

# INSPECTION REPORT

## WHALE HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Eston, Middlesbrough

LEA area: Redcar and Cleveland

Unique reference number: 111635

Head teacher: Mrs Norma Newell

Reporting inspector: Mike Tones  
1575

Dates of inspection: 20<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2002

Inspection number: 195092

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior School

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 – 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Whale Hill Primary School  
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Middlesbrough  
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Phil Meadows

Date of previous inspection: 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Mike Tones 1575	Registered inspector	Physical education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught?
Judith Menes 11468	Lay inspector		How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
David Matthews 18505	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Special educational needs.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Gerry Stephenson 1576	Team inspector	Geography History	
Derek Sleightholme 2759	Team inspector	English Art	Equal opportunities
Joseph Haves 8070	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Religious education	How well is the school led and managed?
Margaret Palmer 20646	Team inspector	Mathematics Music The Foundation stage	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Whale Hill Primary School is much bigger than most primary schools and provides an education for 507 pupils between the ages of three and eleven, with a further 78 children attending part time in the Nursery. The school draws most of its pupils from Eston on the edge of an area of heavy industry. Information about the ward and the local education authority indicates an area where disadvantage is well above average. Attainment on entry to the school is well below average. The 37 per cent of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is above the national average. There are 164 pupils (30 per cent) on the register of special educational needs, which is in line with the national average. Two pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need, which is below the average nationally. There are no pupils with English as an additional language. The school works in partnership with other local schools to raise standards, within an Education Action Zone.

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

This is a very good school where the excellent leadership and management of the head teacher and key staff ensure consistently good teaching and rich and varied opportunities for pupils to learn. Teaching is good throughout the school but especially so in the Foundation Stage where children have a very good start to their education and make rapid progress. All staff know the pupils very well and create a very positive climate where pupils behave very well and develop excellent attitudes to learning. Nursery pupils of all ages make good progress throughout the school and by the time they leave school pupils successfully manage to reach standards that are now approaching the national average. These qualities, which ensure that pupils make good progress, represent very good value for money.

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

- Outstanding leadership and management of the head teacher and key staff. These create an extremely positive climate for learning, which embraces all those involved with the school.
- Good quality of teaching across the school, especially the teaching of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills.
- Excellent assessments made of the standards and progress of pupils. This information is very well communicated to parents.
- The achievements of pupils. Children entering the school have a very good start and all continue to make good progress throughout the school.
- The quality and range of learning opportunities available to all pupils. The provision of learning activities outside the school day is excellent.
- The care provided for pupils is outstanding and appreciated by parents. The provision for pupils' social and moral education is excellent.
- Standards in information and communication technology, art, physical and religious education that are above those expected nationally.

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

- Standards in English, mathematics and science by the age of eleven.
- The quality of speaking skills across the curriculum.

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

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

OfSTED last inspected the school in June 1997. Since then excellent progress has been made in improving the areas for development identified in the report. At the time of the last inspection the monitoring and evaluation of teaching were at an early stage of development and did not sufficiently influence curriculum development. Since then the monitoring and evaluation of teaching have much improved and are now very good. The school is now very aware of its strengths and weaknesses so that all pupils make good progress. Assessments made in many subjects were not always consistent then. The quality and consistency of teachers' assessment of

pupils' progress are now excellent and the information gained is used very effectively to set targets for pupils of all abilities to achieve in most subjects. The school has reviewed the time allowed for teaching in Key stage 2 classes and this is now well balanced.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	D	C	E	C	well above average    A above average        B average                 C below average         D well below average    E
Mathematics	D	E	E	C	
Science	D	D	D	C	

### Children under five

Children enter the school with standards that are well below those expected for their age. The high quality of teaching, together with well-developed learning opportunities, enables children to make very good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes. Despite this they do not manage to make up the shortfall and their standards remain below expected levels by the time they leave Reception, when they start learning the National Curriculum. Many children do not achieve the early learning goals for their age. Standards are below average in communication, language and literacy and mathematics. They are average for creative and physical development. The children make particularly good progress in becoming attentive and eager learners who wish to listen and enjoy lessons.

### Key Stage 1

Good progress is maintained in Key Stage 1. Evidence from the inspection and the school's own assessments show that Year 2 pupils attain standards close to the national average in reading, writing, spelling, mathematics and science. In the national tests taken in 2001, standards were above average in reading and writing but well below in mathematics. Teacher assessments in science showed that attainment was well above national levels. Few pupils attained the higher standards in mathematics or science. Pupils develop sound listening skills but their standards of speaking are below what is expected.

### Key Stage 2

Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils also make good progress. This progress has not yet been sufficient to raise standards to the national average. However, considerable efforts are being made to raise standards in literacy and numeracy and there are clear indications that progress is being made. As the table above shows, in the 2001 national tests, eleven year olds attained standards in science that were below the national average and in English and mathematics well below. However, the same national tests show that pupils were achieving grades in these subjects that are comparable with schools similar to Whale Hill. In the work seen in English and mathematics, standards are higher than last year for the current pupils in Year 6. Though still below average, many pupils are now approaching the national average, even though few will reach above. Pupils listen well but show weaknesses in the quality of their explanations. Performance in science has been maintained and is now comparable to similar schools. The standards achieved in art and information and communication technology (ICT) are good and above those expected.

The pupils make good progress in most subjects because of the high quality of teaching, interesting well-planned lessons and constant drive for improvement. They make good progress towards the targets set by the school by the time they leave. Throughout the school pupils successfully manage to reach standards that are above those expected nationally in religious education and in physical education. Those with special educational needs and those that are gifted and talented also make very good progress against the targets set for them. The rate of improvement over recent years, in core subjects, is broadly in line with the national trend.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. Pupils want to learn. Many voluntarily attend additional learning activities either before or after school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. All staff manage pupils very effectively and help them to learn how to manage any negative feelings.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. Relationships encourage a caring atmosphere where children feel safe and develop confidence, enabling them to concentrate on learning and make good progress.
Attendance	Good. Children enjoy coming to school and are disappointed when, for good reasons, they are unable to attend.

Pupils behave very well because of the considerable efforts made by both teaching and non-teaching staff at all times of the school day. Staff have very successfully learnt the skills of managing the behaviour of pupils in an atmosphere of mutual respect. Pupils have learnt good self-control and this helps to ensure their concentration. They are interested in most lessons, keen to talk about their work, and take a pride in what they achieve.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Teaching and learning are consistently good and strengths throughout the school. In the Nursery and Reception classes teaching is very good. Throughout the school, literacy and numeracy are extremely well planned and very well taught. This results in good progress being made in all classes. Pupils apply the skills they learn in literacy, numeracy and ICT across all areas of the curriculum. Teachers make clear explanations that ensure that pupils know what they are learning. They use their excellent assessments of pupils' progress and build effectively on their previous learning. Lessons are planned well and pupils make good progress. Teaching and learning take place in a stimulating learning environment and are very strongly underpinned by caring relationships between all members of the school community. Behaviour is very well managed, raising pupils' self-esteem. As a result of the good teaching, pupils are often enthusiastic and eager to learn. Sometimes they are unable to explain what they know or rush in with answers without thinking carefully. Teachers should do more to encourage them to think more carefully and give better quality explanations.

This is an inclusive school, where the widely different needs of pupils are well planned. Teaching and the good support given by teaching assistants are closely matched to the pupils' needs. This ensures that those pupils with additional learning needs make very good progress.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. There are effective strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy. Teachers make very good links between subjects to make the work interesting and enjoyable. There is an excellent range of activities for pupils, both in and outside of their main lessons.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. An inclusive school that provides very well for pupils with additional learning needs. Individual learning plans provide clear guidance so that teachers make sure that work is suitably challenging. Teaching assistants are caring and effective.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good. The school has a strong commitment to all areas of pupils' personal development. Social and moral development is excellent. Pupils learn to live together and respect each other. Spiritual and cultural development is very good. Pupils learn about different religions and ways of life.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The school provides a very secure, caring and supportive environment. All the staff know the pupils very well and their well-being and safety come first. Excellent procedures are used to assess pupils' progress and performance.

There is an excellent range of high quality opportunities outside the normal school day. The school works very well with parents who think very highly of it, providing them with good information and encouraging them to be involved. The curriculum meets statutory requirements.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Excellent. The head teacher has a very clear vision for school improvement and is very focused on raising standards. The roles of the deputy head teacher, senior management team and curriculum co-ordinators have been very well developed and they make an important contribution to school development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. Committed governors support the head teacher and school very effectively. They are keen and aware of their responsibilities. They have reliable procedures for collecting information and know the school well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. There are excellent systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. It has a realistic view of its strengths and weaknesses, but sets very challenging targets for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Use is made of finance to support educational priorities, particularly in raising achievement and improving the learning environment.

The leadership and management provided by the head teacher are excellent. Very well supported by the deputy head teacher and senior management team, the whole school is very clear of its educational direction and of how to achieve the goals that have been set. The learning environment has been considerably enhanced with quality improvements to accommodation. These are very well maintained by the caretaker and cleaners. The school is well staffed and good resources effectively support pupils' learning. The school applies the principles of best value through comparing its performance to similar schools.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Expectations to work hard and achieve.</li><li>• The open way they can approach the school.</li><li>• The leadership and management.</li><li>• Good quality teaching and learning.</li><li>• The personal development and behaviour of pupils.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Some parents view the access outside the school gates to be dangerous.</li><li>• A very small number of parents felt there was not an interesting range of activities outside lessons.</li></ul>

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views of the school, particularly about the very high quality leadership and management provided by the head teacher. The range of activities outside lessons is excellent, contrary to a small numbers of parents' views. The safety of access outside the school gates is no longer a significant issue.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children start school with standards well below those expected for their age. They make very good progress in Nursery and Reception although most do not reach the early learning goals by the time they begin National Curriculum work at the end of the Reception year. All pupils make good progress and by the time they are seven their attainment in reading, writing, spelling, mathematics and science is close to the national average. This good progress is maintained and by the time they leave school most pupils' attainment is close to the national average in English, mathematics and science, although, because few achieve the higher levels, standards overall remain below those of schools nationally. Standards of speaking across the school are below what is expected. Standards, overall, have improved since the last inspection in 1997. The rate of improvement over recent years, in core subjects, is broadly in line with the national trend.

#### **Foundation Stage**

2. Many children demonstrate particularly weak skills in areas of communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development. Teaching ensures that all pupils settle securely into school life and are well motivated to learn. Children's learning is particularly successful in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and aspects of communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. A minority exceed the standards expected for their age in these areas of learning. They make very good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes although by the end of the Foundation Stage most have not reached the early learning goals for children of their age.

#### **Key Stage 1**

3. Seven year olds attain standards close to the national average in reading, writing, spelling, mathematics and science. In the national tests taken in 2001, standards were above average in reading and writing and well above the average for similar schools. Standards in reading and writing have steadily improved over the last five years, reflecting the school's high priority of raising standards and success in implementing the school's literacy strategy.
4. The current Year 2 pupils attain standards in reading that are broadly the same as those expected for their age. Most pupils have not yet learnt the full range of reading techniques but nevertheless read at a steady pace and some can suggest what might happen next. More able pupils at age seven are reading independently, accurately and sometimes with expression. These pupils recognise the index and contents pages in information books and can locate facts. Most pupils can write clear sentences with letters and full stops and can write descriptive labels clearly on their work. In Key Stage 1 writing technique improves over time and shows the success of the school's strategy to raise standards. More able pupils have begun to use punctuation such as speech and question marks. Most pupils write in print and can form satisfactory letters. Some of the more able pupils are starting to move towards a joined-up style of handwriting. They achieve satisfactory standards of presentation and many try really hard to achieve neat work. Standards of spelling are broadly typical of those expected for seven year olds with more able pupils benefiting from the more challenging homework. Pupils develop sound listening skills but their standards of speaking are below what is expected. They listen closely to what their teachers say and are willing to listen to each other. When speaking, however, pupils tend to struggle to find the right words or phrases, or rush in without thinking and say the wrong thing. Several pupils have unclear speech. Pupils speak more clearly and steadily when they are reading with their teacher.

