

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BANKFIELDS PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Eston, Middlesbrough

LEA area: Redcar and Cleveland

Unique reference number: 111604

Headteacher: Mrs S Hirst

Reporting inspector: Mr C D Taylor  
23004

Dates of inspection: 17 - 21 January 2000

Inspection number: 195681

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| Type of school:              | Infant and Junior                        |
| School category:             | Community                                |
| Age range of pupils:         | 3 - 11                                   |
| Gender of pupils:            | Mixed                                    |
| School address:              | Mansfield Road<br>Eston<br>Middlesbrough |
| Postcode:                    | TS6 0RZ                                  |
| Telephone number:            | 01642 453157                             |
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| Appropriate authority:       | Governing body                           |
| Name of chair of governors:  | Mr S Fraser                              |
| Date of previous inspection: | 27 - 31 January 1997                     |

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members       |                      | Subject responsibilities          | Aspect responsibilities  |
|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| Christopher Taylor | Registered inspector | Music                             | What sort of school is it?   |
|                    |                      | Physical education                | How high are standards?<br>a) The school's results and achievements                |
|                    |                      | Religious education               | How well are pupils or students taught?  |
|                    |                      | English as an additional language | What should the school do to improve further?                                      |
| Geza Hanniker      | Lay inspector        | N/A                               | How well does the school care for its pupils?                                      |
|                    |                      |                                   | How well does the school work in partnership with parents?                         |
| Paul Broadbent     | Team inspector       | Mathematics                       | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils or students? |
|                    |                      | Information technology            |  |
|                    |                      | Art                               |  |
|                    |                      | Equal opportunities               |  |
| Andrew Margerison  | Team inspector       | English                           | How well is the school led and managed?  |
|                    |                      | Geography                         |  |
|                    |                      | History                           |  |
|                    |                      | Special educational needs         |  |

|             |                |                       |  |
|-------------|----------------|-----------------------|--|
| Hilary Ring | Team inspector | Science               | How high are standards?<br><br>b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development |
|             |                | Design and technology |  |
|             |                | Under-fives           |  |

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The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
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London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Bankfields is a large primary school for boys and girls 3 - 11 years old. It has 295 full-time pupils, and 40 part-time children in the nursery. The number of pupils has decreased slightly over the past three years as there are fewer primary school age pupils in the area. The majority of children enter the nursery with levels of attainment well below the national average, and with limited language, number and social skills. Thirty two per cent of pupils - well above the national average - are known to be eligible for free school meals. Sixty pupils - close to the national average - have special educational needs, but none has a statement of special needs. Only one pupil speaks English as an additional language; no pupil is at an early stage of learning English.

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

Bankfields is an effective school with a good ethos and a warm environment. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school, and provision for pupils' personal development is good. Children under five make good progress, as do pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2. While the majority of children enter the nursery with levels of attainment well below the national average, attainment is in line with national expectations in English and a range of other subjects by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good, and their behaviour is very good. The leadership and management of the headteacher and senior management team are very good. As expenditure per pupil is below the national average, the school provides very good value for money.

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

- Teaching is good for the under-fives and at both key stages. All teaching is at least satisfactory. As a result, pupils' learning is consistently good.
- The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. Strategies for teaching literacy are very effective. Provision for extra-curricular activities is good.
- Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral and social development, is good. Sound moral values are constantly reinforced. Pupils are encouraged to accept responsibilities and work together in harmony. Relationships are very good.
- The school has a very good ethos. Pupils' attitudes to work are good and their behaviour is very good.
- Provision for the under-fives is good. Children make good progress in the nursery and in the reception classes.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They make good progress throughout the school.
- The effectiveness of the school's links with parents and the quality of information provided for them are good. Pupils benefit greatly from the active involvement of many parents and governors in their learning at school.
- The headteacher and senior staff provide very good leadership. The governing body fulfil their duties well. Planning for future development is thorough, and finances are managed efficiently.

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

- Standards in mathematics are below the national average at both key stages.
- Pupils' expertise in information technology is below national expectations. There is insufficient use of information technology to assist the teaching of other subjects across the curriculum.
- Pupils' attainment in religious education is below the standard expected at the end of Key Stage 1 as not all pupils study a second world religion as required by the locally agreed syllabus.
- Homework is not set in a structured manner or consistently enough at Key Stage 2 to make a positive impact on improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.

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

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

Since the last inspection in January 1997, the school has made very good progress in addressing the key issues highlighted in the previous report. The school has made good progress in raising pupils' standards in writing at Key Stage 1 and in design and technology. It has made some progress in information technology, but pupils' attainment is still below national expectations. The school has built effectively on its monitoring and evaluation of teaching to ensure effective teaching in all classes. As a result, pupils' standards in English have begun to rise. The school has provided good opportunities for teachers to develop their expertise in writing, information technology and design and

technology. The school now plans effectively for pupils' spiritual development. In addition to these key issues, there have been many other areas of improvement. Leadership and management, which were judged to be satisfactory, are now good, and the headteacher and key staff provide very good leadership. The governors and curriculum co-ordinators have developed their monitoring roles well. Assessment of pupils' skills and knowledge, which was not well developed in subjects including geography, history, art and religious education, is now good. The curriculum for the under-fives, which was satisfactory, is now good. Provision for pupils with special needs has improved from satisfactory to good. Punctuality has improved, and pupils' behaviour, which was good, is now very good. With the opening of a well-equipped information technology suite, the accommodation, which was satisfactory, is now good.

## STANDARDS

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

| Performance in: | compared with |      |      |                 | <b>Key</b>   |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|--|
|                 | all schools   |      |      | similar schools |  |
|                 | 1997          | 1998 | 1999 | 1999            |  |
| English         | E             | E    | C    | A               | well above average      A<br>above average          B<br>average                    C<br>below average          D<br>well below average      E |
| Mathematics     | E             | E    | D    | C               |  |
| Science         | C             | E    | D    | C               |  |
|                 |               |      |      |                 |  |

In English, the school's results in 1999 were close to the national average for all schools in the country, and well above the average for schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. Pupils make good progress in developing writing skills at both key stages. There has been a steady improvement in standards over the past three years. In mathematics, the results of the 1999 tests were below the national average for all schools, and close to the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Standards in mathematics have improved since the previous inspection, but are still below national expectations. Many pupils are still uncertain which parts of large numbers represent hundreds, tens and units, and are better at working out sums on paper than in their heads. Standards are improving steadily, but are not yet high enough. In science, the percentage of pupils attaining the nationally expected level was close to the national average in 1999, while the percentage achieving higher levels was well below the national average. Overall, the standard was below the national average. Standards are close to the national average when compared to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Inspection findings agree with the test results. All aspects of the subject are covered in appropriate depth, and there is a good focus on investigative work. Standards are similar to those at the previous inspection. Realistic targets have been set to improve standards in English and mathematics in the National Curriculum tests at Key Stage 2 in 2000. To meet these targets, the school has focussed on early identification of pupils with learning difficulties, effective support for pupils with special needs, help for slower readers, additional literacy support and booster classes for pupils in Year 6.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect                                 | Comment   |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school                | Good. Pupils are enthusiastic. They are very interested and involved in all activities around the school.   |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms    | Very good. Pupils behave very well in class and around school. There have been no exclusions.   |
| Personal development and relationships | Very good. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are very good. Pupils are encouraged to develop responsibility and independence. |
| Attendance                             | In line with the national average in 1997/98 and has improved since then. Unauthorised absence is below the national average.                         |



Pupils' attitudes to work are consistently good. They are keen to learn, and eager to come to school. They listen attentively and concentrate well on their work. Pupils' behaviour is very good. They are polite and helpful, and treat property with respect. Very good relationships between pupils are based on mutual respect and co-operation. Teachers know pupils well and build up very good relationships. There are good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, work independently and widen their experiences.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching was satisfactory or better in all the lessons observed. It was good in 58 per cent of lessons, and very good in a further 15 per cent of lessons. Overall, teaching is good for the under-fives and at both key stages. Teaching of English and mathematics, including the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, are good throughout the school. Particular strengths of the teaching include excellent management of children under five and very good management of pupils at both key stages. Teachers' expectations of children, ongoing assessment of their skills, and planning for the future are particularly effective for the under-fives, and good at both key stages. Teachers' use of homework is too inconsistent and unstructured at Key Stage 2. The school meets the needs of higher and lower attaining pupils well. Pupils work at a brisk pace, and make good progress in acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding in most subjects. They make good progress in reading and writing at Key Stage 1, and are getting quicker at doing mathematical calculations in their heads, although some pupils are still hesitant when counting to 100. At Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress in writing and in mathematics, and are working hard to improve their mental mathematics skills. Pupils make good progress in developing basic information technology skills at both key stages, but they are not yet using these skills satisfactorily in other subjects. Progress for the under-fives is good in all areas, and is very good in personal and social development and in knowledge and understanding of the world.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect  | Comment  |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum   | Good. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. There is a broad range of extra-curricular activities and clubs.  |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs   | Good. Pupils make good progress throughout the school.   |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Provision for pupils' personal development is good. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory, social and spiritual development are good, and pupils' moral development is very good. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils  | Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good.   |

The schools' links with parents are good. The school works closely with parents and a significant number help regularly in the classroom. Others coach games activities or help out with visits and sporting fixtures. Provision for personal, social and health education is a strength of the curriculum, with a good programme of health education, 'circle time' planned for each class, and a School Council currently being set up. All the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum are met, but the Religious Education curriculum at Key Stage 1 does not fully meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect   | Comment  |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The leadership and management of the headteacher and the senior staff are very good.   |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities             | The governors fulfil all their responsibilities effectively.   |
| The school's evaluation of its performance                       | The school has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.   |
| The strategic use of resources                                   | Educational priorities are supported very well through the school's financial planning. Specific grants are used very effectively. |

The very good management of the headteacher and senior management team ensures strong direction and clear purpose in the work of the school. The school's aims and values are very well reflected in all its work. The school development plan successfully identifies areas of the curriculum and other provision where improvement will have the most impact on pupils' standards. All major spending decisions take into account the principles of best value. Overall, the accommodation is good, though the library for the older pupils is due to be re-developed, and there is no dedicated outdoor play area for the under-fives in the reception classes.

## 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>Children enjoy going to school.</li> <li>The school enables children to make good progress in their work.</li> <li>The school achieves high standards of good behaviour.</li> <li>The teaching is good.</li> <li>The school keeps parents well informed about their children's progress.</li> <li>Parents are comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.</li> <li>The school expects children to work hard and to achieve their best.</li> <li>The school works closely with parents.</li> <li>The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>The school helps children to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children do not receive the right amount of work to do at home.</li> </ul> |

The inspection findings support the parents' very positive views.

An appropriate amount of homework is set at Key Stage 1, but more consistent and structured setting of homework at Key Stage 2 would help to extend and consolidate pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Most children under the age of five join the nursery before entering the reception class. When they join the nursery, most have levels of attainment well below those expected for children of their age in language and literacy and in mathematics. Children's levels of personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative and physical development are below those expected of four-year-olds. As a result of good teaching, they make good progress overall towards the desirable learning outcomes for five-year-olds. Progress is very good in personal and social development, and in knowledge and understanding of the world, and is good in language and literacy, mathematics, creative development and physical development. By the age of five, the attainment of pupils is above national expectations in personal and social development, and is in line with expectations in physical development, creative development and in knowledge and understanding of the world. It is below the expected level in language and literacy and in mathematics.
2. By the end of Key Stage 1, the overall attainment of pupils is broadly in line with national expectations, though attainment is below the expected level in mathematics and in information technology.
3. In English, the percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard in reading was close to the national average in the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 1999, but the number achieving higher levels was well below the national average. Overall, standards in reading were below the national average. The overall standard in 1999 was similar to that in 1998. In writing, the percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard in 1999 was close to the national average, while no pupils achieved higher levels. Overall, standards in writing were below the national average. In the 1999 tests, standards were slightly lower than in 1998. Inspection findings indicate that standards in English are broadly in line with the national average at Key Stage 1. In speaking and listening, standards are close to the national average, while standards in reading and writing are also close to the national average. These findings are better than the 1999 test results because there are more pupils capable of achieving higher levels in the current Year 2.
4. In mathematics, the percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard in the 1999 tests at Key Stage 1 was well below the national average, and well below the average number achieved higher levels. Overall, standards were well below the national average. In the 1999 tests, standards were lower than in 1998. Inspection findings also indicate that attainment in mathematics is below the national average. In science, the percentage of pupils reaching the nationally expected level in teachers' assessments in 1999 was well below the national average, but well above the average attained higher levels. Inspection findings indicate that attainment in science is broadly in line with the national average at Key Stage 1. This reflects the results of the 1999 tests.
5. The level of attainment pupils achieved at Key Stage 1 in the national tests in 1999 compared quite reasonably with those in similar schools. In reading and writing, and in science, the school's results were similar to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In mathematics, pupils were well below average in comparison with pupils from similar backgrounds.
6. In English, pupils make good progress in reading and writing at Key Stage 1. Average and higher attaining pupils read accurately and use a range of phonic strategies to work out new words. They read a range of fiction and non-fiction books and make choices about what they like to read. The majority of pupils write in complete sentences, and most use capital letters and full stops correctly. Simple words are usually spelt accurately. Pupils make good progress in the development of their speaking and listening skills. They listen attentively to their teacher, and to one another, and follow instructions well.
7. Pupils' progress in mathematics is good at Key Stage 1. There is a good focus on developing basic numeracy skills, and mental mathematics skills have improved since the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. Pupils recognise common two and three-dimensional shapes, and choose appropriate non-standard units, such as rods, when measuring length. In science,

pupils make good progress. They classify common types of materials, and recognise which are translucent, transparent or opaque. They observe the life cycle of a butterfly, understand the digestive system and identify the biggest and smallest bones in the human body.

