

INSPECTION REPORT

GREENHAUGH FIRST SCHOOL

Greenhaugh, Hexham

LEA area: Northumberland

Unique reference number: 122226

Headteacher: Mrs L M Griffiths

Reporting inspector: Mr J J Peacock
25344

Dates of inspection: 21st – 23rd January 2002

Inspection number: 197360

Short inspection carried out under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	The local education authority
Age range of pupils:	4 to 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Greenhaugh Hexham Northumberland
Postcode:	NE48 1LX
Telephone number:	01434 240208
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Jackson
Date of previous inspection:	September 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This county first school caters for pupils from four to nine years of age and is much smaller than other primary schools. There are 27 pupils on roll, 13 boys and 14 girls in two mixed age group classes. Numbers have decreased by about 18 per cent since the previous inspection. Most of the pupils come from the immediate isolated rural area, which is within the Northumberland National Park. About one third have transferred from other local schools. All need to be transported because of the location of the school, which is situated in open countryside. The attainment of most when they start in the reception class is below average.

About 13 per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals but only half actually take them. This is broadly in line with the national average. The school has four pupils with special educational needs, which again is broadly average, but none have a statement of special educational needs. There are no pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. Pupil mobility is not significant with only two joining and one leaving during term time in the last full academic year. The provision of a pre-school playgroup and the growing reputation of the school are attracting pupils from other local schools, helping to combat the falling roll caused by the sparse population in the area.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school, with strengths in a number of key areas. This is mainly due to the guidance and expertise of the headteacher. Her commitment to the school and firm belief in promoting pupils' independence is helping to create a very good climate for learning, which is appreciated by parents in the community. The governing body is supportive and shows a strong determination to be fully involved in any initiatives designed to raise standards further. The quality of teaching in all subjects of the broad and balanced curriculum is consistently good, very good or excellent. As a result, standards have been maintained in English and mathematics, and improved in science along with some other subject areas since the previous inspection. All pupils really enjoy coming to school, show a very good attitude towards their work and behave well. When all these factors are considered, along with the very high level of funding for each pupil, caused by the small numbers, the school is still providing good value for money.

What the school does well

- The standards achieved in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are above those normally expected. Pupils also do well in design and technology and art and design. Their computer skills are well above average.
- The very good leadership and management provided by the headteacher is a key feature in the school's growing reputation.
- The quality of teaching is a strength of the school.
- Pupils' enthusiasm for school is readily apparent. All show very good attitudes towards their work, enjoy very good relationships with everyone and willingly accept responsibility.
- The quality and range of learning opportunities for such a small school are very good.
- Parents' views of the school are very positive.

What could be improved

- The amount of time allocated for classroom assistants to support pupils in the infant class.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The overall level of improvement since the previous inspection has been good. This is reflected in pupils' performance in science throughout the school and in design and technology in the junior class where standards are now above average. The rate of improvement in information and communication technology has been very good with pupils aged nine showing a very good level of skill when using

computers. Four key issues were identified in 1997. The school staff and governors have worked hard to bring about much improvement in each. The quality of teaching is carefully monitored on a termly basis. This has resulted in teaching now being very good rather than good as it was previously. The school development plan is very detailed and clearly shows specific priorities and targets for improvement, the duration of projects and all relevant budgeting requirements. Pupils who have special educational needs are supported well in class with work which is carefully matched to their capabilities. On occasions they receive extra tuition, provided on a one-to-one basis by an unqualified teaching assistant. Statutory requirements are met for the appraisal of teachers and the headteacher, with the latest procedures for performance management being satisfactorily implemented. In addition, imaginative plans to create a new outdoor play area/classroom for children under six are well advanced. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have also been satisfactorily implemented and these are helping to maintain the above average standards in English and mathematics. The school is on course to meet its own targets set for English and mathematics in the tests for seven-year-olds in 2002.

STANDARDS

The very small number of pupils taking the national tests for seven-year-olds makes comparisons with national averages or other similar schools meaningless. In 2000, for example, the performance of the seven pupils who took the tests was very high compared to the average in reading, writing and mathematics. Teacher assessments in science were also very high compared to those achieved nationally. As a result, the school received an award for excellence from the Department for Education and Employment. In 2001, fewer pupils did the tests. Included were pupils with learning difficulties and when the overall results were compared, they were very low, being in the bottom five per cent nationally in each subject tested. No pupil achieved the higher Level 3 in reading or writing. However, all achieved the targets set for them by the school, based on a realistic assessment of their potential. There is no significant difference in the performance of girls or boys. All are set individual targets for English and mathematics following an early assessment of their potential and their progress towards these is carefully tracked each term.