5. Standards of attainment in mathematics have risen steadily in recent years. However, there was a marked dip in the results in the 2001 national tests. Standards were well below the national average, although in line with the average for similar schools. The school's overall performance was reduced because a higher proportion of pupils scored at the lower end of the expected range. In addition, the percentage of pupils attaining above the national average was well below most schools. In the current Year 2, standards are set to rise. Most pupils are on course to attain the national average with a higher proportion on course to achieve above it. Pupils enjoy mathematics and by the end of Year 2, all pupils count to 100 in fives and tens. Most pupils mentally recall addition and subtraction facts to 20 and use this to carry out simple calculations quickly and accurately. They use the language of simple fractions appropriately when comparing numbers or shapes. Most can name a good range of two and three-dimensional shapes and are keen to describe their properties.
6. The 2001 teachers' assessments in science showed attainment well above that nationally. However, while all seven year olds reached the expected levels, none attained the higher level. The current Year 2 pupils attain standards in line with those expected nationally. By the end of Year 2 pupils of all abilities are aware of correct science terms, for example knowing the word *vibrate* in relation to how sounds are made. Most pupils can recognise that living things grow and know which foods are good for them and which are not. Higher attaining pupils can name various sources of light and sound, and have a developing knowledge of how sounds travel to the ear. However, they rarely explain in scientific terms what they have discovered from their investigations, for example about how they changed the shape of a piece of paper and whether the process could be reversed. They infrequently suggest ways of improving what they have done. Above average attainment will be difficult to achieve until they develop their independent investigation skills and can explain their findings. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, maintain good progress throughout Key Stage 1.

## Key Stage 2

7. Good progress is continued in Key Stage 2 but is not yet sufficient to raise standards to the national average. The 2001 tests show a dip in standards by the end of Year 6 in both English and mathematics. In the 2001 national tests, eleven year olds attained standards in science that were below average and in English and mathematics well below. However, the same national tests show that pupils were achieving grades in these subjects that are comparable with schools similar to Whale Hill.
8. In English, pupils' attainment is below that found in most schools. However, pupils currently in Years 3 and 4 are on track to achieve much better results due to the benefits from improvements made to the literacy programme. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 have not experienced these benefits for the whole of their time at this school. Although reading standards of eleven year olds are broadly in line with expected levels, standards in writing and speaking are below average. Most pupils read with pleasure and confidence. They read fluently, recognising and understanding most words. More able pupils read adventure stories such as *Harry Potter* with secure understanding and enjoyment. These pupils read a range of texts, including newspapers and magazines, and confidently use research skills.
9. Although most pupils now in Year 6 can write to a satisfactory standard, few are likely to achieve above average attainment by the time they leave school. They attained well below average writing standards in the national tests when they were aged seven, and since then have made good progress. They use a joined-up style and some are achieving good standards of presentation. This shows the impact of the efforts made to improve writing. Despite the improvements, sentences often lack complexity and there is too little use of imaginative vocabulary. Linked to this are shortcomings in the quality of pupils' speaking. Some pupils experience difficulty in expressing ideas through speech and in writing. As a result there are few signs of pupils using more colourful descriptions or describing feelings by using more advanced vocabulary. Standards in spelling are broadly in line with those achieved in most schools.

10. Standards of attainment in mathematics have risen steadily in recent years. In the 2001 national tests, pupils' attainments were well below the national average although they were in line with the average for similar schools. Standards have improved although the current Year 6 pupils attain standards that remain below the national expectation. They achieve very well in lessons and more pupils are on course to attain the nationally expected level than in 2001, although fewer are in line to exceed this level. This represents an improvement on their performance in the national tests as seven year olds. They can apply their understanding to solve problems. By the end of Year 6, most have a sound grasp of mathematical ideas and explain their thinking using correct mathematical language. They use the number facts that they have learned effectively to solve a range of mathematical problems. For example, higher attaining pupils use their understanding of place value to multiply and divide and apply this to calculations involving decimal numbers. All pupils can use written methods of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They can find percentages of numbers, accurately calculate the area of shapes and have a sound grasp of probability. Most can construct a range of charts, graphs and tables. Pupils of all abilities make good progress. Lower attaining pupils use their knowledge of numbers to order 'jumbled' numbers and high attaining pupils make very good progress in learning to present data on a pie chart.
11. Standards of attainment in science are below nationally expected levels by the end of Year 6. However, pupils' progress is consistently good and standards in national tests are close to those of similar schools. Most pupils have a sound knowledge of electricity and a clear understanding of forces such as gravity. They can identify some of the organs of plants. Many pupils competently plot scientific data to form a simple graph though some are not as skilled at predicting future trends and patterns. They know some of the characteristics of solids, liquids and gases, and how some materials can be separated, such as by sieving. The limited skills of speaking identified earlier affect pupils' ability to reason scientifically, to explain their scientific thoughts and to understand science terms. Teachers provide many opportunities to listen and talk about their science work, which helps them to learn effectively and as a result most achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Pupils of all abilities make good progress. Many with special educational needs achieve the national average and higher attaining pupils achieve above it by the end of Year 6. The school's rigorous system of assessing pupils' attainment and progress is effectively enabling the school to identify gifted and talented pupils who might attain very high levels.
12. The standards achieved at the end of Key Stage 2 in art and ICT are good and above those expected. Pupils have a good understanding of colour. Most can effectively use the skills they have learnt to produce good quality results in both two and three-dimensional form. In ICT pupils are confident and many work independently, being able to quickly start up routines and proceed with their tasks. This enables them to move onto more complex tasks in Years 5 and 6. The older pupils in Key Stage 2 have a wide range of word-processing skills and can create a spreadsheet. A strong feature of the work is the very good use made of ICT across the curriculum. Higher levels of attainment are achieved through the variety of skills acquired and having evaluated their work, explaining how to improve it.
13. By the end of both Years 2 and 6 pupils successfully manage to reach standards that are above those expected nationally in religious education and in physical education. Pupils have a clear understanding of the values which underpin the Christian faith and in physical education they work very hard and can evaluate performance. Standards in design and technology, geography, history, and music are in line with those nationally and pupils make satisfactory progress.
14. The pupils throughout the school make good progress in most subjects. Those with special educational needs or that are gifted and talented also make very good progress against the targets set for them. Pupils are good at using what they have learnt in English, mathematics, science and ICT in a variety of subjects. The school has set challenging targets for standards

to be reached in both English and mathematics in the national tests and is making every effort to achieve them.

## **PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

15. Pupils' attitudes to school are excellent and have improved since the last inspection. They want to attend because they feel safe in school and lessons are interesting and well organised to help them learn successfully. They are eager to participate in the stimulating range of activities provided for them.
16. Pupils are very attentive in lessons; they concentrate hard, are able to organise themselves and work well together when required. Pupils are quick to applaud each other's success. They show courtesy and consideration and listen very well to each other as well as to adults. Very positive attitudes are particularly evident when pupils are given the opportunity to share ideas and talk about their experiences. All year groups enjoy these sessions where they learn to take turns in speaking, to express their own feelings and to respect those of other people. Pupils respond very well to differing points of view, and learn to understand the impact their actions may have on others.
17. Pupils' behaviour in class and around the school is very good. Teachers have consistently high expectations of pupil behaviour and are skilled in classroom management so that pupils are able to get on with their work. Pupils understand how they are expected to behave and are eager to earn the many rewards available for academic and personal achievement.
18. This is an inclusive school where all children are valued equally, feeling safe from bullying or harassment of any kind. They can approach any member of staff if it occurs, whether in or out of school, and be sure that it will be dealt with firmly and with understanding for their situation. Staff provide an excellent example to pupils. They treat them with respect and through purposeful teamwork and a deliberate, thoughtful approach to every detail of school life they have fostered excellent relationships throughout the school. This has a very significant impact on pupils' achievement and personal development.
19. Older pupils willingly take on responsibilities to help with school routines and with younger children. For example, Year 5 pupils take turns to be 'playground buddies' and pick out any child on their own to play with and encourage others to include in their games. 'Playground buddies' are very popular and are a useful link between Key Stages 1 and 2. Year 6 pupils have a variety of roles, for example helping teachers prepare classrooms for lessons such as art and science, and take a pride in their contribution to the running of the school. Pupils' attendance is improving and is just above the national average. Most pupils arrive at school punctually and there are no unauthorised absences and no exclusions.

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

20. Teaching is good and a strength of the school. This reflects the opinion of the majority of the parents who made their views known. The last inspection found teaching consistently good and this standard has been maintained. Since then, improvements have been made to teachers' assessment, which was then a weakness and is now one of the school's strengths. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stages 1 and 2 and very good in the Foundation Stage. The quality of learning closely follows that of teaching. Teaching reflects the success of the rigorous monitoring by the head teacher and key staff.
21. Throughout the school, literacy and numeracy are extremely well planned and very well taught. This results in good progress being made and standards have improved, although teachers should do more to encourage pupils to think more carefully and provide better quality explanations. Children are well prepared for their future education by the importance given by the Nursery and Reception teachers to developing early reading, writing and speaking skills.

Planning in the Nursery and Reception classes is excellent. Teachers throughout the school effectively use and adapt the planning guidance of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Priority is rightly given to the development of pupils' writing and number skills. In literacy this has been extended so that pupils can complete more written work and is clearly helping to raise standards of writing and presentation. In numeracy, teachers encourage pupils during lessons to consider what skills they are improving and this is helping to improve standards.

22. In English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 2 pupils are taught, when appropriate, in classes where they are grouped by ability and this allows teaching on a more personal level, better suited to each pupil's ability. This enables Year 6 pupils to achieve well when tested at age eleven. Reading is taught well and leads to pupils making good progress in learning as a result of teaching specific skills during guided reading sessions. These help pupils to learn how to read unfamiliar words. Teaching of writing skills is thorough and there are plenty of opportunities for pupils to practise when writing independently. Teachers are very committed to raising standards and organise a 'Maths Club' in all classes before school each day. This is strongly supported by pupils and parents throughout the school and is helping to improve pupils' confidence and accuracy. Regular mental mathematics at the start of each numeracy session has helped to improve pupils' quick thinking and recall of number facts. In science the teaching of scientific skills is satisfactory but teachers need to give more opportunity for pupils to use their own initiative during investigations.
23. The quality of checks made on pupils' progress is excellent and makes a very valuable contribution to planning the next stage in pupils' learning and therefore to the good progress they make. Teachers keep detailed records of the progress pupils make and regularly discuss with each pupil the individual targets they have been set. This ensures that work is well matched to the pupils' different needs and abilities.
24. In most lessons teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. This can be seen in the quality of descriptions, their use of technical language and the quality of their questions. This is a strength in most subjects. Pupils apply the skills they learn in literacy, numeracy and ICT across all areas of the curriculum.
25. Strengths in teaching include clear explanations to pupils about what it is they are learning, planned activities that provide high yet realistic expectations of the abilities of all pupils and the demonstration of new knowledge. Teachers question effectively, using their knowledge of individual pupils. Behaviour is very well managed by all staff, who value everyone's contribution. This helps many pupils overcome negative feelings, by raising their self-esteem. It improves levels of confidence and performance among all pupils, whatever their ability. The school reward system is consistently applied in and out of lessons and has a very positive impact in motivating pupils. As a result of the good teaching, pupils are often enthusiastic and eager to learn. Most pupils persevere with challenging tasks and respond positively to all of the adults who help them. Pupils take pride in their work and finish a considerable amount of neatly presented work. This adds to the quality of their learning and to the progress that they make. Pupils are clear about the purpose of lessons so that sessions are extremely purposeful and proceed at a very brisk pace. In a few lessons teachers' explanations are too long and pupils are listening for an unnecessary length of time, resulting in some lack of focus.
26. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good across the school and allows them to learn effectively. Teachers plan for these pupils with careful regard to their individual education plans so that they are fully challenged by the tasks that are set for them in lessons. Support assistants are particularly effective and very supportive. For example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, the assistant explained clearly what the pupils were expected to do, she monitored their learning and progress very carefully and then reinforced their understanding by asking them to read the chart that they had made. Pupils receive good support from specialist staff, who are attached to the school or visit. There is good liaison between all agencies working with pupils and very effective support in school. All staff have a

role in supporting pupils with special educational needs and regularly report on their progress. These reports are reviewed regularly and inform the teaching strategies which will be used. This is an inclusive school, where work is well planned to match the widely different needs of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and those that are gifted and talented, learn very well.

