books, many contain too many unchecked spelling errors, and poorly presented work, where handwriting and punctuation is unsatisfactory. In lessons, whilst many teachers do share their aims for the lesson with pupils, longer term objectives of what pupils are expected to learn and know are not regularly shared with pupils or prominently displayed in class. As a result, pupils have an unsatisfactory understanding of how well they are learning, or what progress they need to make in order to succeed.

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

How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

25 The school provides a reasonably broad and balanced curriculum, offering the pupils a satisfactory range of worthwhile learning opportunities. It provides a satisfactory preparation for secondary school. Since the last inspection the breadth and balance of the curriculum has been improved so that it now meets statutory requirements. There is an appropriate emphasis on English, mathematics and science and is, therefore, very relevant to West Walker's pupils. However, this has resulted in less emphasis on other subjects, notably history, geography and ICT. Religious education is taught according to the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Total weekly teaching time meets national recommendations. There are few opportunities for the pupils to express themselves through drama and no opportunities for instrumental music tuition. Many parents rightly regret this.

26 The school has successfully implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, but there are insufficient opportunities provided for pupils to develop their literacy skills in many subjects. The school's strategies for teaching numeracy skills are broadly satisfactory.

27 Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum. They are given support through withdrawal from class and through in-class support. This meets their precise needs and helps them to make the best possible progress. However, there is no policy for the most able pupils to ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of these pupils as effectively as possible.

28 Various curriculum initiatives have been devised, implemented and evaluated to help ensure that ARC pupils are successfully integrated into the life and work of the school. Led by the SENCO, projects have include involvement by pupils in an "Anger Management" programme, the planning and performing of a musical production from Ghana, and a "pizza" project. For the latter, pupils brought in ingredients, made pizzas, and ate them at a meal to which guests had been invited. An open area within school is currently being developed as a small garden in another project involving ARC and other pupils. These projects are

benefiting pupils in different ways. They make good contributions to their personal and social development by helping to improve their attitudes and to raise their self-esteem; they are learning to co-operate and collaborate effectively with members of the community, and other pupils; and they are beginning to develop good social skills and improve their behaviour through involvement in projects with pupils who are good role models.

29 The school provides well planned opportunities for pupils with English as an additional language to access the full breadth of the curriculum. This is achieved by the additional support given by effective classroom support staff and sometimes in smaller, withdrawn groups.

30 The school provides a very well planned and comprehensive personal, social and health education programme, which covers the entire age range and all groups of pupils. Themes such as “Friendship” and “Respect for other people’s feelings” are well linked to assemblies and many subjects, thus providing consistent and valuable reinforcement. People such as the local community policeman and school nurse are also involved in teaching the school’s effective policies on sex education and substance abuse.

31 Many parents feel that there are not enough activities on offer outside lessons and inspection findings confirm that there are fewer extra-curricular activities than are found in many primary schools. There are weekly, after-school clubs for art, dance, singing and football for junior pupils. A start has been made in organising traditional games at lunchtime for pupils in both key stages. There are no school sports teams, so pupils do not have the opportunity to participate in competitive matches or tournaments. Teachers make use of the locality to enhance learning. They also organise visits to places further afield, such as Souter Lighthouse, Warkworth Castle, and Holy Island. An outdoor residential week is organised for older pupils at Kielder Forest, and provides them with good opportunities to develop their outdoor adventure skills.

32 The school makes very good use of the community to enhance pupils’ learning. The West Walker Parents’ Environmental Group has developed a high quality outside play area for the nursery and reception pupils and the Riverside Rangers have worked successfully with pupils on a garden project. Some pupils and fathers have participated in learning activities at Newcastle United Football Club. Useful links have been forged with Walker Parish Church and with Belmont Methodist Church and local clergy occasionally lead collective worship in school. Some older pupils have worked profitably with members of the Anneville Community Centre on ceramic mosaics and silk hangings. Younger pupils perform a Nativity play for family and friends. The school has deservedly achieved recognition nationally for the initiatives it has established in support of community development and regeneration. The school has a very active community wing serviced by a community liaison officer.

33 There are very good links with Walker Technology College, to which most of the pupils in Year 6 transfer. The school passes on the pupils’ academic and social records. There are opportunities for the pupils to familiarise themselves with the college during the summer term and to take part in some of its extra-curricular clubs. Pupils in Year 5/6 designed and made personalised sports shirts at the college. The head teacher regularly meets staff at the college. Along with other primary schools and the Technology College, the school recently took part in a Mini Education Action Zone bid for more valuable resources, but at the time of the inspection had not yet been notified of its success.

34 The school makes good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils. As stated at the time of the previous inspection, this provision, in particular moral and social development, contributes strongly to pupils’ personal development. Within the curriculum, religious education plays the major part in promoting pupils’ spiritual awareness. For example, Year 2 pupils were given a good opportunity using the popular songs “It’s a wonderful world” and “Earth Song” to write about what was good in their lives and what they would like to change for the better. Collective worship is planned with clear themes for the week. During the inspection the theme of friendship was explored well in story and hymns. There are fewer planned opportunities for promoting spiritual development in other subjects. One good

example was in a music lesson for the mixed Year 1/2 class. The class teacher read the story of ‘The Creation’ very effectively to music and encouraged pupils to sense the mood of the music, valuing all their comments.

35 The provision for moral development is good. There is a clear moral code which is stressed throughout the day. Pupils are taught to consider and take responsibility for their own actions. This is done in a positive way, to enhance their learning. For example, one class teacher used the literacy lesson very effectively in response to evidence that some pupils needed to be reminded to respect local wildlife. Pupils were set the task to write a persuasive letter to themselves from “Mrs Blackbird” asking children to leave her nest alone, which made pupils think of the effect and consequences of their actions.

36 There is very good provision for social development. All adults encourage pupils to work and play well together, to help each other and form good relationships. Pupils benefit from the very good role models provided by adults. The recent election of the School Council has allowed older pupils to take part in discussions of the qualities needed to make a good councillor and those elected take their responsibilities seriously. The Breakfast Club is excellent for promoting good manners and healthy eating. The regular Thursday activities for special needs pupils are successful in promoting social skills. For example, the garden project is very good for encouraging co-operation and collaboration at work.

37 The school makes good use of the local area to promote pupils’ learning of their own culture, for example making visits to Warkworth Castle and Souter Lighthouse. Some opportunities are in place in the curriculum to learn about other cultures, for example Year 5 and 6 pupils are learning about the Five Pillars of Islam and parents commented at the favourable way the school had prepared pupils for the arrival of asylum seekers to the area.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38 The school has good procedures for ensuring the welfare, health and safety of pupils. Child protection procedures are effective with staff aware and sensitive to such issues. The very good programme for personal, social, health education and citizenship encourages healthy living and pupils’ awareness of safety issues.

39 There is excellent monitoring and promotion of all pupils’ personal development. All teachers use the same simple but very effective system for recording pupils’ development and progress. Because these records are passed on and continued from year to year, teachers, especially those new to the school, have a clear initial assessment of each pupil. This enables them to build on the picture, recording pupils’ progress in the light of the previous year’s assessment. All adults have very good relationships with pupils which encourage them to work hard and do their best. The school promotes pupils’ self-esteem well through the weekly “Golden Book” awards which pupils know and appreciate.