8. At Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in information technology is below national expectations, but they are currently making satisfactory progress as resources for teaching the subject and the quality of teaching have both recently improved. Pupils use the mouse and keyboard controls to write sentences and to save and print their work. There is little use of information technology in other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils' attainment in religious education is below the standard expected at the end of Key Stage 1 as not all pupils in Key Stage 1 study a second world religion as required by the locally agreed syllabus introduced in January 1999. Pupils learn about the main Christian traditions and beliefs by hearing stories from both the Old and New Testaments. Pupils make good progress in art, music and physical education, and satisfactory progress in design and technology, geography and history.
9. Overall, the attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with national expectations, though standards are below expectations in mathematics and information technology.
10. In English, the percentage of pupils attaining the nationally expected level in the National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds in 1999 was close to the national average, but the percentage of pupils attaining higher levels was below average. Overall, the standard of attainment was close to the national average. In the 1999 tests, the school's results were much better than its 1998 results. In mathematics, the percentage of pupils attaining the nationally expected level was below the national average, and the number attaining higher levels was also below the national average. Overall, the standard was below the national average. In the 1999 tests, the school's results were better than its 1998 results. In science, the percentage attaining the nationally expected level was close to the national average, while the percentage achieving higher levels was well below the national average. Overall, the standard was below the national average. The school's 1999 results were better than its 1998 results.
11. The level of pupils' attainment in the English tests at Key Stage 2 in 1999 was well above the average in schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In mathematics and science, pupils' attainment was close to the national average for similar schools.
12. Inspection findings indicate that standards of attainment in English are close to the national average. This reflects the 1999 Key Stage 2 test results. Attainment in speaking and listening is close to the national average, while standards in reading and writing are also close to the national average. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in English at Key Stage 2. They make sound progress in listening and speaking. Pupils communicate effectively in groups and contribute enthusiastically to the majority of lessons. Pupils make sound progress in reading, and good progress in writing. Higher attaining pupils read accurately, with fluency and understanding. Lower attaining pupils lack confidence, and read hesitantly, with little expression. Handwriting is consistently neat, and work is presented with attention to detail. Pupils write in a variety of styles and for different purposes including letters, newspaper articles and extended pieces of imaginative writing.
13. In mathematics, inspection findings indicate that attainment is below the national average at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils are currently making good progress, however, due to improvements in the standard of teaching since the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. Pupils are more confident with written methods of calculation than when calculating mentally, but there is a positive effort to develop and use mental methods of calculation. Pupils add and subtract two-digit numbers, and higher attaining pupils perform long multiplication accurately. There are few opportunities, however, to carry out mathematical investigations.
14. In science, inspection findings indicate that attainment is close to the national average at the end of Key Stage 2. This is an improvement on the 1999 test results as there are more pupils capable of achieving higher levels in the current Year 6. Pupils analyse what is a fair test and identify what they want to observe. They make informed predictions, test their hypotheses in a wide range of contexts, and draw sound conclusions. Pupils undertake their own investigations to explore how sound travels, but too often, teachers remain in charge of demonstrations.
15. Pupils' attainment in information technology is below national expectations at Key Stage 2. Pupils have good word-processing skills, and use 'cut and paste' techniques for simple desktop publishing. They use CD-ROMs to find information and search and sort data on a computer

database. Their understanding of spreadsheets, however, is weak, and there is very little use of information technology skills across different subjects of the curriculum.

16. Pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with the standard expected in the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils understand the significance of some of the main festivals and traditions of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. They compare the holy books of Islam and Christianity, for example, and study the significance of pilgrimage in both religions. Pupils make good progress in art, music and physical education, and sound progress in design and technology, geography, history.
17. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, at both key stages, towards the targets in their individual education plans, particularly where they are withdrawn for specific work on literacy and reading through the Additional Literacy Support and Reading Recovery programmes. In these sessions, pupils make very good progress. In lessons where there is no support available, in numeracy and other subjects of the curriculum, pupils make progress that is appropriate to their age and ability. There is no significant variation in attainment by gender, race or background. Differences in attainment between girls and boys generally follow national trends.
18. Pupils' literacy skills are broadly in line with national expectations at both key stages. Literacy skills are improving with the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy. The literacy hour has been introduced effectively in all classes. The school has taken care to plan opportunities for extended writing. Pupils apply new knowledge and skills gained in the literacy hour to improve their writing, for example, in science, history and religious education.
19. Standards in numeracy are currently below the national average at both key stages, although pupils' understanding and use of number is now developing satisfactorily at both key stages. The National Numeracy Strategy is being introduced effectively in all classes. Pupils are beginning to carry out mental calculations with increasing accuracy and are beginning to show greater confidence in manipulating numbers and using multiplication tables. There is only limited use numeracy skills, however, in other subjects such as science and geography.

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

20. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes to learning and their personal development are good. Behaviour is very good, and relationships with other pupils and with staff are also very good. This aspect of the school is strong, and shows good improvement since the last inspection.
21. Pupils have consistently good attitudes to their work. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. Pupils are keen, enthusiastic to learn and eager to come to school. Nearly all parents state that their children enjoy school. Pupils listen attentively, follow instructions well and settle quickly to a given task. Even the youngest pupils concentrate well during a range of activities and work diligently, both independently and with others. Pupils are interested in the life of the school and enjoy extra-curricular activities, school productions, fundraising and visits organised by the school. When given the opportunity, pupils work together well, share resources and ideas, and help each other in group work. They are encouraged to do well, but understand that they are valued for their effort, persistence and positive approach to a task, even if they encounter difficulty with it. Pupils' attitudes generate a good working atmosphere throughout the school.
22. Pupils' behaviour is very good in and around the school, and has improved since the last inspection even though it was then considered that most pupils behaved well. Most parents feel that behaviour in the school is good. Pupils respond very well to a positive approach that is now applied uniformly across the school. No inappropriate behaviour was seen during the week of the inspection and there have been no exclusions in recent years. Discipline is a strong feature of the school and provides a sense of security. Pupils of all ages fully understand the system of rewards and sanctions. They know right from wrong, and are mindful of the school and class rules, which they help to devise.
23. Individuals are praised in assemblies for their good behaviour. On a recent occasion, the headteacher discovered that a pupil had found and handed in a lost purse, and recognised this honest deed publicly. During assemblies, pupils enjoy sharing their work and having their efforts recognised. Pupils in the football team know that they have been chosen to represent the school not only for their sporting skills, but also for their ability to remain well behaved under all circumstances. Their sporting behaviour is acknowledged even when they are not

successful in winning a match.

24. Pupils are very polite and courteous with teachers, their peers and with visitors. They move sensibly about the school, between the two sites and in the playground. Older pupils carry bags for smaller children, hold doors open and conduct themselves well. The school's buildings and grounds are treated with respect. There are no graffiti, and litter is picked up promptly. Lunchtime is a pleasant social occasion and is very orderly. Pupils wait patiently to be served, show respect towards the staff, and when playing outside, they willingly accept the authority of adult supervisors.
25. The quality of relationships in the school is very good. Teachers know pupils well and are sensitive and responsive to individual needs. Particularly caring support is given to those with special educational needs, and pupils respond by trying hard to do their best. Pupils know that bullying is unacceptable and have confidence that teachers will deal with it firmly, should it occur. Parents agree that isolated incidents of bullying are dealt with promptly and effectively. Pupils of all ages establish very effective relationships with other pupils, and with their teachers. This is demonstrated by the way that they are willing to take turns, co-operate in group activities, share equipment and listen to the opinions of others. Pupils show respect for other faiths, traditions and cultures, and acknowledge the skills of pupils of the opposite sex.
26. Pupils' personal development is good. There are many opportunities for pupils to reflect on what they do, and to understand the impact of their actions on others. This is done particularly well when pupils discuss their own, and others', feelings in personal and social education lessons. Pupils in Years 4 and 5, for example, discuss the characteristics of their best friends, and what it means to be a good friend. They debate what to do when faced with a dilemma, and how to react. There is a strong sense of pupils belonging to a community, of being a member of a class, a family, or a club. Thoughtful discussions lead pupils to consider what responsibilities these roles bring, and what the effect of one person's actions might be on a community or group. Older pupils consider what their responsibilities to others will be if they are elected to the school council.
27. Pupils respond well to jobs they are given, which range from taking the register to the office, tidying coats in the cloakroom and preparing the computer suite for a class lesson. Even young children in the nursery are assigned roles at tidying up times, and understand that, at this time of the day, they have to wear labels to show what they are expected to do. There are often good opportunities for pupils to work independently in lessons and to use their initiative, although there are occasions towards the end of Key Stage 2, for example, in science, when pupils would benefit from being allowed to take more decisions. A large number of visits and visitors helps to widen pupils' experiences, and pupils develop a good awareness of the basic needs of others by helping to sponsor a girl in India. At the parents' meeting, all parents felt that the school promotes good values and teachers act as good role models.
28. Attendance is close to the national average and has improved further this year. The rate of unauthorised absence is below the national average. A significant number of pupils achieve full attendance for a term. The school works closely with parents and the education welfare officer to ensure that any absences are explained satisfactorily and promptly. Registrations are taken efficiently, and lessons start on time. Pupils know what is expected of them. As they enter their classrooms, they take out their reading books or workbooks, and settle to work without any fuss. Although a few pupils still come late to school, there has been a notable improvement since the last inspection, when a significant number came late. Parents are reminded regularly of the importance of punctuality.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

29. The standard of teaching is good for the under-fives and at Key Stages 1 and 2. All teaching is at least satisfactory. In 58 per cent of the lessons observed the teaching was good, and in a further 15 per cent it was very good. The standard of teaching has improved since the previous inspection.
30. Teaching is good, and sometimes very good, in all the six areas leading to the desirable learning outcomes for children under the age of five. It is good in language and literacy, mathematics, physical development and creative development, and very good in personal and social development and in knowledge and understanding of the world. The high level of good teaching is largely responsible for the good progress made by the under-fives.
31. Teaching is good at Key Stages 1 and 2. In English and mathematics, art and physical education, teaching is good at both key stages. In science, teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and sound at Key Stage 2. In information technology, teaching is sound at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Teaching of religious education is sound at Key Stage 2; no teaching was observed at Key Stage 1. In history, teaching is sound at both key stages. In design and technology, teaching is sound at Key Stage 2; no lessons were observed at Key Stage 1; In geography and music, insufficient lessons were observed to make a judgement at either key stage. Teaching that is good or very good is a major factor in ensuring that pupils make good progress at both key stages.
32. Teachers' subject knowledge and understanding are good for the under-fives and at both key stages. A significant factor in the improvement of English teaching, for example, is the consistently secure subject knowledge when teaching all aspects of the subject. In mathematics, teachers show good subject knowledge, challenging pupils with appropriate questions and tasks. Teachers use correct vocabulary and terminology, for example in literacy, mathematics and science. In science, a key feature of the most successful lessons is the good subject knowledge of teachers. In history, teachers have a secure subject knowledge and communicate enthusiasm for the subject. This helps pupils to make sound progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of historical research skills. Very good use is made of a teacher's specialist expertise to accompany the singing on the piano during school assemblies. This helps pupils to develop a very good standard of singing.
33. All teachers are confident in teaching appropriate skills during the literacy hour and numeracy lessons. Planning for the literacy hour follows the guidance of the National Literacy Strategy, and has a strong emphasis on direct teaching. There is a suitable balance of whole-class, group and individual work. In literacy lessons where the teaching is very good, the teachers' subject knowledge and their understanding of teaching phonics and basic skills are particularly well developed and secure. Where pupils are withdrawn for specific literacy support, for the Reading Recovery scheme and for the Additional Literacy Support programme, the quality of teaching is consistently good or better. In mathematics, there is suitable emphasis on developing basic skills, and on encouraging pupils to explain their methods for different calculations. The recommendations of the National Numeracy Strategy have been fully adopted, with mental mathematics games and exercises at the beginning of lessons being particularly successful.
34. Teachers' planning for the under-fives is very effective. The nursery curriculum is completely focused on the six areas of learning and children are taught in accordance with the Desirable Learning Outcomes. In the mixed-age Reception and Year 1 classes, work is suitably planned so that when classes are divided during parts of the day, the reception children take part in more structured play activities. Both long-term and medium-term planning are good at both key stages. Learning objectives related to the National Curriculum programmes of study are clearly identified in lesson plans, and lessons build well on previous learning. Teachers successfully plan different activities for pupils who are at different stages in their learning. Careful planning ensures that parallel classes in each year group follow a similar curriculum.