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

27. The school provides a very good curriculum for its pupils. All subjects required by the National Curriculum, together with religious education, are well represented. Many are thoroughly enriched through a wide range of additional opportunities, most of which take place outside normal lesson times. Teachers and support staff are all highly committed to improving pupils' learning and the local and wider community supports them very well.
28. The quality and range of learning opportunities for children in Nursery and Reception are very good, and this gives them a good start to their education. The school's curriculum fully includes all groups of pupils. It provides very well for pupils with special needs throughout the school and this results in their very good progress. The school's arrangements for grouping pupils into sets according to ability, notably in Year 6, enable teachers to focus more accurately on meeting the needs of pupils of different levels of attainment. An example of the positive effect of this is seen in the many higher attaining pupils reaching above average levels in science. A key issue from the last inspection was to review the teaching time for pupils in Year 2, which varied between classes. The variation has been fully resolved as all pupils in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 now receive the same amount of teaching time.
29. There are very effective arrangements for teaching numeracy skills. A recent initiative focuses on mental mathematics before the start of the school day. All teachers in Years 3 to 6 are fully dedicated to this as a means of raising pupils' achievements in mathematics. The school's effectiveness in teaching pupils literacy skills is excellent. Teachers have very effectively adapted and extended the National Literacy Strategy to meet the needs of all its pupils. Support assistants have a notable impact on enhancing the learning of pupils with special needs, for example in 'reading recovery' lessons, which have a strong impact on developing their reading skills. Opportunities for numeracy and literacy are effectively planned across the curriculum so that even in physical education pupils count the number of jumps made.
30. The school's outstanding range of activities outside the school day makes a significant impact on pupils' learning, attitudes and personal development. Pupils are so interested in these opportunities that many are over-subscribed and programmes are rotated to ensure that all pupils have equal access to them. These opportunities extend the curriculum very well. There are opportunities for pupils to learn three foreign languages, gardening skills and chess at different levels of difficulty. There are sporting and music clubs and a 'Barnaby Bear Club' that supports learning in geography. A 'Harry Potter Club' capitalises on pupils' current interests in order to develop their love of literature. Residential visits such as those in Year 6 to Carlton Camp and Year 5 to Boggle Hole further enrich pupils' learning and skills, for example in orienteering.
31. Teachers give very good emphasis to pupils' personal, social and health education. It pervades the daily life of the school through the example that all adults set in their relationships with each other and the respectful way they treat the pupils. All pupils' emotional and social needs are addressed very well. This is particularly effective for pupils with specific emotional and behaviour difficulties. Regular time is planned for pupils to share their concerns with teachers and classmates in a very supportive environment. As a result all pupils listen with consideration to the problems of others and offer help and advice. The school effectively uses this strategy as a successful way of removing barriers to learning by reducing social problems, fostering respect for others and building pupils' self-esteem. In one particularly

effective lesson the Year 2 teacher skilfully used puppets to help pupils to express their feelings openly and confidently. Middlesbrough Football Club provides relevant and meaningful guidance about the dangers of drug abuse. This captures pupils' interest well. Teachers effectively encourage pupils to be sensible and responsible, for example through a system of voluntary 'playground buddies' when older pupils befriend the younger ones. However, they do not always give them enough opportunities to use their initiative in some lessons, for example in design and technology and science.

32. The community makes an excellent contribution to pupils' learning through the school's links with organisations and individuals. For example, representatives from local churches support learning in religious education lessons, St John's Ambulance workers help pupils to learn about first aid and all Year 6 pupils make a 999 call under the supervision of the Fire Service. Pupils are very well prepared for good citizenship. The local residents association teaches pupils about the mining heritage of the locality while a local artist works with pupils on the art, food and customs of Pakistan. Visits from theatre companies support pupils' cultural development well.
33. There are very good links with other institutions. Measures taken to ensure pupils make a smooth transfer from primary to secondary education are effective, particularly for pupils with special needs and vulnerable pupils. Strong sporting links with other primary schools and the school's keenness to be involved in as many competitions and ventures as possible, greatly enrich the curriculum.
34. Moral and social development is excellent; spiritual and cultural development is very good. These four themes permeate the day-to-day operation and ethos of the school. They are founded on a genuine concern for the well-being of the pupils through a positive approach to behaviour and a commitment to providing enjoyable experiences for all who attend. Pupils are encouraged to learn and play well together and to consider each other's point of view. They know what is right and wrong and have a deeper understanding of the world, valuing the contribution of those from differing backgrounds and cultures. This is a school where it is possible to clearly trace the impact of this provision to the improving standards in many subjects.
35. All classes are provided with many opportunities for worship through assemblies and in more intimate classroom settings when themes can be more sensitively provided. The delightful setting of the school's Millennium Garden with running water over the back of the 'whale' sculpture provides a very good facility where pupils have opportunity for personal reflection. Religious education lessons provide regular opportunities to extend the pupils' spiritual development. In a Year 3 lesson, good opportunities for reflection were provided through teaching about the purpose of prayer and the value of helping and caring for each other. In a lesson for Year 1 pupils who were planning a visit to a church in Guisborough, the teacher ensured that the pupils were aware that such a visit requires particular forms of behaviour and a good opportunity was provided to reinforce moral and social conventions. Similarly, pupils in Year 4, who worked with a local church youth leader, were provided with Biblical teaching about forgiveness, thus reinforcing a moral theme well. The regular singing of the school song, *Magic Penny*, helps to remind pupils of a moral based on promoting good relationships.
36. Good use is made of the time planned for pupils to share ideas and talk about experiences. This helps their speaking and listening skills where the value of each other's contribution to the class is recognised. In a Year 2 Circle Time, skilful teaching based on the theme of personal targets and achievements helped pupils to express anxieties and gain advice on how to deal with problems. As the lesson developed it was clear that the teacher valued all the pupils, encouraged them to value each other and helped them towards an understanding of good citizenship.
37. A high priority is given to social development. The introduction of 'playground buddies' has successfully promoted a sense of caring for one another and sense of personal support for

pupils who have recently been admitted to the school. In a Year 2 science lesson the teacher commented "Everyone's contribution matters!" and in follow-up group activities in many subjects the pupils are encouraged to work together co-operatively. This approach is promoted also in extra-curricular activities and field study visits. For example, the impact of the chess club on social development is clear, especially in raising self-esteem. The pupils willingly acknowledge that the benefits of playing in the chess club go beyond the enjoyment of the game because they gain confidence from travelling to different venues, making new friends and learning new strategies in different situations.

38. In a geographical area where the population has few people of other races and cultures, the school makes very good provision for cultural development. The school is aware of the importance of getting ready for life in a multi-cultural society and provides useful activities that prepare pupils well for their adult life. The local authority schools' librarian has been involved in providing guidance on improving the range of books in the school library areas. Teaching about religious festivals and the traditions of religious groupings is regularly undertaken. Pupils are given opportunities to visit the theatre, to listen to music and to work with visiting specialists. An artist in residence programme was used well to provide pupils with a better understanding of art when a visiting artist from India taught them batik skills.

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

39. Care of pupils is at the heart of the school's way of life and can be seen in the priority all staff give to their health and safety through the curriculum, the quality of the working environment and daily routines. Appropriate procedures to promote health and safety and child protection are followed, with staff showing constant vigilance and encouraging pupils to care for each other. A key feature of the care the school takes of pupils is the role played by the school in the community, in particular the close and constructive partnership which has been built with parents, and the willingness of the head teacher to address issues faced by pupils in the community. The very high quality of care and support provided for pupils means that they feel safe and can concentrate on their learning.
40. There are very good procedures for promoting and monitoring attendance and punctuality. Good quality records are kept and analysed so that patterns of absence are quickly noted and acted upon. Parents are contacted if pupils' absence is not explained and the education welfare officer is informed when problems arise.
41. The school has developed very good procedures to promote good behaviour in school, which are constantly monitored and evaluated through staff discussion, and modified to maintain an orderly working environment. The provision of an excellent variety of activities and clubs at lunchtime to interest pupils is an example of this constructive approach. The emphasis is on praise and the encouragement of good behaviour. Supervision at break times is good and staff support lunchtime supervisors in the playground. Teachers very quickly detect a loss of attention in the class and have developed a variety of effective methods to bring pupils back on task before they become too restless. Parents are very pleased with the high standard of behaviour achieved by the school and are consulted as partners to help resolve the problem when their children's behaviour falls short of expectations.
42. The school is determined to get rid of bullying and racial harassment. All occurrences are recorded and rigorously followed up and the situation subsequently monitored. Issues that arise are introduced into assemblies and personal, social and health education lessons, so that pupils learn to respect and understand each other's differences. Pupils report instances of harassment, confident that their concerns will be sensitively and firmly dealt with, and they sometimes ask for help in dealing with their experiences out of school such as witnessing a fight. Teachers give pupils strategies to help them cope with difficult situations both in school and out in the community, and continue to offer support, and monitor progress.
43. The school has achieved a significant improvement since the last inspection in the arrangements made to check how well pupils are learning and whether they are making

enough progress. Teachers have devised an excellent, workable system for the management of assessment, which has been adopted as a model of good practice by the local education authority. Assessment is planned and carried out using the same system from Nursery to Year 6 in all subject areas. Criteria for assessments using National Curriculum levels have been established in all subjects and are moderated through extensive staff discussions. The information obtained on pupils' attainment is collected and filed systematically so that it is easily available for teachers' use. Teamwork and regular meetings ensure that the information is used to very good effect. It is used to detect patterns of weakness in pupils' learning and modify the curriculum accordingly, identify pupils with special educational needs, set targets, review the progress of individual pupils and provide parents with accurate information.

44. The head teacher, class teachers and lunchtime supervisors know pupils very well indeed and work together closely to overcome the difficulties such a large school might experience in this respect. For instance, pupils' records are passed on to the class teacher for the following year and discussed, so that strengths and weaknesses from the beginning of the year are fully understood. Teachers and class assistants often discuss difficulties faced by pupils in order to further improve and refine the support they can offer. The school creates many opportunities to support and monitor pupils' personal development through assemblies and class sessions. Teachers and support assistants are fully aware of the nature and degree of support required by all groups including gifted and talented pupils and those with special educational needs. They work tirelessly to ensure that pupils' physical, academic and emotional needs are met so that they make very good progress.
45. Teachers give excellent support for pupils' educational progress through setting targets and sharing aims for the lesson and success criteria with them. Pupils appreciate the quality of teachers' marking of their work, which celebrates success and helps them to improve and make progress. This is particularly strong in English where the improvement of writing has been a focus of attention. Pupils understand and are motivated by the reward system that shows them that their efforts are valued and which they consider to be fair and consistently applied.