40 The school has very good procedures for monitoring and the promotion of good behaviour and for combating bullying, which have resulted in the good behaviour seen in school. These strategies are central to the school’s determination to create a safe, orderly community in which all pupils can learn and make progress in their academic and personal development. All adults have the same high expectations that pupils will try to behave well in and out of the classroom and pupils receive clear consistent messages about the standards expected of them. Pupils are confident that any instances of bullying are always dealt with quickly and properly and that all staff are approachable if they have problems.

41 Pupils with special educational needs, including those in the ARC units, are well cared for. The monitoring of their personal development is of the same high quality as for all other pupils. Their work is frequently and effectively monitored to ensure that they are making progress towards the targets set for them. They receive regular reviews of their progress to help ensure that they are receiving work that is

suited to their needs. Outside agencies are involved as required to help meet their precise needs.

42 There is a comprehensive policy document on the assessment, recording and reporting of the pupils' academic attainment. In the infant and junior classes, procedures for assessment in English, mathematics and science are satisfactory. The head teacher recognises the need to extend these procedures, on a more formal, whole-school basis, to other subjects. Some teachers use information gained from assessment satisfactorily to plan subsequent work. For example, comments in the Year 2 teacher's assessment file include "Need more experience with digital times" and "Found coin totals difficult; lots more work on this concept needed". Nevertheless, the school has rightly identified as a priority in the current school improvement plan the need to make more use of assessment data, including an analysis of national test results, to guide curricular planning. This is not yet done sufficiently well.

43 Procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' academic progress as they move up through the school are unsatisfactory. There is insufficient tracking of the progress that individuals and groups of pupils are making in developing their skills in different subjects, such as reading, and insufficient feedback provided to pupils about their own progress.

44 The school monitors attendance very thoroughly and has a very good partnership with the education welfare officer who comes into school regularly to work with pupils in need of support. The daily Breakfast Club, which caters for up to sixty pupils a day, encourages many pupils to get up and arrive at school early, thereby helping to promote good attendance and punctuality.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45 As reported in the previous inspection report, the school works hard to promote strong links with parents which help to promote pupils' learning and progress. This is a real community school where the contribution of parents is valued. Parents are very supportive of the school. They feel welcome and comfortable to approach staff if there is a problem. They agree that the school expects their children to work hard and make good progress. Inspectors agree with these positive views. Some parents are less happy with the amount of homework set, the lack of musical instrument tuition, and the limited range of extra-curricular activities. The inspection team agrees that the provision of musical instrument tuition would help to raise standards in music and additional extra-curricular activities would enhance the experiences of pupils, particularly in sport. It considers the amount of homework to be satisfactory and similar to other schools.

46 Parents receive regular useful information on school events. There are well-planned consultation meetings for parents to discuss their children's progress. These are held during the day to enable as many parents as possible to attend. The school works closely with parents whose children need support for behaviour problems and keeps them well informed of their progress. Annual written reports give parents sufficient information on their children's progress in English, mathematics and science but tell them too little about strengths and weaknesses in other subjects such as art and design, and music.

47 Parents of pupils with special educational needs, including those pupils in the two ARCs, are kept well informed and are involved at an early stage of the assessment process. Communication with them is very good throughout the time that their children are on the special needs register. Links between home and school are regular and constructive, and this helps to ensure that pupils receive good support.

48 Parents are very actively involved in the work of the school. Several parents help regularly alongside class teachers and make an effective contribution in the classroom. Other parents support the school well by organising the change over of mathematics games, accompanying on class visits and on the annual residential trip to Kielder Forest. A committed group of parents and other adults runs the Breakfast Club every day. Parents are less involved with their children's learning at home. The school recognises this and has prepared useful plans to encourage and support parents to enable them to help their children more.

For example, the school organised for a number of fathers to take part in computer training sessions, involving Newcastle United Football Club. This was successful in helping them to gain certificates at the end of the course.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49 In the last 12 months the school has suffered from the turnover of a high proportion of key teaching staff, including the head teacher. Prior to the appointment of the present head teacher, who previously served as the deputy, the morale of many teachers was low. This was partly due to the negative impact of the challenging behaviour of a small, but significant number of pupils, with accompanying emotional difficulties, on the behaviour of other pupils.

50 Since her appointment in September 2000, the present head teacher has provided good leadership and management. She has quickly identified the necessary priorities, such as improved behaviour management strategies, and greater emphasis on pupils' literacy, particularly writing, and the development of pupils information technology skills. With the arrival of many new staff, including teaching and non-teaching staff, she has rightly concentrated on agreeing new procedures and policies as quickly as possible and offered necessary support and guidance to new appointees. Her support for one newly qualified teacher has been particularly notable, in providing very good opportunities for him to observe other, more experienced colleagues teach. The school development plan, which was written by the head teacher and involved staff in consultation, sets out a very clear agenda for action, incorporating realistic costs, responsibilities, success criteria and time scales.

51 The governing body does not yet have its full entitlement of members, despite many attempts in the recent past to attract additional co-opted and local authority representatives. The previous chairman, who had served for a long time, resigned last year, and the vice-chairman took over his post at very short notice. The difficulties of recruitment have created problems in establishing necessary committees and providing the necessary quorum for regular meetings. Nevertheless, the serving governors, many of whom are parents and active members of the community association, give much support to school events and activities, such as the successful 'Breakfast Club', and school visits. At the time of the last inspection, governors were criticised for not including statutory assessment results in their annual report to parents. This has now been addressed and they fulfil their statutory duties. However, because of lack of adequate recent training and skills, they are not yet fulfilling their role in effectively monitoring and evaluating the school's performance. As a result, they have insufficient knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and therefore cannot play an effective role in shaping the school's future direction.

52 The head teacher has established a clear policy for monitoring the teaching and curriculum, involving senior management and subject co-ordinators and has already begun monitoring the quality of teaching. Although other key staff provide satisfactory and sometimes good leadership in their subject roles, some have not yet consistently developed their monitoring roles in these areas of provision. The absence of effective delegation because of the recent appointment of many teachers has resulted in the head teacher leading the staff in too many areas. The head teacher has clearly identified the need for, and organised, suitable training for teachers in the effective use of performance data for monitoring and target setting. Although this process has begun throughout the school, it is at an early stage and has, as yet, had insufficient impact in raising school standards.

53 Issues relating to special educational needs are managed well. The SENCO oversees this important area effectively. She conscientiously maintains and regularly updates the special educational needs register. Plans for development are clear, rigorous and realistic. However, she does not regularly monitor the teaching of pupils to assess the extent to which work is matched to their precise needs. The small numbers of support staff provide good support for pupils with special educational needs. They have clear roles and responsibilities, work well together and are valued. They are well informed about the nature and range of

disability, which helps most pupils to make good gains in learning. The SENCO, working closely with teachers in the ARCs and the head teacher, works very effectively to manage the integration of ARC pupils into the work of the school.

54 The school accommodation and resources are generally satisfactory. However the lack of a networked computer suite has a negative impact on standards in ICT and the way the school can make best use of modern technology. Nevertheless, governors are actively pursuing this necessary provision. Although there has been a recent high turn over of staff, there are now sufficient suitably qualified teachers to teach the curriculum. However, difficulties arising in finding suitably qualified and experienced ‘supply’ teachers to cover occasional absences of teachers in the ARCs has an adverse impact on the continuity of provision for these pupils. Classroom support staff are well deployed to support and enhance pupils’ learning across the age range. The school administrative systems are strong and the efficiency of the school secretary ensures that daily procedures, such as dinner monies and registers are very effectively handled. The school is making good use of its ‘Excellence in Cities’ funding and has recently been involved in ‘Mini Education Action Zone’ and ‘Sure Start’ bids in order to secure more valuable resources.

