

INSPECTION REPORT

NETTLESWORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Nettlesworth, Chester-le-Street

LEA area: Durham

Unique reference number: 114005

Head teacher: Mrs L Roberts

Reporting inspector: Mrs Barbara Doughty
22261

Dates of inspection: 22nd – 24th April 2002

Inspection number: 195743

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Front Street Nettleworth Chester-le-Street Co Durham
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S Duncan
Date of previous inspection:	23 rd June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
<p>Mrs Barbara Doughty Registered inspector 22261</p>	<p>The Foundation Stage Curriculum Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education</p>	<p>What sort of school it is and what it should do to improve further The school's results and achievements How well the pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed</p>
<p>Mr Ernie Marshall Lay inspector 14141</p>		<p>Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents</p>
<p>Mr Joe Haves Team inspector 8070</p>	<p>Equal opportunities Special educational needs English Science Geography History Religious education</p>	<p>How good the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils are</p>

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a very small school with 72 pupils, 31 boys and 41 girls. Pupils' attainment on entry varies from year to year, but it is more often below that typically found elsewhere. There is an above average percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, 25 per cent, and an average number with special educational needs, 18 per cent. Nearly three per cent have statements of special need, which is above the national figure. Nearly all of the pupils come from white English-speaking families and there are none with English as an additional language. There are four teachers, including the head teacher. Two of the teachers are new to the school; one is in her first year of teaching and the other, although experienced, has not taught in this country before. The head teacher was appointed a week before the inspection, having been acting head for nearly a year.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This school provides a sound education for its pupils. The head teacher leads with energy and enthusiasm and staff and pupils are highly motivated. Most pupils attain the expected level in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave the school because of sound teaching. However, too few pupils attain above this level. Given the circumstances in which it works, the school provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- The percentage of eleven-year-old pupils attaining the expected level in English, mathematics and science has risen over time and at a greater rate than nationally.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are high because of effective teaching and the use of very good resources.
- Pupils with special educational needs do well because of effective leadership and management and good support from teaching assistants.
- Pupils' attitudes to school are good because of the many rich opportunities they are given.
- Teachers manage pupils well and establish good relationships with them. Consequently, pupils work hard to please them.
- The head teacher inspires and motivates the staff and there is a strong commitment to future improvement.

What could be improved

- The most able pupils do not always make good enough progress in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave school.
- The work that the youngest children do is not based sufficiently on the Foundation Stage curriculum guidance and this slows their rate of learning over time.
- The steps the school takes to measure the effectiveness of teaching and learning are insufficiently rigorous.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in 1997. Most of the key issues have been dealt with. Standards in English, mathematics and science have risen faster than they have nationally and have improved in many other subjects, including religious education and geography. Behaviour and the provision for pupils' moral and cultural development were satisfactory and are now good. However, handwriting and the care pupils take in presenting their work are still not good enough. The provision for the youngest children is not as good as it was mainly because of inexperienced teaching.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

The very small number of pupils in each year group means that results are not always published and comparisons with other schools are unreliable. By the time they leave the school, most pupils attain expected standards for their age in English, mathematics and science and the school is on course to meet its targets this year in English and mathematics. However, the most able pupils do not always make good enough progress and too few attain the higher level in the national tests, bringing standards to below the national average overall. The work of the current Year 6 pupils reflects this. By the end of Year 2, most pupils attain the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics bringing them to just about in line with the national average but, again, too few attain the higher level. Overall, boys do not do as well as girls; this follows the national trend. However, there is little to suggest why this is so because teaching focuses equally on boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and consequently make good progress. Standards in ICT are high and pupils learn well. They use subject vocabulary confidently when talking about what they are doing and to explain clearly what they know. Pupils' knowledge and understanding in all other subjects, including religious education, are as expected by the ages of seven and eleven. Overall, pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve reasonably well as they move through the school. However, children in the Reception group do not do as well as they could because not enough of their work is based on learning through observation and exploration. By the end of their first year in school, few children attain the Early Learning Goals in personal, emotional, social, mathematical, and communication, language and literacy development, and their knowledge and understanding of the world are weak. Their physical skills are broadly as expected, but their creative skills are underdeveloped. Most lack the confidence to work independently. Their writing of letters and numbers is under-developed. They lack excitement in exploration and interest in observation; they do not readily ask questions about why things happen and how things work. They do not handle malleable materials with sufficient control and do not use imagination in their work and play.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good, particularly when listening and talking. Pupils enjoy lessons especially when teachers use the interactive whiteboards to show them what to do, and when pupils use them to illustrate that they understand.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	This is good. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. The few incidents of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with well.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils get on well together. For example, they enjoy teamwork in physical education lessons and working on joint projects in design and technology.

Attendance	Satisfactory. Pupils are enthusiastic about coming to school.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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.

All of the teachers make good use of the large interactive whiteboards and this captures and holds pupils' attention well. Lessons are carefully planned and include a satisfactory balance of teacher explanation and pupil activity. Teachers' secure subject knowledge means that their answers to pupils' questions are accurate and their explanations are correct. Pupil management is good. Teachers have high expectations about how pupils should behave and pupils respond well to these demands. The teachers' good sense of humour makes learning fun and they value what pupils say and do. This leads to good relationships and pupils working hard to please their teachers. The quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics is sound overall. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught satisfactorily and because of this most pupils attain the expected levels by the end of the infants and juniors. However, teachers do too little to get the brightest pupils to the higher level. This is because they do not make use of what they know pupils can already do in order to select more suitable work from the higher levels. Too often the more able pupils have to do work they understand just because the rest of the class does not. In addition, teachers do not expect high enough standards of handwriting and this means that work is untidily presented. They tolerate too much crossing out in pupils' workbooks and sloppy letter and number formation. Opportunities for teachers to demonstrate good handwriting are too few and writing is not marked clearly enough. Pupils with special educational needs learn well because of effective support from the classroom assistants and specialist staff from the local education authority. Although the boys at this school do not do as well as the girls in the national tests, teachers focus on boys and girls equally. Whereas the teaching and learning in the infant class are sound overall, the youngest children are given insufficient opportunity to learn through experience, observation and exploration because of the way their teaching and learning are organised within the infant classroom. Sometimes they are given simplified Year 1 work, particularly in science, rather than work from the early stages of learning. This is mainly because the teaching staff have had limited training in the teaching of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	This is good. Pupils' experiences are wide-ranging and valuable, including after-school and lunchtime activities, visits and visitors. The mathematics work is not always related to real-life situations and this means that pupils do not always see the relevance of their work.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Individual learning programmes are precise and teachers and support staff use them well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There are currently no pupils in school with English as an additional language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social	This is good. Pupils' personal development is promoted well when pupils are encouraged to discuss openly, for example, fairness and justice. They are asked to talk about how they feel, including things that worry

and cultural, development	them, and reflect on what is happening and has happened.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. This school is particularly good at promoting good behaviour through effective relationships and clear rules.

Pupils' records give a clear picture about what pupils can do in English, mathematics and science, but not in some of the other subjects. Teachers do not then make sufficient use of this information to decide what pupils will learn next. Curriculum planning for Reception children is not based enough on the teaching guidelines for this age group. The school works satisfactorily with parents; it provides them with good information about their children's progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Sound. There is commitment and enthusiasm for change and improvement. The new head teacher has successfully created an atmosphere of excitement and anticipation for the future.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors keep an eye on standards, but they do not have systems and strategies in place to measure the impact of their decisions and do too little to compare their expenditure with its effect on standards.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Teaching and learning are checked on, but there is too little evaluation of why some things work in teaching and others do not and why some pupils learn at a faster rate than others. This makes staff unclear about how to bring about improvements to their teaching and to pupils' learning.
The strategic use of resources	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good overall. The resources for ICT are very good and staff use them well to support teaching and learning.

There is a good number of staff, and accommodation is spacious and used well. Reception group staff have limited training of teaching the Foundation Stage curriculum and because of this do not manage and organise the learning of these children as well as they could. Overall, the school applies the principles of best value for money satisfactorily.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The quality of the teaching and the progress their children make. The friendliness of the staff and the way teachers expect their children to work hard. The way the school is led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The inconsistencies between classes in the amount of work children get to do at home.