A detailed scrutiny of pupils' completed work and lesson observations confirms that standards in English, mathematics, science, art and design and design and technology are above those normally expected for pupils aged seven and nine. In information and communication technology, standards are above those normally seen for pupils aged seven and well above by the time that pupils are ready to leave the school aged nine. A lack of evidence meant that it was not possible to confirm parents' views about high standards in music, expressed at the meeting prior to the inspection. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory with all achieving the targets set for them. By the time children are at the end of their reception year, all make good progress and achieve the early learning goals in the six areas of learning which make up the Foundation Stage curriculum.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy being at school and show a genuine commitment and desire to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall. In all 12 of the lessons seen it was good or very good. No oppressive behaviour was observed during the inspection. One fixed term exclusion reflects the school's aims for good behaviour from all pupils.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Opportunities for pupils to take responsibility are widespread. The relationships between pupils and with teachers are very good.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Closure due to snow and the outbreak of foot and mouth disease were the two main factors affecting attendance. One pupil was excluded in the last school year. No unauthorised absence is recorded.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 4
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very good	Very good

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

In the 1997 inspection, teaching was mostly good, never less than satisfactory and occasionally very good. Much work has been undertaken to monitor the effectiveness of teaching and improve the quality, with staff working very well as a team. As a result, the overall quality of teaching is now very good. In all of the 12 lessons observed, it was good, very good or excellent. This represents a significant improvement and it is beginning to have a noticeable impact on the standards pupils achieve in the classroom. In the Foundation Stage, which covers the time children spend in the reception class, the overall quality is very good. This is giving children a good start to school and helping most to make good progress towards the early learning goals in their curriculum. However, with only two hours support provided each week by a classroom assistant, children inevitably spend some time working independently of the class teacher as she teaches others. This helps to promote their sense of responsibility, but their rate of progress is sometimes affected as they occasionally lose concentration. Moreover, the teacher is constantly being interrupted as she works with any group, making it a difficult situation for all.

There is strong commitment to give all pupils the best possible education, and the basic skills for all subjects are taught very well by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable staff. The above average standards in art and design and design and technology, for example, are directly attributable to the quality of teaching. Computers are used effectively in all lessons. In one excellent lesson in the junior class, for example, pupils demonstrated well above average skills when e-mailing another local school. Other strong features promoting the very effective learning are the detailed lesson planning and management of pupils. These features help to ensure that all pupils are fully included in all activities, and as a result the climate for learning is very good. The identification and provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Higher attaining pupils are well provided for throughout the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. Statutory requirements are met. French lessons, personal, social and health education and citizenship together with a programme of visits and visitors, plus special events such as camping, effectively enhance the quality of the curriculum. The Foundation Stage curriculum is well planned and covers all nationally agreed areas. Extra-curricular provision is satisfactory overall.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. This represents an improvement from the previous report. Individual targets are clearly defined and pupils on the register are fully involved in all lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Provision for pupils' social development is particularly effective, with teachers actively encouraging pupils to act responsibly, show initiative and work conscientiously, even when they are not directly supervised. The school council is an excellent forum for pupils to air their views.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good procedures exist for ensuring pupils' personal wellbeing. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good.

The school actively develops the partnership with parents, involving them whenever possible. Parents' views of the different aspects of the school are very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher demonstrates a high level of professional expertise when carrying out her duties. Her clear educational vision and calm, unflappable approach succeeds in inspiring all staff to work effectively as a team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Effectively! Led by a conscientious chairman, all governors carry out their duties well with the best interests of pupils in mind.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Standards and the quality of teaching are closely monitored. Decisive action is taken to bring about necessary improvements.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The finances are managed well and best value is sought in all expenditure. The school makes satisfactory use of new technology.