55 Governors have begun to apply the principles of best value through tendering procedures for proposed building works, and in a recent survey of parents carried out by a governor. However, they have not yet used these principles to evaluate the effectiveness of spending on resources.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56 In order to build on the progress which the school has made since the last inspection, the governing body, head teacher and staff should strive to:

1) Raise attainment of infant and junior pupils in,

a) English, mathematics, science and ICT by:

- developing more effectively in all subjects of the curriculum pupils’ skills in handwriting, spelling and punctuation;
- improving the use of the library so that pupils can develop independent learning and research skills;
- continuing the present strategy to improve the breadth and depth of writing for a range of purposes;
- using assessment and the analysis of test data more effectively to set challenging but achievable individual targets to raise attainment;
- increasing the opportunities for pupils to use ICT to develop their skills.

b) English, by:

- assessing reading more effectively through the more systematic use of reading records and the greater involvement of parents in reading.

c) mathematics, by:

- helping all pupils to consolidate their knowledge and recall of mathematical tables and simple arithmetic strategies to increase their speed and accuracy in mental calculations;
- developing further their knowledge and understanding of mathematical language and key definitions in order that they can recognise these and respond better to them in written mathematical problems.

d) science, by:

- increasing the opportunities for pupils to measure, estimate and record scientific data in a variety of ways;
- develop the competency in investigation work (*of pupils at the end of the junior stage*) by planning for them to be more involved in designing and evaluating their experiments.
(Paragraphs 4, 19, 21, 43, 73, 74, 79, 86 and 103)

2) Improve the monitoring of infant and junior pupils’ academic progress and use of ongoing assessment by:

- sharing lesson objectives with pupils to develop their understanding of their own learning;
- improving the quality and consistency of marking so that it focuses on the degree to which pupils have achieved set objectives and gives pupils ongoing feedback on their learning.

(Paragraphs 24 and 43)

3) Develop the role of senior members of the teaching staff by:

- developing their understanding, through further training where necessary, of how their roles can be used to improve provision and raise standards;
- involving them in the development of effective classroom and other monitoring strategies related to learning and teaching;
- providing appropriate opportunities, for them to develop these strategies;
- continuing to promote the use made by teachers of performance data in assessing pupils' progress, and setting future targets for improvement.

(Paragraphs 52, 89, 94, 111 and 119)

4) Improve the skills, knowledge and understanding of governors so that they can effectively:

- use evaluation techniques in order to set clear targets for improvement in consultation with the head teacher and senior management team, and developing further their influence on the direction of the school;
- develop further their knowledge and use of 'best value' principles in order to make the most effective use of all resources.

(Paragraphs 51 and 55)

The following more minor issues should also be considered by the governing body for inclusion in the action plan:

- Raising the attainment of infant and junior pupils in history, geography, design and technology, and Junior pupils in music.
(Paragraphs 95, 100 and 108)
- Increasing the range of extra curricular activities including instrumental tuition.
(Paragraphs 45, 111 and 115)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	64
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	8	56	34	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	229
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		168

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	5	108

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	24

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.1
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	26	16	42

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	11	20
	Girls	13	10	13
	Total	28	21	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70 % (67%)	46% (59%)	79% (84%)
	National	84% (82%)	85% (83%)	90% (87%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	19	17
	Girls	10	12	11
	Total	23	31	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	57% (60%)	74% (84%)	67% (65%)
	National	84% (82%)	88% (86%)	88% (87%)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	23	16	39

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	11	15
	Girls	10	12	15
	Total	18	23	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	49% (50%)	59% (59%)	79% (62%)
	National	75% (70%)	72% (69%)	85% (78%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	12	14
	Girls	14	14	13
	Total	24	26	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	45% (51%)	61% (59%)	63% (62%)
	National	70% (67%)	72% (69%)	79% (75%)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	205
Any other minority ethnic group	3

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	2	1
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.9
Average class size	24.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	93

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

Total number of education support staff	1.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	33

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
--------------------------------	----

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000 - 2001
	£
Total income	760,664
Total expenditure	713,804
Expenditure per pupil	2,704
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	46,860

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	260
Number of questionnaires returned	70

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	29	4	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	41	0	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	53	6	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	39	13	13	4
The teaching is good.	61	33	1	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	57	34	6	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	30	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	29	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	49	47	4	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	51	44	1	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	41	1	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	48	10	3	6

Other issues raised by parents

Parents expressed some concerns at the parents' meeting that the school didn't provide any opportunities for pupils to learn a musical instrument.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

57 The good provision for children in the nursery and the reception class is, as stated in the previous inspection, a strength of the school, and is attributable to good teaching.

58 Children enter the nursery with very low skills, knowledge and understanding in all areas of learning. This is confirmed by the initial tests carried out in the school. However, by the time children leave the nursery and enter the reception class, good progress has been made, particularly in the children's personal, social and emotional skills and in their reading, mathematical and physical development. Initial assessments carried out when children first enter the reception class confirm that children are achieving well when compared to similar schools. All staff in the nursery and reception classes keep very detailed records of children's progress. Tests taken in the last term of reception indicate that whilst the standards children achieve are still below the national expectation in all the areas of learning apart from physical development, children have made good progress and have achieved well against their attainment on entry to the nursery. This is due to the consistently good teaching children receive and the good support given by nursery nurses and learning support staff.

59 Children who have special educational needs are identified early. Parents and external agencies are involved from the outset and as a result, the support these children are given is of good quality, which enables them to make good progress against the targets set for them. Children who have English as an additional language are well supported, particularly in their early language and communication skills and in their mathematical development.

Personal, social and emotional development

60 By the time the children enter Year 1, most are achieving below the levels expected in this area of learning, but they have made good progress, particularly in the positive relationships they have made with adults and other children. All staff, in both the nursery and reception classes, carefully plan to develop social skills by setting good examples for the children to follow. Learning activities are well organised and teachers ensure that all children are aware of classroom rules and routines. Children respond very well to this from an early age. They take responsibility for collecting resources and tidying up after completing tasks. From entering the nursery, children respond well to the clear instructions from staff and show positive attitudes to new tasks. They are encouraged to take turns and share resources, which they do well, as for example when using large wheeled toys outside. Children in both classes are taught the difference between right and wrong and as a result, behaviour is consistently good. They are beginning to show good levels of independence and concentration when working individually or with other children. Teachers have very detailed and impressive records of the personal, social and emotional development of individual children which are used very effectively to ensure they are well supported in this area of learning.

Communication, language and literacy

61 By the end of the reception year, the majority of children achieve standards below those expected in this area of learning. Achievement against their attainment on entry to the reception class is good, particularly in speaking and listening and reading. This results from good teaching in both classes. Children have many opportunities to speak in more extended sentences, and teachers and support assistants strive to ensure that correct vocabulary is consistently used. Effective strategies are used to encourage children to listen carefully and then talk about the work or activity they are doing, thereby raising the self-esteem of many pupils. For example a boy in the nursery talked about how well he could paint a flower with a sponge. In both classes, teachers encourage children to listen to other children speaking and they are encouraged not

to interrupt.