Parents are generally happy with this school. The inspection team agree with nearly all of the parents' positive comments. Inspectors judge teaching and learning to be sound overall because both the brightest and the youngest children in school could do better. The range and amount of work pupils are asked to do at home is satisfactory overall.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils' attainment on entry varies from year to year; sometimes it is below that typically found elsewhere, sometimes above. These fluctuations are partly dependent on when within the first seven weeks of the children starting school the entry assessments are carried out and partly due to differences in individual pupils each year. Either way, these children do not do as well as they could during their first year in school, mainly because of the way their teaching and learning is organised within the infant classroom. Only a few of the children draw recognisable pictures and not all of them can yet write their own name. Only one or two consistently form letters using the correct sequence of strokes and although many of them know the sounds most letters make, they do not attempt to use this knowledge to help them to read. They listen attentively to stories, but make little attempt to read words. They know some scientific facts, but do not show sufficient curiosity about what is happening or ask how and why. Many do not write numerals correctly and do not always count accurately.
2. The infant pupils in the same class and the junior pupils make sound progress over time and most of them attain the expected level by the end of Years 2 and 6. When year groups are large enough to be able to make reliable comparisons with other schools nationally, this school's infant results are broadly average and its junior results are below average. This difference is due to more pupils attaining the expected level by the end of the infants than do so by the end of the juniors. This comes about because some of the Year 2 pupils only just attain the expected level by the end of the infants but not all of them then go on to attain it by the age of eleven.
3. Compared with similar schools, the school does reasonably well and sometimes better. Standards have risen over time in both the infants and the juniors and they are better than they were at the time of the last inspection, particularly in English, science, religious education, and geography. This is because the late implementation of the national subject teaching guidance is starting to have a positive effect.
4. Most of the current Year 2 pupils are likely to reach the expected level in English, mathematics and science by the end of the year. However, some of them only just do so and too few of them are working at the higher level. In the juniors, the pupils' end of Year 5 assessments and the work Year 6 pupils are currently doing show that about 80 per cent of them are on course to attain the expected level in English, mathematics and science by the end of this year. Again, however, few of these pupils are working at the higher level, making standards below average overall. In English, most pupils answer and ask questions confidently. They read with accuracy, but sometimes lack expression and fluency and offer few opinions about what they are reading, preventing them attaining the higher level. Their writing is lively and thoughtful, but they do not always take enough care over choosing words and extending the story line. Their handwriting is often sloppy and untidy and not enough care is taken with it. In mathematics, most pupils calculate confidently with four-digit numbers and sometimes higher. They change decimals to fractions and then percentages and carry out calculations in their heads. Their problem solving, however, is too simple and there is little evidence of work from the higher level such as using and applying algebraic formulae. Their knowledge and understanding in science are secure and their scientific investigation skills are well developed. Older pupils, in particular, use scientific words correctly to explain what they are doing, but again there is very little work tackled from the higher level.

5. Standards are high in ICT and pupils achieve well over time. This is because of good teaching. Equipment is very good in range and quality and because teachers use it confidently to support teaching and learning, pupils come across technology every day. This helps them to understand the usefulness of computers in particular, declaring matter-of-factly, "We integrate ICT into all our work". They use subject language accurately to explain precisely what they mean, for example, how they "use different search engines" and how they "find a site that gives us images".
6. Standards in all other subjects, including religious education, are broadly as expected by the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils with special educational needs do well, partly because their targets for learning are precise and achievable, but mainly because the effective support these pupils are given in and out of lessons means that they can do the work. When they struggle, precise and accurate instructions and guidance from teachers and support assistants help them.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Pupils' attitudes towards work and behaviour in lessons and around the school are good and reflect the positive ethos that the school promotes. Pupils show enthusiasm to learn and an interest in the lessons and activities. Parents say that their children like school and want to talk about their work when they get home. In class, pupils of all ages work well together in pairs and groups and wait turns patiently. Children in the Reception group settle into the class routines and pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all of the activities.
8. The school successfully promotes and encourages high standards of behaviour. This means that behaviour in class and in the playground is good, an improvement since the last inspection when it was only satisfactory. A lot of thought has gone into how to manage pupils' behaviour and staff set good examples by their consistent and fair approach. Pupils generally respond well to the teachers' expectations to behave well. This has a beneficial effect on their learning because it means that they can concentrate on their work. Instances of inappropriate behaviour are few and any that occur are dealt with quickly and fairly. Between lessons, pupils move about the school in an orderly manner without pushing or shoving their classmates. There is no evidence of any oppressive behaviour or other forms of harassment and there are no recorded exclusions. Relationships throughout the school are good.
9. There is no evidence of vandalism or graffiti on the school premises and pupils show respect for the equipment and facilities provided. They are courteous to classmates and polite to visiting adults. They are happy to engage others in conversation, and express their likes and dislikes about the school, and some have clear opinions on topical matters in the world outside of school.
10. Pupils respond positively to additional tasks they are given, such as acting as register monitors, tidying the library, setting up equipment, and organising physical education apparatus. The establishment of a school council has provided the opportunity for some pupils to take an active part in planning improvements to the school's facilities. Members of the council have been very successful in raising money for benches in the playground. The process they went through of comparing prices and selecting contractors gave them valuable insight into adult business life.
11. The latest reported annual attendance rate is in line with the national average for primary schools and is satisfactory. There was no unauthorised absence last year. The current

year's attendance performance has been affected by a significant amount of widespread short-term sickness amongst pupils last January. Registration complies with requirements and there is no evidence of truancy or persistent lateness. The school day starts and finishes on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12. The quality of teaching are sound overall and this means that pupils' achievement is satisfactory over time. The strengths in teaching and learning outweigh the weaknesses, but there are a number of things that need dealing with.
13. The management of pupils' behaviour is good. Teachers have high expectations about how pupils should behave and pupils respond well to these. On occasion, one or more pupils have difficulty behaving in lessons, but teachers deal with this effectively, showing care and sensitivity. Consequently, lessons move at a suitable pace and pupils' concentration is at least acceptable. Teachers' sense of humour often makes learning enjoyable, such as when one Year 6 pupil suggested that the phrase 'over the hill' means, "Anyone over 18". The teacher said wistfully, "I wish it did" and those pupils who knew the real meaning laughed. Teachers value what pupils say. They listen to them and this helps to establish good relationships and encourages pupils to work hard. Pupils are not afraid to admit that they do not know something or to ask questions.
14. Literacy, numeracy and ICT are promoted satisfactorily through other subjects. For example, pupils write about past historical events, using empathy to describe the lives of Victorian factory children; they explore co-ordinates in geography and produce timelines in history. Opportunities are taken to promote language and literacy in different subjects. For example, effective use was made of poetry to describe the moon in a science lesson on solar eclipses. Pupils are encouraged to adopt correct subject terminology, which they do successfully. For example, Year 6 pupils used the terms 'penumbra' to describe the shadow of the earth or moon in a total eclipse, and 'web-sites' and 'text and images' when talking about their work in ICT.
15. Pupils with special educational needs learn well because of the effective way teachers deploy classroom assistants to take care of them. Adults explain things to them in a more relevant way if they do not understand, and help them to do their work. Teaching takes care to involve boys and girls equally in discussion.
16. Lessons are planned well and, because of this, teachers are clear about what pupils are to learn. They tell pupils what they are going to do, but sometimes the language they use means that pupils are not always as clear as they could be about what it is they are going to learn by the end of the lesson and why. For example, a phrase shared with pupils like, 'Relate fractions to the decimal representation and recognise the equivalence between the decimal and fractions forms' is not quickly or easily interpreted and does not give pupils a clear knowledge of what precisely they are going to be able to do by the end of the lesson, like 'change decimals to fractions and back again'. Nor do teachers tell pupils why they need to learn how to do this and so do not add enough interest and enthusiasm to the task.
17. The large interactive computer whiteboards are used well to support teaching. They enable teachers to take pupils step by step through a particular process, such as how to join words to pictures on a worksheet they are going to do. They allow teachers to move on to the next idea, or revisit something taught earlier. Instructions are clear and precise and pupils enjoy seeing, for example, the teacher drag away the ten and unit digits in 210 to reveal the number 200. However, at times, because teachers program

the computer beforehand, they are reluctant to move away from the pre-planned schedule and timescale to make use of other equipment such as flipcharts to reinforce a particular idea or show pupils another way to do something. This leaves some pupils confused and they sometimes struggle with the work later on. The constant use of the computer whiteboards also means that teachers do not often demonstrate writing words or numbers to pupils and examples of exemplary handwriting are too few. The younger children in particular do not often see an adult forming letters or numbers using a particular sequence of strokes and this hinders their progress.

18. The literacy and numeracy teaching guidelines are implemented satisfactorily. They give teachers sound subject knowledge and secure understanding of what to teach and when to teach it. This means that explanations are clear and precise and answers to pupils' questions are accurate. However, teachers tend to stick rigidly to the subject programme without having sufficient regard to pupils' assessed needs. For example, in a Year 6 lesson seen, the teacher asked all of the pupils to use given information to compile a tally chart and then a graph to show the information in different forms. The group of brighter pupils then had to interpret the data by answering some questions. However, this work did not reflect the pupils' personal targets in the front of their mathematics books; at least two of the average group could already 'interpret data and draw conclusions', yet they stopped after drawing the graph and only the brighter ones went on further.
19. The organisation of the teaching of the youngest children in the infant class means these children do not get enough opportunities to learn through observation and exploration. Too often they are given simplified Year 1 work, such as labelling parts of a plant in science. Not enough regard is given to the Foundation Stage teaching guidance to plan children's learning experiences. Because of this, staff do not have sufficient regard to the early stages of learning that children need to move through in order to develop secure knowledge, skills and understanding in each of the areas of learning.