35. Teachers' expectations of children under five are very high. This encourages children to make very good progress, for example, in their personal and social development and their knowledge and understanding of the world. Expectations of pupils' work and behaviour are good at both key stages. In physical education, for example, teachers are very enthusiastic, high expectations are communicated to pupils very clearly, and this encourages pupils to put the maximum physical and creative effort into their work. Work for individual pupils is graded to match pupils' age and ability in the mixed-age classes. In English, for example, teachers have high expectations of pupils and constantly seek to provide challenging activities. Expectations are often particularly high for the younger pupils in mixed-age classes. In science, for example, expectations for the attainment of Year 2 pupils within the mixed Year 2 and Year 3 classes are particularly high. Work is pitched at achievable but challenging levels, and both the younger and older pupils respond well. Very occasionally, work set for the older and more able pupils is not challenging enough. In science at Key Stage 2, for example, some of the oldest pupils are not always sufficiently challenged by the choice of practical activities, and the recording of them, and this limits the development of their investigative skills.
36. Teaching methods and organisational strategies used by teachers are good for the under-fives and at both key stages. Where teaching is good or better, a suitable range of activities helps to retain pupils' interest and develops their skills and knowledge. Lessons usually contain a good balance between teacher input, questioning and discussion, and activities for pupils to complete. Teachers make good use of question and answer sessions, and work hard to include all pupils in discussions, for instance, in religious education lessons. Teachers give clear instructions, and make good use of praise. Pupils are often asked to demonstrate their work and share their good practice, for example, in physical education lessons. In mathematics, setting by attainment throughout the school helps to focus work on the pupils' abilities and to improve standards of numeracy. In science, teachers place suitable emphasis on practical demonstrations and investigative work. In practical work in design and technology, teachers play an active role in helping pupils to identify how they can improve their designs. There is some use of computers in English to draft and improve work, but teaching could be improved further by extending the use of information technology to assist teaching in other subjects of the curriculum. There is very little use of information technology in mathematics, for example, to assist in data handling or to practice numerical skills. Insufficient use is made of computers to plot the results of surveys and weather data in geography, for example, or to draw graphs and charts of the results of investigations in science.
37. The very good relationships between teachers and pupils help to produce a pleasant, hard-working and creative atmosphere. The management of pupils is usually very good at both key stages, and is excellent with the under-fives. As a result, pupils remain well motivated and attentive. They listen carefully to their teachers, and concentrate very well when working on their own or in small groups. In physical education, for example, teachers have very good relationships with pupils, and as a result, pupils' attitudes to physical education are good at both key stages. Creative relationships are built on mutual respect, and praise is frequently used to reward positive attitudes and pupils' contributions, for instance, in English lessons.
38. The use of support staff, time and resources is good at both key stages and with the under-fives. Support staff are well briefed, and are deployed very effectively. Good use is made of the valuable help provided by volunteer parent helpers and governors, for example, with reading and with literacy. The use of time is good, with teachers dividing lesson time carefully between teacher-led sessions and individual pupil activity. Efficient use of time was observed, for example, in the literacy hour and numeracy lessons. A brisk pace, for instance, in physical education and science lessons, produces a good pace of work and very productive lessons. The use of resources is good throughout the school. Good use is made of a wide variety of resources including big books and shared reading books in literacy, artefacts in history and religious education, and a good range of percussion instruments and recorded music. Good use is made of visiting musicians, authors, artists and a visiting theatre group. The curriculum is extended by visits to local churches, farms, a woodland centre and a Victorian seaside resort. Insufficient use is made of information technology resources to support other subjects of the curriculum such as numeracy, science and geography.
39. The quality of ongoing assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding is good at both key stages, and is very good for the under-fives. Teachers make good use of day-to-day



assessment of pupils' progress. They sometimes modify their teaching as a result as the lesson progresses. Teachers often use questions and answers to assess pupils' understanding, and use the information well to focus their explanations. On-going assessment is good in mathematics, for example, due to careful questioning and monitoring of pupils during lessons. In investigative work in science, pupils make good gains in their knowledge as a result of teachers' probing questioning and their precise assessment of pupils' understanding. Teachers' assessments are generally well used in all subjects to plan the next stage of learning.

40. The use of homework to reinforce and extend what is learned in school is unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2. Spellings, tables and reading are set regularly as homework at Key Stage 1. In addition, further tasks at Key Stage 2 sometimes help pupils to consolidate their skills in a range of subjects. An appropriate amount of homework is set at Key Stage 1, but homework is not sufficiently structured and consistent at Key Stage 2 to extend and consolidate pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The quality of marking is inconsistent. All work is marked, but in some subjects, such as science and religious education, there are few constructive comments. The best marking includes helpful comments on how pupils can improve their work, in addition to praise and encouragement.
41. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school and, as a result, pupils make good progress. Pupils' needs are recognised early in their school life, and appropriate support is given. The majority of pupils with special needs have difficulties in English and literacy. Teachers' planning for the literacy hour takes into account the needs of pupils with learning difficulties by ensuring that independent work matches their ability. Effective use is made of whole class sessions to reinforce and consolidate basic skills. Good use is made of support staff to teach pupils with specific literacy difficulties through the Additional Literacy Strategy. The special educational needs support teacher and the learning support assistants have very good expertise and a good understanding of the pupils' difficulties. They effectively assist pupils with special needs, and their support contributes substantially to the good progress made by pupils. Where pupils are withdrawn to work with classroom support staff or special needs teachers, they make good, and often very good, gains in skills, knowledge and understanding. They are interested, concentrate well and work hard. During lessons, class teachers have a good understanding of the pupils' special needs and adapt their teaching methods to meet these needs. In the majority of lessons, teachers plan specifically for pupils with special needs, providing appropriately matched work, and supporting pupils with additional individual assistance. Class teachers plan in accordance with the targets identified in pupils' individual education plans. Strategies in the individual education plans, however, do not always give sufficient guidance to class teachers on how to reinforce the work covered in withdrawal sessions in class when the support staff are not present. The special needs support teacher, class teachers, and the learning support assistants work together effectively to ensure that all pupils take a full and active part in the curriculum.

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

42. A broad and balanced curriculum is provided throughout the school, and this meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The statutory curriculum is not fully met, however, in religious education at Key Stage 1, as not all pupils have the opportunity to learn about a second world religion, as stipulated in the locally agreed syllabus. Equality of access to the curriculum is offered to all pupils. A good range of learning opportunities is given to pupils, with numeracy and literacy given a strong focus, and topic themes planned carefully to deliver the foundation subjects. Attractive displays around the school and in the classrooms show the broad range of opportunities and the rich life of the school.
43. Issues raised in the previous inspection report regarding insufficient curriculum time in art, information technology and design and technology have been dealt with satisfactorily, and planning for pupils' spiritual development has been successfully addressed.
44. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy, and appropriate time is allocated for literacy lessons. Emphasis has also been placed on appropriate time for implementing the National Numeracy Strategy. The increase in time spent on literacy and numeracy lessons has been accompanied by improvements in pupils' standards in both subjects. At both key stages, planning of the curriculum ensures equal access for all pupils,

and reflects the needs of both younger and older pupils in mixed-age classes. Medium term planning is good, with clear learning objectives, suitable activities and appropriate opportunities for assessment. Curriculum co-ordinators and the senior management team monitor plans to ensure full coverage of the National Curriculum. The curriculum in each subject generally builds on existing knowledge, understanding and skills in a structured and systematic way. Suitable schemes of work are in place in most curriculum areas, with draft schemes of work in art and information technology ready to be implemented.

45. Pupils' learning is enriched by a broad range of extra-curricular activities and clubs. These include football, netball, games, choir, music, recorder, art, information technology, gardening, and craft clubs. The contribution of parents and voluntary helpers is valued by pupils and by teachers. Educational visits and school visitors are an important and regular feature of the curriculum, with the school making great efforts to provide a rich variety of experiences for pupils.
46. Equal opportunities in all areas of the curriculum are supported by careful planning and the strong relationships between staff and pupils. A particular focus in the school is raising the attainment of boys. The school is actively involved in an initiative to close the gap between boys' and girls' attainment, particularly in writing, whilst raising the standards of both.
47. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good, including circle time planned in every class each week, and the setting up of a school council. There is a well developed health education programme for all classes. Drugs education, awareness of medicines and sex education are based, where appropriate, within the half-termly topic or theme. The school has good links with the local community, including many local visitors and trips within the local area. Co-operation with other junior and infant schools in the local cluster is strong, and students from the local college come into school regularly to support pupils with computer skills.
48. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory, pupils' social and spiritual development are good, and moral development is very good. There is a very positive school ethos, and the commitment to moral, social and spiritual development has a very positive influence on pupils' personal development. School assemblies are lively and well-presented, and through these, and lessons such as circle time and religious education, pupils learn to consider others' feelings and to value their culture and beliefs.
49. The school has had a recent focus on spiritual development, with a working group looking at planning to ensure provision throughout the school and across the curriculum. A draft statement has been agreed by the staff, but has not yet been fully implemented. Assemblies provide good spiritual teaching. The story of St. Nathan, who disciplined himself and was then forgiven, for example, contained the moral message that we all make mistakes. Prayers are a strong feature of assemblies, with some pupils being asked what should be included in the prayers, and others leading with their own prayers. A very effective 'hand prayer' was used to provide a focus for reflection, and a 'prayer tree' gives pupils the opportunity to display their own prayers. Planned circle time sessions in the classroom allow pupils time to reflect on spiritual issues such as valuing others.
50. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The behaviour and discipline policy provides a good framework for a whole-school approach, based on positive reinforcement, with a variety of privileges, rewards and incentives. Staff provide very good role models for pupils. The strong relationships in the school, and positive management of pupils, give a good basis for moral understanding. Pupils are carefully guided when considering their own rights and their responsibilities towards those less fortunate than themselves. This occurs, for example, through fund-raising for a number of charities on a regular basis, including sponsoring a child from a children's home in India. Staff have been well trained in delivering effective circle time sessions where moral issues, such as dealing with a dilemma and making the correct decision, are discussed.
51. The provision for social development is good. Most parents agree that the school is helping pupils to become mature and responsible. Very good relationships within the school help to form positive attitudes towards good social behaviour and self-discipline. Everyone is valued in the school, and pupils are encouraged to accept responsibilities and to work together in harmony. Pupils work well in pairs, in small groups and as a whole class throughout the school.

52. Pupils are given a suitable range of responsibilities, such as taking registers to the school office, and cloakroom, library and assembly duties. A school council is currently being developed, and this is already encouraging responsibility and thoughtful decision making. Social skills are further developed by the good range of extra-curricular activities and by opportunities to perform in front of others, for example, with the choir and in concerts. Pupils are encouraged to support local and school initiatives, including a subway painting in Normanby by pupils in Years 2 and 3, and the development of a courtyard as an environmental area. Pupils in Year 6 are also given the opportunity to develop their social skills on a residential trip to an outdoors activities centre.
53. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The school works hard to provide local cultural opportunities for pupils, but exploration of multicultural traditions is not as rich or varied. A good range of visitors is encouraged to visit the school to provide cultural diversity and interest. These include authors, an artist, the local member of parliament, a theatre company and a range of musicians. Pupils go on a wide range of visits including a trip to Saltburn to support a Victorian topic and visits to local churches, farms and a woodland centre. Multicultural opportunities are more limited, but guided reading books, and big books with a multi-cultural theme, are used during literacy lessons, and artefacts from world religions are used in religious education.
54. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. Curriculum planning successfully meets the needs of pupils with special needs. There is a good policy for special educational needs and this is reflected in the school's provision. Individual education plans, for all pupils on the special needs register, are good. Plans are well focused, with specific, measurable targets based on evidence obtained from diagnostic tests or the pupils' work. They provide good guidance for small group work, but the strategies in the plans do not always help class teachers to plan suitable work in class. Revised plans are written on a termly basis after a full review meeting. In addition to long-term intervention, the school has introduced short-term provision such as the Reading Recovery and Additional Literacy Strategy programmes to help pupils with specific difficulties. This is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' skills. Pupils with special educational needs have equal access to all areas of the curriculum. Where pupils are withdrawn for additional support, teachers ensure that they are brought up to date with any work they have missed so that they are fully prepared for the remainder of the lesson.

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

55. The quality of care is good, and has improved since the last inspection. The school safeguards pupils' welfare well. Teachers know their pupils very well and have very good relationships with them. They discuss any concerns they may have about pupils with senior members of staff. Several teachers have received training in recognising signs and symptoms of child abuse. The school has adopted the area child protection committee procedures, and staff meetings are used to discuss general concerns. The education social work service is informed about any suspected or identified problems.
56. There are good health and safety procedures. A recent Health and Safety Officer's report stated, "....as in the previous report, the standard of Health and Safety and Welfare in the school was very good." Inspection evidence supports this statement.
57. Good attention is paid to monitoring and promoting high rates of attendance and punctuality. Although most pupils attend regularly, the school has effective systems in place to promote good attendance. Excellent attendance is celebrated at whole-school assemblies. The school takes every opportunity to encourage parents to ensure their children attend school through discussions, newsletters and, if necessary, the support of other agencies.
58. Developing pupils' self-discipline receives a very high profile, and is very effective. Teachers have very high expectations of good behaviour, and of courtesy to peers and adults. They implement the school's aims and behaviour policies consistently, and have very good methods of managing pupils. All staff in the school contribute to this. The dinner ladies, for example, have regular meetings with senior staff to discuss how improvements may be made, and how to deal with incidents that concern them. They are also empowered to award good behaviour points. Although the school successfully avoids exclusions, its policies and practices do not tolerate any kind of harassment or bullying.