62 Teachers encourage children to enjoy books and they teach early reading skills well. In the nursery the book area is well organised to encourage children to sit quietly, choose books and “read”, either independently or with a friend. In the reception class, higher attaining children talk about a favourite book they have read and happily talk about whether the main character in a story is a boy called Ben, or ‘Sparky’ the horse. They read confidently and achieve above the level expected in the early learning goals because the teacher uses reading records effectively to make a clear assessment of where the child is and how further progress can be made. This is also the case with average and lower attaining children. Parents are actively involved in the reading progress of their children. Many write useful comments in their child’s reading record book, which informs the school and helps to encourage children to read at home.

63 Children are given many opportunities to develop their writing skills. In the nursery, early writing skills are developed well as children trace over the letters in their name, many also attempting to write their own name. In the reception class, the teacher successfully teaches the basic skills of letter recognition, spelling and punctuation using the Literacy Hour structure. The effective support given to all ability groups by either a nursery nurse, learning support assistant or a parent helper ensures that children make a good rate of progress in lessons.

Mathematical development

64 By the end of the reception year, most of the children achieve below the expected standard of the early learning goals identified for their age. This area of learning is taught well. In the nursery, all staff focus on developing mathematical concepts by developing correct mathematical vocabulary. The reception teacher uses guidance from the Numeracy Strategy effectively, ensuring children are ready to begin their national curriculum work in Year 1. Teachers ensure children have opportunities to use mathematical skills and knowledge in activities, such as songs and number rhymes. As a result, progress over time is good and children achieve well from when they first enter the Foundation Stage. Lessons and activities are well planned, to develop early concepts of number and shape. This was well illustrated in the nursery as children used Play-doh to make two-dimensional shapes, then used large three-dimensional shapes to build towers, using cylinders, cones and cubes. The teacher used this opportunity well to develop the language of shape. In the reception class, the teacher made very effective use of resources to extend children’s knowledge of number as they counted forwards and backwards to 20. Teachers use classroom displays effectively to constantly reinforce new skills and knowledge. Children use number games, role-play in the “post-office” and counting exercises on the computer to improve their number recognition and develop concepts of weight and time.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

65 Children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world because of good teaching in this area of learning, which includes effective use of first hand experiences in the local community. For example, reception children visited the nearby Riverside Wildlife Garden. They developed early scientific skills observing flowers and the conditions necessary for growth. The staff skilfully guided their observations so that they took note of the parts of a flower, such as stem, roots and petals. From their observations close to the school pupils built a model of their local area. Nursery children develop scientific skills well as they plant cress and nasturtium seeds and observe how these grow under different conditions. Knowledge of the wider world developed well by the use of regular visits, as, for example, to the local church to take part in a “Christening” service, or to the Sea-Life centre to look at the wide variety of marine life. Teachers invite school visitors, such as the health visitor to talk about health and hygiene, good attitudes to healthy eating, exercise and hygiene. They deploy classroom support assistants and volunteer parents well to support children’s information technology skills, thus ensuring good progress. By the end of the reception year, most children’s knowledge and understanding of the world is below the level expected. However,

because of the rich learning experiences provided all children achieve well, particularly in their ability to respond positively to experiences in the wider world.

Physical development

66 The majority of children achieve the early learning goals for physical development by the time they leave the reception class. The good teaching in this area of learning is enhanced by the high quality outdoor provision, which teachers use very effectively to offer children challenging experiences in climbing, swinging and balancing. The encouragement and support given to children as they use new apparatus helps them to feel safe and secure. As a result, children become more adventurous and make good progress. The majority of children display good control and co-ordination of their bodies. Many opportunities are provided for children to improve their manual dexterity through the use of scissors, crayons, paint brushes, tools, construction equipment and sand play.

Creative development

67 The teaching of creative development is good. Activities are well planned. Support staff and resources are deployed effectively to work with children in small groups to develop necessary knowledge and skills thoroughly. As a result, all children make good progress and achieve just below the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception class. The interesting curriculum allows children to experience a good variety of tools, materials and equipment. In the nursery children choose the colour of paint to match the colour of flower petals, recognise and name the colours red, blue and purple, and know that mixing yellow and blue together makes green. Musical activities are enjoyed as children in the nursery clap out the syllables of their own name, identifying many percussion instruments. Children thoroughly enjoyed playing instruments and singing “Baa Baa Black Sheep” as they marched around the room. In the reception class, the teacher used first hand resources well to develop skills in observation when painting flowers. Children were encouraged to look carefully at fresh daisies to see the white petals and yellow centre. Very good use is made of music, during these creative activities, to provide a calm atmosphere.

68 Accommodation and resources for children in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory, with good provision made for outdoors education. The position of the nursery and reception classes makes the sharing of staff and resources quite difficult and an opportunity is lost in the use of one of the shared outdoor areas between the two classes. Further development of this area would enhance the provision for children in the reception class, which is much smaller than the nursery.

ENGLISH

69 Standards in English are broadly similar to those found in the previous inspection. Inspection evidence indicates that standards for pupils at the age of seven and 11 are well below average and still not high enough. In the 2000 national tests, standards were well below the national average in reading and very low in writing for sevenyear olds. However, when compared to similar schools, standards in reading were similar, but still well below in writing. At age 11, in the 2000 tests, a significant number of pupils failed to reach the expected level and achieved standards that were well below average in national terms, but were close to average when compared to similar schools.

70 Unconfirmed results for the 2001 national tests, suggest that standards achieved in writing by the present seven and 11 year old pupils are significantly improved, as a result of clear whole school strategies put in place at the beginning of the year to improve writing.

71 Despite the high turnover of junior department teachers at the beginning of the year, the quality of teaching of English throughout the school is now good overall. The Literacy Strategy is being implemented

well, but is not yet effective in developing sound literacy skills in other subject areas. This is set to improve over time. Teachers have worked very hard to ensure that the behaviour and learning attitudes of pupils is good in lessons and in this they have been successful. As a result, pupils are now well behaved in most lessons and show a keen attitude to their activities. The co-ordinator for the subject has clearly identified priorities for improving pupils' writing and the effect of this focus can now be seen in the improved breadth and depth of written work. Pupils are now making sound progress over time.

72 Standards in speaking and listening are below average throughout the school. Teachers use the whole class teaching part of the Literacy Hour effectively to engage pupils in discussion. Responding to the challenge, pupils often strive to improve both their vocabulary and ability to reply to questions with extended answers. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher used questioning well to extend and develop the knowledge and understanding of unfamiliar words and as a result, pupils made good progress in the development of their vocabulary. The majority of pupils listen carefully to the teacher and to other pupils in discussions. In Year 6, the teacher's skilful use of appropriate vocabulary was particularly effective in encouraging pupils to talk about the persuasive speech devices used by politicians or salespeople. This promoted a thoughtful response from one pupil, who stated that "Many salespeople use flattery to get you to buy things". Pupils with special educational needs are given good support to extend and develop both their listening and speaking skills. For example, in Year 5, the learning support assistant worked with a small group to show them how to phrase questions effectively. Consequently, this group of lower ability pupils was able to make good progress in the lesson. Similar support is made available to assist those pupils with English as an additional language. In small groups, and often with additional help from a learning support assistant these pupils are helped to use their limited English vocabulary more effectively and develop greater confidence.