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

20. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good for both the infant and junior pupils. There is appropriate breadth and balance between subjects and sufficient time devoted to the teaching of English, mathematics and science. Unlike at the time of the last inspection, there is now enough time allocated for the teaching of religious education. Whilst there is no specific time identified for personal, social and health education, there is effective provision through class and small group discussions, and science. Pupils benefit from good opportunities to discuss a range of issues at an appropriate level for their age. Health education is taught effectively through science and physical education. Sex education is taught mainly through science and talks from and discussions with the school nurse. There is an appropriate policy in place for teaching pupils about the dangers of drug misuse, also promoted through science.
21. The curriculum for the Reception children is insufficiently based on the Foundation Stage curriculum. There is insufficient opportunity, because the work is so formal, for children to practise the early stages of number work, reading and writing, through, for example, browsing through books, tracing over lines and counting objects, or to explore things through touching and looking.
22. The curriculum is enriched for pupils of all ages through a wide range of educational visits and other activities. The oldest pupils go on a residential visit to an outdoor activity centre, where they develop a range of physical and environmental study skills. Day visits to places such as Durham Cathedral and Beamish Museum provide contrasting

opportunities to develop other skills and interests, like discovering about times gone by and learning how to make stained glass windows. Pupils have been to a mock wedding ceremony and a baptism at a local church, and a local artist and a potter have helped widen pupils' understanding of art. The school enjoys strong links with members of Sunderland Football Club, who provide coaching for the pupils, and visits from representatives from the police and fire services who speak about aspects of their work.

23. The curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and the school is moving at an appropriate pace to fully implement the new Code of Practice by September 2002. Strengths in provision include the expertise of the new co-ordinator, the active involvement of governors, and good support for individuals and groups of pupils from class teachers and support assistants. There is careful planning of specific tasks for pupils who experience learning difficulties. Pupils' individual education plans carefully document pupils' achievement, which this is then used to identify their next learning targets; these are reviewed on a regular basis. There are two pupils with statements of educational need, who receive appropriate support from a local education authority specialist teacher.
24. The strategies in place for promoting literacy across the curriculum are good and those for promoting numeracy are satisfactory. The difference between the two is because the literacy strategy has been up and running for longer and teachers are more confident about adapting the work from it for those pupils who learn at different rates. Mathematics work is not always related to real-life problem solving and so pupils' lack of understanding about why they are learning particular skills lessens their enthusiasm.
25. The provision for after-school and lunchtime activities is good. This is because all staff help and the school makes good additional use of outside expertise, for example, to coach sports skills and promote art projects. There are popular, well-attended, art and French clubs. Pupils have opportunities to play netball and football after school and to take part in inter-school sports matches. This provision helps promote the good relationships that exist throughout the school.
26. There is an appropriate policy in place to ensure all pupils have equal access to all of the learning activities. Pupils of either gender are encouraged to participate equally in lessons and in all sports. The school ensures that pupils with learning difficulties benefit from appropriate curriculum planning; however, there is insufficient planning at present to meet all the needs of the brighter pupils and this means that not enough of them attain the higher level by the time they leave the school.
27. The contribution of the community to pupils' education and the school's relationship with partner institutions are both good. A number of local people visit school and contribute to pupils' learning. These include local sportsmen and women, representatives of local community projects, and past pupils. The local parish council has helped fund playground seating. The 'school community group' holds regular events to raise funds, for example, to purchase a school soccer kit. There are good links with the local church and local commerce, in association with a nearby secondary school. There are well-established links that provide an effective induction programme for pupils in Year 6 before they transfer to local secondary schools. There is an established programme of visits and visiting staff and projects with a specific curricular focus, currently science. The school seeks information from local playschools and nurseries as pupils join the school and this helps to settle pupils quickly into school routines.
28. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, with moral provision being especially effective. This shows considerable

improvement since the last inspection when the provision was satisfactory overall, but unsatisfactory for spiritual development. Assemblies are planned effectively to ensure pupils are aware that some people believe in a supreme deity. There is an appropriate emphasis upon Christianity, but with plenty of opportunities for pupils to hear stories from other faiths as well, such as Buddhism. During the inspection, pupils heard stories of personal courage, such as that displayed by Neil Armstrong and the New York fire fighters on 'September 11th'. Recently, pupils were invited to reflect upon the life and death of the Queen Mother and the anniversary of the end of the Falklands War. Good use is made of prayer and song to help pupils reflect upon these and other themes. Pupils are encouraged to respect different beliefs and these are taught mainly through religious education. In addition, throughout the curriculum, opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their own ideas and express their concerns. In lessons, the good questioning skills of staff effectively promote this and encourage pupils to consider the wider dimensions of life.

29. The school promotes, very clearly, the idea of right and wrong and seeks to give pupils a degree of ownership of school rules. Good guidelines for behaviour are in place and these are displayed in classrooms and around the school. Staff provide good opportunities for pupils to explore moral concepts and values within an atmosphere that encourages them to express their views. Pupils are provided with positive models of fairness and integrity in the way the adults in school relate to them and each other. Clear and often demanding expectations are placed upon pupils with regard to their conduct in school. Team points are awarded for good behaviour, but they can also be withdrawn; there are clear procedures and consequences for poor behaviour. The normally well-ordered behaviour in class and around the school is an indication of the effectiveness of these policies.
30. The school successfully promotes a clear set of values. Pupils are encouraged to develop a sense of community and co-operation. In a number of lessons, group activities promote collaborative learning well. For example, in science, pupils work well together to investigate the habitats of plants and animals. Recently, the school hosted a visit by teachers from Botswana. This provided pupils with valuable opportunities to compare their own educational opportunities with children from that country. The school encourages pupils to take responsibility by acting as school monitors. A well-established school council is democratically elected and its members become involved in real issues. For example, their letters prompted the parish council to fund some playground seating.
31. Pupils are given some good opportunities to explore their own traditions and culture. For example, St George's Day was celebrated during the week of the inspection. Pupils take part in historical re-constructions of the Victorian era and visit local centres of cultural interest. The arts are promoted actively through visitors and visits. There are a number of good opportunities to celebrate diverse cultures. The French club provides opportunities for pupils to learn about French culture. The school makes good use of the local learning resource centre to obtain books that celebrate non-European cultures. Particular talents are nurtured; for example, the school has a clarinet group and a number of pupils are talented gymnasts. A pupil recently demonstrated her skills in Karate during an assembly.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. The school is very safety conscious and takes great care over pupils' welfare and school security.

33. Induction of Reception children into school and the transfer of Year 6 pupils to secondary school is well planned to ensure pupils have prior knowledge of their new classrooms, classmates and class teachers. The younger children quickly gain trust in the staff and the confidence to participate in the activities provided. Pupils leaving for the secondary school have the opportunity to meet their new teachers and to join in a full day's joint work in, for example, science and poetry. A group of the previous year's leavers come back to meet the Year 6 pupils about to move up, to tell them of the type of work they will be doing in Year 7, and recount their personal experiences of the transfer to secondary school.
34. The school promotes good behaviour, partly through effective classroom rules, which the children have discussed and agreed. Pupils of all ages understand what is expected of them and respond well as a result. In addition, teachers show respect for pupils as individuals and promote good behaviour and attitudes through rewards and sanctions, such as the awarding of points, stickers, 'worker of the week' certificates, and prizes. Pupils draw up their own personal targets and these are displayed in class; many of these relate to desired improvements in behaviour and attitude, indicating the positive impact the school's action has on the pupils.
35. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well. Their assessment leads to the preparation of individual education plans that are carefully monitored and regularly reviewed. Parents are involved in the review and target-setting process.
36. Procedures for the monitoring of pupils' personal development are satisfactory. Personal development is assessed and recorded shortly after entry into the Reception class and repeated at the end of the year for comparison purposes. Monitoring afterwards is more informal and carried out through periodic discussion between the teaching staff. Assessments are recorded in summary form on the pupils' annual reports.
37. Procedures for assessing pupils' academic attainment and progress are good in English, mathematics, and science and are being developed in ICT. Teachers make some use of the information to help plan future lessons. However, it is not used well enough to plan work for the brighter pupils and, in mathematics, there is also a lack of detail passed from the infant class to the first junior class about what aspects of the different levels each child has achieved. This leads to teachers assuming that pupils have learnt what has been taught and, in some cases, getting it wrong.
38. The school uses national tests to find out what pupils in Years 1 to 6 know in English and mathematics and commercial testing materials for science, geography, history, ICT, and religious education. However, there are no procedures yet in place for assessing and recording pupils' learning in art and design, design and technology, music or physical education. Assessment procedures in the Reception class are unsatisfactory. The initial entry assessment took place last September, but except for in numeracy, no more recording of children's achievements was done then until February. This means that the adults working with these children are not always sure how much individual children already know, can do and understand, and what they need to learn next.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

39. Parents are generally supportive of the school. They regard staff as caring, friendly and approachable. Most parents are satisfied with the amount of information they receive about school events and the progress their children make. The quality and quantity of

this information is good. Newsletters are regular and informative. Information on the curriculum and other aspects of school life is displayed on a computer screen in the reception hall and is updated each day by a Year 5 pupil. Parents are encouraged to use this facility to find out what is happening on a daily basis. Parent-teacher consultation meetings take place twice each year and there is a separate 'new' parents' evening followed by an open day when parents and new children can look around and see the school at work. The school prospectus is comprehensive; the home-school agreement is concise; the annual report of the governing body requires only minor amendment. Pupils' annual progress reports are specific about what the pupils know, understand and can do as well as what they need to learn next.