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

46. Links with parents have improved since the last inspection and are now very good, with excellent communication and an outstanding level of parental satisfaction. The school considers that the building of partnerships with parents makes an important contribution to pupils' education and personal development, and teachers work hard to build very positive relationships with the parents of children in their class. They go out at the beginning and end of the school day so that they are available to chat or answer queries, and parents feel confident that they can approach class teachers and the head teacher at any time, and be listened to, and that their concerns will be taken seriously. Parents' responses show that they are delighted with the education their children receive and they are full of praise for the head teacher and staff of the school.
47. Parents are very happy with the information they receive on their children's progress. Annual written reports are very thorough, giving grades for attainment, and information on what pupils can do and how they can improve, and showing very good knowledge of pupils as individuals. In addition parents receive graded half yearly reports, which include information on areas of learning where they could help their child make progress. Meetings with parents to discuss progress, and regular review meetings supplement this excellent provision, for parents of pupils with special needs. Teachers make every effort to encourage all parents to attend these meetings or make alternative arrangements.
48. Very good information and resources are provided to help parents support their children's education, and family literacy, numeracy and other courses have been held for them, which are usually very well attended. Information for parents of children starting Nursery and at the beginning of each school year helps them to understand what their children will be learning.

Some parents help in school in a variety of ways such as listening to readers and helping with design and technology and art lessons. Parents have a positive impact on pupils' learning through their support for school initiatives and extra-curricular activities so that pupils can arrive early for 'Maths Clubs' and are taken by car to sports events and chess tournaments. When the school appeals for help, parents respond whole-heartedly, so that the construction of the Millennium Garden was speeded up by fathers barrowing soil. Items are brought to school for recycling, and charity appeals and fund-raising events are very well supported. The school shows its appreciation by inviting as many as 80 helpers to an annual 'thank you' tea.

49. Parents are invited into school for special events to celebrate success, watch their children perform and join in Christmas and Easter celebrations. Their support is an important element of the ethos of the school. The 'Stay and Play' club provides good support for working parents and the school website and monthly newsletters keep them very well informed on school events.

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

50. The head teacher provides outstanding leadership for the school. Her management of all staff and school procedures is excellent. She has a clear vision for the future: to raise standards by establishing shared aims, having clear moral purpose and ensuring the care of all pupils. This is combined with a detailed knowledge of the local community and the close working relationship with a strong governing body. Her belief, "that everyone on the staff can make a difference for the pupils in their care", provides the underlying ethos for the school.
51. The head teacher, deputy head teacher and senior staff work effectively together to provide excellent leadership. The senior management team is ably supported by all groups of staff. Members of the senior management team have clearly identified roles in specific areas and, together, identify the means of achieving them. The school has successfully addressed the issues from the previous inspection and has moved forward. The overall quality of leadership is a major factor driving up standards in the school.
52. There is a clear focus upon improving the standard of teaching and the quality of learning in the school. Performance management is very firmly rooted and helps identify the needs and clarify the responsibilities of staff. It was recognised during the 'Threshold Process' as being of high quality. Clear job descriptions are in place. The head teacher observes the staff teaching, and provides detailed feedback. There are further opportunities for observations; for example, subject co-ordinators regularly use this process as part of their subject monitoring responsibilities.
53. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties extremely well. There is a good record of attendance at both the full governing body and sub-committee meetings. This keeps them well informed and enables them to fully meet their statutory obligations. The governing body monitors both the budget and standards carefully. They have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. For example, their support for developments in ICT has contributed to rising standards. They recognise the importance of personal, social and health education within the school and are aware of the issues regarding curriculum time and staff training for this area of the curriculum. The governors play an important role in shaping the future direction of the school and make good use of the head teacher's advice and professional expertise in moving the school forward.
54. The school is very effective in checking how well it is performing and then taking action. A very detailed school development plan establishes clear priorities for the future. The overall quality of curricular planning is very good and the outcomes are carefully monitored on a regular basis. For example, each half-term, subject co-ordinators observe a lesson, then meet to review planning and assess samples of pupils' work. This provides excellent guidance for future work and enables the school to reach clear judgements on current standards. The

school is very clear when identifying priorities for the next phase of development. For example, there has been clear commitment to resource improvements in literacy and numeracy. The current focus on ICT is clearly raising attainment and the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education much improves pupils' attitudes and behaviour in school. Underpinning these developments is a strong and shared commitment by all staff to achieve the school's targets. A particular feature of this school is the sense of pride in achievement and the desire to ensure all pupils have the opportunity to do well in all aspects of their school life.

55. The school has prudent budgeting based on detailed and realistic development planning. The governors maintain a strategic overview that complements the head teacher's very clear understanding of the priorities and the appropriate allocation of funding. Principles of best value are consistently applied to good effect. The school challenges its suppliers to quote the best possible price for goods and services and reviews service level agreements. The head teacher and governing body compare performance with that of similar schools. They spend time in seeking to fund additional projects in order to raise standards, for example, by seeking a partnership with other local schools in a local regeneration bid. This has resulted in additional resources such as participation in a 'reading recovery' programme, family literacy training, and support for maintaining and resourcing ICT. The budget is used very effectively to maintain staffing and is regularly audited by the local education authority.
56. The match of staff to curricular needs is very good. They are well qualified and have all benefited from the training opportunities provided in recent years. Good use is made of specialist staff, for example, in physical education and ICT. On occasion, visitors with expertise enhance provision, for example in football coaching. There are good levels of support staff who are carefully allocated throughout the school according to need. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported throughout the school and the head teacher, as co-ordinator, has a very clear understanding of their needs. The school makes very good provision for the induction of new staff, with substantial mentoring procedures in place. The school is also a very good provider of initial teacher training and has a carefully worked out programme for this with a nearby university department. The school is well supported by the clerk and receptionist.
57. The level of resources throughout the school is good, with particular strengths in literacy, ICT and for the children under five years old. There are further strengths in such areas as art, physical education and religious education. These improve the achievements of pupils throughout the school. The school is introducing story sacks of English resources to help parents support their children's learning further. The school library, now located in a long corridor, is satisfactory in terms of book provision. Pupils are making good use of the improved ICT facilities to improve their writing and research skills.
58. The accommodation is good overall, although some open plan classrooms are quite small and noise levels can be disturbing. However, Nursery accommodation is good, with sufficient space for outdoor equipment. There are two good quality ICT suites, which can each accommodate a full class group. The two assembly halls are of good size and offer facilities for physical education and dining. The grounds are used particularly well, for physical activity and recreation. The large garden and wildlife area is a valuable resource supporting a number of curricular areas. The reception area offers a welcoming entrance to the school for visitors. Overall, the provision for accommodation and resources has a positive impact upon pupils' achievements.

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

The inspection team acknowledges the improvements made since the last inspection. In order to raise standards and improve the quality of education further, the head teacher, staff and governors should work together to:

1. Raise the standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science by the time pupils leave school. (Paragraphs 1, 7, 8, 10, 11)
2. Improve speaking skills across the curriculum by developing the quality of pupils' explanations and vocabulary. (Paragraphs 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 9)

In addition to the above, the head teacher, staff and governors should consider developing pupils' independent learning skills when undertaking science investigations. (Paragraphs 71, 93, 95)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	98
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	22	54	19	0	0	0
Percentage	3	22	55	19	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR-7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	39	507
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	185

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR-7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	151

#### English as an additional language

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

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	33	41	74

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	30	28	29
	Girls	41	41	38
	Total	71	69	67
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (99)	93 (97)	91 (96)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	31	29	33
	Girls	41	38	41
	Total	72	67	74
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (99)	91 (93)	100 (94)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	41	33	74

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	20	35
	Girls	27	21	26
	Total	48	41	61
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (79)	55 (58)	82 (81)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	20	35
	Girls	27	22	26
	Total	48	42	61
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (71)	57 (60)	82 (82)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	454
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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

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

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

## **Teachers and classes**

### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR-7**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	19
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27
Average class size	27

### **Education support staff: YR-Y7**

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	272

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	39
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	190
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

## **Financial information**

Financial year	2001
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	£
Total income	1141966
Total expenditure	1127488
Expenditure per pupil	2038
Balance brought forward from previous year	81095
Balance carried forward to next year	95573

## **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	585
Number of questionnaires returned	123

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64.2	34.1	1.6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	69.9	28.5	1.6	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	70.7	27.6	0	0	1.6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	58.3	35	5	0	1.7
The teaching is good.	76.2	23.8	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	69.9	29.3	0.8	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	82.1	17.1	0	0.8	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	85.2	14.8	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	68.9	31.1	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	77.2	22.8	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	76.4	23.6	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	53.3	29.2	5.8	0.8	10.8

### Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Parents are very supportive of the school, especially of the leadership and management and the quality of teaching.

## **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**

59. In the Nursery and Reception classes the school makes very good arrangements for the children in the Foundation Stage. Children start Nursery on a part-time basis when they are three. They enter full-time education at the beginning of the term in which they are five. Children enter the Nursery with levels of attainment substantially below average for their age. Many demonstrate particularly weak skills in areas of communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development. The teacher and skilled Nursery nurses work hard to ensure that the Nursery is calm and welcoming. This ensures that all boys and girls, including those with special educational needs, settle well into school life and are motivated to learn. They make very good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes although by the time they move into Year 1 many have not attained the early learning goals for children of their age. Children's learning is particularly successful in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and aspects of communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. A few achieve standards above those expected for their age in these areas of learning.
60. The quality of teaching is very good overall in the Nursery and both Reception classes. This marks an improvement since the last inspection when teaching of children under five was good. All staff work very well together. The support staff are clear about what the children are to learn in the course of each session. They support groups and individuals purposefully and make a very significant contribution to children's learning. The teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of how young children learn and their detailed planning very successfully incorporates the required areas of learning. They assess children's skills shortly after they join the Nursery and on entry to the Reception classes, using local authority materials. Arrangements are very well established for checking each child's strengths and weaknesses and using the results to identify development and learning priorities for each child. The Nursery and Reception classrooms are thoughtfully organised with a good range of resources to stimulate children's curiosity and encourage them to become independent learners. There is direct access from the Nursery to a secure outdoor area, which provides very valuable opportunities for children to learn by working on a more active scale than is possible indoors. For example, physical skills are improved by climbing and balancing on wooden outdoor equipment. Children in the Reception classes join older pupils for playtime, when they use the well-equipped Lower School playground.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

61. Children make very good advances in their personal, social and emotional development and many achieve expected standards by the end of Reception. Parents attend a meeting and children visit school and meet their teacher informally before starting the Nursery. These arrangements successfully aid the change from home to school and enable links with home to begin to be established. This effectively promotes children's sense of belonging. They gain confidence and begin to learn the classroom routines. Initially many children are dependent on adult demonstration when approaching unfamiliar activities. They become increasingly interested and keen to learn, approaching tasks willingly and concentrating well for short periods. Children often need help in putting on their coats for outdoor play but most put on aprons for art and craft activities with a minimum of help from adults. In the Reception class the children show a very good degree of independence in their approach to activities and daily routines. Most respond promptly to instructions and put out and clear away equipment efficiently. They are well motivated to learn, settling quickly to tasks and concentrating hard. Books and equipment are accessible and most children handle resources carefully. When moving around school, as when they go to the hall for assembly, they behave very sensibly and co-operatively. The children are happy and well used to the classroom systems. The

Nursery and Reception class teachers have high expectations of children's involvement and they respond well. Teaching in this area of learning is very good. Teachers plan opportunities, which enable every child to feel fully involved and special. For example, during the Reception classes' weekly Birthday Assembly, individual children's acts of particular kindness, politeness or hard work are recorded in the Golden Book. All staff value each child's efforts and give lots of individual praise and encouragement. These arrangements successfully build children's self-esteem and promote their confidence in learning and in their relationships with others.