73 Standards in reading at the age of seven and 11 are well below average and most pupils do not achieve the levels expected for their age. A weakness in the teaching of reading in both the juniors and infants is that the reading records held are inconsistent, with many simply recording what books have been read. A clear evaluation of how well pupils read and what they need to do to make further progress is lacking in the majority of records. There is no systematic method of assessing pupils' reading and, as a result, the progress pupils make is slower than it need be. Parents are not always involved in helping their children to read, as the school's use of home-school reading diaries is very inconsistent. This does not build upon the good practice in the Foundation Stage. However, during the Literacy Hour, teachers use good strategies to develop the knowledge and understanding of how books are organised. This was particularly evident in the infants, where effective teaching of how to use the index page and the glossary in Year 2 resulted in pupils of higher and average abilities being able to construct their own index page, using their sound knowledge of the alphabet to structure their work. When reading independently, higher attaining pupils in Year 6 are not able to identify their favourite author and are still unsure about the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. Pupils read with some fluency, but lack expression in their reading. Average and lower attaining pupils show similar confusion between fiction and non-fiction books and all pupils have weak library skills. They are unsure of how the school library is organised and this affects their ability to become independent learners when carrying out research in other subject areas.

74 Standards in writing are well below the national average throughout the school, but recent whole school targets are already having an impact. As a result, teachers use very effective methods to illustrate to pupils how to model a persuasive letter, for example. An effective lesson in a mixed Year 4/5 class; pupils made good progress in their ability to use alliteration and exaggeration when writing about "The Hoppings", because the teacher used a shared whole class writing exercise to demonstrate the necessary skills. Work in pupils' books during the year indicates that the standards of handwriting, spelling and punctuation are weak in each year group. Pupils' ability to develop good handwriting styles is hampered by the use of unlined exercise books in Year 2, which deter pupils from writing in straight lines or positioning their letters correctly. This also effects the presentation of work, which is often weak and does not do justice to some interesting writing. Good teaching of the sounds of letters and letter blends (phonics) is developing successful spelling strategies in infant classes, but this is not the picture throughout the school. Teachers use some opportunities to use ICT

to support pupils' writing, but this is still an area to be developed in the school. The ability of pupils to draft, edit and present their work using word-processing skills is very under-developed.

75 The teaching of English throughout the school is good. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils and use effective strategies to manage behaviour. As a result, classrooms have a purposeful working atmosphere. The quality of marking is inconsistent throughout the school however, and as a result, the weaknesses in handwriting, spelling and punctuation have not been tackled with enough rigour. Opportunities for the assessment of pupil's written work have recently been undertaken. However, assessment of English, with the rigorous analysis of test data used to set challenging but achievable targets for improvement, has still some way to go before it is effective in helping to raise standards. The school has recognised this however in the recent development plan. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. They are well supported in their learning, either in smaller groups outside the classroom, or within the classroom with effective teacher support. This ensures that pupils make good progress against the individual learning targets set for them.

76 The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has only been in post for a year, but has clearly identified specific weaknesses in both the teaching and learning of writing and has set in place strategies to tackle these. All staff throughout the school are now being well supported in their efforts to raise standards in English. The school's continued priority for improving the quality of writing throughout the school is appropriate, as is the future target to focus on raising standards in reading. Standards in both areas are still well below average and the pupil's low literacy skills affects their progress in other areas of the curriculum. Resources for the subject are good, but insufficient use is made of the school library to teach library skills.

MATHEMATICS

77 By the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, standards in basic numeracy and in other areas of mathematics are well below average. Although standards are not quite as high as they were in the previous inspection, there are valid reasons for this, linked to staffing changes and the increase in number of pupils with special educational needs. However, this does not disguise the fact that standards are still not high enough.

78 Inspection findings reflect pupils' attainment in the 2000 end of key stage national tests, where pupils' attainment was well below the national average in both Year 2 and Year 6. Compared with similar schools, however, standards were average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Standards have risen very gradually over the past four years, but not enough to narrow the gap with national trends. Girls have outperformed boys, though current inspection findings cannot confirm this. With the more stable staffing currently in force, the achievement of pupils in both key stages is satisfactory. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and the few for whom English is an additional language, are making sound progress in the development of their knowledge and understanding of mathematics.

79 In both key stages, pupils' weak literacy skills make it difficult for them to solve mathematical problems that are presented in word form. They are unsure what information is being given to them and what precisely they are expected to find out. Many pupils have a limited knowledge of mathematical vocabulary. However, by the age of seven, most pupils can use quick mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to 10. They understand the concept of half and quarter. More able pupils can recall the names of common two and three-dimensional shapes. By the age of eleven, many pupils can use block graphs effectively to represent data such as that collected in a pupil survey. However, too many pupils find it difficult to add or subtract two digit numbers in their heads. For example, some pupils in a mixed Year 5/6 class had to use their fingers to subtract 23 from 34. Some pupils have problems even with single digit numbers. More able pupils have a good grasp of squared numbers, understand how to calculate perimeters and can use protractors accurately to measure angles.

80 The quality of teaching and learning is good in both key stages and has improved since the previous inspection. However, recent staff changes mean that this good teaching has not yet had time to impact on standards. The greatest strength of teaching is in the management of pupils. Most of the teachers know how to motivate the pupils to try their best, despite the very limited listening skills and concentration spans of some pupils. This results in a good, purposeful, working atmosphere in the classroom. The appropriate matching of work to varying levels of ability during group work is also a strength of most teaching. The greatest weakness in teaching is inconsistency in ongoing assessment of pupils' attainment. The teachers mark pupils' work regularly and positively, but the marking is not always as helpful in guiding the pupils on how to improve as some examples from a Year 6 book, in which the teacher's comments were: "Show your working out; it will help me to know where you are going wrong" and "You are still not always saying what unit of measurement you are using".

81 In a very good Year 2 lesson, the teacher used a 'rolling ball' game effectively in the opening oral mathematics session. This ensured that all the pupils were involved and helped in their knowledge and understanding of the 10 times table. The teacher emphasised the use of correct mathematical language, such as 'value', 'total' and 'amount', and this impacted well on the pupils' ability to add up coins and work out change. In a good Year 1 lesson, the teacher made effective use of a game in which the pupils each had a number card and they had to find another pupil whose card would add with their own to make 10 and beyond. This made learning fun and helped with quick mental recall of addition facts.

82 In a good lesson for pupils in Year 5/6, the teacher shared the aims for the lesson with the pupils, so that they knew precisely what was expected of them by the end of the lesson. A brisk mental mathematics session helped develop the pupils' ability to identify factors of numbers and whether the number was a prime number. The teacher moved the lesson along briskly, giving reminders about the use of time, and this led to good learning. In a sound lesson for pupils in Years 3/4, the teacher made effective use of a counting stick to consolidate the pupils' ability to find multiples of 10. He used questioning soundly to make the pupils think carefully about how they should construct their bar charts to interpret data: "How many fewer children had one than the other?" and "What is different about the scale here?". Pupils of the same age in another class made less progress in their knowledge of doubling and halving because the teacher's behaviour management strategies were less successful; too many pupils here were unco-operative and wasted time.

83 The co-ordinator leads the subject well. She monitors planning and teaching and has offered colleagues useful advice on how to make the daily three-part mathematics lesson most effective. She makes the best use of her expertise by teaching mathematics to both Year 5/6 classes. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and for using this information to guide future planning. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. There are adequate resources to support learning in the subject.