40. Whilst there is an enthusiastic parent-teacher association, which provides valuable and welcome support to boost the school funds, there are very few regular parent helpers in school. All new parents are invited to help in school, but the take-up rate is disappointing. Many parents are reluctant or unable to make a regular commitment to the school. The support given to pupils at home in the form of assistance with homework and topic work is variable and, combined with the poor level of classroom support, sadly limits the effectiveness of parental involvement. The school is well aware of the situation and is optimistic that the new community computer suite to be installed this term, together with instruction support from the nearby college, will provide a school-based community facility that will attract more parents into school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The school is soundly led and managed and has improved satisfactorily since the last inspection. Standards are better than they were and most of the issues raised have been dealt with, although poor handwriting and weak presentation skills remain, and the provision for the youngest children in school is not as good as it was. Nevertheless, the school is securely placed to bring about more improvements and raise standards further. This is because the newly appointed head teacher has enthusiasm for change and commitment to make the school more successful. During the last year, as acting head, she has initiated several short-term developments. Now that her appointment is permanent, the school can move forward with renewed vision, and within an atmosphere of excitement and energy. Although it has the will and inspiration to improve, however, its direction needs clearer focus and in order to get this, senior managers need to deal with the following:
- Senior managers do not have a detailed enough picture about why different pupils learn at different rates, such boys and girls, and less and more able pupils.
 - Although the head teacher watches lessons, her observations are not perceptive enough about what it is teachers do or do not do that makes pupils' learning good, satisfactory or poor.
 - Pupils' progress is not tracked systematically as they move through the school and therefore senior managers and subject leaders cannot be sure that all pupils achieve at least as well as could reasonably be expected each year.
 - Pupils' answers to the yearly tests are not analysed in order to identify gaps in learning that need remedying the next year.
 - Although the priorities for development are well chosen and focus on raising standards, the action plans are not specific enough about how to bring this about.
42. There is a new chair of governors and vice chair of governors, who are developing their roles and negotiating how they are going to work with the head teacher. Various committees have been established and governors are becoming more informed about, and therefore more effectively involved in, budget setting and prioritising areas for

development. They share the head teacher's vision and determination to make the school more successful. Several governors are new to the governing body and are already starting to ask questions and hold the school accountable for what is going on. Governors have been appointed to oversee the provision for literacy, numeracy, ICT and special educational needs. Finances are managed satisfactorily and money is spent on relevant developments, but the governing body has not yet put in place ways to measure the impact their decisions have on raising standards, and cannot therefore be sure that they should continue supporting and financing particular developments further or change direction. For example, some money from the school's large contingency fund has been used to increase the level of support staff, but the governors need to check on how effective this has been so far on raising standards before committing more money to it.

43. Subject co-ordination is good in English, mathematics and science. These subject leaders, and also the senior managers, have a clear enough idea about what is happening in these subjects and a broad and fairly accurate idea of what how they can raise standards further. However, because this is a small school, they have had to take on the leadership of several other subjects as well and have limited time and opportunity to observe lessons beyond English, mathematics and science or to look at pupils' work. The other two teachers are new to the school and although it is planned that they will take on more responsibilities next year when they are more settled, they do not have a significant role in leadership and management at the moment. This means that no one person has a clear enough idea about what is happening throughout the school in the other subjects and this limits the effective bringing about of improvements in them.
44. The school makes very good use of new technology, particularly to support teaching, and computers are starting to be used more to organise and analyse data. Staffing levels are good, resulting in realistic class sizes, and professional development is up and running. There are support assistants in all classrooms, many of whom are trained, which means that the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs in particular are effectively supported. The two teachers new to the school are supported well by the two senior managers and because of this, have settled in well. However, none of the teachers have a clear enough idea about what is achieved by pupils in other schools and particularly with regard to handwriting and the presentation of work. This means that they do not make high enough demands on pupils and too readily accept low quality handwriting and messy work. The accommodation is spacious and used well and learning resources are satisfactory in quality and quantity.
45. Training for the teaching of the curriculum for Foundation Stage children has been minimal and because of this, the adults working with these children do not have a good enough knowledge and understanding of the early stages of learning children move through or of how young children learn best through observation and exploration. In addition, they are both fairly new to post and have not yet worked out the best way to organise the teaching and learning of these children taught within an infant class. They make insufficient use of the Foundation Stage teaching guidance and this means that too often these children are given simplified National Curriculum work, which is sometimes inappropriate.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

46. The head teacher, staff and governing body should now:

- (1) Improve the learning of the brighter pupils by:
 - a. ensuring that teachers always use what they know about pupils' previous achievements to set suitably challenging work taken from the higher levels;
 - b. making sure that pupils always take care with the presentation of their work, and develop a legible and joined up handwriting style.Paragraphs 4,18,6,37,44,60,63,64,68,72.

- (2) Make sure that children make the most progress possible in their first year at school by:
 - a. improving staff knowledge and understanding about how best to organise the teaching and learning of children in the Foundation Stage within an infant classroom;
 - b. improving the assessment and recording of children's achievements in order that teaching focuses on what children need to learn next;
 - c. giving children sufficient opportunity to learn through first-hand experiences, observation and exploration;
 - d. ensuring children move systematically through the early stages of learning and are able to attain the early learning goals by the end of the year.Paragraphs 1,19,21,45,47-59.

- (3) Give clearer focus and direction to the work of the school by:
 - a. making sure that the action plan for improvement is specific about how to bring about improvements;
 - b. finding out why some groups of pupils learn more successfully than others, such as those at different levels and boys and girls;
 - c. evaluating more precisely what does and does not work in lessons in order to improve pupils' learning further;
 - d. tracking pupils' progress as they move through the school in order to pinpoint where the fastest and slowest learning takes place;
 - e. analysing pupils' answers to national test questions in order to identify gaps in learning.Paragraphs 41,43,71.

In addition to the above areas for improvement, there are other minor weaknesses which the governing body should have regard to when writing their action plan:

1. Governors do not have effective ways to measure the impact their decisions have on provision and standards.
 2. There are no assessment procedures in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education.
- Paragraphs 38,83,102,105.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	18
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	0	7	11	0	0	0
Percentage	0	0	39	61	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than five percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	72
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	18

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	13

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	4	6	10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	*	*	*
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	n/a (n/a)	n/a (n/a)	n/a (n/a)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	*	*	*
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	n/a (n/a)	n/a (n/a)	n/a (n/a)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	3	5	8

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	*	*	*
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	n/a (63)	n/a (88)	n/a (81)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	*	*	*
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	n/a (75)	n/a (88)	n/a (81)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

* Because fewer than ten boys and fewer than ten girls took the tests in 2001 the numbers at each level are omitted from the tables in line with the governors reporting arrangements to parents.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	70
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)	4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18
Average class size	24

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	85

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	218345
Total expenditure	210257
Expenditure per pupil	2961
Balance brought forward from previous year	15792
Balance carried forward to next year	23880

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	72
Number of questionnaires returned	14

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	21	7	7	0
My child is making good progress in school.	36	57	0	0	7
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	43	7	0	14
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	36	21	21	0
The teaching is good.	50	43	0	7	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	57	7	7	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	29	0	7	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	29	0	0	7
The school works closely with parents.	36	50	14	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	57	21	0	0	21
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	43	0	0	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	29	36	7	7	21

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

47. The youngest children in school are taught in the same class as the Year 1 and 2 pupils. The teaching of these children is satisfactory overall in all of the areas of learning and although the majority of them are unlikely to attain all of the early learning goals by the end of Reception, this reflects their attainment on entry and they make sound progress overall. However, there are some teaching weaknesses in all of the areas of learning that slow children's learning unnecessarily.
48. The Reception children are taught mainly by the classroom support assistant under the direction of the class teacher. Both members of staff are fairly new to the school and although they are trained in 'early years' education, they have had limited training in teaching the Foundation Stage curriculum. Consequently, they make insufficient use of the work from the teaching guidelines and too often give these children simplified Year 1 work to do instead of a range of activities based on exploration and observation as suggested in the Foundation Stage teaching guidelines.