59. The school has effective methods to support the raising of pupils' standards. Part of the weekly whole-school assembly, for example, is devoted to celebrating pupils' achievements. Pupils of all ages, including children from the nursery, are encouraged to achieve high standards of work and behaviour. Pupils are proud to be praised for their achievements and they value their merit certificates, which are awarded for good effort, high attendance, outstanding behaviour, sensible initiative and hard work. Pupils design some of the merit certificates themselves. Pupils strive to achieve a praise certificate for which they have to work very hard. Many have an opportunity to show their talents to their peers by playing instruments or reciting poems they have written for special occasions.
60. Pupils who need extra help are well supported. The reading recovery scheme is particularly effective. Pupils with special educational needs have good individual educational plans with short-term, specific and measurable targets.
61. Pupils' personal development is supported well by the school's personal and social education programme. To enhance pupils' contribution to the life of the school, a school council is currently being set up. Pupils have been prepared for the responsibilities involved, nominations have taken place, and those standing for election have written statements saying why they wish to serve on the council.
62. Procedures for assessing pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are good, and good use is made of assessments to inform planning. As a result, work is more closely matched to individual pupils' attainment, and leads to more effective learning. Improvements have been made since the previous inspection in the quality of assessments in subjects other than English, mathematics and science, and these are now good. The school complies with statutory requirements regarding the testing of pupils at the end of each key stage, and optional tests are used in other years. Results are analysed at the end of the key stages, and suitable targets are set for pupils. There is a clear policy for carrying out end-of-year assessments and day-to-day judgements. Ongoing daily assessment is effective, with good use of questioning to check understanding, and clear links to the objectives of the lesson to evaluate learning and to monitor progress. The use of common procedures allows teachers to identify consistently what pupils know and understand. This information is then used to target individual improvement. Target setting is highlighted in the school development plan, and the school is in the process of establishing a whole-school cycle of target setting for all pupils. Subject co-ordinators maintain a portfolio of work in each subject, and portfolios of assessed work are kept in English to help teachers reach a consensus about different levels of attainment. Assessment records are good. Teachers keep their own records of on-going assessments, which inform their planning and feed into standardised record sheets to help monitor individual pupils' progress. The assessment policy lists the records to be passed on from class to class, including an annotated record sheet with comments for each of the core subjects.

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

63. Parents and carers have very positive views about the school. With the exception of the management of homework at Key Stage 2, most parents support the school wholeheartedly. The inspectors agree with the parents' views, including the need for a more structured programme of homework at Key Stage 2.
64. Parents agree that the school keeps them well informed. The regular monthly newsletter contains features that highlight the contributions of parents to the school and their support of children's learning. These include a parent who took part in the Great North Run to raise funds for the school, and parents who helped with Christmas activities. Notices sent home at appropriate times inform parents of learning, sporting and visiting opportunities, and seek permission for their children to participate.
65. The parents' evening in the early autumn is effective in informing parents what their children will be learning through the year. Annual reports are informative on what pupils know, understand and can do. However, while they highlight positive achievements, it not always sufficiently clear what pupils need to do to improve their work. Parents have suitable opportunities to discuss reports with their children's teachers.

66. The school works closely with parents, and they make a good contribution to their children's learning. A significant number of parents help regularly in the classrooms. Several have been encouraged by the school to train and qualify as classroom assistants and as "better reading partners". The school provides the necessary support for their practical training. Others parents use their talents as sports coaches or help out with visits and sporting fixtures. There is no parent-teacher association, but members of the governing body and other parents initiate fund raising and social events to purchase educational materials and to bring parents and the school closer.
67. Parents' involvement in their children's education at home is not as well developed. Although the school has provided a "reading together" programme and the information technology suite is open to the community at specified times, there is little evidence that most parents work regularly with their children at home, for example, reading with them regularly for enjoyment. Parent governors are increasingly active in the governance of the school, but the majority of parents are not involved in helping to formulate the curriculum or in influencing major spending decisions.
68. The school does not make routine home visits before children start in the nursery, but it does provide a very good booklet explaining how the nursery educates children. The nursery programme for the youngest children is flexible enough to accommodate their different needs. Parents are very welcome in the school, and friendly discussions regularly take place between parents and teachers. Parents of older pupils often discuss their children's progress with teachers when they bring them to school or collect them. The school operates a truly "open door" policy, and teachers also find time for discussions with working parents.

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

69. The headteacher and senior staff, as at the last inspection, continue to provide very good leadership of the school. They have very clear corporate aims, and appropriate plans for the future are well documented. The school is moving forward with a strong sense of direction and clear purpose. The headteacher works closely with the deputy headteacher and senior management team. During her three years as headteacher, she has established very good relationships with staff and parents, and has gained the respect of her pupils. She has nurtured good relationships with the community, and has fostered many opportunities for pupils' personal development. She is strongly committed to raising standards in the school and has established a very good ethos to support the effective learning of all pupils.
70. The headteacher monitors teaching and pupils' work effectively. Together with the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators, she has monitored the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies by observing literacy and numeracy lessons in all classes. With the senior management team, she has analysed National Curriculum assessments at the end of each key stage and the results of the optional tests in Years 3, 4 and 5, and has then taken action to address weaker areas, for example, to improve the standard of spelling and writing at Key Stage 1.
71. The aims and values of the school are very clearly reflected throughout its work. The school provides a warm, supportive and stimulating environment in which children feel happy and secure, and are eager to learn. The school has high expectations of all children's learning and behaviour, and introduces children to a wide range of experiences and challenges which motivate and enrich their learning.
72. Responsibility for subject areas is delegated to subject co-ordinators who manage spending on resources, and monitor teachers' planning and pupils' work effectively. All staff have job descriptions which specify their roles clearly. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides very good leadership in the identification of pupils with special educational needs and in the compilation of appropriate individual targets. She monitors the provision for pupils with special needs effectively, and ensures their progress is reviewed regularly.
73. The governors provide good support for the headteacher, and are fully involved in the management of the school. They are very effective in fulfilling all statutory requirements. They hold regular formal meetings, and there is an appropriate structure of committees that discuss issues fully and report directly to the governing body. Governors are kept well informed by presentations from the headteacher and other staff. Several governors visit the school

frequently and assist regularly in the classroom. They help to monitor curriculum provision and see the school in action. Several governors have attended accredited training courses, and the headteacher arranges in-service training sessions for governors in school. Governors play an important role in discussing management issues, and have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The governing body has a clear view of the long-term development of the school, and their vision is well documented in the school development plan.

74. The school has good procedures for evaluating the performance of staff, and this contributes to the high quality of teaching. The headteacher has an annual meeting with each member of staff and, through negotiation, targets are set for both personal and curriculum responsibilities. These targets relate to the priorities outlined in the school development plan. Teachers' progress is reviewed on a termly basis.
75. Priorities identified in the school development plan are very appropriate. The governors, headteacher and senior management team have successfully identified areas of the curriculum and other provision where improvement will have the most impact on the standards pupils achieve and the quality of education provided. The school has a very clear commitment to improve standards and to provide equal opportunities for all pupils regardless of race, gender, religion or other personal circumstances. This commitment is shared strongly by the senior management team and by all staff. Realistic targets have been set to improve standards in English and mathematics in the National Curriculum tests at Key Stage 2 in 2000. To meet these targets, the school has focussed on early identification of learning needs, effective support for pupils with special needs, help for slower readers, additional literacy support and booster classes for pupils in Year 6.
76. The school does not, at present, have any newly qualified teachers, or a formal policy for the induction of new staff. Arrangements for support, through the staffing and management structure, however, are good. Upon appointment, new staff are provided with a copy of the staff handbook and are allocated to a year group team. The team leader acts as a mentor to provide help, advice and support on a daily basis.
77. The school is very effective in supporting educational priorities through its financial planning. The school development plan identifies clear targets that are linked to specific success criteria. Where possible, the cost implications of each initiative are identified. The clarity of the planning enables the school to implement specific programmes such as the Reading Recovery programme and the Additional Literacy Strategy effectively. The school is not yet fully geared to using the latest technology as it is not yet online; but it has been assigned to the second cohort of development in the National Grid for Learning project.
78. The school makes very good use of funding which is allocated to specific projects. The information technology suite, for example, has been developed using grants earmarked for the National Grid for Learning, and the school is currently being developed as a Community Learning Centre with local authority funding. Disabled access to the west school building has been achieved by a successful access bid.
79. There is a sufficient number of suitably qualified and experienced teachers to meet the demands of the National Curriculum and religious education. Additional teaching staff, with responsibility for special needs provision, enhance the level of staffing. There is a good match of teachers' qualifications to their subject responsibilities. Since the last inspection, staff expertise in information technology, design and technology and the teaching of reading has been improved through the appointment of a new information technology co-ordinator and by in-service training. Improved teacher expertise is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' standards of attainment.
80. There is a good number of classroom support staff who are appropriately qualified and experienced. These staff provide skilled and positive support to those groups of pupils for whom they are responsible. Teachers and support staff provide good role models for pupils. All display skill, care and commitment in their dealings with pupils. The school is well served by administrative, caretaking, cleaning, catering and midday supervisory staff. All make effective contributions to pupils' wellbeing and the very good ethos of the school.
81. Accommodation is good. Classrooms and shared areas are spacious and well appointed. Staff utilise the space well for teaching and displays. There is a designated music room which is large enough for class teaching, and both school halls are large enough for whole-school

assemblies and physical education lessons. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from access to small teaching rooms and surplus classrooms. The split site results in some duplication of resources, for example, in physical education; but it causes no major difficulties in implementing the curriculum. Outside areas are extensive, with large playgrounds and playing fields. There is no dedicated play area, however, for under-fives in the Reception and Year 1 classes in the west building. Since the last inspection, the school has improved the accommodation by developing an information technology suite. Library facilities are satisfactory in the west building, but are unsatisfactory in the east building. This situation should be corrected in the near future when a designated library area is created in the east building. There is a high standard of maintenance and the school is clean and well kept, both inside and out.

82. The range and quality of learning resources are satisfactory overall, and are adequate to teach the planned curriculum. Resources for English, information technology and art are good. Resources are satisfactory in all other subjects except geography, where the range of resources is still unsatisfactory. Resources have improved since the previous inspection in many subjects, including English, mathematics, information technology and religious education. Library resources are satisfactory, and are supplemented by loans from the local authority library service. Resources for teaching pupils with special educational needs are good. Good use is made of visiting authors, artists and theatre groups, and of visits to residential centres and places of cultural and historical interest.

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

83. In order to raise standards and improve the quality of education provided, the governing body, headteacher and staff should
- (1) raise standards in mathematics at both key stages. (see paragraphs 4, 13, 114 -120)
  - (2) raise standards in information technology at both key stages, and increase the use of information technology to assist the teaching of other subjects across the curriculum. (see paragraphs 8, 15, 36, 38, 113, 142, 147, 148 - 154, 160)
  - (3) revise the policy and scheme of work in religious education to ensure that the curriculum for all pupils at Key Stage 1 meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. (see paragraphs 8, 169, 173, 175)
  - (4) devise and implement a suitable homework policy to ensure that homework is set consistently and in a structured manner at Key Stage 2. (see paragraphs 40, 63, 67, 105, 117)
84. In addition to the key issues above, the school should consider including the following minor issues in its action plan:
- (1) The school should improve resources for the teaching of geography. (see paragraphs 82, 142)
  - (2) The school should consider providing a dedicated outdoor play area for children under five in the reception classes. (see paragraphs 81, 100, 102)
  - (3) The school should carry out its plans to develop suitable library facilities for older pupils in the east building. (see paragraphs 81, 113)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed   | 66 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 32 |

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0%        | 15%       | 58%  | 27%          | 0%             | 0%   | 0%        |

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

|  | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|--|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | 20      | 295     |
| Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals        | 0       | 94      |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

|   | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs       | 0       | 0       |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 0       | 60      |

#### English as an additional language

|   | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 1            |

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

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

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

|                           | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 5.1 |
| National comparative data | 5.4 |

#### Unauthorised absence

|                           | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 0.1 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

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



### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
|  | 1999 | 18   | 19    | 39    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | 16      | 15      | 14          |
|   | Girls    | 14      | 17      | 14          |
|   | Total    | 30      | 32      | 28          |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 81 (79) | 86 (85) | 76 (92)     |
|   | National | 82 (80) | 83 (81) | 87 (85)     |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | 14      | 15          | 15      |
|   | Girls    | 14      | 14          | 12      |
|   | Total    | 28      | 29          | 27      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 76 (75) | 78 (94)     | 73 (92) |
|   | National | 82 (81) | 86 (85)     | 87 (86) |

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
|  | 1999 | 24   | 30    | 54    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above   | Boys     | 17      | 14          | 20      |
|   | Girls    | 25      | 19          | 24      |
|   | Total    | 42      | 33          | 44      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School   | 78 (44) | 61 (43)     | 81 (54) |
|   | National | 70 (65) | 69 (58)     | 78 (69) |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above   | Boys     | 18      | 14          | 20      |
|   | Girls    | 26      | 20          | 25      |
|   | Total    | 44      | 34          | 45      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School   | 81 (32) | 63 (38)     | 83 (54) |
|   | National | 68 (65) | 69 (65)     | 75 (72) |

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

## Ethnic background of pupils

|                                 | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage      | 0            |
| Black – African heritage        | 0            |
| Black – other                   | 0            |
| Indian                          | 0            |
| Pakistani                       | 0            |
| Bangladeshi                     | 0            |
| Chinese                         | 1            |
| White                           | 294          |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 0            |

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

## Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

## Teachers and classes

### Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 13.5 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 21.8 |
| Average class size                       | 29.5 |

### Education support staff: YR – Y6

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 1.2 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week   | 33  |

### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 1  |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 20 |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 1.5 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week   | 42  |

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Number of pupils per FTE adult | 8 |
|--------------------------------|---|

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Financial information

|                |         |
|----------------|---------|
| Financial year | 1998/99 |
|----------------|---------|

|  | £      |
|--|--------|
| Total income                               | 538558 |
| Total expenditure                          | 517957 |
| Expenditure per pupil                      | 1455   |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 46352  |
| Balance carried forward to next year       | 66953  |

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate      29%

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 317 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 93  |

### Percentage of responses in each category

|  | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school.   | 67             | 31            | 1                | 1                 | 0          |
| My child is making good progress in school.  | 67             | 32            | 1                | 0                 | 0          |
| Behaviour in the school is good.   | 53             | 44            | 2                | 0                 | 1          |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.                              | 31             | 40            | 22               | 2                 | 5          |
| The teaching is good.  | 70             | 28            | 1                | 0                 | 1          |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.                          | 69             | 27            | 2                | 2                 | 0          |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 73             | 25            | 2                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.              | 67             | 31            | 0                | 0                 | 2          |
| The school works closely with parents.   | 60             | 38            | 2                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school is well led and managed.  | 72             | 24            | 2                | 0                 | 2          |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.                      | 65             | 31            | 3                | 0                 | 1          |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.            | 57             | 28            | 5                | 0                 | 10         |

### Other issues raised by parents

No other issues were raised by a significant number of parents

## **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**

85. This section of the report focuses on the 33 children aged under five in the reception classes and the 40 under-fives in the nursery. When children enter the nursery, their attainment in language and literacy and in mathematics is well below the expected level for their age. In other areas of learning, they are below the expected levels. Children make good progress. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when children under five made satisfactory progress. By the time they are five, they are still below expectations, however, in most of the nationally agreed desirable learning outcomes as their limited language skills hinder attainment in other areas. These inspection findings are confirmed by the school's baseline tests which are used to measure the skills and knowledge of four-year-olds.