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

62. Children make very good gains in their communication, language and literacy skills. A few reach the early learning goals for children of this age and a small number exceed them. However, many do not reach these standards. The teachers plan a very good range of worthwhile opportunities for all children to improve their skills in this area of learning. Children are consistently encouraged to talk to adults and each other. Staff take every opportunity to promote children's confidence and communication skills. For example, the teacher sitting with two children in the Nursery 'Sandwich Bar' talking about the size of her apron and the Nursery nurse working with three children rolling dough in the Nursery, asked straightforward, well-directed questions, which successfully promote individual children's responses. Within such small groups all children are successfully encouraged to contribute, although some are reticent. Throughout the Nursery and Reception classes children enjoy sharing stories and joining in with repeated phrases. In the Reception classes, they are eager to predict what will happen next in their story during their literacy session. As a result of such daily opportunities, children make very good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. The quality of teaching is often very good. Very detailed planning ensures that children of all levels of attainment are well challenged and supported.
63. Carefully prepared activities successfully stimulate children's interest in letter sounds, reading and writing. From their earliest days in school, children regularly take home books to share with their parents. They show increasing confidence in handling books and higher attaining children are on the initial stages of reading. They recognise familiar words and associate letters and sounds. Lively activities and games successfully reinforce their learning and encourage the children to see learning as fun. For example, Reception class children confidently match the letter sound, 'w', and items from a bag. Children regularly practise writing patterns. They form their letters carefully, although not always accurately. Most children understand that writing conveys meaning. Most write their own names. Some children are beginning to write simple words and phrases independently.

### **Mathematical development**

64. Children make very good progress in developing their mathematical understanding, although many do not attain the goals set. In the Nursery and Reception classes most children develop a sound sense of number, order and sequence through regular counting routines. Most know the names of primary colours and can identify circles and squares. By the end of Reception, higher attaining children count to 20 and beyond. They recognise numerals within ten and are beginning to record them. However, many children's limited language skills restrict their ability to talk about and describe patterns or the position of objects. The quality of teaching is often very good. Staff successfully promote a positive approach in numeracy sessions. In the Nursery, the younger children happily take part in a wide range of games and activities which improve their mathematical development, such as sorting, matching and counting small wooden animals and joining in with action songs, such as *Five Green Bottles*. In the Reception classes, teachers and support assistants work purposefully with small groups of children. They carefully plan activities which successfully extend children's learning, such as 'bingo' involving sequencing numbers within ten. They provide lots of support whilst successfully reinforcing children's mathematical skills and checking their understanding through well-directed questions.

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

65. Many children join the school with very limited knowledge and understanding of the world. They have very good opportunities to extend their experiences through well-planned topics and by the end of Reception most children are well on the way to attaining the early learning goals. They learn about the properties of materials such as sand and water by handling and working with them. They make very good progress in finding out about living things through practical activities, such as planting sunflower, apple and cress seeds and using a magnifying glass to observe growing tadpoles. They gain a secure knowledge of features in their immediate locality by exploring the school and its grounds. In the Nursery and Reception classes they progressively extend their learning by taking part in carefully planned trips, such as those to the local park, post office and library. The teaching of this area of learning is very good. The teachers plan topics in which children can be actively involved, for example, walking to the shops to buy the ingredients before baking gingerbread men. This adds relevance to their work and successfully stimulates their interest. Visitors effectively extend children's knowledge and understanding in this area of learning. These include familiar figures, including the lollipop lady, cook and caretaker, as well as 'Olly the owl' and a theatre group. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes become increasingly confident and independent as they use and become familiar with a range of simple computer programs both on classroom computers and in the school's ICT suites. They also make very good progress in learning to operate other forms of technology, such as a programmable toy.

## **Physical development**

66. Children's physical development is satisfactory. They move safely and confidently in and around the Nursery and Reception classrooms. They play vigorously and confidently outdoors, using a wide range of large equipment, including large wheeled vehicles. The quality of teaching is often very good. Children have regular well-planned opportunities to be active in physical education lessons when they practise balancing, throwing, bouncing and running without bumping into each other. They also have opportunities to move imaginatively to music. Within the classroom, carefully prepared activities satisfactorily promote children's physical development alongside other areas of learning. Children fit together jigsaws and construction materials. They frequently use a good range of paintbrushes, marking pens and simple tools, such as glue sticks, and demonstrate sound manipulative skills.

## **Creative development**

67. Many children's creative skills are poorly developed when they join the Nursery. They have regular opportunities to take part in creative activities and by the end of the Foundation Stage many are close to attaining the early learning goals in this area of development. They enjoy singing together and join in readily with action songs and number rhymes. Children in the Reception classes control their voices sufficiently to copy their teacher and make loud and quiet sounds. They enjoy exploring sounds made by percussion instruments. Throughout the Foundation Stage children have frequent opportunities to draw, stick, paint and print in various ways, including with their hands. They enjoy mixing powder paints together to create a new colour, such as red and yellow to make orange and blue and yellow to make green. Their art and craft activities successfully support other areas of learning. For example, Reception class children successfully reinforce their learning about parts of a plant when making a flower from a good range of materials, including coloured straws, cards, sticks and tissue paper. The quality of teaching is good. Staff ensure that stimulating materials and tools are accessible to the children. Teachers plan activities which successfully engage pupils' interest and promote their use of imaginative language. For example, in the Nursery children collaborate satisfactorily in role-play areas, organised as a Travel Agent and a Sandwich Bar.

## ENGLISH

68. By the age of seven, pupils' attainment is the same as expected in most schools in reading, writing and listening. By age eleven, pupils' attainment is below that found in most schools. Although reading standards of eleven year olds are broadly in line with expected levels, standards in writing and speaking are below average.
69. Many pupils, although eager to enter into discussion, have difficulty in expressing themselves and so standards of speaking are below what would be expected across all ages. Only a minority of eleven year olds can hold an extended conversation drawing on a range of vocabulary expected for their age.
70. Standards in spelling are broadly in line with those achieved in most schools by the end of both key stages. Standards of handwriting are improving, and are mostly average, but with some pupils capable of and regularly producing very neat work both in English lessons and when writing up other subjects.
71. Pupils make good progress in all aspects of English. When pupils enter Year 1 most are attaining below average standards for their age and by the end of Year 2 most have reached the standards expected of most seven year olds. Given that many pupils currently in Year 6 attained well below average writing standards when tested in the national tests at age seven, this inspection has confirmed they have also achieved well compared to their prior attainment. Pupils of all ages with special educational needs make good progress in terms of the targets set for them.
72. Although there is a dip in standards in Years 5 and 6, pupils in Years 3 and 4 are on track to achieve much better results when they are tested at eleven. This is because these classes have benefited from significant improvements made to the national literacy programme since the last inspection. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 have not experienced these benefits for the whole of their time at this school.
73. Standards of listening are the same as those expected by the end of both key stages. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers and to each other. Key Stage 1 pupils are regularly captivated by stories being told to them by their teacher or when they are learning how to acquire a new skill. Teachers plan the work carefully and teach enthusiastically. Their clear speech, skilful use of vocabulary and careful explanations help to keep the pupils' attention on the work being covered. There are few occasions when instructions need to be repeated. As a result pupils' interest is maintained and they listen very carefully, as, for example, when Year 1 pupils learned how to skim through a book to find information. This good concentration continues in Key Stage 2 classes.
74. Standards of speaking are below those expected across the school. Pupils are more successful at speaking when they are reading with their teacher and on these occasions they mostly speak clearly and steadily. The excellent relationships and good teaching encourage pupils to contribute to lessons, for example by appealing to the interests of both boys and girls in an interesting lesson focused on a snake. As a result, many are keen to hold a conversation with an adult but often have difficulty in conveying their thoughts, use little expression and do not draw on a wide range of vocabulary when expressing their ideas. In a Year 6 art lesson where pupils discussed the local landscape from photographs, the main features of buildings were described using simple adjectives such as *round* or *high* and no pupil confidently used the term *horizon*.
75. Standards in reading are broadly the same as those expected at the end of both key stages. Higher attaining pupils at age seven are reading independently, accurately and sometimes with expression. They can read a new book confidently, recall main events in the story and describe, usually in simple terms, one of the characters. These pupils recognise the index and contents pages in information books and can locate facts. Average attaining pupils do not

always have a full range of reading strategies to overcome difficulties but they nevertheless read at a steady pace and some can suggest what might happen next. Pupils with special educational needs regularly struggle to say what the story is about, are hesitant and rely heavily on clues in the illustrations that accompany the text. Very good assessments enable some of these pupils in Key Stage 1 to benefit from the 'reading recovery' programme. Here the work is well matched to each individual pupil and supported personally, and as a result pupils make very good progress.

76. By the end of Key Stage 2 higher attaining pupils are reading adventure stories with understanding and enjoyment, such as those featuring the popular *Harry Potter*. They can identify their favourite author and without help, find a range of reading materials including newspapers and magazines. They confidently use research skills, quickly skimming through an index to find information. Some have become increasingly confident in finding information by using search engines available through the Internet. Pupils know the function of a glossary and some are knowledgeable about a synopsis. Pupils of average reading ability enjoy reading; they are fluent, recognise most words accurately and read effectively. They enjoy reading extracts to the rest of the class and access information books readily for their work in other subjects. Most pupils with special educational needs are keen to read, particularly as they are encouraged and well supported.
77. Standards in writing are the same as those expected by the end of Key Stage 1 but below what is expected by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils' writing in English and in other subjects shows that they are being provided with a rich programme of writing experiences including stories, letters, and poems. By the age of seven most pupils can write clear sentences with capital letters and full stops. Higher attaining pupils have begun to use punctuation such as speech and question marks. Most pupils can produce a draft plan for their writing that sets out the order of events correctly and can write descriptive labels clearly on their work. Writing technique improves over time and confirms the success of the school's key strategy to raise standards. Standards of spelling are broadly typical of those expected for seven year olds with more able pupils benefiting from more challenging homework. Although most pupils' handwriting is almost always in print form it is consistent in terms of letter formation. Most pupils achieve satisfactory standards of presentation and many try hard to present work neatly. Higher attaining pupils are starting to move towards a joined-up style of handwriting. Pupils with special educational needs, who access the full range of writing experiences, benefit from the use of writing templates that help them to form their letters evenly.
78. By age eleven most pupils can write satisfactorily and spell accurately. Most are using a joined-up style and some are achieving good standards of presentation, taking great pleasure in producing neat work. Teachers closely follow the planning guidance of the National Literacy Strategy and set out clearly the English topics that are to be taught in literacy sessions for the following week. A decision to extend the literacy 'hour' so that pupils can compose more substantial pieces of written work is proving to be beneficial and is clearly helping to raise standards of writing and presentation. Pupils are given a good range of opportunities for writing. For example, they have set down the arguments for and against the impact of locating a bypass or supermarket on the local environment. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils might achieve. For example, in a Year 4 lesson the teacher expected that each pupil add a 'twist' in the tale. Standards in writing are improving but there remains a lack of complexity in the sentences most pupils produce and a lack of imagination in their use of vocabulary. There is little evidence of phrases being used that use more colourful descriptions, portray emotion and express feelings through the use of a more advanced vocabulary. This and the shortcomings in speaking mean few pupils are on track to achieve above average attainment by the time they leave the school.
79. The quality of teaching is good. All teachers are very secure teaching English lessons and they confidently lead pupils to a better understanding of English grammar and improve their presentation skills and spelling abilities. There is an excellent system for checking pupils' progress that is well used to plan the next steps in learning and to set targets for them to

achieve. This has the effect of ensuring that the work is well matched to the pupils' current attainment. In the final two years of Key Stage 2 the pupils are taught for English in a class where they are grouped according to their ability. This helps the teacher to teach the programme on a more personal level to each pupil's ability. This results in Year 6 pupils achieving well compared to their level of understanding when tested at the age of 7.

80. Classroom support assistants make a significant contribution to the progress of pupils with special educational needs. They are well briefed on the work to be covered and ensure that pupils can learn at a level more appropriate to their individual needs.
81. The school has been very successful in implementing the National Literacy Strategy. It has also successfully introduced the 'reading recovery', additional and early literacy programmes. Increasingly pupils are making good use of the improved ICT facilities to improve their writing and research skills. Parents are encouraged to be involved in homework through the reading programme and weekly homework in spellings. These initiatives positively contribute to raising standards.
82. The school has taken part in a national initiative to raise standards and has been monitored regularly. The good progress made has been acknowledged through the School Achievement Award. The success is due to the very effective leadership of a strong English team led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator. A number of senior managers come together as the English working group and working effectively together they have improved English provision since the last inspection. The subject is very well co-ordinated. Resources used in lessons are good throughout the school. The school is introducing story sacks of English resources to help parents support their children's learning further. The school library, now located in a long corridor, is satisfactory in terms of book provision. The content has been scrutinised recently by the local education authority school librarian, and the co-ordinator is aware of the need to re-stock in some areas.