Personal, social and emotional development

49. Children are generally happy to come to school and they settle quickly to class routines. Their classroom is bright and colourful and pleasant to be in. Although they lack confidence in more formal, structured situations, they respond well to the adults they know. They nearly always have the support of an adult and this means that they are very closely monitored and supervised but rarely act independently, for example, in choosing activities or selecting resources. Their freedom to move around the room to observe and explore is restricted. However, the support assistant sometimes takes them into the hall or library so that they can engage in more boisterous activities, such as play-acting and noisy games.
50. They are given some exciting things to do, like make biscuits and play in the class 'garden centre', and this holds their interest well and stimulates their learning. However, because of the size and layout of the room, there are not a lot of interesting things around for children to look at and touch and this limits their excitement and enthusiasm to explore and learn how and why things work.
51. Children are encouraged to talk about their feelings such as during circle time, and the support assistant leads these discussions well by giving examples of her own to start the children off. For example, in one session, she shared with them what was precious to her, and this prompted some non-stop chattering from a few, but some children still declined to comment, even when prompted with "Have you any brothers or sisters?" During this time, however, all of them patiently waited their turn and listened to their classmates.

Communication, language and literacy

52. Children generally follow the Reception year programme of work from the National Literacy Strategy. The classroom is linguistically stimulating and worksheets are well prepared. However, the work is not always pitched at the appropriate level. There is a lot of worksheet completion and too few early learning activities such as tracing and colouring in, and children are asked to blend letters together like 'ue' 'er', 'ar' and 'bi' before they are ready. They are expected to copy the teacher's small writing onto lines

before they can form letters correctly. In addition, teachers' handwriting in the children's workbooks does not set a good example, and does little to show children how to write properly.

53. Children's speaking, listening and reading skills are under-developed. Children participate in role-play activities and experience sand and water play, but these activities are often closely supervised and children do not have enough opportunities to negotiate their own plans and activities. They enjoy having books read to them and they respond well to stories, but have too few opportunities to sit and just browse through books and simply enjoy them. They know most letter sounds, but do not always use this knowledge to read unknown words. They are not confident readers; they each have a school 'reading book', but sometimes take two weeks to get through it, which does little to enthuse them to want to read or develop their love of reading.

Mathematical development

54. As in literacy, the mathematics work is mainly drawn from the national strategy. Children do lots of number worksheets and the classroom is full of things to support them in their work, like numbers on charts and things to count. The effective support they get enables them to complete their work successfully, but they do not have sufficient opportunities to use numbers informally and to experience them in their play. Most of the children accurately order numbers one to ten in cutting and sticking exercises and orally count up to ten. They lack confidence, however, to add two sets together and some of them struggle to write recognisable numerals. Most of them cannot put missing numbers in a sequence of one to ten or draw the correct number of objects in a given set. Nevertheless, a few children are attaining at the expected level. However, work does not always build on what they already know and this slows their learning unnecessarily. For example, last January, one child could add two sets of objects together and subtract one number from another. However, in February she was asked to do work which she could already do, like put in missing numbers in a series from zero to ten, and in April, to order numbers to ten.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

55. The work children do in this area of learning is mainly based on National Curriculum science, geography, history, design and technology work and infant religious education and insufficiently on the Foundation Stage curriculum. All of the children usually do the same tasks and worksheets, although there is clearly a range of abilities represented within the group. All of them are asked, for example, to colour in the countries of the British Isles on a map and name them. They are expected to label the external features of plants and the human body, write up scientific experiments and sort pictures of objects that do and do not use electricity. Whilst some of them cope with this work, many do not. However, following discussions with inspectors early on in the inspection, teaching and learning showed improvement by the end of the inspection, and was satisfactory overall. In a science lesson, for example, original plans to make a booklet about their walk in the school grounds the day before were abandoned, and the children went on an imaginary bear walk instead, inspired by a book they had read. They thoroughly enjoyed the experience and engaged well in the role-play. They expressed themselves vividly, declaring in loud ferocious voices and with hands placed firmly on their hips, "I'm not scared!"
56. There are some interesting things around the room for children to look at, such as tadpoles and shells, but these are limited because of the constraints of space. This means that children do not ask questions about why things happen and how things

work. They go into the hall to use the large construction equipment, but do not have enough opportunities to shape, assemble and join materials. Although they made some biscuits during the week of the inspection, the support assistant made the mixture at home the night before and this meant that the children missed out on seeing how easily or not the ingredients mixed together. They enjoyed, nevertheless, rolling out the dough and putting it on a baking tray ready for cooking. However, there were no tools to help them to do this and some struggled to get the shape they wanted.

57. Computer work is satisfactory. Children use the computer to, for example, “dress teddy” and their records of achievement show that most of the children can use the keyboard and mouse and save their work to disk.

Physical development

58. Children learn satisfactorily in this area of learning. All of them move around the room with a secure understanding of their own space and that required by others. Although there is no separate outdoor learning area for these children, they get time in the hall with and without their infant classmates and the opportunity to join indoor and outdoor physical education lessons. They throw and catch with developing control, but teaching does too little to help them improve their skills by, for example, telling them to keep their eye on the ball and move if it is clear that they are not going to reach it when it is thrown to their left or right. Most children cut out and stick well, but their pencil control is poorly developed. They struggle to trace lines and copy letters and many of them do not draw recognisable pictures. They undress with increasing independence and leave their clothes in a tidy pile ready to put on again!

Creative development

59. There is very little evidence in this area of learning except for some well-proportioned paintings on the wall, which children did using ready-mixed paint, and some attractive collage pictures made from pasta, wool and fabric. The lack of space in the classroom means that the water and sand play have to be provided in rotation and the dressing-up clothes are put out only occasionally. There is a role-play area in a small space between the classroom and toilets, but because it is not easily seen from the classroom, children need to be taken in there as a group.

ENGLISH

60. Over time, the school has raised standards for pupils age six to eleven at a faster rate than the nationally. Standards are close to the national average for pupils age seven; most of these pupils reach the expected level by the end of Year 2, however some of them only just do so and few of them attain the higher level. Standards are below the national average for pupils at age eleven. This is because, although a significant number of pupils achieve the expected level, not as high a percentage as in the infants do and in addition, again as in the infants, none are currently working at the higher level. This is because there are insufficient extension tasks from the higher levels planned for the brighter pupils.
61. By the age of seven, pupils listen carefully and most speak clearly. Standards in speaking and listening broadly match expectations for this age group, because of the emphasis on discussion during the literacy hour. In a well-planned lesson, careful questioning provided good opportunities for pupils to discuss the giant in ‘Jack and the Beanstalk’. Pupils offered valid suggestions on how to improve the original text, by identifying appropriate new adjectives that could be inserted. Most pupils attain the

expected level in reading. The more able and average ability pupils read accurately, but with varying degrees of fluency. They possess a number of strategies to help recognise text, including the use of picture clues and letter sounds. The best readers recognise such words as 'whispered'. These pupils know the difference between fiction and non-fiction and give examples of each; a 'story book' and an 'information book'. However, they are less confident in offering opinions on their reading, or showing understanding or expressing a preference, preventing them attaining the higher level. The less able readers are not fluent and some struggle with a simple text, such as, 'I can help you'. They use picture clues to tell the story, but lack skills in using letter sounds. They offer few comments on their reading or upon books generally. In writing, most pupils achieve expected standards for their age. This is because they are given some good opportunities in lessons to write stories, having first explored language through class discussion and reading. By the age of seven, most pupils form letters accurately and transfer these skills competently to written tasks, such as story writing. Pupils do not join their letters, however. They use capital letters and full stops accurately and the more able pupils use adjectives and verbs appropriately to enliven text. These pupils write well on such topics as 'The Pirate Adventure' and 'Dreams'. Other groups are less fluent in writing stories and a minority of pupils mix print and cursive script, again preventing them reaching the higher level.