SCIENCE

84 Standards in science are not high enough, although there are indications that standards are continuing to rise steadily, when compared to the national trend. In the 2000 statutory assessments for seven year olds attainment was well below the national average for all schools, but compared to similar schools it was below average. In the statutory tests for 11 year olds, the attainment was below the national average when compared to all schools, but above average when compared to similar schools. Unconfirmed results for the 2001 national tests indicate that a greater proportion of pupils is achieving the higher level of attainment than in previous years.

85 By the age of seven pupils can draw and label parts of a plant and can name insects they might find when taking part in a 'minibeast hunt'. They are beginning to understand the nature of forces, through simple investigations, such as toy cars moving down a ramp under the effect of gravity. They have a sound understanding of the way electricity is used and of some of the possible dangers linked to this. They also understand that there are many different sources of light. Pupils have investigated the differences between

some materials and the effects of heat on substances. However they often have difficulty explaining clearly what they are doing, and linking investigations to predictions. They have limited skills in using measurement and in recording their investigations in different ways, such as in graphical form or on the computer.

86 By the age of 11 pupils show a greater knowledge of forces and can use a spring balance to measure the size of various forces in Newtons. They can draw and label a simple diagram of the circulatory system and describe in simple terms the function of the heart and lungs. They have satisfactory knowledge of the effect of light, water and heat on the growth of plants, and can record such growth using a bar chart. They show increasing understanding of a 'fair test', as in investigations on insulating materials in Year 6, and can use apparatus such as stop clocks and thermometers effectively to take measurements, but have too little involvement in the design of experiments and choice of equipment. Higher ability pupils in the same class could independently draw a line graph with an appropriate scale on each axis to plot temperature over time. Lower and average ability pupils could take measurements satisfactorily when guided by the teacher, but had difficulty explaining their results. Analysis of work shows that pupils often have difficulty writing and spelling accurately what they have done. However they can often explain their results orally, as for example when relating the slower loss of heat from hot water through several layers of cotton wool during a class discussion in Year 6. Pupils have insufficient opportunities to use ICT to record and access data and to use as a research tool for a variety of scientific topics.

87 Teaching is good in both key stages. Because a significant proportion of junior teachers have been in post for just over two terms their good teaching has not yet had the impact it deserves on raising standards for the oldest pupils. Teachers set clear objectives and make good use of introductions to set the tone of lessons and gain pupils' interest. At the beginning of a Year 6 lesson the teacher used a digital thermometer and sensor to demonstrate the effects of various layers of clothing on heat retention by the body. Pupils observed the demonstration keenly and listened well to the teacher's explanations. Teachers make good use of group work and plenary sessions; resources and time are used well to maintain pace and interest. Pupils' behaviour is managed very well, so that potentially disruptive pupils are well handled and the class allowed to work productively, without too many interruptions. Teachers encourage pupils to work hard. In a Year 3/4 class, on a very hot afternoon, the teacher praised pupils for the way they had responded during the class discussion on drawing bar charts, then encouraged them further to try hard to complete their individual work in the time that was available. The quality of marking is inconsistent, and too frequently poor spelling and unfinished work is ignored. Too few opportunities are provided for pupils to work independently on library research tasks and to record data from investigations in different ways, including the use the computer for data handling.

88 Pupils with special educational needs, are well taught and appropriate attention given to the planned targets, particularly linked to literacy and numeracy. When they are given additional support in class they learn well. This ensures that over time they make satisfactory progress. Pupils with English as a second language are well supported by either the classroom teacher or learning support assistant during lessons.

89 The co-ordinator has only recently taken responsibility for the subject, and is currently reorganising resources to match the needs of the Curriculum 2000 guidelines, which have been used to update the scheme of work. She has identified a number of useful areas for further development, such as clearer links between assessment and planning, and is providing satisfactory leadership. Monitoring of the curriculum and of teaching are not yet effective and the use of national test results is not being used to set clear learning targets for pupils. However, this has been recognised and is to be acted upon in the near future.

ART AND DESIGN

90 Attainment in art and design is at the expected levels for pupils at the age of seven and 11 and this reflects the findings of the previous inspection. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress in developing their

knowledge and skills when using different media and techniques. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys or girls.

91 By the age of seven, the pupils know how to make interesting collages. For example, in work linked to science, they have produce imaginative collages of gardens, in which mini-beasts hide. They use pastels skilfully to produce pictures based on images from magazines and imaginative night time scenes. They show confident pencil control in observational drawings of flowers and plants. Some pupils produce effective three-dimensional, painted models of mini-beasts, using a variety of materials.

92 By the age of eleven, pupils are familiar with some of the works of famous artists, such as Van Gogh, Klee, Kandinsky and Renoir. They use different media to produce pleasing paintings in the style of some of these artists. From first hand experience in work linked to history, pupils produce accurate pencil drawings of some of Newcastle's well known buildings. From the same visit to the city pupils produce some effective rubbings of floor mosaics in the famous Central Arcade. They are steadily developing their knowledge and understanding of perspective, for example, in their pencil sketches of chairs from different angles. Pupils in Year 3/4 are developing sound skills using line and shade in drawings of Henry VIII and work well together to produce three-dimensional models linked to their topic on ancient Egypt.

93 The quality of teaching and learning in both infant and junior classes is satisfactory. The greatest strength of teaching is the way in which the teachers use art and design to support work in other subjects, whilst at the same time developing the specific skills which have to be learnt in art and design. The greatest weakness is the lack of opportunity for pupils to experiment through the use of sketch books. In a sound lesson for pupils in Years 1/2, the teacher made useful links with design and technology and this helped the pupils to incorporate moving parts into their roadside pictures. They were fascinated by the teacher's use of a hidden magnet to make vehicles and aircraft move across her picture and this stimulated them to produce their own. She encouraged independence in learning by the comment, "It's your choice". This helped to develop the pupils' confidence in what they were doing. In a good lesson for pupils in Year 5/6, the teacher made appropriate use of photographs of some of Newcastle's buildings to develop the pupils' observational skills. She also used questioning well to encourage the pupils to observe carefully and to pay attention to detail and made effective links with history, as some pupils began to create Greek writing tablets, using wax crayons and card. In a Year 4/5 lesson the teacher emphasised the importance of perspective in art and this helped the pupils to understand proportions as they started to create pictures of some of Henry VIII's wives, using pastels. She encouraged pupils to assess their own progress with the simple question, "Are you happy with that?"

94 Planning is based soundly on national guidance. The co-ordinator has been in post for only two terms and has not yet had the opportunity to develop her role in monitoring the overall performance of pupils or the development of the subject. However, she does enhance the curriculum through a weekly art club which she organises, together with an assistant from the special needs unit. Resources to support art and design work are adequate, which is an improvement from the previous inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

95 Attainment in design and technology is below the expected levels by the time pupils are seven and 11 years old, although some aspects of the "making" component are close to these levels. Pupils' progress as they move through the school is generally unsatisfactory. There are a number of reasons for this. Firstly, some teachers do not have the confidence to teach all the requirements of the subject effectively. Design and technology, especially the design component, has been insufficiently represented in the curriculum for pupils to be able to improve their skills, knowledge and understanding at the rate required for them to reach expected levels by the end of Year 6. Recently introduced plans, which will ensure that work carefully builds on previous learning, are likely to remedy this situation, but they have yet to make a significant impact on standards.