## **MATHEMATICS**

83. Teaching and learning in mathematics are good. As a result, pupils of all levels of attainment make consistently good progress. From a very low starting point when they join the school, they attain standards that are close to the national average by the end of Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs receive very effective support and make very good progress towards the targets set for them.
84. Standards of attainment in mathematics at the end of both key stages have risen steadily in recent years. Pupils' performance in national tests is often limited because too few attain the higher levels. However, standards are set to rise in the current Year 2. Most pupils are on course to attain the nationally expected standard with a greater proportion on course to achieve the higher levels. Pupils in the current Year 6 achieve very well in lessons and more pupils are on course to attain the expected level in national tests than in 2001, although fewer are likely to attain the higher levels. This represents an improvement on their performance in the national tests as seven year olds.
85. Year 1 pupils enjoy mathematics and participate readily in a range of activities, which promote their confidence in counting forwards and backwards in ones, twos and threes. Almost all pupils recall pairs of numbers that total ten. By the end of Year 2, all pupils count to 100 in fives and tens. Most pupils mentally recall addition and subtraction facts to 20 and use this to carry out simple calculations quickly and accurately. Lower attaining pupils recognise odd and even numbers and recall number facts to ten. Most pupils are confident about the value of digits in numbers up to 100. They use the language of simple fractions appropriately when comparing numbers or shapes. Almost all name a good range of two and three-dimensional shapes and are keen to describe their properties. Lower attaining pupils make good progress in learning to use accurate vocabulary, such as *clockwise* and *anti-clockwise* to describe

position, direction and movement when plotting a route. Pupils collect information, such as a record of the weather, and present it as a block graph.

86. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 continue to make good advances in their learning and apply their understanding to solve a satisfactory range of problems that are carefully planned to challenge pupils of different levels of attainment. For example, Year 3 pupils apply themselves well to money problems, such as using as few coins as possible to pay for items costing up to five pounds. By the end of Year 6, most pupils have a sound grasp of mathematical ideas and explain their thinking confidently, using correct mathematical language. They use the number facts that they have learned effectively to solve a range of mathematical problems. For example, higher attaining pupils use their understanding of place value to multiply and divide by 10, 100 or 1000 and apply this to calculations involving decimal numbers. Lower attaining pupils use their knowledge of positive and negative numbers to order 'jumbled' numbers. All use written methods of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They identify equivalent fractions and find percentages of numbers. They accurately calculate the area and perimeter of regular shapes. Pupils have a sound grasp of the concept of probability. They construct a range of charts, graphs and tables. High attaining pupils enjoy the challenge and make very good progress in learning to present data on a pie chart. Pupils successfully reinforce their numeracy skills through work in other subjects. In a Year 1 physical education lesson, for example, pupils count the number of times they bounce different sized balls. In a Year 6 science lesson, pupils use a stopwatch to measure and compare the time taken to dissolve different types and amounts of sugar in water. Throughout the school, pupils successfully use their ICT skills to support their work in mathematics. For example, Year 6 pupils use a computer program to practise finding percentages of numbers and extend their skills by calculating 'real life' price reductions.
87. Teaching is successful and pupils achieve well because the experienced co-ordinator has high expectations of pupils and staff. She has very enthusiastically led staff in the introduction and monitoring of developments in this subject. The arrangements for teaching pupils in Years 2 to 6 in sets according to their ability work well. Teachers plan work very carefully at levels that effectively build on pupils' prior learning. They use assessment information very effectively to match the work carefully to pupils' differing needs and abilities. Priority is given to the development of pupils' number skills. Teachers organise 'Maths Clubs' in all classes before school each day. This is wholeheartedly supported by pupils throughout the school and is helping to improve their confidence and accuracy in approaching varied mathematical tasks. Mental agility work forms a lively part in lesson introductions. This successfully engages pupils' interest and promotes rapid thinking. Teachers skilfully target questions so that pupils of differing levels of attainment benefit and make good progress. Teaching of pupils in Years 5 and 6 is particularly effective and contributes very positively to the raising of standards. Teachers have a very secure knowledge and understanding of the subject. This gives great clarity to their teaching and inspires the confidence of pupils.
88. Teachers plan work at challenging yet achievable levels for pupils of all levels of attainment. Pupils are clear about the purpose of lessons so that sessions are extremely purposeful and proceed at a very brisk pace. This very successfully motivates their involvement and boosts their confidence. Teachers encourage pupils to consider what they are learning and what skills they are improving in the course of a lesson. This very successfully extends pupils' thinking, consolidates their learning and enables teachers to check their understanding.
89. Teaching and non-teaching staff work as effective teams. Classroom assistants and support staff know exactly what is expected of them and this enables them to support teaching and learning successfully. This enables the school to meet the needs of all pupils more effectively, for example, by providing additional support for pupils with special educational needs. The teachers value everyone's contributions and this helps to improve levels of confidence and performance among all pupils, whatever their ability.

90. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work in mathematics. Most pupils join in well, persevere with challenging tasks and respond positively to all of the adults who help them. Pupils' take pride in their work. Pupils of all attainment levels throughout the school complete an impressive amount of work and almost all present it neatly and carefully. This adds to the quality of their learning and to the progress that they make.

## SCIENCE

91. Standards in science are below expected levels for their age by the end of Year 6. However, pupils' progress through the school is consistently good. Many children enter the school with very limited skills in speaking and communication. This affects their growing ability to reason scientifically, to explain their scientific thoughts and to understand scientific terms. Teachers address this well by giving pupils ample opportunities to listen and talk about their science work. This helps them to learn effectively and as a result most achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.
92. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress so that many achieve the levels expected of pupils by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The school's effective focus on higher attaining pupils has helped many of them to achieve above the national average in tests by the end of Year 6. Its rigorous system of checking pupils' attainment and progress is effectively enabling the school to identify gifted and talented pupils who have the potential to attain very high standards. However, the effect of the school's emphasis on higher attaining pupils has not yet resulted in them reaching standards above average. This is partly because pupils' lack of independent investigation skills limits their achievement throughout the school.
93. By the end of Year 2 pupils of all abilities are aware of correct science terms. For example, lower attaining pupils know the word *vibrate* in relation to how sounds are made. All pupils recognise that living things grow and most have a good understanding of which foods are healthy and which are not. Average attaining pupils know that living things are found in various habitats, such as squirrels in woodlands. More able pupils name various sources of light and sound, and they have a developing knowledge of how sounds travel to the ear. Some higher attaining pupils rarely explain in scientific terms what they have discovered from their investigations, for instance about how they changed the shape of a piece of paper and whether the process could be reversed. They infrequently suggest ways of improving what they have done and how.
94. By the end of Year 6 most pupils know why a bulb might not light up in a circuit. Apart from some lower attaining pupils, most have a clear understanding of forces such as gravity and the effect of friction. All pupils identify such organs of a flower as stamen and stigma. Some lower attaining pupils lack competence in explaining what they observe. Average attaining pupils competently plot points to form a simple graph though some are not as skilled as the more able at predicting future trends and patterns from these. They are developing their understanding of what a food chain is. They know some of the characteristics of solids, liquids and gases, and how some materials can be separated, such as by sieving. Higher attaining pupils achieve particularly well in scientific knowledge, describing the functions of the main organs of both humans and plants. They have a good understanding of forces and their effects in terms of how they speed things up, slow them down and change their direction.
95. Teaching is good overall. Teachers in Year 6 group pupils according to their levels of attainment. This helps them to focus more specifically on pupils of differing abilities and to foster their good progress by giving them tasks that generally match their needs accurately. This supports the school's success at ensuring that good numbers of pupils reach the higher levels in tests. Where teachers do not fully challenge pupils of different abilities, their learning is not always as good as it could be. For example, in one lesson, Year 1 pupils were given a feather and a fan and asked, "What makes the feather move?" Because the task was too easy for the higher attaining pupils, they did not learn as much as they could have done had the task been more demanding. Teachers are good at helping pupils to build up their scientific

knowledge. For example, Year 2 pupils learn that batteries are filled with chemicals and Year 6 pupils learn about how quickly or slowly different sizes of sugar crystals dissolve in water. Teachers use correct scientific terms when they talk to pupils. This effectively encourages pupils to use words such as *germinate* when they talk in Year 3 about the growth of seeds. The teaching of scientific skills is satisfactory but it is not as good as it could be. Teachers do not always give pupils enough opportunities to use their own initiative when they plan and carry out science investigations and when they record what they find out. For example, teaching in one Year 6 lesson missed opportunities for pupils to select their own methods of recording the results of their investigations about dissolving, even though some pupils had their own ideas about how to do this. As a result, most pupils have limited skills in making their own independent decisions about how they might go about devising an investigation, what resources they could use and how best to record their findings.

96. A significant strength of teaching throughout the school is teachers' very good management of pupils that is underpinned by teachers' very positive relationships with them. Teachers value pupils and welcome their ideas. "Everyone's contribution matters", a Year 2 teacher told the pupils. This results in pupils' good behaviour, very good levels of concentration and enthusiasm for learning combined with confidence to offer comments. On the rare occasions that pupils become restless it is sometimes because the teacher has been talking for too long, notably in a Year 2 lesson.
97. The co-ordinator has an effective impact on the subject by observing and developing teaching in science through the school, including the Nursery. He ensures that learning resources are well organised and easily accessible and he enables pupils to become involved in a wide range of projects and activities such as projects and clubs that enhance learning. Although ICT is used, for example to help Year 6 pupils to consolidate their learning, the co-ordinator is aware that ICT needs to be planned more systematically to support pupils' progress. The leadership of the co-ordinator and the science working group are helping to raise pupils' overall achievement so that their attainments are approaching national averages by the time the pupils leave at the end of year 6.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

98. At the time of the last inspection standards in art and design at the end of both key stages were judged to be broadly typical of those found in most schools. This inspection has shown that this continues to be true of Key Stage 1 pupils by the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6, standards are now above those found in most schools. Given that most Key Stage 1 pupils begin Year 1 attaining standards in art below what would be expected for their age, both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils have achieved well in relation to their prior attainment.
99. By the age of seven most pupils can use a good variety of art materials including paint, wax crayon, fabrics, dyes and modelling dough to produce lively interesting work. They can also access ICT software to develop their artistic ideas. Pupils are introduced to art and design skills from an early age and past work shows they can cut gummed paper, card and sticky tape satisfactorily. Pupils quickly begin to appreciate how colours can be combined in pleasing combinations. In Year 1 pupils have used their knowledge of colour to produce illustrations of foods they would combine to make an attractive salad during a food technology lesson. Pupils can achieve satisfactory standards of shape and proportion when using pencils or crayons to draw a house. Most provided appropriate detail of the roof and windows and more able pupils shaded their work carefully and evenly with crayons.
100. By the age of eleven pupils have a good understanding of harmonising and contrasting colours. Most can apply successfully the skills they have acquired to produce good quality results in both two and three-dimensional form. Pupils can blend pastels together to produce a range of shades and they can mix paint carefully to produce a wide range of shades appropriate for landscape work. When illustrating their writing in other subjects, such as history and geography, they carefully use pencils, crayons and felt pens to produce good

detailed drawings. For example, pupils carefully observed and produced detailed illustrations of shells in a science topic, capturing a true image of the original. Most select colours carefully and appropriately. They can draw the human form with good proportion and use the mouse in ICT confidently to select the electronic brush, spray and fill commands.