62. By the end of the juniors, standards in speaking and listening are quite varied and are just below expectations overall; an insufficient number of pupils speak with real confidence. By the age of eleven, most pupils listen carefully, though a small minority can be inattentive. A number speak with enthusiasm; they enjoy answering questions and offering opinions. Other pupils, however, lack the confidence to express their ideas when asked to do so. The more confident speakers offer their views on poetry and prose openly. For example, they compare different poems with similar rhymes, 'From a Railway Carriage' and 'Night Mail', noting how each gives a sense of speed. These pupils offer thoughtful comments to compare the styles of Roald Dahl and J.K. Rowling. They identify a good range of similes and use them appropriately to enliven text. Standards in reading are below average because not enough pupils achieve the higher level. Most pupils, however, are accurate readers, though levels of fluency and expression are quite varied. Most possess sufficient skills in phonics to pronounce difficult words; however, they do not always know their meaning, for example, 'shuffled' and 'shifty'. The few pupils who achieve the higher level read confidently and accurately from complex texts, such as 'The Iron Woman'. They predict the plot, identify links to associated stories, and pronounce and define such words as 'binoculars' and 'weirdest'. However, other pupils struggle with a simpler text and offer few opinions about it. Most pupils are aware of the names of popular authors, recall their stories and discuss them; for example, a pupil confidently commented on characterisation and plot in 'Matilda'. Standards in handwriting are poor, mainly because pupils do not transfer the skills they acquire in practice sessions to their general written work. This is evident across much of the curriculum. It is not made a priority for correction when work is marked. Letter formation is weak, much work is very untidily presented, and pupils do not join their letters, lowering standards in general. Standards in writing are below average overall, again because not enough attain the higher level. Nevertheless, there are a number of pupils who write imaginatively and can adopt differing styles competently. They write interesting stories, such as 'The Teacher Strikes Back'; they review pantomime and write some good poetry. There is interesting work on character in reviewing the cast of 'Peter Pan'. The more able pupils use punctuation well and spelling is secure. Other pupils find these basic skills more difficult and do not apply them consistently.

63. The overall standard of teaching is satisfactory, with some good teaching seen during the inspection. Teachers have a clear understanding of the literacy strategy. This ensures that all of its components are introduced over time. The successful features of lessons include clear explanations, so that pupils understand learning objectives. Questioning skills are good and this promotes discussion effectively. For example, in Years 3 and 4, a lively conversation took place on family relationships in a Jackie Wilson story. Good use in general is made of ICT to present information and some well-chosen texts are introduced for discussion. This maintains pupils' interest in language and story and helps improve their vocabulary. However, there is insufficient attention given to handwriting and presentation. Opportunities are missed to set extension tasks for the more able pupils and as a result, their standards of work are not always high enough. Pupils with special education needs are well supported and make good progress. This is because tasks are matched to their abilities and they benefit from the good support of classroom assistants. All pupils have opportunities to contribute in class and their ideas are listened to and valued, even where they stray from the subject under discussion. There are good links to other subjects, for example the use of poetry to support a science lesson about a solar eclipse.
64. The literacy strategy is now fully established and good use is made of supportive material, such as 'Progression in Phonics'. The co-ordinator monitors pupils' progress and there is a thorough set of assessment procedures. The use of assessment is not always put to full advantage, however. It provides good guidance to the planning of work for the average and below average pupils, including those with special needs. However, it does not always provide sufficient guidance in planning work for the more able pupils, or indeed identifying them precisely enough. This became evident when hearing readers, where the most able was not identified as such. The school is becoming aware of these issues and beginning to target specific pupils for higher levels of work. This is not yet sufficiently well developed, however, to raise standards enough. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory, with evidence of rising standards, especially in the juniors. In addition, pupils' achievements in the end of year assessments are not collated to see who does well some years and not others and work out the reasons why. Lessons are observed in literacy but the targets for improvement are often broad and the impact of what the teacher does well or not so well is not linked to learning. This makes it unclear how the teaching can be improved to make learning more effective.

MATHEMATICS

65. Most of the Year 2 pupils are currently working within the expected level and about 80 per cent of the Year 6 pupils are. However, not one pupil was seen working at the higher level in either year group. This is because teaching does not challenge the brighter pupils to do better by using work from the higher levels.
66. Teaching and learning are generally satisfactory in both the infants and juniors and pupils make sound progress as they move through the school. From looking at the work of individual pupils, it is clear that most of the junior pupils attain the level that can reasonably be expected from their end of Year 2 results. However, the school does not do enough to ensure that those who do not attain the expected level securely at the end of Year 2 attain it by the end of Year 6 or that those who attain it securely by the end of Year 2 attain the higher level at the end of Year 6. In addition, the information passed from Year 2 to Year 6 about what aspects of each level each pupil has and has not attained is insufficiently detailed. This means that the Year 3 teacher is unaware of who needs to go over what again, and all pupils start at the same point on the Year 3 national programme.

67. By the end of the infants, most pupils show a good understanding of the value of digits in numbers up to 99 and can count in tens up to 100. Pupils' past work shows that most can add 11 on to a given number by first adding 10 and then 1, but in a lesson seen, they struggled to add 21 using the same method. This was because the teacher rushed the recap of how they had added 11 before, and pupils became confused and forgot how they had used number patterns previously. Instead, they counted on in single digits, making careless mistakes and often getting to the wrong answer. They confidently calculate near doubles of numbers and find missing numbers in sentences such as $14 + ?$ makes 28. They use mental recall of addition and subtraction and know that subtraction is the inverse of addition.
68. Standards are below average by the end of the juniors because, although a broadly average number attain the expected level, not enough attain the higher level. This is because, although pupils' achievements are recorded in the front of their books, teachers have insufficient regard to this information when adapting work. Although different pupils often do different things, usually they all start off doing the same and then some go on to work with higher numbers or, as seen in one lesson, to interpret line graphs they have compiled from given information. However, the pupils' records of achievement showed that this was also relevant to some of the pupils who did not go on to do it and meant that they did not move onto the next stage of learning quickly enough. Nevertheless, by the end of Year 6, most pupils work confidently with four-digit numbers and higher. They multiply numbers by 3, 4, and 5. They plot graphs to show the correlation between shoe size and age, and some go on to interpret the data. They complete long multiplication sums correctly, but have been taught only one way before involving 'carrying' and struggle with other ways, such as partitioning by saying 34 multiplied by 16 is the same as $(6 \times 4) + (6 \times 30) + (10 \times 4) + (10 \times 30)$. They change decimals to fractions and percentages, but they do not always understand what they are going to be able to do by the end of the lesson because, although the teachers share the intending learning objectives with them at the beginning of the lesson, they use complicated words and phrases which leave pupils confused, not about how to do it, but about what exactly they are doing and why.
69. Pupils do not present their work neatly and this detracts from the overall acceptable quality of their achievements. They do not, for example, use rulers to draw lines and their number formation is poor, particularly lower down the school. There is little evidence of pupils acting on the few comments teachers write in their books, like "Please show all your working out" and "What was wrong with this one?" ICT is used satisfactorily to support work in mathematics, such as when compiling different graphs to show information in different ways such as on pictograms, bar graphs, and pie charts.
70. Overall, pupils' attitudes towards their work in mathematics are satisfactory, but their enthusiasm is stemmed because the teachers do not explain to the pupils why they need to learn certain skills and how these are necessary to help them to solve everyday problems, such as when shopping. Boys and girls are treated equally in lessons and teachers are careful to involve both genders in question and answer sessions. Pupils with special educational needs do well, mainly because of the effective support they get from teachers and support staff.
71. This subject has had several managers over the past two years but, nevertheless, there is a real enthusiasm and commitment to bring about further improvements. Subject monitoring is generally satisfactory, with the current subject co-ordinator watching lessons, looking at teachers' plans and talking with pupils about what they are doing. However, lesson observations are new to her and although teachers welcome her

comments and want to improve their practice, comments are very broad and not enough evaluation of what does and does not work in lessons takes place. This leaves teachers unclear about precisely how to improve teaching and learning. There is too little analysis of how pupils do in mathematics as they move through the school. Although assessments of pupils' achievements are carried out at the end of each year, the results are not collated to show in which year pupils make the least and most progress, to identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning, and to deal with them.

SCIENCE

72. Standards are close to the nationally expected level by the age of seven. Most pupils reach the expected level, with the more able pupils achieving the higher level in some aspects of their science work. This is because they are provided with appropriate opportunities to carry out investigative work and are challenged to think carefully about the results obtained. Standards of attainment are below the national average for pupils aged eleven. Although most pupils in Year 6 are achieving expected levels for their age, few are working at the higher level. This is because there is insufficient emphasis on planning extension tasks for the more able pupils. On occasion, their standard of work is not high enough.
73. By the age of seven, most pupils are aware of the importance of careful eating for good health. Year 2 pupils have carried out a survey to study the eating habits of their classmates and recorded the results accurately on a bar graph. They know that humans, animals and plants have life cycles and can record the life cycle of a frog in its correct order. Pupils are effectively taught experimental methods and apply these well to, for example, growing a flower from seed. They identify factors, such as sunlight and water, which encourage growth and record their results competently in illustrative and written form. The more able pupils demonstrate a good understanding of this and have an ability to conduct such experiments carefully, recording their results with accurate measurements. Other groups have less precise recording skills. However, many pupils understand the importance of carrying out experiments carefully and recording outcomes accurately. Most pupils are aware of common items of equipment that use electricity as a source of power. They can discriminate between these and other items that do not. Overall, pupils achieve satisfactory rates of progress and clearly enjoy science. They improve their understanding of the local environment through their observation and involvement in the development of a class bottle garden.
74. By the age of eleven, pupils understand that different foodstuffs provide the body with energy and are the source of proteins, fats and carbohydrates. They understand the importance of good hygiene to health. They know the basic function of the heart and lungs and carried out an effective experiment to measure and record pulse rates. Pupils are aware that some activities, such as smoking, can affect their and others' health. There is a good emphasis on experimental work. Pupils test materials for conductivity and carefully record their results. They can draw a simple electrical circuit, label it accurately, and know how it works. Pupils know the different parts of a flower, can draw one accurately, and label and know the functions of its different parts. Pupils carry out experiments to grow a broad bean from seed; they know the factors that influence growth and record these accurately. Pupils know what micro-organisms are and they study these in the effect of yeast in making bread. They carry out tests on musical instruments and this enables them to reach conclusions on how sound travels. Pupils have a good knowledge of scientific vocabulary in relation to the solar system. They know about the basic movements of the planets and how an eclipse is caused. This is because good use is made of ICT to create images of an eclipse, showing the moon's

shadow moving across different continents. Such work helps reinforce their understanding of a fair test and they use this to good effect in carrying out an experiment to see how craters could be formed on the moon.