#### **Personal and social development**

86. Children make very good progress in their personal and social development in the nursery and reception classes. Most children exceed the nationally agreed desirable learning outcomes by the time that they are five. Children soon become aware of the routine of school sessions and learn what to expect. They show good attitudes to most learning situations and are happy and secure in their surroundings. Most are eager to explore new learning situations and during the inspection were keen to look at books with an inspector. They settle down quickly to tasks and become involved in what they are doing. Behaviour is very good for their age and they understood the simple rules that are imposed. School property is respected, and even children as young as those in the nursery have jobs to do. At tidying up time, each member of the class wore a label to indicate their responsibility. Children are taught to take turns, which they do well. In both the nursery and reception classes, children relate well to each other. They help each other to put on aprons and undress for physical education. During a snack time, very good personal development occurred when children were encouraged to choose between two types of biscuit according to whether there was cheese spread on them, and to say "no, thank you", "yes, please", and "I would like...".
87. Teaching is very good in this area of learning. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when teaching was satisfactory in all areas. Excellent opportunities are provided for reflection, and staff give a strong lead. Children in the nursery have considered what they would like to say thank you for, and have thought about simple prayers. They think about who loves them, and whom they love. During circle times, children learn about friendship and caring for others. Even nursery children are collecting 1p and 2p coins to help the school's attempt to sponsor a little girl in India. Contact is kept up with a family who has moved to Australia, and there is a children's notice board with correspondence on it.

#### **Language and literacy**

88. Children in the nursery and reception classes make good progress, but as their attainment is well below average on entry to the school, they are still below the nationally agreed standards in language and literacy skills by the time they are five.
89. Most children listen attentively, and like to talk to each other about what they are doing. They often find difficulty, however, when trying to explain to an adult, to answer a question or to describe what they see. For example, when a group of nursery children were engaged in water play with a toy duck, the nursery nurse discovered that none of them knew the correct word for it. One child volunteered that it was a "quack quack". Reading is slow to develop. Children enjoy listening to stories told by the staff and on tapes. They remember the sequence of events in familiar stories and join in with repetitive phases. In the nursery, although a few children can recognise a small number of familiar words and use pictures to help them understand what is happening in a story, most are at the pre-reading stage. They are learning letter sounds appropriately from a phonics scheme. In the reception classes, many are acquiring skills associated with early reading. They know that text gives meaning, and some pupils realise that words are built up from individual letters. Two higher attaining children were developing fluency and accuracy well for their age and, with support, were able to express opinions and predict what would happen in the story. A few pupils are reliant on memory to 'read' the books, but they often know the initial sounds at the beginning of words. Nursery children show an awareness of some of the conventions of writing, and use pictures,

symbols, and some letters to communicate meaning. Staff often help children to explain what they want to write, and scribe it for them. Several children in the reception classes write their names accurately without the support of the teacher, and are putting together phonetically justifiable words. Letter formation is developing well, and children have made very good progress with pencil control since starting school. They make good attempts to trace or copy letter outlines which are provided for them. There are some good opportunities to carry out emergent 'pretend' writing in play activities, but the potential for extending children's skills in these situations is not fully developed in the reception classes.

90. Teaching is good, overall. There are some very good features. Many opportunities are very well planned to promote fluency in speaking, and this aspect is featured in all the practical activities in the nursery. Staff and adult helpers also involve themselves alongside children in 'role play', for example, in the café, or when children are building with large blocks. Subtle intervention helps to extend the language, and gives staff the chance to assess pupils' capabilities. The assessment of individual skills, and the use of this information, are strong features of the work in the nursery. Teaching in the reception classes is very skilfully adapted to introduce children to the early elements of the National Literacy Strategy.

### **Mathematical development**

91. Children's attainment is well below average on entry to the nursery, and although they make good progress, by the time that they are five, they are still below the nationally agreed desirable learning outcomes. In the nursery, they begin to use mathematical language such as 'more than' and 'longer than', but accurate counting is not assured, and several children are unable to count beyond a few numbers. They sort plastic bears for colour and size with the support of an adult helper, but often require help when sequencing items in a given order. Reception classes follow on this work for children who need the practical experiences, and give much attention to helping children become familiar with numbers by counting on, counting back, adding on one more and assessing how many items are in a set. The curriculum for children in reception dovetails well with the National Numeracy Strategy for pupils who are at Key Stage 1. Higher attaining pupils carry out very simple calculations with equipment, but those who need special support have difficulty when threading a sequence of two or three coloured beads on to a string.
92. The quality of mathematical teaching is good. A wide range of practical equipment enables the children to practise their skills, and sand and water enable the children to explore concepts of capacity and measures. Very good work with water was seen in the nursery when children explored which objects will float and sink. The teacher helped children to put objects into two large hoops to demonstrate those which floated and those which sank. There was also an intersecting set of objects which children observed had floated at first, and then sank. Opportunities are also taken throughout the day to reinforce counting activities. When baking, for example, children count the baking cases before adding the mixture, and they try to decide if there are enough biscuits for everyone at snack time.

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

93. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is very limited when they enter the nursery. Most children make very good progress as a result of the excellent first hand experiences which they encounter. By the time that they are five, there is a wide variation in attainment, with most children meeting the nationally agreed desirable learning outcomes, and some still below them. Some children's weaker skills in language and literacy adversely affect the level of attainment they can achieve in this area.
94. In the nursery, children learn about the area around the school, and draw a route of their walk with features they have remembered. They learn about the workings of a farm by making a visit. The topic on winter alerts them to changes in the trees during the seasons, and they draw what they have observed. They know that different clothes are worn in the winter and summer, and keep a record of how the weather changes from day to day. When baking, they realise that ingredients have to be mixed to give the desired result, and that heat changes substances. The role-play in the café helps them to understand the idea of a menu, and that there are different types of meals. Good photographs taken by the staff help children to learn how to classify items. Structured activities which are led by staff help children to explore materials, draw simple designs, and produce models of 'daddy in bed', or a robot. Children select equipment purposefully and build with large blocks. They pretend that they are part of a construction site and wear safety helmets. In the reception classes, they learn to associate

toys with different generations and look at some of them from their grandparents' era. Children are adept at using headphones, and they enjoy using computer programs, for example, to 'dress teddy' in the appropriate clothes for the weather.

95. The quality of teaching is very good in this area, and there is a real sense of purpose in all the work. Teaching is very carefully planned and staff use all experiences to extend children's vocabulary. They relate very well to children, and provide interactive displays that are productive and are designed to teach concepts. For example, nursery children experiment with magnets, magnifiers and mirrors and are encouraged to talk about their findings. Reception class teachers, similarly, try to provide a range of experiences. Sometimes, however, there is not enough adult support for children, such as when they are engaged in role-play or are experimenting with the properties of sand and water.

### **Creative development**

96. Children make good progress in creative development, and most reach the nationally agreed desirable learning outcomes by the time they are five. Children in the nursery mix paints and discover that they can produce other colours. They learn about cold colours that are associated with winter, and make drawings of buds on the trees and cars that they have seen during a walk. Children in the reception classes build on these skills and paint portraits. They learn about Picasso and make pictures in his style, sometimes applying printing techniques. Collage work is well featured, and this is linked with work on exploring the sense of touch. Children learn to paint their models of spiders and vehicles, and realise that the paint must be of a certain consistency for it to cover the cardboard. Class pictures sometimes call for a corporate effort, as with the picture of Humpty Dumpty and the work on reflective materials in the reception classes.
97. Children enjoy experiencing music in different forms. They sing along with their teachers and participate eagerly when using percussion instruments. Nursery children try to keep a steady beat while playing, and this leads them to count '1,2,3,4' while others sing a nursery rhyme. Role-play areas engage pupils in imagining themselves in different situations, for instance, serving meals in the café, or looking after someone who is ill in 'the bedroom'.
98. Teaching is good in this area. There is constructive support for children, and techniques and skills are well taught. High expectations lead children to produce work of high quality, and keen intervention by teachers keeps pupils well on task. Work is valued, and the quality of display is of a very high standard.

### **Physical development**

99. Children make good progress in developing their physical skills. By the time they are five, most children meet the standards of the nationally agreed desirable learning outcomes. They are taught to hold pencils properly, to cut with scissors, spread glue and paint with large brushes. Good opportunities exist for children to mould materials such as play dough and wet sand, and to balance bricks. They take apart and build with construction toys, which helps them to develop fine muscular control. Children in the reception classes show that they are developing these early skills well. They cope with buckles, buttons and fasteners with few problems. Within the classroom environment, children move about freely and learn to negotiate the space when they are carrying items. Nursery children enjoy moving to music, and are developing an awareness of finding a space for themselves. Reception children show that they are developing good skills when they are throwing and catching balls and handling small apparatus.
100. The quality of teaching is good in physical development. The nursery staff make good use of the dedicated play area outside the nursery, but there is no designated area, with suitable equipment, for use by under-fives in the reception classes. As a result, reception class children do not have the opportunity to develop their co-ordination skills by using bicycles and wheeled vehicles. There are opportunities for them to use the hall, however, and to develop their skills in climbing and balancing indoors. Staff are very aware of the safety aspects associated with this area of learning, and they plan and organise the activities very carefully.
101. The curriculum for children under five is closely related to the nationally agreed desirable learning outcomes. There is a good policy, and good awareness amongst staff of how to implement it. The nursery curriculum is completely focused on the areas of learning, and they

are taught well. Expected outcomes are conveyed to all adults who work with groups, and assessments often occur while the activities take place to indicate the growth of skills in individuals. Children who are of reception age are taught in mixed-age classes with Year 1 pupils, but the classes are divided during parts of the day, so that reception age children experience more structured play activities as required. The adult support which children in the reception classes receive when teachers are focusing on Year 1 pupils is not always sufficient, however, to help pupils make sense of the activities, and to get the most from them. The school is aware of this. A recent development has been to plan specifically for play with sand and water, as this provides good concept development for later learning in mathematics. Key adults are not always available, however, to manage these activities.

102. Assessment and recording procedures are good for the under-fives, and reception class teachers are well informed about the progress of children in the nursery. The nursery accommodation has been improved since the last inspection and is spacious and well managed. It is attractively displayed and the furniture is well suited to the needs of very young children. Resources are good in the nursery, and satisfactory in the reception classes. There is no outdoor equipment for the older children, however, as they do not have their own designated space for outdoor play.

## **ENGLISH**

103. The percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard in reading was close to the national average in the national curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 1999, but the number achieving higher levels was well below the national average. Overall, standards in reading were below the national average. In writing, the percentage of pupils achieving the national standard in 1999 was close to the national average, but the number achieving higher levels was below the national average. Overall, the standards in writing were below the national average. Inspection findings indicate that standards in English are close to the national average at Key Stage 1. In speaking and listening, standards are close to the national average, with standards in reading and writing also in line with the national average. The levels of attainment pupils achieved at Key Stage 1 in the national tests in 1999 compared reasonably with those in similar schools. Both in reading and in writing, the percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard was broadly in line with the national average for similar schools. Standards have improved over the past four years, and are continuing to improve due to the high standard of teaching and the focus on additional support for reading and literacy.
104. The percentage of pupils attaining the nationally expected level in the National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds in 1999 was close to the national average, but the percentage of pupils achieving higher levels was below the national average. Overall, the standard of attainment was broadly in line with the national average. Inspection findings confirm that standards in English are close to the national average at Key Stage 2. Standards are in line with the national average in speaking and listening, and in reading and writing. The level of pupils' attainment in the English tests in 1999 was well above the average in similar schools. Results of the national tests over the last four years indicate that standards are steadily improving at both key stages. At Key Stage 1, the improvement is most evident in reading. In line with national trends, the performance of boys is significantly lower than that of girls, especially in writing at Key Stage 2. The school is actively involved in a programme to raise the standard of boys' writing.
105. Teaching is good at both key stages, and ranges from very good to satisfactory. During the inspection, teaching was very good in 21 per cent of English lessons, good in 63 per cent and satisfactory in 16 per cent. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. All the very good teaching was observed at Key Stage 1. Where pupils are withdrawn for specific literacy support with the English co-ordinator or classroom support staff, the quality of teaching is always good or better. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection, when the quality of teaching was judged to be satisfactory. A major factor in this improvement is the consistently secure subject knowledge of the teachers in all aspects of the subject. In lessons where teaching was very good, teachers' subject knowledge and their understanding of teaching phonics and basic skills was very well developed and secure. Planning is thorough, and teachers use every opportunity to reinforce existing skills. Very good management strategies are used, with praise frequently being used to reward positive attitudes and good contributions

to the lesson. Time is well used, with a range of different approaches that maintain pupils' attention and concentration. This has a very positive impact upon the pace of learning. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, particularly at Key Stage 1, and constantly seek to provide challenging activities. Resources are well chosen and classrooms are well organised, bright and stimulating. This ensures a positive learning environment. Lessons that are no more than satisfactory sometimes lack sufficient pace, and although activities are carefully planned, they do not always stimulate pupils' interest or provide sufficient opportunities for all pupils to be challenged and extended. Homework is used satisfactorily at Key Stage 1 to support the development of reading. At Key Stage 2, taking reading books home, and the use of homework to extend work covered in lessons, is inconsistent across classes and is insufficiently planned and structured.