Spending on classroom assistants is well below average. Outdoors, pupils have plenty of space and many interesting opportunities for imaginative play using the very good variety of climbing and balancing equipment. Plans are well advanced to add a designated, safe outdoor play area for children in the Foundation Stage. The library is not very welcoming and many of the books are looking dated.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils like school and they make good progress. • Behaviour is good. • Pupils get the right amount of homework. • Teaching is good. • Parents are well informed and feel comfortable about approaching school. • Pupils are expected to work hard and the school works closely with parents. • The school is well led and managed. • The school helps pupils to become more mature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive responses. Staff work extremely hard and thoroughly deserve this vote of confidence from parents. The provision of extra-curricular opportunities is satisfactory overall. The isolated locality and small numbers make it impractical to arrange activities after school hours. To compensate, a wide variety of visits and visitors, special one-off occasions, such as camping in the school grounds and dancing at a folk festival, are arranged to enrich the curriculum.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The standards achieved in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are above those normally expected. Pupils also do well in design and technology and art and design. Their computer skills are well above average.

1. There is a very strong commitment shown by all who work at the school to provide the best possible education for every pupil. As a direct consequence of this, pupils achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment. Every parent who responded to the questionnaire agreed that pupils make good progress, and 95 per cent say pupils have to work hard. Inspectors found evidence for this in:
 - the well-planned, interesting lessons which covered a wide range of learning experiences;
 - the enthusiastic teaching which effectively motivated pupils;
 - the way pupils enjoyed being in school and their keenness to learn.
2. Attainment on entry to the reception class is below average. This is most likely due to the lack of contact with other children in this isolated area and fewer opportunities to attend pre-school groups. Children benefit from the detailed lesson planning which effectively covers the six areas of learning in the Foundation Stage curriculum. The quality of teaching is very good, and as a result most make good progress in language and literacy, mathematics, in their knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and in their personal and social development. For example, children listen well to all adults, respond well to instructions and work well on the tasks set for them. In their physical development, progress is also good. Good use is made of the hall for large play equipment. However, at present they do not have free access to a designated outdoor play area with equipment such as large climbing frames and wheeled toys for children to push or ride. Plans are well advanced to develop an area leading out from the hall. Their physical development does not suffer as they use the very good range of play equipment provided all around the grassed areas for climbing and balancing every playtime. By the end of their reception year, all children achieve the early learning goals in the Foundation Stage curriculum. This gives them a good start for the next phase of their education.
3. Pupils' performance in the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2000 showed that the school achieved very high results in reading, writing, mathematics and in teacher assessments in science. This achievement was recognised by a national award for excellence from the Department for Education and Employment. However, performance in the national test results for 2001 was well below average in all subjects. The very small numbers who take the tests each year causes the dramatic fluctuation and makes comparisons with the national average and with similar schools meaningless. One pupil failing to reach expected levels in 2000, for example, affected the results by 20 per cent.
4. Inspection evidence, based on a scrutiny of pupils' completed work, displays in classrooms and discussions with pupils shows that attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is above average for seven- and nine-year-olds. The introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and a marked improvement in the quality of teaching are helping to ensure that standards since the previous inspection have remained above average in English and mathematics and have improved in science. The appointment of a part-time teacher with a specialism in science has no doubt helped to raise attainment from being in line with the national

average at the time of the previous inspection to above average. Inspection evidence also shows that the standards pupils achieve in art and design and design and technology are above those expected for seven- and nine-year-olds. In information and communication technology, standards are above average for seven-year-olds and well above for nine-year-olds. This represents a significant improvement in design and technology and information and communication technology since the previous inspection, when standards were in line with expectations for nine-year-olds in both subjects. Parents, at their meeting prior to the inspection, expressed the view that music was a strength of the school. Unfortunately, insufficient evidence could be gathered in this short inspection to verify this. The improvement in standards reflect the very positive attitudes pupils have towards their work.