75. The standard of teaching is satisfactory overall, with examples of good teaching seen during the inspection. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and use investigative methods well. This is effectively supported by the use of resources, including the Internet. For example, in Years 3 and 4, pupils use a CD-ROM and the Internet to research animal habitats and this provides good learning opportunities in science and reinforces their ICT skills. On occasion, lessons lack pace and new work is not introduced quickly enough. Whilst assessment procedures are good, they are not always used sufficiently well to plan specific extension tasks for the more able pupils. As a result, these pupils do not always make sufficient progress in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well, with appropriate tasks being set; this enables them to make good progress.
76. The curriculum offered is of good quality and promotes all aspects of science well. Health education is taught effectively. The governing body's policy on sex education is properly implemented through science, and appropriate guidance on the dangers of drug misuse is also taught. There is an increasing emphasis on experimental work, which helps develop collaborative learning effectively. This in turn encourages pupils to question one another as they proceed with an experiment. The co-ordinator has only limited opportunities to monitor the curriculum and this restricts her opportunity to improve standards and teaching. The range of resources is sufficient to meet the needs of the curriculum and good use is made of ICT, especially for research-based learning. There has been satisfactory progress since the last inspection. Standards have risen sharply and the rate of progress now exceeds the national improvement in science.

ART AND DESIGN and DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

77. By the ages of seven and eleven, pupils achieve in line with the expected level in both subjects. Their achievement is satisfactory over time because teaching is sound.
78. The national subject guidelines are used successfully to plan appropriate tasks and the pupils work with a satisfactory range of materials; the clay pots they made in the infants are still remembered with pride! Year 6 pupils have completed pastel pictures of objects, such as fruit, and explained in detail how they had to "think about the roundness, shadows and texture". They talked confidently about how they "needed a steady hand" and used shading to create a three-dimensional effect. They know to use different pencils "to create different effects" and they practise the different techniques, such as pointillism, sometimes using computers to create the desired effect. They take things apart, like switches, to see how they work.
79. Good links have been forged with other schools for joint projects. The older pupils talk excitedly about how they joined 27 other schools designing and building a model of the Cathedral Bridge; Nettlesworth pupils constructed one of the modules of the arch. On another occasion, their visit to Durham Cathedral prompted the creation of some very effective stained effect windows on sheets of acetate and members of the art club went on to paint drinking glasses with good results. These are proudly showed off on the window ledge where, on sunny days, they shimmer in the sunlight. Designs of land yachts, done on computer by the oldest pupils, were sent on disk to the local comprehensive school, where students cut out the shapes needed. The pupils here then assembled their designs and tested their success by racing them.

80. Pupils study the work of famous artists and designers, such as Monet and William Morris, and use their work to influence their own artwork. They use books to study the lives of these people and know something of their history such as, "Van Gogh cut off his ear!"
81. Evaluation skills are satisfactorily developed in both subjects. Pupils use subject language well to talk about how they try something out and change their minds if it does not work as they intended it to, such as when one pupil wanted to make a car with flashing lights, but then realised she had been too ambitious! Another pupil found that the musical instrument he had designed and made did not produce the right pitch, so he changed one of the strings for a thinner one, whilst another complained that a purse they had made would not hold enough money!
82. Pupils' work shows good imagination and they are excited about what they create. Year 6 pupils talk proudly about their own work and the achievements of their classmates, such as the crane made by two pupils that stands in the hall. "It runs on batteries," announced one proudly!
83. The subject leaders are new to the post and have real enthusiasm for the subjects. Standards have been maintained in both subjects since the last inspection, but there are no assessment procedures in place and not enough is done to find out what is happening in the subjects. No one looks at how well pupils do or evaluates the quality of teaching to see if things could be improved further.

GEOGRAPHY

84. Standards of attainment are close to national expectations for pupils aged seven and eleven. Pupils achieve satisfactory rates of progress as they move through the school. This is because their work is carefully matched to the national subject guidelines. This enables pupils to broaden their knowledge and understanding of geography steadily and improve their geographical skills. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactory progress in this subject because they are supported in class and their work is matched to their abilities.
85. By the age of seven, pupils have studied their local area and carefully recorded its specific features. They complete a comparative study with the island of Struay and recognise differences in the landscape, transport facilities and local occupations. They record these accurately in written and illustrative form. This helps promote an appropriate range of skills, such as mapping techniques. Pupils are aware that significant journeys are needed to reach distant locations. They have recorded a journey to France and identified some geographical features and characteristics of the country.
86. By the age of eleven, pupils have studied mountain ranges in the United Kingdom and abroad. They know how mountain ranges are formed and how weather conditions, over time, cause erosion. Pupils have completed work on the weather cycle and can explain how rainfall occurs and how it affects the environment. Pupils have sufficient map reading skills to use four-figure co-ordinates to locate a specific feature on an Ordnance Survey map. They are aware of the local environment and understand the importance of protecting it. Good use is made of a visit to an outdoor education centre and an 'outdoor classroom'. These visits provide good opportunities for pupils to widen their understanding of the environment and complete specific studies of their region.
87. During the inspection no lessons were observed in geography. However, from the scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils, the overall standard of teaching is

satisfactory. Topics are carefully planned, with some tasks carefully matched to ability. Specific skills are taught, for example mapping skills, and these enable pupils to develop their ability to record work accurately. Appropriate resources are used to stimulate pupils' thinking.

88. Appropriate assessment procedures are in place, based on local and national guidance. However, these do not always guide planning sufficiently for the more able pupils. The co-ordinator has limited opportunities to monitor planning, pupils' work, and teaching. Resource provision is satisfactory and is supplemented through loans from the local Learning Resource Centre. The school's literacy strategy is promoted effectively through written work. The subject makes appropriate use of ICT as a research facility. Overall, standards since the last inspection have been maintained in the infants, with some improvement in the juniors and overall improvement is satisfactory.

HISTORY

89. Standards in history broadly match national expectations for pupils aged seven and eleven. Pupils achieve satisfactorily as they move through the school. This is because their work is carefully matched to national subject guidelines. This enables all pupils to improve their knowledge and understanding of history and broaden their range of historical skills. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactory gains in their learning. This is because of the support they receive in class, where tasks are carefully matched to their abilities.
90. By the age of seven, pupils have an understanding of change over time and know how to sequence events. They compare the Victorian home with the modern home and correctly identify kitchen equipment in each case. They continue by comparing different areas of the house and note, for example, the different sources of power between the early 20th century and today. Pupils are aware that some events belong to the distant past. They have studied the story of the Fire of London and identified how it started and how people escaped from it. They recognise that the material used to construct many buildings was wood and this caused the fire to spread more quickly. This work enables pupils to develop an understanding of cause and effect and of chronology.
91. By the age of eleven, pupils develop a range of historical skills by studying different periods in history. They make comparisons between ancient and modern Greece and this helps broaden their range of skills. Pupils recognise the difference between primary and secondary sources. They use empathy skills effectively to write about Victorian factory life and child workers. They compare the experiences of school children today and 100 years ago. Because there is an emphasis on research methods in lessons and pupils have opportunities to study primary source materials, pupils gain useful insights into change over time and into changing attitudes towards family life. Pupils make good use of census information to study local villages in the year 1851. This provides them with useful insights into family groups, housing and occupations of the time.
92. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection. From this, scrutiny of work and conversations with pupils, the overall standard of teaching is satisfactory. However, a number of strengths in teaching are apparent. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of this subject and because of this there is good use of resource material and some stimulating tasks are set. These effectively promote differing historical skills, based on individual and group research. Care is taken to ensure pupils are clear what is expected of them and clear parameters for behaviour are set. Pupils gain good factual knowledge because learning is consolidated well. However, there is insufficient attention

paid to designing tasks for the more able pupils. Because of this, these pupils do not always achieve high enough standards in their work.