101. Both boys and girls make good progress in the development of art skills during their time in the Key Stage 1 classes; those with special educational needs make good progress in terms of the targets set for them. Pupils learn how to use new marking materials such as charcoal, manipulate modelling dough and produce collage work using a selection of fabrics. They make good progress in acquiring new artistic skills, sometimes working in the style of famous artists such as Matisse and Gauguin and they begin to appreciate how the use of a more limited range of colours can lead to pleasing results. Year 1 pupils produced very appealing versions of Picasso's *Cat Catching Bird* using wax and paint and these were of sufficiently high quality to justify being displayed in the school entrance. The pupils' good progress in knowledge of art materials and how they are best used helps them to become increasingly independent artists and more confident when working with dough to make, for example, a plaster cast of their hands.
102. This good progress continues through the Key Stage 2 classes. Here pupils build on and extend their artistic skills and their work becomes more detailed and better presented. Year 6 pupils used magazine illustrations to carefully select colours to produce a mosaic of a fish. The results confirmed good progress in accuracy of shapes and greater refinement in selection of colours compared to the more elementary approach to mosaic work typical of Year 1. Pupils' improved understanding of how to use a colour wheel has helped them to approach colour mixing with a more critical and sophisticated approach and by the time they are in upper Key Stage 2 classes many are capable of comparing and evaluating results of landscapes that have been produced using different resources such as paint, wax crayon, chalk and pastels.
103. The quality of teaching is mostly good. This is an improvement on the last inspection. It reflects attention given to successfully addressing a previous shortcoming in providing suitably challenging work for higher achieving pupils. Teachers are confident in demonstrating artistic skills and concepts and when helping pupils to improve their work through sensitive guidance and support. Pupils in Year 6, who had previously created landscapes using different materials in the style of Cézanne, were taught effectively how to capture the concept of distance through the use of artistic techniques to improve foreground and the background. To challenge them further, pupils were expected to reflect the contrast in their landscapes at the same time as representing foreground and background perspectives. This challenged the pupils well, particularly the more able, and resulted in good effort and a sense of achievement. Art and design lessons are mostly well managed with resources readily available and easily accessible. Useful prompts during lessons are skilfully used to help individual pupils recall their past knowledge of colour mixing and brush control and how to apply those techniques to their current work. Guidance is clear and directed to improving standards with pupils expected to produce their best effort; as pupils are regularly praised they usually respond to this encouragement well. A Year 5 pupil was congratulated for her success in skilfully blending pastels when drawing figures to mirror the painting by Gauguin, *The Vision after the Sermon*.
104. Most pupils enjoy art and design lessons and are proud of their achievements. They enthusiastically discuss each other's work and collaborate well when sharing resources. They behave very well, remembering that they are expected to respect each other's opinions. Most pupils show good creative effort and are pleased to congratulate each other when good results are achieved.
105. The school provides a very good variety of creative experiences that fully meet the coverage in art that is required by the National Curriculum. Good opportunities are taken to promote an understanding of well-known artists and these are carefully chosen to reflect different artistic periods and cultural backgrounds. A very good opportunity to promote the art of India was

provided when an artist in residence visited the school to teach the pupils batik skills using fabrics, wax and dyes. Increasing use is being made of ICT in developing artistic skills and knowledge of the history of art.

106. There are excellent arrangements to check on how pupils are learning. Teachers gather valuable information through observation of pupils in both lessons and through analysis of their finished work. This good knowledge of standards and achievement is very well used by members of each year group team to help them judge whether pupils are making sufficient progress and to help plan the next stage of their learning. Very effective planning of art and design themes, combined with skilful and sensitive teaching, has helped the school achieve its excellent provision for moral and social development.
107. Subject leadership in art is good. The co-ordinator has been able to check how well art and design is being taught and has scrutinised work that is regularly and very well displayed throughout the school. Given the recent attention to improvement in core subjects, progress in improving art and design has not been a high priority. This is being dealt with addressed during the coming year when the focus moves to art and a specialist art teacher has been engaged to regularly work with each class on daily art and design programmes. The subject leader has encouraged pupils to enter local art competitions and pupils are very often successful. The subject leader has organised the storage of materials very well with a walk-in cupboard storing most materials and good shelving for the storage of papers and art posters. Overall there is a very good supply of art and design resources.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

108. Standards in design and technology are broadly as expected by the end of both key stages and reflect those at the time of last inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress over time because teaching is sound. There are examples of good teaching in Year 5. Here pupils are given opportunities to use their initiative to select from a wide range of materials and tools when they design and make musical instruments. Because teaching enables them to use their own ideas, the resulting instruments are all very different, showing good levels of pupils' original thinking. In a Year 2 class teaching effectively encouraged pupils to think creatively about how their finished vehicles would look. This resulted in 'buggies' that were imaginatively finished. Teaching in most other classes is satisfactory but it does not always provide such valuable opportunities for pupils to select from a rich range of resources and techniques. As a result pupils' progress through the school is satisfactory overall.
109. Teachers throughout the school have effectively established the process of pupils designing, making and evaluating what they have made. Many pupils know about this cycle and they can talk about it with some degree of understanding. However, not all teachers have developed aspects of this system at sufficient depth for it to have a significant impact on learning. For example, a lack of focus on the design stage means that some pupils in Year 5 are unsure who will use the decorative plant pot that they make. When they describe how they will make it suitable for a member of the family their comments are often restricted to the colours that they will use rather than the design. Although teachers expect pupils to evaluate what they have made, this is sometimes not detailed enough. This is notable in Year 2 where pupils' evaluations are not always developed and in Year 3 where they could be more meaningful. For example, one Year 2 pupil wrote, "I wish it was better". By the end of Year 6 most pupils say what they enjoyed about making their products and what went well or not so well, but they are less skilled at judging how effectively it fulfils the original intention. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress.
110. Teaching overall is sound. In the Year 5 lesson, the strengths were the teacher's warm but firm relationships, questions that focused pupils' concentration well and a clear sense of direction to the lesson. As a result, pupils' attitudes in the lesson were good. Similar attitudes

are reflected in conversations with pupils in Years 2 and 6 as well as in pupils' pride in their work in all year groups. Teaching in Year 3 makes good use of ICT for pupils to design pizzas.

111. Since the last inspection the school has improved its arrangements for assessing the attainment and progress of pupils of all abilities, including those with special needs. All teachers have effectively agreed the system, which gives them a clear view of how well pupils are doing in the subject. The role of the co-ordinator has also been developed and it is effective. She now monitors teaching, though this has mainly been in Years 1 and 2, and influences planning. The curriculum is improved through additional opportunities that include competitions and university links. The community makes a strong contribution to learning. For example, a school governor supported Year 5 pupils when they designed a working mine to commemorate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Eston ironstone mines. The caretaker's involvement when Year 5 made musical instruments had a strong impact on the quality of the finished products. All involved adults promote pupils' social development very well.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

112. The overall standards attained by the end of both key stages are in line with expectations. However, eleven year olds' knowledge of the British Isles and world locations is weak. Achievement of most pupils is satisfactory, and those with special educational needs make good progress. Standards are the same as at the last inspection but there have been some good improvements within the subject.
113. In Key Stage 1 pupils learn about the local area, and can describe and draw simple maps of some places they have visited. There was some good work following a visit to a contrasting area, the seaside. Pupils made some drawings of things they observed and produced some simple maps. Good use of ICT was evident in digital photographs, word-processed reports and block graphs showing things they had found. Skills are taught as pupils move through the school and in Key Stage 1 they learn the basics of map work, such as drawing things from above and using a key. There is a good lunchtime geography activity, 'The Barnaby Bear Club', for Year 2 pupils. Barnaby Bear is taken home by pupils, who keep a diary record of his travels. There are also Barnaby Bear visits arranged from school, for example, to the local shops and pupils record the journey on maps.
114. Pupils in Key Stage 2 build on the skills taught in Key Stage 1. In map work, for example, they learn to use six-figure grid references. As part of their rivers study, Year 5 pupils had visited the mouth of the River Tees, resulting in some interesting written accounts of their experience. Year 6 pupils develop an awareness of environmental issues, for example whether a high street should be pedestrianised. They are aware of issues such as pollution and traffic problems and can give reasons both for and against.
115. Pupils' attitudes to geography are very good and they behave very well in lessons. Their work is generally neat and well presented. Pupils' speaking skills are not well developed. In two lessons on rivers they found it very difficult to express the meanings of geographical vocabulary, but their writing proved that they understood the meanings of the words.
116. Teaching is good with lessons well planned and prepared. At the beginning of lessons, teachers inform their pupils what they will be learning and what is expected of them. There are good links to literacy as part of the school's efforts to raise standards, but this can be at the expense of teaching geographic content and knowledge. In the last inspection work was not always of a sufficient standard to meet the full range of ability. This is still the case for more able pupils who would benefit from more challenging work to extend their learning. Teachers provide a good range of geography visits for pupils throughout the school, culminating in Year 6 pupils having the opportunity of experiencing a residential visit. Good quality displays of geography work enhance the learning environment and support learning.
117. Since the last inspection, an excellent assessment system has been introduced based on end of topic tests and this is developing well. Another very positive step has been the introduction

of monitoring in the subject. Subject leadership is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has started a portfolio of examples of pupils' work, so that a clearer understanding of standards throughout the school is developing. In pupils' work there is some evidence of duplication and repetition of topics, but this is being addressed in new schemes of work that are being developed.

## **HISTORY**

118. Standards are in line with those expected by the end of both key stages. Pupils learn at a steady rate and achieve appropriate levels of work. This reflects the position at the time of the last inspection. In Key Stage 1 the youngest pupils are beginning to understand the passage of time through the use of artefacts such as teddy bears which can be described as being new, older and oldest. Older pupils develop their sense of time in a more formal context by studying famous people from the past, particularly Victorians such as George Stephenson. Pupils are beginning to make associations between the past and present in terms of what people did then and what they do now. Pupils' learning and understanding have been extended by their visit to Darlington Railway Museum, where they were able to experience first hand some of the things they had been learning about at school. In Key Stage 2 pupils develop an understanding of periods and cultures such as those of the Tudors, ancient Egyptians and Greeks. In Year 6, pupils study the Victorians and some tasks encourage them to reflect on their own experiences and compare them with the lifestyles of children of that period.
119. Pupils' attitudes to history are very positive. Work is generally well presented and many do additional research on their own, often using computers to enhance their work. A good example of the way children can use ICT in history is seen in Year 3 where they design and produce some very good posters for a Roman Museum. There are some good opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills, but in some classes there is too much focus on these, at the expense of developing history skills. There is a good range of visits arranged to places of historical interest. These make a significant contribution to the teaching and learning of history.
120. The management provided by the co-ordinator is good. The history policy has been reviewed and updated as appropriate. An excellent new system of assessment has been introduced, based on end of topic tests. However, in the day-to-day marking of pupils' work there is too much focus on literacy and insufficient feedback on history skills.
121. Since the last inspection, a new system for monitoring the curriculum and teaching has been introduced and this is developing well. Pupils have a better understanding of the concept of chronology through the use of strategies such as time-lines and contrasting and comparing. One area still to be addressed is the challenge in work for higher attaining pupils. This is particularly so in Key Stage 2, where these pupils would benefit from being extended.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

122. Standards of attainment in ICT match those expected for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and are higher than those expected by the end of Key Stage 2. Rates of progress are good for all pupils between the ages of five and eleven. Standards are now higher than at the time of the previous inspection. This represents good improvement in this subject.
123. By the age of seven, most pupils' standards of attainment match the expected levels for their age; a minority of pupils produce work that exceeds those expectations. Pupils know how to use basic equipment and understand the functions of a computer keyboard and mouse. They know that their work can be edited, saved and retrieved and many pupils are capable of carrying out these skills independently. They use these skills effectively to write short sentences, punctuating them appropriately and exploring different fonts. Pupils know that text and illustrations are combined using such devices as *clip-art*. They use these effectively to produce posters and Christmas cards. Pupils explore paint programs to experiment with

colour, line and shape and produce self-portraits and illustrate scenes from well-known stories, such as Joseph's coat of many colours.