96 In Year 1 pupils achieve standards that are appropriate for their age. For example, when making cat masks, pupils use pictures and words to show what they want to do before making their masks, with assistance, using suitable tools and materials. In Year 5, in a whole class project to make a throne fit for a Tudor monarch, they consider important features, such as height, support, materials, shape and comfort, and the quality of finish. By the end of Year 6, pupils make models of the Theatre Royal in Newcastle to levels close to national requirements. Some pupils work with accuracy, for example, they take account of exact measurements for columns, the need for them to be stable and rigid, pay attention to detail and to the quality of finish, and consider possible improvements. However, designs show little progress from those completed by much younger pupils, although they include labels of materials they will use, which provides some evidence of pupils' intentions.

97 Although only two lessons were seen in mixed Year 5/6 classes, the quality of teaching was good. Teachers developed and reinforced skills that are common to art and design, and design and technology. They made good use of their secure subject knowledge by involving pupils in thoughtful discussion. For example, when considering the design of a model of a city centre building, pupils were encouraged to consider how they could reinforce and strengthen the columns to make them load bearing. Teachers used well chosen resources, such as photographs of the front view of the Theatre Royal, to assist learning and asked pertinent questions to help develop understanding. They consistently used encouragement and praise to motivate pupils. This helped most pupils to develop positive attitudes to learning and take pride in their work. There is not yet an effective system for assessing pupils' achievements and recording progress as they move through the school.

98 Pupils with special educational needs make progress equivalent to other pupils as a result of good support and encouragement during lessons.

99 The leadership of the subject by an enthusiastic and recently appointed co-ordinator is sound. Resources have been audited and extended to ensure that a full range of design and making activities can be undertaken. A national planning framework has been adapted to the school's needs so that work carefully builds on previous learning. Plans for the subject's needed development include a whole school project on "mechanisms". This will enable teachers to see the skills, knowledge and understanding demonstrated at different ages to help them with their teaching. There is a suitable emphasis on completing design and making projects from first-hand experience, which helps to bring the subject alive for pupils. Pupils benefit from links with the comprehensive school in developing their design and making capability. Links with other subjects, such as history are evident, but are under-represented.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

100 Attainment of pupils at the age of seven and 11 in history and geography is below what is expected nationally at these ages. There are several reasons for this. The school has taken advantage of the national guidance that allowed schools to reduce the time spent on some subjects in order to focus on the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. As a result, pupils' skills in these subjects have suffered from the lack of time given to them. In addition, the school is beginning to implement the new nationally recommended schemes of work in these areas. Teachers have worked hard with these but have not yet come to grips with the teaching of specific skills and subject knowledge that these subjects require. As a result, pupils have a sound grasp of the factual knowledge of these subjects but other areas are underdeveloped. For example, pupils in Year 6 show a sound understanding of life in Britain since 1930 but find placing events into chronological order very difficult. They describe people, events and fashions from past societies well, but cannot carry out independent research, using a range of sources and present their findings in a well-structured way.

101 These subjects have very enthusiastic co-ordinators who are keen to develop their areas. They

have already identified these shortcomings and, consequently, the school has clear plans about how these subjects should be developed. Geography was identified as an issue in the previous inspection report. The school has improved the provision for this subject and resources are now adequate. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning is still unsatisfactory and there is still insufficient use made of field studies. The main areas of improvement have been the quality of teaching and pupils' responses. In both geography and history the teaching of factual information is satisfactory. As a result, throughout the school, pupils have a sound understanding of the topics they have studied. For example, pupils in Year 5 can describe the 'Life of a river' and name the major rivers in England. Pupils in Year 3 recognise which places in the world are hot and cold and realise that even when it is hot in England places such as Libya are even hotter.

102 There have been some very good recent developments in these subjects. Infant pupils' enthusiasm for geography has been developed thorough the introduction of 'Barnaby Bear'. Pupils take great delight in following the travels of Barnaby, who accompanies both staff and pupils on their holidays. His adventures are exploited by matching places he has visited to large world maps and pupils write postcards both to and from him describing the area he is visiting. This develops their knowledge and understanding of places and conditions around the world. The improvement of pupils' responses has been well developed through more practical and first hand experiences. For example, pupils in Year 6 carried out traffic surveys and conducted questionnaires to ascertain the problems of a local, very busy street from a variety of peoples' viewpoints. Year 3/4 pupils experienced a visit from a 'Tudor Lady' who described and compared life in her time to life today. Pupils asked a range of questions and the visit captured their attention and interest to such an extent that they talk about it still. Pupils with special educational needs make sound gains through support given by class teachers and tasks well matched to their needs.

103 Skills in some other subjects are linked well with history and geography. For example, pupils in Year 3/4, designed and built a very large replica of Henry VIII's throne in design and technology. In art and design, pupils have made replica Greek plates, created mosaics and made sketches of technological advances since 1950. However, literacy and information and communication technology skills are not used sufficiently.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

104 Standards are below nationally expected levels by the time pupils are seven and 11 years of age. Although standards are still too low, improvements in pupils' learning have been made since the last inspection. There are a number of reasons to account for the continuing low standards. Firstly, some teachers still have insufficient skills and confidence to teach all required aspects of the subject effectively, despite the attention given by the school to the use of specific grant funding to improve these skills during the last year. Unfortunately the high turnover of teachers in the junior department has exacerbated this difficulty. Too few opportunities are provided, through teachers' planning, for pupils to use information and communication technology to support and enhance other subjects. Also, the lack of a dedicated, networked computer suite has inhibited efficient and effective teaching in the subject, which in turn has marred pupil progress. Because of these weaknesses, pupils make unsatisfactory progress as they move through the school. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs is similar to that of other pupils.

105 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use computers to word-process information about themselves. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 start to learn how to use a spreadsheet to help them create a shopping list to support work in mathematics. By the end of Year 6, pupils use different colour, size and style of font to print headings for their work. They used computers to design the logo which is now printed on the front of their sweatshirts. They research information about recent events using a CD-ROM. Pupils use information and communication technology to record, graph and analyse the results of a traffic survey outside the school, as part of their local study work in geography. Overall, data handling is more evident than at the time of the last inspection.

106 There is too little evidence to judge the quality of teaching across the school as only one lesson was seen. However, in this lesson the teacher's subject knowledge was secure and there was appropriate

emphasis on the development of skills, knowledge and understanding to enable pupils to make satisfactory progress. Pupils working at computers were eager to please and showed interest and involvement, but sometimes required more direct help and support for them to make sound gains in learning.

107 The curriculum requirements for the subject are better covered than at the time of the last inspection and it now meets statutory requirements. This is an improvement on the judgement at the previous inspection. There is a clear action plan to ensure its future development and to raise standards. Performance management targets for teachers have been linked to either pupils' progress or teachers' own professional development to help improve their competence and confidence. There has been substantial training to develop the teaching of word processing, data handling and control. A recently appointed member-of-staff, with specific skills in information technology is to lead the subject. The new computer suite is soon to be furnished and fully equipped. This will enable pupils to have more frequent access to computers to help them improve their skills. There is a developing range of computer software, which has been audited and assigned to each year group to help support the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum and to help develop essential skills. Pupils have benefited from the ICT facilities at the nearby Technology College in out-of-hours clubs. An 'internet family' learning project has helped to develop relationships with some parents and families.