93. There is good emphasis on research-based learning. Appropriate assessment procedures are in place, based on local and national guidance. However, these do not always inform planning sufficiently for the more able pupils. The co-ordinator has only limited opportunities to monitor planning, pupils' work and teaching. Resources are satisfactory and good use is made of ICT to research information. The school's literacy strategy is promoted well, particularly where pupils have opportunities for extended writing. Overall standards have been maintained since the last inspection and improvement is satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

94. Standards in ICT are high by the time the pupils leave the school, mainly because of effective teaching, but partly because of the wealth and quality of pupils' past experiences. This school has received several awards for its ICT provision and, although the subject does not have quite such a high profile as before because other subjects such as English, mathematics, science and religious education have been given equal status, these high standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
95. Teaching and learning are good in the juniors. Teaching is made so much easier though by the very good attitudes pupils have towards ICT, and computers in particular. Pupils' understanding of how computers work is exceptional and their use of subject language when talking about their past and present work means that their explanations are clear and precise. "We integrate ICT into all of our work", shows the importance pupils put on the usefulness of ICT. They use it extensively to research things such as finding out about the world's rivers, but know about the safety features that stop them accessing undesirable sites! They make good use also of the stand-alone computers in the classrooms to word process stories and they understand the advantage of using spell and grammar checks. They particularly enjoy the way teachers use the interactive computer whiteboard to demonstrate how to do things, saying, "ICT has virtually eliminated the flipchart!" They have used e-mail to communicate with others, and control technology to program traffic lights and electronic gates. They use the range of technology equipment available in school including, for example, the digital cameras and photocopier machines; "We find pictures in encyclopaedias and copy them" declared one enthusiastic Year 6 pupil. They use tape recorders confidently to record poetry. Their understanding of communication is good. They know that posters, for example, need to be eye-catching and have produced some effective ones to advertise events for the school council. They have designed land yachts on computers and sent their designs on disk to the local comprehensive school.
96. Standards in the infants are broadly as expected for pupils aged seven. They use word processing packages to produce single sentences, and art programs to produce effective computer-generated pictures. They can change brush size, and use the 'fill' tool to colour their work. They add text to pictures and successfully change the style and size of text. They compose music on the computer and use CD-ROMs to listen to music. They print their work using the drop down menu and save it to disk.
97. Computers are used well to support those pupils with special educational needs. One pupil with a statement of special educational need has their own laptop and uses it to help with writing. They use it, in particular, to check spelling, to help with vocabulary and to put phrases together.

98. Subject management is satisfactory. The subject leader is new to post and has not yet observed any teaching. She has introduced a new system for recording pupils' achievements and intends to use this to monitor pupils' learning as they move through the school. She is aware that data handling is relatively under-developed compared with the other features of ICT and is insufficiently promoted throughout the school.

MUSIC

99. Pupils do as well as can reasonably be expected for their age by the end of the infants and juniors. Satisfactory standards have been maintained since the time of the last inspection and teaching is sound.
100. Pupils experience an appropriate range of music creation and performing as well as listening to music and appraising what they hear. They particularly enjoy singing and the four-part round that they sang in assembly echoed around the hall tunefully. The oldest pupils know that they need to breathe properly so that they can hold the long notes and to "think about the speed and pitch". "Clear diction is also as important", declared one. Musical composition features on the timetable and pupils are confident performers. For example, two pupils happily played the clarinet in assembly, bringing spontaneous applause from their schoolmates. Pupils of all ages are encouraged to paint to music in order to express how it makes them feel. An awareness of how different instruments create different atmosphere and effect prompted one pupil to say, "Violins are chosen sometimes for sad music".
101. In reply to the question, "Why do you enjoy music so much?" a Year 6 pupil announced, "Its fun!" The group then burst, unprompted, into a rendition of 'Bobby Shaftoe'. They enjoy different types of music, such as pop, classical and jazz, and know a variety of famous composers, ranging from Beethoven to The Blues Brothers! They talk equally confidently about famous people in music like "Pavarotti sings opera" and "Michael Ball's good".
102. Computers are used to compose music and although the older pupils in particular use tape recorders to record their music so that they can listen to it later, they seldom use written musical symbols or notation to help them to remember their compositions. Pupils' achievements in music are not recorded and no one checks on the quality of the teaching or on how well pupils are doing. It is difficult, therefore, for the subject co-ordinator to influence change and bring about any further improvement.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

103. By the end of the infants and juniors, standards in physical education are broadly as expected for pupils aged seven and eleven. Pupils make sound progress as they move through the school because teaching is satisfactory overall. All of these judgements reflect those made at the time of the last inspection. Teachers use the subject national guidelines successfully to plan a range of activities for the pupils, including focus on why it is important to exercise in order to stay healthy. Questions such "What is your heart doing?" ensure that Years 1 and 2 pupils notice how their heart rate has increased after running around the field at the start of a physical education lesson. The oldest pupils know how important it is to warm up muscles to stop them getting damaged, before putting them through a strenuous routine. Pupils are safety conscious and know that they must not call out when on the apparatus, for example, for fear of distracting others.

104. Pupils clearly enjoy physical education lessons. Good promotion of the dynamics of teamwork means that the oldest pupils in school understand the importance of working with others “because if you don’t, you won’t get anywhere”. They talk with sincerity about the need to trust others, explaining that it is important to believe that they will be able to catch the ball if you throw it to them, giving the example, “even if they are smaller than the person marking them”. They talk about how different people have different qualities to bring to the subject, like some can dodge better whilst others can run quicker. They show a real understanding about how all of these qualities can be used together as a force to become a successful team. Competitiveness is clearly important to them, but they are not worried about losing, “Its only a game that’s how we’ve been taught”.
105. There are no records yet of how well pupils do in physical education and no one checks on teaching and learning. This limits the co-ordinator’s influence in bringing about change and improvement.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

106. Standards of attainment meet the requirements of the local authority’s agreed syllabus for religious education for pupils aged seven and eleven. Achievement over time is satisfactory for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. This is because work is carefully planned to meet national guidelines and syllabus requirements.
107. By the age of seven, pupils are aware of the importance of ceremony and celebration as a part of Christianity and other world faiths. They know that the Harvest Festival is an important event celebrating the safe gathering in of crops. Pupils carefully write about and illustrate this, showing traditional harvest gifts. Pupils know that monks travelling from Ireland introduced Christianity to Britain. They are aware that this led to monasteries being built in northern England. They recognise that ceremony is particularly important to the Jewish people. They can identify a Sedar plate and know that it is significant in helping recall events from long ago. Pupils show particular interest in the teacher’s accounts of travels in Sri Lanka. This good teaching promotes thinking and encourages questions. Pupils discuss and carefully draw prayer flags, asking further questions about Buddhist shrines and statues.
108. By the age of eleven, pupils have a sound knowledge of major events described in the Old and New Testaments. For example, they know the story of Moses and Noah, the story of Christ’s life and the events surrounding the crucifixion. They carefully study the story of St Cuthbert as part of their work on the northern saints. Pupils are able to describe conditions in England at the time of Cuthbert and gain insights into why individuals chose to become monks. They can outline the daily routines of monks and know that these people were responsible for the preservation of learning. As part of this work, pupils learn about the Lindisfarne Bibles and have the opportunity to practise illuminated script. Pupils develop a sound understanding of Judaism and can relate specific traditions to events in the Old Testament. For example, they know that during the Passover celebration, a Jewish family consumes specific food and drink, with each ingredient having special meaning. Good use is made of discussion and most pupils demonstrate a greater understanding orally than their written work shows. This is because of an emphasis on oral work, which forms the basis of assessment in this subject.
109. During the inspection, only one lesson was observed in the infants and one in the juniors. From this, scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils, the overall standard of teaching is judged to be satisfactory. However, there are a number of good features,

which include effective questioning and the imaginative use of resources. For example, in Year 2, photographs from Sri Lanka helped promote a lively discussion about Buddhism. In Years 5/6, the teacher used questions well to develop pupils' use of appropriate language when answering questions on the monasteries.

110. The co-ordinator offers sound leadership, but has little opportunity to monitor provision or sample work. The curriculum is satisfactory and is enriched by the use of imaginative resources, educational visits, and visiting speakers. Good use is made of the local church to improve pupils' understanding of Christianity. The standards achieved by pupils are best observed through discussion work. Assessment procedures are oral and therefore written tasks are under-developed, restricting opportunities for extended writing. Whilst resources are sufficient overall, the lack of relevant computer software restricts opportunities to make best use of ICT as a learning resource. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Standards are higher in the juniors and more time is now devoted to the subject.