5. In English, pupils are provided with regular opportunities to express themselves in class discussions. Most make good progress in their speaking and listening skills as a result. Reading is taught effectively, allowing pupils to develop their technical skills well. All have good strategies, for example, to try and read unfamiliar words. Most read with understanding. The close liaison between home and school, with parents regularly hearing their children read and writing comments in reading diaries, is helping to improve standards.
6. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to write in most subjects. For example, in science, pupils record their results following investigations into sound or plant growth and record findings from research about their topic on rocks and soils. The daily literacy sessions successfully introduce skills that pupils can use when writing in other subjects. Year 1, for example, are taught when to use capital letters, and in Year 2 pupils use punctuation accurately, most recognising question marks and exclamation marks. Junior pupils produce quite lengthy pieces of writing and their work covers a wide range of writing styles and topics. For example, they write reports about their harvest festival and about historical events such as The Gunpowder Plot. All re-tell stories, write new beginnings for some, and create their own imaginative stories. The standard of their spelling is above average.
7. The formal structure of literacy and numeracy sessions is having a beneficial effect on standards throughout the school. Detailed lesson planning, well chosen texts and teachers' skills in teaching reading, supported by parents at home, help all to reach nationally expected standards. Teachers provide very good opportunities for pupils to write in a wide range of contexts and styles, often using computers. For example, pupils record the results of science experiments into the insulation properties of materials, write 'scarey' stories and list the key incidents from stories such as 'The Ant and Grasshopper'. All pupils demonstrate a fluent joined style of handwriting when completing handwriting exercises but the neatness is not always carried over into their other exercise books.
8. In mathematics pupils do well. This is mainly because of the clear structure of lessons, which closely follows the guidance of the National Numeracy Strategy, the quality of teaching and pupils' positive attitudes. All pupils enjoy the challenge of finding answers to number problems and most competently explain how they worked out an answer. By the age of seven, pupils successfully count in twos, fives and tens, halve and double numbers and competently add and subtract numbers to 50. Pupils in the junior class were quick to calculate the answers to number problems involving two- and three-digit numbers. They calculate perimeters of mathematical shapes and can measure and draw angles. By the end of Year 4, all show a good knowledge of fractions, decimals and negative numbers. Pupils collect, record and process data well, producing graphs showing the results of science investigations or favourite fruits or authors.

9. Much of the work in science is of a practical nature. By the time they are seven, pupils have studied electricity, magnets, sounds, light, materials and living things, such as plants. In a lesson seen in Year 2, for example, pupils tried to devise an investigation to measure the brightness of a variety of torches. Pupils in the junior class have many opportunities to investigate and conduct experiments independently of their teacher, for example measuring the temperature as liquids cool and growing plants in different conditions. All are well motivated and work hard in lessons to complete a copious amount of work in their books. Some examples of topics covered include monitoring how materials such as wax change when heated, separating solutions, plant growth, healthy lifestyle and sound, light and electricity. Girls and boys of all abilities achieve equally well in science, as well as in English and mathematics.
10. Teachers' obvious flair for art and design and expertise in design and technology and information and communication technology help pupils to achieve better than average standards in these three subjects. The quality of display throughout the school, such as the woven willow circles decorated with coloured paper in the infant class, and wide range of materials on offer show how much emphasis is given to developing pupils' skills in art and design. All prepare designs thoughtfully before making models in design and technology. Pupils handle tools such as saws sensibly. In the infant class, for example, they used clamps to fix saw guides to their desks to improve accuracy when cutting axles for their model vehicles and junior pupils cut out wooden square tiles for printing their designs accurately. Pupils of all ages use computers confidently and competently. Year 2 pupils were able to load programs into the computer unaided and were familiar with the functions of the various keys. They could change font size, use capital letters and print their work. All demonstrate good control of the mouse when selecting options in mathematic programs. Junior pupils make good use of a digital camera to take a series of photographs of their school play area before selecting one to scan on to a letter to send on an e-mail to a school in Hexham which they are developing links with. Two Year 4 pupils showed advanced skills when they used the office computer to reply to an e-mail from one of the parents. All use data gathered on pupils' favourite food or authors and present it accurately in a variety of graphical forms.
11. Pupils with special educational needs are satisfactorily provided for, showing that the comments in the previous inspection have been acted upon. It means that every pupil can be fully included in all classroom activities. The small numbers in each class and skilled support help everyone to achieve the challenging targets set for them. All pupils are fully included in all aspects of school life, with teachers ensuring equality of opportunity for all. As a result, these pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment and make satisfactory progress towards the targets set for them by the time they are ready to leave at the end of Year 4.

The very good leadership and management provided by the headteacher is a key feature in the school's growing reputation.

12. The quality of leadership and management has further improved since the previous inspection when leadership was described as positive, providing very effective educational direction. The headteacher has conscientiously addressed all the issues raised in the previous inspection and shown a strong determination to raise standards in all aspects of school life. Her very good leadership and capable management are largely responsible for the school's growing reputation in the area. Overall, leadership and management are very good. The headteacher has a clear picture of what she wants to achieve for the benefit of the pupils and community. As a direct result of her vision, knowledge, calm approach and high quality leadership, the school is managing to improve on the standards reported previously. Staff and governors share her very

strong commitment to the school and work hard in partnership with her to meet the clear and specific aims set out clearly in the school prospectus. These aims and values are strongly reflected in all aspects of school life such as pupils' very good attitudes to their work and their good behaviour.