106. As a result of the good teaching, at Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in the development of their speaking and listening skills. During the literacy hour, they listen attentively to their teacher, and to one another, and follow instructions well. At Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their listening skills. Pupils communicate effectively in groups, and contribute enthusiastically to the majority of lessons. The ability of a minority of older pupils to listen to text being read, then to extract relevant points and organise their ideas so that they can explain them to the rest of the class or group, is less well developed. This is particularly the case when the subject matter is of a more abstract nature and they are unfamiliar with it.
107. Pupils make good progress in acquiring reading skills at Key Stage 1. An improvement in standards over the last two or three years is partly due to the emphasis the school has placed upon setting targets for individual pupils and the introduction of the Reading Recovery scheme for pupils with special educational needs. Average and higher attaining pupils read accurately, and use a range of phonic strategies to work out new words. They understand simple texts and are beginning to express some opinions about the main events or characters within the story. Higher attaining pupils use their knowledge of the alphabet to locate information in an index or contents page, and suggest specific books they have enjoyed reading.
108. Pupils make satisfactory progress in reading at Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, partly due to the introduction of the Additional Literacy Strategy that has seen these pupils make an average gain of 8 months in one full term's work as measured by the Salford Reading Test. By the age of 11, a majority of pupils are close to the national average, with a few pupils exceeding this. Pupils develop the skills to use reference books to locate information well. Pupils in Year 3, for example, can locate specific cities in an atlas by using the index and page references, and older pupils can use a range of textbooks and CD-ROMs to locate information about specific topics such as the Roman army. The oldest pupils know how to use the library to find suitable books. In Year 5, higher attaining pupils read accurately, with fluency and understanding. Lower attaining pupils lack confidence, often reading mechanically and without expression or real understanding. This is reflected in Year 6, with higher attaining pupils being enthusiastic readers using a number of phonic and other strategies when faced with an unfamiliar word. Lower attaining pupils read with hesitation and in some cases, still use a finger to follow words when reading. Although, there are good opportunities within the school day for pupils to read to themselves, not all pupils take their reading books home on regular basis, with some pupils only taking them home on Friday for the weekend. This variable practice reflects a weakness in the school's policy for reading at home.
109. Pupils make good progress in developing writing skills at both key stages. Their attainment in writing is broadly in line with the national average at the end of both key stages. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be below the national average. By the age of seven, the majority of pupils write short sequences of sentences. They understand the purpose of full stops and capital letters and use them effectively in their writing. In Year 1, the majority of pupils write simple sentences and form letters correctly, although there is some inconsistency in size and orientation. By the end of the key stage, the majority of pupils are writing evenly, and the spelling of simple words is accurate. Mistakes are generally phonetically plausible. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to use speech marks and other punctuation in their writing. The quality of presentation and handwriting is good. Lower attaining pupils use simple punctuation at the beginning and end of short statements, but use them inconsistently within narrative writing. Letter formation is inconsistent. Higher attaining pupils write cursively in pen, and show good control over letter formation and consistency. Within their writing they are beginning to use additional



punctuation such as speech marks accurately.

110. By the age of 11, pupils write about their ideas in clear sequence, and use a range of punctuation correctly and accurately. They write in a variety of styles and for different purposes including letters, newspaper articles and extended pieces of imaginative writing. Pupils develop their understanding of verbs, adjectives and nouns and become increasingly able to use these conventions within their writing to convey interest and to illustrate ideas. Pupils in Year 3 use simple adjectives within simple sentences. Older pupils write poems and letters expressing how they feel about specific issues, using adjectives within the text to create atmosphere and to develop their initial ideas. Throughout the school, pupils show a pride in their work, which is generally presented with attention and care to detail. Handwriting is consistently neat.
111. Pupils have a positive attitude to English lessons. The attitude and behaviour of pupils at Key Stage 1 is very good, and it is good at Key Stage 2. Throughout the school, most pupils answer questions eagerly, and are keen to contribute during whole class sessions. Most pupils concentrate well and persevere to complete tasks. Relationships between pupils, with teachers and with classroom support staff, are very positive and this creates a good atmosphere in classrooms. Behaviour in lessons is very good.
112. There is a positive ethos for the subject, and teachers have implemented the literacy hour effectively. The leadership of the English co-ordinator is very good, and has given a clear direction to this process. With the support of the headteacher and the senior management team, she has analysed the results of both national and school-based tests. Using this analysis, the school has implemented a range of strategies to raise standards in reading and writing. This has involved specialists from the local authority providing staff development, training and support. Initiatives such as the Reading Recovery and Additional Literacy Strategy programmes are beginning to have a positive impact on raising standards, particularly on the reading of below average pupils at Key Stage 1, and writing skills of pupils in the lower years of Key Stage 2. The subject policies and schemes of work for the three strands of the English programme of study are currently being revised in the light of the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers' planning is monitored and evaluated by the co-ordinator, and guidance is given when needed.
113. Resources for the teaching of English are good. Displays throughout the school reflect the positive attitude that teachers have to pupils' work, and reflect the work done in literacy in all areas of the curriculum. Pupils use their literacy skills well in other subjects such as history and geography, to write up investigations in science and to record and evaluate their work in design and technology. The use of information technology as an integral part of the English curriculum is limited, however. The recent addition of an information technology suite now provides good opportunities for the school to incorporate this type of work more fully into the curriculum. Library facilities are satisfactory at Key Stage 1, and the school has plans to develop a new library area for pupils at Key Stage 2.

## **MATHEMATICS**

114. The percentage of pupils gaining the nationally expected standard in the end of Key Stage 1 assessments in 1999 was well below the national average. The percentage of pupils gaining higher levels was also well below the national average. Results over four years show a marked improvement in 1997 and then a worsening in 1998 and 1999 against national trends. As a result, standards in mathematics at Key Stage 1 have fallen since the previous inspection, although good teaching and a focus on basic numeracy skills is currently ensuring good progress. At Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils gaining the nationally expected standard in the 1999 assessments was below the national average, and the percentage of pupils gaining higher levels was also below the national average. Standards at Key Stage 2 have been improving steadily, however, over the past four years, at a slightly better rate than improvements in standards nationally. Inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment is below national expectations at the end of both key stages.
115. At Key Stage 1, pupils are beginning to develop an accurate use of mathematical vocabulary, understanding language such as 'more than', 'less than' and 'total'. They compare two numbers and say which is bigger or smaller and they show some understanding of partitioning a 2-digit number into tens and units. Some pupils' counting skills are insecure, however, with some

hesitancy in counting beyond 20 and when counting in twos, fives or tens. The mental agility of pupils at Key Stage 1 is improving, although many pupils still have difficulties with addition and subtraction bonds. Shape recognition is sound, and pupils show some understanding of choosing appropriate non-standard units, such as rods, when measuring length. Pupils have under-developed skills in problem-solving and in applying mathematics in real-life situations.

116. At Key Stage 2, pupils are more confident with written methods of calculation than calculating mentally. However, there is currently a positive effort to develop and use mental methods of calculation, with pupils able to use and explain, for example, different methods for adding and subtracting two 2-digit numbers. Some average and lower attaining pupils have an insecure understanding of place value. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 are able to perform long multiplication accurately in their books, and they have a secure understanding of place value. Pupils at Key Stage 2 have few opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to real-life situations or to carry out mathematical investigations.
117. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. Lessons are well planned using the guidance from the National Numeracy Strategy. There is good use of resources such as 100-squares and number lines, and an effective style of classroom management. Teachers create a pleasant working environment, with firm, positive discipline and a friendly, supportive manner with pupils. They show good mathematical knowledge, challenging pupils with appropriate questions and tasks. There is a good emphasis on developing basic skills, encouraging pupils to explain methods used for different calculations. The recommendations of the National Numeracy Strategy have been adopted, with mental mathematics activities at the start of lessons proving to be particularly successful. Teachers reinforce the language of mathematics and make the objectives of the lessons clear to the pupils. Setting by attainment throughout the school helps to focus work on pupils' abilities and to improve standards of numeracy. On-going assessment is often good, due to careful questioning and monitoring of pupils during lessons. Homework is set in all classes, particularly at Key Stage 2, but it is not carefully planned to support learning in a structured way.
118. Progress at both key stages is good, mainly due to the good teaching. A focus on developing basic numeracy skills, and the good use of the three-part lesson structure, is giving pupils the opportunity to learn and consolidate new skills and concepts. Mental skills are improving, with pupils beginning to explain methods they used to add or subtract two numbers, for example, by partitioning or by rounding. The lower attaining pupils make good progress through targeted activities, particularly in developing a 'feel' for number and place value. Booster classes are provided for lower attaining Year 6 pupils prior to the Key Stage 2 assessments, and there is a mathematics club for a small number of more able Year 6 pupils at the local secondary school.
119. Pupils enjoy mathematics lessons and respond positively to the tasks. They listen attentively to each other and to adults, and concentrate well on their work. They share resources well, and behaviour is very good, both when working with the teacher in a whole class activity and when working independently.
120. The subject is co-ordinated well. Staff have adopted many aspects of the National Numeracy Strategy and the co-ordinator is enthusiastic and positive about improvements in teaching and learning, such as improvements in mental mathematics, that have been in evidence since September. Medium term planning is monitored and supported, and classroom observations of the mental mathematics activities at the start of lessons have been carried out. Mathematics is highlighted as a priority on the school development plan, with a series of staff training sessions already planned. Resources are adequate following the recent purchase of basic materials such as 100-squares, counting sticks and number lines, and text based resources at Key Stage 1, such as whole class 'big books'. Further development of resources is planned for Key Stage 2 to support teaching of basic numeracy skills.

## **SCIENCE**

121. At the end of Key Stage 1, the percentage of pupils reaching the nationally expected level, according to teachers' assessments in 1999, was well below the national average. The percentage of pupils who reached higher levels was above the national average. In comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, the proportion of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard in 1999 was well below average. The percentage achieving higher levels was well above average for similar schools. Inspection findings indicate that the attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 is close to the national average.

Although last years' results show that pupils' attainment was strongest in the knowledge of materials and their properties, and weakest in experimental and investigative science, there is currently a good focus on this latter element in all the work observed during the inspection, and this has had a positive effect on pupils' attainment.

122. At the end of Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils attaining the nationally expected level was close to the national average in 1999, while the percentage achieving higher levels was well below the national average. Overall, the standard was below the national average. Standards are close to the national average when compared to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. **Inspection findings indicate that attainment is close to the national average at the end of Key Stage 2. This is an improvement on the 1999 test results as there are more pupils capable of achieving higher levels in the current Year 6.** All aspects of the subject are covered in appropriate depth, and attainment is satisfactory in all areas. Standards are similar to those at the previous inspection, at both key stages.
123. The quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and is satisfactory at Key Stage 2, although there is a significant proportion of good teaching. This is an improvement on the previous inspection which found that teaching was sound overall. Key features of the most successful lessons are good subject knowledge of teachers and purposeful intervention which support pupils when they are reaching conclusions arising from practical work. This was seen to good effect when pupils in Year 1 investigated how objects move, and tried to decide whether the force in question was a push or a pull. Similarly, a class of pupils in Years 2 and 3 explored changes in materials when they were squashed, bent, twisted and stretched. In both these lessons, good teaching had an important impact on pupils' learning. Pupils did not have any foregone conclusions about the outcomes of the practical work and made good gains in their knowledge. This resulted from teachers' probing questions and precise assessment of pupils' understanding as the activities progressed. Lessons are carefully planned following the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines, and learning intentions build on pupils' developing skills and knowledge. Teachers form positive relationships with pupils, manage classes very well and have good organisational skills. Expectations for the attainment of pupils in Year 2 within the Year 2/3 classes are particularly high. Work is pitched at achievable but challenging levels, and pupils respond to this well. In some of the Key Stage 2 classes, although teaching is lively and interesting, the science content is sometimes obscured. When this occurs, insufficient emphasis is given to the scientific knowledge that underlies practical activities. Resources are used well, and lessons are generally taught at a good pace. Some of the oldest pupils are not always challenged sufficiently, especially in the conduct of practical activities, and in their recording. Marking is carried out regularly, but is frequently confined to ticks and comments to build pupils' self esteem. There are few examples of constructive marking which show pupils how they might improve.
124. Progress is good at Key Stage 1, largely due to the good teaching. Work is pitched at levels which extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. Discussions form an important part of lessons. Older reception class children and those in Year 1 explore the properties of reflective materials and tend to record their work by drawing or by producing collages. By Year 2, there is a specific emphasis on recording work in a structured way, and good examples occur where pupils have explored which materials are translucent, transparent and opaque. Pupils learn about the life cycle of a butterfly, classify insects, know about the digestive system and identify the biggest and smallest bones in the human body. Properties of materials are carefully tabled. Knowledge about sources of light and the direction of a force is well conveyed by the use of good demonstrations.
125. Progress at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall, and teachers work hard to build on the knowledge which pupils are acquiring. A good focus is given to investigative work, but too often, teachers remain in charge of the demonstrations, and these sometimes provide very predictable results. By Years 4 and 5, pupils analyse what is a fair test and identify what they want to measure. They practise applying skills of observation, prediction, looking for patterns and testing hypotheses in a wider range of contexts. Most pupils know that they must change only one variable if they wish to reach a verifiable conclusion. This knowledge was demonstrated when testing trainers to discover which ones had the best grip. Higher attaining pupils identified the variables which might influence the results, and made accurate measurements using Newton meters. The follow up task, however, which involved writing a letter to the product manufacturer, did not focus on the scientific aspect of the work. A Year 6 class made particularly good progress when they evaluated an experiment which tested how sound travels.

126. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress at Key Stage 1 and sound progress at Key Stage 2. Individual progress is often good, at both key stages, when pupils receive additional support. In a Year 4/5 class, pupils were withdrawn for specialist support in literacy for most of a science lesson, and therefore were not able to see the practical demonstration by the teacher. Few individual education plans include specific targets which are linked to science. Higher attaining pupils make good progress at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2.
127. Pupils' attitudes to their work continue to be good throughout the school. However, there were no signs of pupils becoming distracted when working together, as was found in the previous inspection. Pupils take pride in presenting their work neatly and accurately. They show interest in the subject, concentrate well and respond sensibly when given the responsibility to use equipment and carry out fair tests. Older pupils have fewer opportunities to use their initiative in lessons than younger ones. They are particularly good listeners and observers, and make thoughtful comments when teachers evaluate findings with the whole class at the end of sessions. Behaviour is very good, and pupils are particularly supportive of each other. They notice when others need help, and make positive remarks about each other's work.
128. All the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. The co-ordinator leads the subject well, and has provided in-service training for staff in an attempt to raise the profile of science, to use assessment procedures appropriately, and to give support to the teaching of investigative and experimental processes. Teachers' plans are carefully monitored, but there has been no time made available for the co-ordinator to observe lessons. A comprehensive draft policy has been produced, and work from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidance is suitably planned across the school, with good assessment opportunities and clear procedures for record keeping. A good health education programme has been devised to dovetail with the scheme. The school has considered carefully how to deliver the curriculum to mixed-age classes by means of a two-year rolling programme. There are adequate resources, which are of good quality, and are readily accessible to teachers. The curriculum was enriched by a visit from the ICI science caravan last year, and the school is looking forward to a return visit. Pupils enjoyed carrying out investigations in the caravan. They tried to discover, for example, which boat shapes would travel the fastest through water. Some very good application of numeracy and literacy skills is evident in the subject. Pupils have investigated, for example, how bones of the human body grow according to age, and have plotted graphs of their results based on measurements of children throughout the school. Displays about the universe, and about electricity, have provided excellent opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in creative writing and poetry composition.

## **ART**

129. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress at both key stages. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils handle tools confidently and skilfully, and use a variety of media such as textiles, charcoal and wax-resist to express their ideas. At Key Stage 1, pupils use a sketchbook to record their work, and understand how to create tone and texture using different pencils. They know about primary colours, and successfully mix these to make secondary colours. Work done in the style of Picasso shows a good feeling for the style of that artist, with pupils using their paintings to express emotions. Pupils at Key Stage 2 use a wide range of media, with particularly good use of fabrics in collage work. Good work is produced in print making, with very effective use of fabric printing, drawing and painting seen on good quality displays around the school. Pupils have some knowledge of the work of other artists such as Van Gogh, Monet and Paul Klee.
130. Teaching is good throughout the school, with very good management of pupils and very good relationships. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. Lessons are well planned and organised, with clear teaching objectives given at the start of the lesson, and effective support and guidance for pupils when they are working independently.
131. As a result of the good teaching, pupils enjoy art, and work purposefully, with good concentration. Their behaviour is good, and they have a good attitude to the subject, shown, for example, in a Year 5 discussion about Van Gogh. They take care when using materials, and quickly clear away at the end of lessons. They show pleasure when their work is displayed or shown to others in the class, and other pupils are quick to show their appreciation, for example, of careful shading in Year 1 which showed the textures of a teddy bear.

132. The co-ordinator monitors and evaluates the subject well, examining teachers' planning, and evaluating strengths and weaknesses through discussions with staff. Using the work of famous artists was seen as a weakness, for example, and the co-ordinator is now supporting staff with suggestions of ideas and themes. A draft policy and scheme of work has been prepared, and will support staff and help to ensure continuity and progression. The co-ordinator runs a successful art club where pupils produce a variety of creative work, including sculptures. The school is about to embark on a millennium project, with visiting artists and workshops on sculpture and ceramics. Resources for art are good, with a variety of media which are easily accessible. The quality of display around the school is of a very high standard, and this greatly enhances the attractiveness of the working environment.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

133. During the course of the inspection, it was only possible to observe two design and technology lessons. No teaching was seen at Key Stage 1. In addition to the two lessons observed at Key Stage 2, teachers' planning, scrutiny of photographs and work on display, and discussions with pupils have also been used as evidence when making judgements. Inspection findings indicate that pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress at both key stages.
134. At Key Stage 1, pupils in reception and Year 1 build tall towers and bridges with constructional toys to discover which structures are the strongest. They quickly understand that the making process begins with a plan, and all pupils are accustomed to designing vehicles before they start making them. Pupils explore how to join different types of materials such as paper, card and fabric, and how to stick wheels onto their models. Some of these skills are used when pupils make very good models of churches. They design and make spiders which have winding mechanisms so that they can be raised and lowered. Higher attaining pupils know how to take products apart in a structured way, and understand that they have been made from several pieces. Pupils have good opportunities to develop skills of cutting, moulding and shaping when they cook and prepare food. They make cakes with the help of a support assistant, and learn how to make a variety of sandwiches.
135. Pupils in the mixed age Year 2/3 classes have a clear understanding that products are made for a purpose. Pupils make houses for the Three Little Pigs, and test them for strength. Some of this work is of a particularly high standard, and shows that pupils follow a design accurately. Pupils appraise their models critically, and suggest how they can make refinements to improve their function. As pupils move through Key Stage 2, they learn further ways of joining materials such as using hinges. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 experiment with rotary movements and cams to make a toy with moving parts. Most pupils in Year 6 do not have such well-developed skills as younger pupils in the key stage. They discuss various kinds of animal shelters, the materials used and their purpose, but attempts at making a jack-in-the-box showed a wide variation in practical skills.
136. No teaching was observed at Key Stage 1. Teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 2. In the two lessons seen, techniques were carefully taught and planning took account of varying abilities. Teachers give good introductions and frequently intervene to show pupils how to improve their work. In one lesson, where pupils in Years 4 and 5 evaluated money containers for different groups of people, resources were particularly well prepared, and the teacher helped pupils to identify the criteria for a successful design. Both lessons observed were characterised by very positive relationships with pupils and clear demonstrations of techniques. Pupils in Year 6 were well motivated when starting to make a jack-in-the-box, but their practical activity had to be curtailed because of the short time given for the lesson. The quality of work on display indicates that teachers' expertise has improved since the last inspection and their knowledge of the requirements for teaching the subject is now clear.
137. Pupils' attitudes are good. They are very well behaved and use their initiative when asked to generate a design, select materials and produce a model from their own plan. They enjoy design and technology lessons, and often help each other with problems which arise during practical activities. Pupils concentrate well on their work, take pride in it, and always do their best. They show a great deal of respect to adult helpers who work with them.
138. At the time of the previous inspection, the curriculum for design and technology did not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. Planning now follows the guidelines

recommended by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, and is beginning to provide good breadth and balance across the school. Good progress has been made since the last inspection. The subject benefits from very good leadership from the co-ordinator who organises the subject documentation well, supports staff and has a clear view of the future direction of the subject. Good assessment and recording procedures are in place. There has been no time allocated for monitoring the teaching of lessons. In-service training has helped staff to gain confidence and to tackle new areas such as the use of hydraulics and pneumatics in models. Resources have been improved and are now adequate.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

139. As at the previous inspection, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1. Pupils become familiar with different types of homes and shops. They describe the journeys they make from home to school, identifying some of the main landmarks. Through a study of the travels of Barnaby Bear, they learn about different places around the United Kingdom and compare these places with their own area. The oldest pupils name and point out the constituent countries of the United Kingdom on a map. They locate cities in an atlas by using the index and a simple grid reference. They know about different forms of transport and their uses.
140. Pupils at Key Stage 2, including those with special educational needs, continue to make satisfactory progress. Pupils in Year 3 broaden their awareness of places in the United Kingdom and develop a sound knowledge of the countries of Western Europe. They colour in a map and use a key to identify specific countries. By the end of the key stage, pupils use a range of sources such as atlases and information books to research topics such as features of mountain environments. They understand the physical and environmental characteristics of mountainous regions, and how people use these areas for business and leisure. They recognise the importance of the water cycle when discussing the different uses of water, and understand the formation of different types of weather. They use appropriate geographical vocabulary within their discussions and writing.
141. As only one lesson was observed during the inspection, it is not possible to form a judgement about the quality of teaching, but scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work indicates that the attitude of pupils towards the subject is satisfactory. Work is presented neatly, and when talking about the work they have done, pupils show good levels of recall and explain the work they have done clearly. In the one lesson observed, the pupils were enthusiastic and interested. They worked well together, sharing ideas and resources appropriately. Behaviour was good, and the relationship between the teacher and the pupils was good. Teachers' planning indicates that the parallel classes in each year group follow a similar curriculum. The use of assessment is good, with specific tasks and activities used to assess pupils' attainment within each topic. Work is marked satisfactorily, although the use of helpful comments indicating how work might be improved varies significantly from class to class.
142. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership in the subject by monitoring planning and providing support and advice for colleagues when required, but the subject has suffered from some neglect in recent years due to the emphasis on literacy, numeracy and information technology. The scheme of work now used incorporates the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines, but the school's documentation does not yet reflect these changes. There is no clear direction for the future development of the subject. Resources are limited, and are spread throughout the school with no central catalogue or storage system. There is no guidance indicating how teachers can use information technology as an integral part of the subject to develop research, presentation and investigative skills.

## **HISTORY**

143. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress at both key stages. At Key Stage 1, the youngest pupils develop an understanding of change through time as they use artefacts to compare old and new toys. They begin to appreciate differences between the past and the present by examining events in their own and in other people's lives. They look at their own family tree and develop an understanding of chronology. By dressing up in Victorian costume and taking part in special projects, they begin to empathise with

historical characters and to recognise changes that have taken place in the recent past.

144. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make satisfactory progress by building on skills learned earlier. They develop a secure knowledge about specific periods of history such as the Victorian era, the Tudor dynasty and Roman Britain. Pupils in Years 4 and 5, for example, investigate the type of houses people lived in during Tudor times, and examine the lifestyle of ordinary people in the sixteenth century. They build upon the research skills begun in Key Stage 1 to use a range of sources such as photographs, paintings, information books and CD-ROMs to research specific topics such as the Roman army. Higher attaining pupils understand the difference between fact and opinion, and between primary and secondary sources. They are able to compare and contrast the validity of these different sources. Pupils compare how people lived in different historical periods with their own lifestyle, and develop a deeper understanding of changes in transport and housing through the use of timelines and contrasting illustrations. The ability of the oldest pupils to apply their skills and knowledge to more abstract historical ideas, however, is not well developed. They are not clear, for example, how communication methods have changed over time, and how the rate of change has accelerated rapidly in the last hundred years.
145. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages, with some good and some very good teaching. Teachers have a secure subject knowledge and communicate enthusiasm for the subject. At Key Stage 1, teachers use this knowledge to plan effectively and to generate and develop discussion about toys and the importance of using artefacts. The pace of lessons is good, and this maintains pupils' attention during discussions. A good choice of suitable activities enables pupils to learn about chronology through sequencing objects and justifying their choices. Teachers at both key stages make good use of resources and artefacts. Resources are chosen wisely and well prepared. All teachers make good use of class discussion to stimulate and develop ideas about the past, and to give pupils the opportunity to reflect and to ask questions about what they see. This was particularly evident in a lesson with Year 4 and 5 pupils where the teacher used a 'know', 'want to know' and 'learn about' chart to focus pupils' attention, and to encourage independent thought, ideas and research. The management of pupils and the organisation of lessons are consistently good throughout the school. The pace of lessons is generally satisfactory, but time constraints sometimes limit the ability of pupils to record fully what they have found out.
146. Pupils' attitudes to history are good and sometimes very good. Pupils are interested and enthusiastic. They respond particularly well to opportunities for investigating the past. They take pride in their work and have a good capacity to undertake in-depth investigations successfully. Behaviour in lessons is good. Older pupils work well on their own, and co-operate sensibly when working in groups, sharing resources and ideas.
147. The co-ordinator manages the subject satisfactorily. Teachers' planning is monitored and evaluated on a half termly basis, any issues are dealt with and advice is provided for colleagues. Although the school has successfully adopted units of work from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's guidelines, the subject policy and scheme of work do not yet reflect these changes. Teachers occasionally use information technology as a research tool, but it is not yet an integral part of the history curriculum. The subject policy does not reflect the development of the school's information technology resources, so there is no guidance on how teachers might use information technology in their lessons. Assessment procedures are good. Resources are satisfactory, and the school makes effective use of the local library service to augment the range of information books and artefacts available. Resources are not kept centrally or catalogued, however, so it is difficult for teachers to know what resources are available. A proposed audit of resources should help to remedy this situation. Good use is made of visits to museums and historical monuments such as Hadrian's Wall.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

148. Standards have improved since the previous inspection, but are still below those expected at the end of both key stages. Since the last inspection, the school has made considerable improvements in the hardware and software, and has begun to teach the skills needed for the

subject with more consistency. Consequently, pupils, including those with special educational needs, are currently making satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2. The school is in a good position to raise standards and has identified this as a priority in its development plan.

149. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils log on and log off the computer unaided, and have satisfactory control of a computer 'mouse'. They enter information by using the keyboard, and have basic word-processing skills including using functions such as changing the font size and typing capital letters. They have limited experience of computer control, and most pupils are unable to sort, classify and present their findings. Their competence in using information technology in other subjects is a weakness.
150. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils use menus correctly, and understand the use of windows and icons. They have good word-processing skills due to a recent focus of teaching in the school, and they are able to use 'cut and paste' techniques and simple desktop publishing programs. They know how to use a CD-ROM to find information, and are beginning to search and sort the information on a computer database. Their understanding and use of spreadsheets is weak.
151. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection, and is now satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Lessons are planned carefully with clear learning objectives, and staff show confidence and increased expertise in the subject. Recent in-service training has improved their subject knowledge. Management of pupils is good, with effective questioning to involve pupils and to support their learning. When new skills are taught to the whole class, for example in data handling, pupils make appropriate gains in understanding.
152. Pupils make good progress in developing basic skills at both key stages, but progress in applying their knowledge to other subjects is unsatisfactory. The school has recently been equipped with a computer suite consisting of 15 personal computers, by using funding for the National Grid for Learning and a Local Learning Centre grant. This is providing the opportunity for pupils to learn basic skills that will then allow them to explore and use information technology across the curriculum. This has already started, with pupils using the computer to produce a very successful booklet of recipes, 'Tastebud Tingles' for the school to sell.
153. Pupils enjoy the subject and are keen to work on computers. They listen well to instructions and always stay on task, showing good concentration. Their behaviour is very good, showing respect for equipment and for each other. They co-operate well, and work happily in pairs, in groups or individually. They are beginning to keep a personal record of achievement of work carried out on the computer.
154. The subject is led by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator, who also runs a very successful information technology club. An audit was carried out highlighting many weaknesses in hardware and software. This has now been remedied with the development of the new computer suite, further computers around the school, and appropriate software. A policy and scheme of work is in draft format and will provide the progression of skills and understanding needed throughout the school. The school is focussing on a different element of information technology, such as word-processing, each half-term so that the staff can be supported and the teaching monitored by the co-ordinator. Once these skills are in place, pupils will be in a good position to use and apply them in other areas of the curriculum.

## **MUSIC**

155. Pupils, including those with special needs, make good progress at both key stages. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. At Key Stage 1, pupils develop their listening skills and discuss the feelings evoked by different pieces of music. They recognise that different instruments make different sounds, and appreciate that contrasting dynamics are used to convey different moods. Pupils in reception and Year 1, for example, listened to Vivaldi's 'The Four Seasons', and drew pictures of hedgehogs and squirrels waking up in the spring. Pupils listen to contrasting rhythms and clap the different rhythmic patterns. They sing simple songs from memory, and play loudly and softly on a variety of percussion instruments, following a conductor.
156. At Key Stage 2, pupils listen to a range of instruments and a variety of music from different



times and places. Pupils in Year 6, for instance, listen to the 'Pastoral Symphony' from Handel's 'Messiah', and discuss the feelings evoked by the music and why it was written. They sing more complicated songs, and improve the quality of their singing by varying the dynamics, sustaining notes at the end of phrases, and pronouncing the words clearly. During the junior hymn practice, for example, pupils in Years 3 to 6 sang a variety of modern worship songs very tunefully, with good diction, accurate rhythms, and sensitive variations in the dynamics. One song was sung in both English and Afrikaans. Pupils invent complicated rhythmic patterns, and copy these patterns by clapping them out. They use a variety of percussion instruments to compose and perform their own music, and record their own compositions using correct musical notation.

157. Pupils of all ages have plenty of opportunity to appreciate music during school assemblies, and appropriate music is used well to create a calm and meditative atmosphere for collective worship. Pupils regularly enter and leave assemblies to a variety of music, some recorded, and some played very professionally on the piano by a teacher. The names of the pieces and the composers are written up at the front of the hall, and opportunities are often taken to discuss the music. Pupils sing a wide variety of modern worship songs enthusiastically, with good diction and sensitive variations in dynamics. Worship songs at whole-school assemblies are chosen very carefully so that even the youngest children can join in the clapping and other actions enthusiastically.
158. Insufficient teaching was seen at Key Stage 1 to judge the overall quality of teaching. No lessons were observed at Key Stage 2. In the lessons, assemblies and hymn practices observed, teachers' knowledge and understanding are generally good, though individual teachers' musical expertise varies. Teachers plan their work well, and individual lessons have sound learning objectives. Teachers use a variety of teaching methods, and make good use of a range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. Pupils are well managed, and good use is made of day-to-day assessment to evaluate pupils' work and to improve their standard.
159. As a result of the enthusiastic teaching, pupils have good attitudes to music at both key stages, and enjoy their lessons and hymn practices. They are well motivated and join in enthusiastically. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers and behave very well when singing or playing musical instruments.
160. The music co-ordinator provides good leadership of the subject, and very good use is made of another teacher's specialist musical expertise to accompany the singing on the piano during assemblies. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' termly plans and hears pupils singing and playing during hymn practices, school assemblies and concerts. The policy document and scheme of work need updating, but new versions are currently being produced, based on national guidance. The existing scheme and the new scheme of work help pupils to develop musical skills in a logical progression. Termly assessment of music skills takes place in reception and Year 1, and plans are in hand to introduce assessment in other years as part of the new scheme of work. There has been some useful in-service training to develop teachers' skills. Little use is made of information technology to assist the teaching of music.
161. The school has a good selection of recorded music, and a satisfactory range of percussion and other instruments, though there are very few instruments from other cultures. There are more tuned instruments than at the last inspection. Good use is made of the dedicated music room for class and individual lessons. Very attractive wall displays encourage pupils' appreciation of music. A number of pupils have clarinet, flute and violin lessons with visiting teachers. These pupils, and others taught by the co-ordinator, play in assemblies and in school concerts. Visiting instrumentalists from the local peripatetic music service and the local concert band introduce pupils to a variety of instruments and perform for the whole school. Pupils sing at a wide range of concerts and carol services, both in school and in the community. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 perform in the school pantomime at the neighbouring secondary school. There is a very good range of extra-curricular musical activities including a choir, recorder group and rehearsals for concerts and pantomimes. The choir regularly takes part in the annual Saltburn music festival and gained second place in the choral competition in 1999. The range of extra-curricular musical activities has improved since the previous inspection.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

162. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress at both key stages.

This is better than at the previous inspection. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn the importance of warming up their bodies before taking part in lessons and cooling down afterwards. They run, hop and skip while bearing in mind their own and other pupils' safety. They learn to control their movements, and to co-ordinate their hands and feet as they travel in time to music. Pupils in Year 2, for example, developed a sequence of travelling movements and maintaining their balance to the music of Pachelbel's 'Canon'.

163. At Key Stage 2, pupils understand the effect of exercise on their bodies, and are aware of the need to warm up before strenuous activities and to cool down afterwards. They learn the skills required for a variety of games including football, netball, kwik cricket and indoor hockey. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 attend a local swimming pool to develop their skills. Nearly all pupils swim 25 metres confidently by the end of Key Stage 2, and some swim over 100 metres. Pupils develop sound travelling skills in gymnastics. They combine stretching and curling actions to form a dance routine. Pupils in Years 4 and 5, for example, devised their own sequence of stretching movements to music by Enya to represent the awakening at dawn.
164. During the summer term, pupils in Key Stage 2 develop their running, jumping and throwing techniques. All pupils take part in every event at the annual sports day. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 usually have the opportunity to experience a range of outdoor pursuits such as orienteering, canoeing, rock-climbing and abseiling on a residential visit to an outdoor activity centre.
165. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. This is an improvement at Key Stage 1 compared with the previous inspection. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject, and are confident in their presentation. Lessons are planned carefully with a logical development of skills. Teachers dress appropriately, and have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attainment. The pace of lessons is brisk, and appropriate resources are used well. Good use is made of pupils' expertise to demonstrate good practice. In the best lessons, teachers are very enthusiastic, expectations are communicated to pupils very clearly, and teachers have very good relationships with pupils.
166. As a result of enthusiastic and skilful teaching, pupils' attitudes to physical education are good at both key stages. They behave well, and concentrate on the tasks set. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers; they follow instructions carefully and obey the safety rules. Pupils work sensibly in pairs and co-operate well when working in small groups. Particularly good levels of effort and concentration were seen when pupils in Years 4 and 5 developed a sequence of dance movements. Pupils' attitudes to swimming are good. They enjoy their lessons and try hard to improve their standard.
167. The subject policy does not yet reflect changes in the National Curriculum. There is currently no detailed scheme of work to ensure that pupils learn all the necessary skills in a logical order, but a new scheme of work is in preparation for introduction in September 2000. A variety of games, gymnastics, dance and athletic activities ensures that all aspects of the National Curriculum are covered. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' social development. Boys and girls mix socially during physical education lessons, and learn principles of co-operation and fair play. Both girls and boys have access to all the extra-curricular sports activities. Sound use is made of informal day-to-day assessment, and more formal assessment of pupils' skills takes place at the end of each topic. The subject co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and observes pupils' skills during extra-curricular games sessions, but has not been given time to monitor teaching in the subject. Provision for the professional development of teachers' skills is satisfactory.
168. Resources are satisfactory and are easily accessible, though equipment has to be duplicated for separate use in the two buildings. The shortage of small apparatus and agility mats reported at the last inspection has been resolved. Both halls are large enough for gymnastics and dance, though the wall-mounted equipment in the west building is unsuitable for the younger pupils with classrooms on that site. The playing field is used for team games. There are football and netball teams who practice after school, and a sports club is run as an extra-curricular activity. The football squad is trained by the school caretaker and by a parent helper (who is a qualified coach and referee). Pupils compete against teams from other schools in football, netball and cross-country running. Professional players occasionally visit the school to offer coaching skills in football and kwik cricket. A cricket club operates in the summer term, and the school takes part in a local schools' swimming gala and athletics competitions. The wide range of sporting activities provided by the school helps to develop the confidence, ability and self-esteem of pupils at all levels of attainment.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

169. Pupils' attainment is in line with standards expected in the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Key Stage 2. It is below the standard expected at the end of Key Stage 1 as not all pupils in Key Stage 1 study a second world religion as required by the locally agreed syllabus introduced in January 1999. Standards were reported to be in line with expectations in the previous agreed syllabus at the last inspection.
170. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know about the main Christian traditions and beliefs by hearing stories from both the Old and New Testaments. Pupils hear the story of Jesus' birth, for example, and learn the significance of his baptism. Pupils in reception and Year 1 visit a local church, and are told about the furnishings and the use of candles. They learn about special occasions such as christenings and marriage ceremonies. Pupils in Year 2 explore sources of light and their feelings about the dark. They learn to pray and to sing hymns and modern worship songs in assemblies.
171. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know the significance and meaning of some of the main festivals and traditions of Christianity, Judaism and Islam. Pupils in Years 4 and 5, for instance, study the significance of the Jewish festival of Channukah, and compare Jewish and Christian initiation ceremonies for young people. They compare the holy books of Islam and Christianity, and study the significance of pilgrimages in both religions. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 study some of the healing miracles of Jesus, and write their own hopes and prayers for the new millennium.
172. No teaching was observed at Key Stage 1. The quality of teaching is sound at Key Stage 2. Teachers have a satisfactory knowledge of the major world religions, and plan their lessons conscientiously. Pupils are well managed, and teachers work hard to involve all the pupils in discussions. Good use is made of a variety of artefacts, and pupils are encouraged to think for themselves by careful questioning, analysis and reflection. Pupils' work is marked regularly, but there few comments on how the work might be improved. Sound use is made of day-to-day assessment to cater for the individual needs of pupils, and pupils' knowledge and understanding is assessed at the end of each topic.
173. As a result of sound teaching, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in the areas of the curriculum covered at both key stages. They develop an awareness of their own feelings, and an understanding of celebration and worship. At Key Stage 2, they develop knowledge of the similarities and differences between the major world religions, and learn to respect the beliefs and customs of others. Learning in this area is unsatisfactory at Key Stage 1 as this aspect of the curriculum is not covered by all pupils.
174. Pupils' response to teaching in religious education is sound. Pupils behave well in lessons, and respect the feelings of others. They listen carefully to their teacher, and empathise with the feelings and emotions of the characters in the stories they study. They work quietly on their own and are keen to join in class discussions.
175. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning, but does not assess pupils' work, and has not been given the opportunity to observe her colleagues teaching. The school's religious education policy promotes understanding and tolerance of the major world faiths, and provides opportunities for extending pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development. The policy has not yet been updated to bring it into line with the 1999 Redcar and Cleveland agreed syllabus. The scheme of work has also not been updated to ensure that every pupil at Key Stage 1 covers all aspects of the new syllabus. This has had an adverse effect on pupils' understanding of other world religions. At the previous inspection, there were few Bibles for all age groups, reference books or artefacts. There is now a satisfactory range of resources including children's Bibles, information books, posters and artefacts for studying the major world religions. Pupils visit several local churches, but there are no visits to a mosque or a synagogue, and no representatives of other world religions visit the school to talk about their faith.