MUSIC

108 Standards in music are satisfactory and match what is expected for seven year olds by the end of Year 2. Standards in the infants have been maintained since the previous inspection. Standards are below those expected for 11 year olds by the end of Year 6 and reflect a similar picture to that found in the previous inspection. The school has not been able to improve standards up in the juniors, primarily because of the loss of a key member of staff during the last twelve months, and the limited musical skills of other recently appointed teachers, who have been required to address other, more pressing curriculum issues.

109 In the infant classes, teaching is good and as a result, pupils' skills are being developed in a progressive way. A good example of this was seen in Year 2 when pupils were taught the correct vocabulary for 'dynamics', 'pitch' and 'tempo' and the teacher ensured that pupils had a clear understanding of what these terms meant by asking the pupils to demonstrate them. This was an effective strategy to check their developing knowledge and understanding. Specific skills developed well in this lesson, particularly in the ability of pupils to read graphic notation as they clapped out a simple rhythm. All pupils make sound and often good progress because they are being taught not only the knowledge and understanding of music, but also the skills of playing instruments and responding to symbols. Teachers manage pupils well and as a result, their behaviour in lessons is good, they are attentive and work hard. Singing, particularly in assemblies, is usually tuneful and enthusiastic. Pupils know many songs by heart and recall their favourites.

110 In the junior classes, some teachers' knowledge and understanding is insecure and as a result, the musical skills and knowledge of some pupils are below average for their age. Nevertheless teachers teach with enthusiasm, ensuring that the pupils enjoy their music lessons, but pupils' skills are not being progressively developed to enable them to reach the required standard at the age of 11. For example, in one lesson, younger junior pupils clapped out the syllables of their name and began to recognise and respond to simple notation, but they had little understanding of beat and rhythm. Consequently, many missed the pauses necessary to establish rhythm. Older pupils completed a very similar exercise, showing similar problems in establishing rhythm, indicating that skills are not being developed in a systematic way. Teaching in the juniors is satisfactory. Teachers use lively music in lessons to ensure good attitudes and enjoyment, as, for example, when older pupils showed much enthusiasm for the song "America" from West Side Story. However, there are several missed opportunities to further develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. For example, pupils are not consistently taught correct musical vocabulary or terminology, so that they cannot achieve the required knowledge levels in the subject. In assemblies, music is played as pupils enter and leave the hall and this is a useful way of introducing pupils to the works of famous composers. This is then not taken further by

talking about the music, or displaying information of the life and work of composers. Both infant and junior pupils are given good opportunities to sing, in lessons and assemblies; this they regularly do tunefully and enthusiastically.

111 The co-ordinator for the subject is acting in a “care-taker” role at the moment and has no opportunity to make any impact on either the quality of teaching or learning across the school. No opportunities are provided for pupils to receive peripatetic tuition. An extra-curricular singing group is provided every week with parental support.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

112 Pupils start in the infant department with physical education skills that are slightly below what is typical of their age. However, they make good progress and, by the time they reach the ages of seven and 11, pupils’ attainment is in line with expectations for their ages. Most areas of physical education are taught well. This is because teachers follow a clear and precise scheme of work to provide lessons that build upon previously taught skills. For example, pupils in Year 1 develop ball control by throwing and catching large balls to each other. This is then developed so that, in Year 3, pupils accurately throw a small ball to their partner, varying the height and type of throw. One area of physical education not taught as well as others is dance. Teachers are less confident about their subject knowledge in this aspect and consequently make regular use of commercially produced tape-recorded lessons. Although these are satisfactory they are not always sufficiently challenging or imaginative. When this is the case, pupils are less enthusiastic about the subject and interest and concentration deteriorates.

113 Staff are good role models in physical education lessons: they all dress suitably and give enthusiastic demonstrations of what they are teaching. For example, in a Year 6 lesson the teacher led the warm-up session. Whilst demonstrating the movements for pupils to copy she used good questioning to prompt their understanding of the need to warm-up properly. Through very effective questioning, pupils were able to demonstrate a very good knowledge about the effect of exercise on the body. They explained that when you exercise, muscles work harder and they require more oxygen, so you need to breathe faster.

114 Pupils enjoy physical education lessons as they are stimulating, particularly when pupils are challenged to improve the quality of their skills. For example, in a Year 6 gymnastics lesson, pupils sequenced jumps, rolls and balances. This activity they found quite easy but the teacher encouraged them to improve their skills by pointing their toes, jumping higher and holding the balances perfectly still. Pupils then had to transfer their sequence from the floor onto apparatus. Most pupils found this challenging but concentrated well and applied themselves conscientiously. As a result of their efforts and teacher support, they all experienced success and confidence levels were improved. Pupils with special educational needs make gains equivalent to those of other pupils and show similar interest and enthusiasm.

115 The school provides a narrow range of extra-curricular activities: football and dance. However, some pupils have received coaching in football and basketball from local clubs. Pupils are given the opportunity to participate in a residential visit that provides opportunities for outdoor adventurous activities. All pupils go swimming and most attain the 25 metre standard by Year 6.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

116 By the time the pupils reach the ages of seven and 11, their attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This judgement reflects the findings of the previous inspection. Good teaching is promoting good progress by most pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Boys and girls attain equally and participate equally in class activities and discussions.

117 By the age of seven, the pupils know about some Bible stories, such as ‘Jesus in the Temple’, and they know some of the parables Jesus told. They know about some of the events of the Easter story. Pupils write simple accounts of special times they have experienced and to compose simple prayers, thanking God for our wonderful world. They talk about feelings, such as love, happiness and jealousy. By the age of 11, the pupils know that the Old Testament tells us stories of times before Jesus’ birth and that the New Testament tells us about Jesus’ life and work. They know about some Old Testament characters, such as Joshua, Jonah, Daniel and Noah, and they understand that the parables which Jesus told have a message which is still relevant to us today.

118 The quality of teaching and learning in infant and junior classes is good. In a very good Year 2 lesson, the teacher made very effective use of the words of the song ‘It’s a Beautiful World’ to help the pupils understand what God has provided for us and what we can do to ensure people don’t spoil it. The teacher’s quiet manner encouraged the pupils to suggest some thoughtful responses. The lesson ended with a prayer, led by one pupil and repeated by the others. This is just one example of the positive contribution which the subject is making to the pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In a good Year 1 lesson, the teacher encouraged the pupils to suggest ideas about friendship and this had a positive impact on learning. Through skilful questioning, such as “Why do you think your friend likes you?”, the teacher succeeded in making the pupils think carefully about characteristics that engender friendship. In a good lesson for pupils in Year 5/6, the teacher gave a clear recap, through skilful questioning, of the significance of the Pillars of Islam, and this helped the pupils to make comparisons with Christianity. They understand, for example, that the Fourth Pillar, with its references to Ramadan, is similar to the Christian period of Lent and is intended to make people aware of the need for self-discipline and self-control.

119 The co-ordinator has developed a good scheme of work which incorporates national guidelines. She has done a lot to increase resources for learning. These are now adequate, which is an improvement from the previous inspection. Resources are also borrowed from the local teachers’ centre. There are no formal, whole school procedures for assessing pupils’ attainment and progress. The co-ordinator is keen to extend her role, in order to monitor and support pupils’ progress throughout the school and to gain an overview of the subject’s performance. Worthwhile visits are made to local churches and to Holy Island in order to enrich learning.