13. The effective delegation of responsibility to staff and governors is a strong feature. It promotes a feeling of unity as all work together very effectively as a team. All share responsibility to evaluate the school's performance and to plan for its future. The planned development of the new outdoor classroom area for pupils in the school grounds is a prime example of co-operation and teamwork to effect improvements. Staff work closely together to co-ordinate the development of subjects within the curriculum, giving much support to one another. Their roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. The experienced and talented teacher in the infant class, for example, carries out her responsibilities very efficiently and effectively. The newly formed Foundation Stage for reception aged children is currently managed as part of Key Stage 1. This is appropriate in such a small school. Non-teaching staff feel part of the 'school team' and value the guidance and support they receive from teachers. The quality of their work adds to the success of pupils' learning experiences.
14. The governing body carries out its statutory duties effectively and works extremely hard to support the school. The knowledgeable chair of governors has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses through regular weekly meetings with the headteacher. Individual governors accept responsibility for areas such as literacy, numeracy and special educational needs. This gives them a clear overview of learning in these areas. All approach their duties conscientiously and are proud to be associated with the school. Importantly, all appreciate the level of improvements brought about by the headteacher and express confidence in her. Minutes of the governing body's meetings indicate that meetings are well attended and business is conducted efficiently. The statutory requirements for the special educational needs Code of Practice are met.
15. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching, a key issue in the previous inspection, are in place for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. All other subjects are monitored less frequently. In response to a recent national initiative, the school has very good procedures and documentation for assessing the quality of teaching and rewarding those who perform highly. The headteacher constantly strives for high standards and has a regular programme for analysing national test results and monitoring pupils' completed workbooks to evaluate the standards being achieved. Last year, for example, this highlighted the need for improvements in writing in the junior class.
16. In the previous inspection, the school had four key issues to address. All have been tackled rigorously. Very effective procedures to monitor and evaluate teaching are helping to raise standards in all subjects. Improvements to the school development plan give all a clear indication of current priorities and these are carefully costed and evaluated. Additional support for pupils with special educational needs has been provided and this is used satisfactorily to help pupils in lessons and on occasions in a one-to-one basis in the library.
17. The school office is run efficiently. Administration staff are friendly and welcoming, giving visitors a very good first impression. Satisfactory use is made of new technology in the office, with an electronic mail facility for parents and computer programs for managing the finances. Government grants are used effectively and correctly. Compared to other schools, there is a very favourable ratio of computers to pupils with a computer for every eight pupils. The headteacher, ably supported by the chair of the finances committee, is meticulous in making sure that funds are applied

to the best effect. Overall financial control is good. The large contingency budget, amounting to 21.2 per cent of the total, is being safeguarded sensibly to cover any drop in pupil numbers. In actual terms, this is not a great deal of money. The effect of one or two pupils moving has a significant impact with such small numbers involved. A few minor items for improvement found during the last audit by the education authority auditors were promptly dealt with. The school buys its resources at the most competitive prices and pays careful attention to quality.

18. Teaching staff levels are generous with a very favourable teacher to pupil ratio of 11.7:1. The level of provision for non-teaching support staff, however, is well below average for a school of this size. This places undue pressure on teachers, particularly in the infant class with its wide range of age groups. The school grounds provide an exciting and interesting play environment for pupils, with a wide range of play equipment for pupils to climb, jump over or balance on. However, at present there is no designated outdoor area for children in the Foundation Stage to use to promote their physical development. This is identified as a school priority and plans are well advanced to provide one. The school library is small but adequate for the size of school. It is not particularly welcoming or attractive. The amount of equipment stored there gives it an untidy appearance and many of the books are looking very dated. The school has already identified this as an area for improvement in its current management planning. Taking into account the exceptional way in which the school is led and managed, the standards achieved, the very good quality of teaching and pupils' very good attitudes, along with the high costs for each pupil, the school is providing good value for money.

The quality of teaching is a strength of the school.