124. Standards of teaching are good in Key Stage 1 and so pupils are willing to learn and all have very good access to learning resources. This enables them to use CD-ROMs appropriately to broaden their overall range of experience. For example, pupils develop competent information retrieval skills to investigate the natural habitat of the seaside. The more able pupils can log on to programs independently and then move between screens to retrieve information, which they record accurately on a bar graph. Through careful planning, class teachers are able to extend the work of the more able pupils and also provide good support to those pupils with special educational needs. This ensures that a number of pupils achieve higher standards in such areas as information retrieval and that all pupils have full access to ICT. There are very good links into a variety of curricular areas, such as literacy and numeracy.
125. By the age of eleven, the standards achieved by most pupils exceed the expected levels for their age. Standards steadily improve as they move through the key stage. There are a number of reasons for this, which include the good overall standard of teaching, the wide range of well-planned activities introduced progressively, and the quality of the learning resources. Most pupils acquire a secure range of skills early in the key stage. For example, they use *Roamer World* effectively to create different shapes on screen in Year 3 and move on to producing a 'crystal flower' in Year 4, by drawing and turning shapes to form a pattern. They are confident and many work independently, being able to quickly start up routines and proceed with their tasks. This enables them to move onto more complex tasks in Years 5 and 6.
126. The older pupils in Key Stage 2 understand the principles of control and use these to program a route for a model car. They combine a wide range of skills, handling text, cut and paste activities and Internet search routines to design and lay out a newspaper front page. Pupils are confident in using *Excel* to create a spreadsheet and calculate discounted prices for a range of goods. A particular feature of the work seen during the inspection confirmed the very good use made of ICT across the curriculum. This enables pupils to apply their skills in most subject areas, for example, in history to research and write about Victorian schools, in literacy to produce a school newspaper, in numeracy to complete calculations and in art to replicate paintings in the style of Cézanne. The higher levels of attainment are achieved through the variety of skills acquired and where many pupils evaluate their work, explaining how to improve it. They have a clear understanding of the wider applications of ICT beyond the classroom, being able to identify its use in industry, higher education and leisure.
127. The school is successful in promoting high standards in ICT by age eleven. During the inspection examples of excellent and very good teaching were observed. These were typified by the high levels of challenge, a persistence to ensure pupils could achieve success even when things went wrong, and a very secure understanding of the potential for ICT. Learning is consolidated effectively, because assessment procedures are excellent. The staff have gained great benefit from the recent national in-service programme of ICT training. Pupils' attitudes are excellent and relationships are very good. Because of this, pupils are trusted to work independently; this promotes investigation very effectively and is very good social provision.
128. The school offers a very rich curriculum in this subject. This provision is based upon national requirements, but considerably enhanced through the impressive range of work set across the curriculum. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership; she is enthusiastic and hard working, always being prepared to listen and consider new ideas. Assessment procedures provide a very accurate picture of individual progress in each year group. This information informs planning extremely well, so that appropriate levels of challenge are identified.
129. The two computer suites and classroom areas represent very good accommodation. Each suite is designed to facilitate whole-class teaching. The overall level of resources is very good.

The school is well equipped with personal computers, inter-active whiteboards and a good range of software. Class teachers make good use of these resources and they have a direct impact upon the opportunities created and standards achieved. The head teacher and senior management are very supportive and have rightly identified developments in ICT as being central to overall school improvement. This is a very successful subject area, which is being developed effectively across the curriculum and helping enrich all pupils' learning experiences.

## MUSIC

130. By the end of both key stages pupils attain standards that meet those expected for their age. Pupils produce satisfactory performances when singing, playing musical instruments, making simple compositions and listening to and appraising music. Older pupils have opportunities for musical tuition and involvement in musical ensembles and choir, where they reach satisfactory standards. These activities successfully promote pupils' interest, learning and involvement in music. Teachers and support staff are committed to ensuring that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are fully involved in musical activities. This enables them to make satisfactory progress as they move through the school.
131. Pupils sing tunefully and enthusiastically. They know a wide range of songs by heart. In lessons given by a visiting specialist, singing teacher, they follow instructions well and learn the importance of posture and breathing. They successfully develop the ability to control their voices and sing with confidence. Pupils have opportunities to create and develop their musical ideas in class lessons. By the end of Year 2 they play a satisfactory range of percussion instruments and know how sounds can be made in different ways. They understand that sounds can be represented by symbols and they produce simple compositions. Pupils enjoy listening to music, such as Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*, and eagerly identify instruments they recognise.
132. Older pupils successfully extend their listening skills. In Year 3, they use their knowledge of Saint-Saens' *Carnival of the Animals* as a starting point for working in small groups to create their own musical patterns to represent the animals. Pupils concentrate well and most perform their compositions confidently. They listen very attentively to each group's efforts. Pupils progressively extend their knowledge of notation and use an increasing musical vocabulary to explain their responses to music. However, they do not have opportunities to broaden their experience by employing ICT to record, alter and combine sounds.
133. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers plan lessons to include varied practical activities that successfully promote pupils' enjoyment and learning. However, although teachers regularly assess and record pupils' progress, this information is not consistently used to ensure that planned tasks closely match pupils' abilities. Consequently, in lessons pupils are usually given similar tasks with no reference to their individual skills and experience. This limits the progress of more able pupils. A notable feature of teaching is the very good relationships teachers maintain with their pupils. Teachers' ready praise and patience consistently promote all pupils' confidence and involvement in lessons. Pupils are keen to take part in musical activities and almost all behave very well.
134. The co-ordinator manages the subject satisfactorily. Subject documentation incorporates national guidelines and includes opportunities for pupils to learn about music from cultures other than their own. This provides sound guidance for teachers' planning. During the year, pupils' participation in musical events, including school productions and celebrations at Christmas, Easter and Harvest Festival, and presentations by visiting musicians, successfully contribute to pupils' musical development. Teachers run choir and recorder groups, which reinforce and extend pupils' musical skills. Pupils have opportunities for instrumental tuition, which promotes the learning of those involved. Also, a group of Year 4 pupils are practising for a forthcoming Samba Extravaganza, which will involve performing with pupils from other schools. Participation in such Education Action Zone initiatives promotes pupils' confidence very well and contributes effectively to pupils' positive attitude to the subject. Pupils regularly

hear a range of recorded music as they enter assembly and this promotes pupils' awareness and listening skills. Overall, pupils' learning in music makes a valuable contribution to their social and cultural development.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

135. Standards of attainment are above those expected at the end of both key stages. In games, which formed the main focus during inspection, standards of achievement are high. Most pupils are aware of issues related to the health advantages gained from exercise. Pupils exercise vigorously and can explain that this causes rapid breathing and the heart to work harder. Pupils' basic fitness levels are good. Pupils can invent a variety of appropriate ways to move, using good posture and balance. Good teaching successfully develops the skills of evaluating performance and to refine what they have devised when, for example, working out how to move in a group in and around a 'parachute'. Games' skills are accurately performed, such as bouncing, passing, catching and throwing a ball. Teachers' planning and records of pupil's performance show pupils are achieving well in dance and gymnastic activities. The progress of all pupils, including those with special educational need, is good and sometimes very good when planning and refining the quality of movement. This also applies to the progress they make as they move through the school and become increasingly independent when finding their own ways of improving their performance.
136. The teaching of physical education is very good and sometimes excellent. This enables pupils to perform and evaluate their work beyond what is expected for pupils of the same age. Lessons always begin with very appropriate 'warming up' sessions and finish with activities to allow pupils to 'cool down'. The best lessons were seen when the teacher maintained a brisk pace of activity and pupils were given periods of practice to learn and adjust to new movements or skills. This quality was especially evident, for example, in the way pupils were encouraged to recognise the various qualities of the balls they were bouncing and the effect this had on the techniques they needed to use. Lessons have real vigour and the pupils work very hard. Very good use is made of frequent changes in the pace and type of activity. This maintains pupils' interest and provides plenty of opportunity for the development of skills. This develops good attitudes to physical education, particularly noticeable in games. All pupils dress appropriately and they change for physical education efficiently. They work well in groups and in pairs in virtually every context. Teachers comment accurately on performances and practice is lengthy and relevant. Very good use is made of demonstrations where pupils learn to recognise elements of good performance. An unusual and effective feature of physical education is the way the development of numeracy and literacy skills are built into lessons. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, an understanding of shape and space was effectively developed using relevant resources.
137. The subject is well managed. One teacher with good subject expertise mainly teaches all physical education lessons. The head teacher regularly monitors teaching to ensure the good quality of teaching. The curriculum is well designed and is extended with a very good range of out-of-school sport and with worthwhile activities in the playground during the breaks in the working day. The school takes part successfully in competitive team events with other schools, which are well supported by parents. Swimming forms a regular part of the curriculum, which is based on the local education authority scheme. By the time pupils leave school most can swim 25 metres, as expected by the National Curriculum. Very good resources are available to support pupils' learning and excellent use is made of outside features built into the grounds, such as playground markings.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

138. Standards of attainment in religious education by the end of both key stages are higher than those identified in the syllabus taught in the local authority's schools. Rates of progress are good for all pupils throughout the school. Standards remain at a similar level to those found at the previous inspection. There has been satisfactory improvement in the subject since then.
139. By the age of seven, pupils have a good knowledge of familiar Bible stories, from both the Old and New Testaments. They can recall the creation story from Genesis and the story of Joseph and his coat of many colours. Pupils use ICT effectively to illustrate this story. They know that Christmas and Easter are important festivals and write in some detail about each, outlining the key events of each story. Pupils explore their feelings effectively and write poems and prayers when doing so. They can recall some of the main stories from the life of Christ, for example, the 'healing of the sick man' and the story of the 'Good Samaritan'. Pupils are aware that churches are special places and that a visit to a local church requires particular standards of behaviour. In further studies, pupils explore Hindu rituals and know the story of Rama and Sita well. The staff have a clear knowledge and understanding of the subject and pupils are taught well. This is an important factor in the good standards achieved.
140. By the age of eleven, pupils have a clear understanding of the values that underpin the Christian faith. They describe these competently in discussion on celebrations. For example, pupils described a wedding ceremony in detail and one pupil suggested its purpose is: "to show love, to become part of the family." Standards of written work are good and presentation skills are very good in Year 6. Pupils clearly take great pride in their work. This is a clear reflection of the importance the school places upon religious education within the curriculum. The high standards achieved are rooted in good standards of teaching throughout the key stage. For example, in Year 3, pupils are carefully taught the main beliefs of Judaism and they gain a good understanding of its traditions. As they move through the key stage, pupils strengthen their understanding of Judaism and Christianity by studying individual lives, significant events and family celebrations. For example, they know why the Passover is significant and they know how it is celebrated today. Pupils gain a detailed understanding of the significant events of Christ's life and how Christianity developed subsequently. They study contrasting people in history, such as Elizabeth Fry and Mother Teresa, and write in detail about them, showing a good understanding of their lives. There is a good range of written work throughout the key stage and pupils demonstrate considerable knowledge and understanding of the world faiths they study. Pupils make good use of visits to local churches to expand their knowledge and understanding of religious faith within a community.
141. Standards of teaching are good in both key stages and this has a direct impact upon learning. There are very good assessment procedures in place, which are carefully matched to different age groups and areas of the curriculum. Work is carefully planned and marked, with regular assessment tasks used, which provide good information on progress. The curriculum is effectively matched to the local authority's agreed syllabus and the programmes of study provide ample opportunities to enrich it through educational visits and visiting speakers. The subject makes a very good contribution to all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This has a direct impact upon pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour, both in religious education lessons and throughout the school.
142. The co-ordinator provides good leadership. She ensures there is thorough checking on progress through the regular co-ordinator meetings each half-term. Resources are of a good standard and there is a good range of topic books and artefacts covering each religion taught. Some good opportunities are taken to use ICT, for example, where pupils use *PowerPoint* to present an assembly, based on their work. Pupils in Year 5 used a paint program effectively to produce an impressive book of Hindu illustrations, *The Ramayana*.