19. The overall quality of teaching is very good throughout the school. It has improved since the previous inspection in June 1997 as a direct result of the headteacher's leadership and a shared determination by all staff to raise standards.
20. The quality of teaching observed during this short inspection was good, very good or excellent in all of the 12 lessons seen. It was very good or excellent in six of them, which reflects the high quality overall. Staff are guided effectively in their lesson planning by detailed teaching programmes for all subjects, and as a result the quality of their lesson planning is very good. Other strong features that contribute most to the effective teaching are high expectations of pupils, relationships within the small class groups and the level of discipline which enables pupils to work independently of their teacher in a quiet orderly learning environment. As a direct consequence, pupils work conscientiously in their lessons, concentrating well until they finish their work.
21. There is a very strong determination by all staff to raise standards, and pupils are playing their part by showing a very good attitude towards their work and trying constantly to do their best. As a result of this, a copious amount of pupils' completed work was available to the inspection team for their scrutiny. Teachers' enthusiasm and their very good knowledge of the curriculum and ability to make learning challenging and exciting, helps to keep all pupils fully motivated and extremely busy. In a Years 3 and 4 lesson, for example, pupils enjoyed researching information on owls using the Internet. The task in this excellent lesson was given purpose as pupils in the class prepared to share their information via an e-mail with another school.
22. One of the most important elements in maintaining high standards and the very good teaching is teachers' very good subject knowledge and level of expertise. As a result, basic skills are taught very effectively and very good links are made between different subjects. In the infant class science lesson observed, for example, skills in English, design and technology and in using computers were all utilised by pupils to complete

their investigation. Junior pupils had to use art, design and measuring skills when making their printing tiles. Overall, expectations of pupils are high and they respond by behaving extremely well and working conscientiously. Pupils of all abilities are given suitably challenging tasks. That is why they achieve so well.

23. Another strong feature of most lessons is the effective way teachers promote pupils' independence and encourage them to use their initiative. The very good attitude pupils in general have towards their work means that they can be trusted to work diligently, whether they are supervised by an adult or not. Children in the mixed age infant class, for example, did not need telling to find something else to do when they had finished their task and their teacher was occupied with another group. Praise is used well throughout to motivate or raise pupils' self-esteem. This was evident in the supportive comments attached to pupils' marked work.
24. The quality of teaching in the literacy hours and during numeracy sessions is very good throughout the school. All teachers use the skills that pupils have learned in these sessions effectively when teaching other subjects. In Years 3 and 4, for example, pupils' literacy skills were developed well as they researched information from the Internet and prepared messages to send to pupils in a Hexham school. Pupils are frequently provided with the opportunity to use computers as part of their work in all subjects and this invariably involves them practising their literacy or numeracy skills. For example, pupils in the infant class record the results of their investigation into the brightness of torches and transfer them to a spreadsheet on the computer.
25. The consistently good quality of teaching accounts for pupils achieving highly in English, mathematics and science. In English and mathematics, all achieve the targets set for them by the time they are ready to leave the school. This is a direct result of the quality of teaching and the successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. In information and communication technology in particular, pupils' well above average achievements reflect the vastly improved level of resources and quality of teaching. Both teachers have a considerable level of expertise and provide pupils with a wide range of challenging experiences. This accounts for the high standards achieved in the subject.
26. All teachers work hard to establish a good working atmosphere and promote effective learning. Pupils obviously enjoy the calm, orderly atmosphere in lessons and behave very well. This results in a productive working environment in all classes and sustained levels of concentration. The quality of teaching in the reception class is very good. Pupils of all ages in this class are keen to work. The close support available from the class teacher, clear instructions and carefully structured tasks ensures that all are fully involved. As a direct result, effective learning occurs in virtually all lessons. There are occasions, however, when an extra pair of hands would considerably ease the workload of the busy teacher and make some activity sessions more challenging or educationally worthwhile for pupils. Planning of children's work meets the new requirements of all six areas of learning in the Foundation Stage curriculum.
27. The satisfactory provision made for pupils with special educational needs shows that the school has successfully responded to the previous inspection. The small number of pupils in each class guarantees them much individual attention. Staff use expert advice and very good assessment information to ensure that individual learning plans identify precise and achievable targets in relation to literacy, numeracy and social behaviour. Teachers take full account of these individual targets in their lesson plans. Support staff work closely with teachers to ensure that the best possible use is made

of their time when they are teaching pupils in class or withdrawing pupils for short sessions to work on a one-to-one basis in the small library. As a result, all pupils with special educational needs consistently receive the help they need to make satisfactory progress in relation to their personal targets. Teaching is usually of a high quality, characterised by well-planned activities and a sensitive and caring approach, which successfully builds pupils' confidence. As a result, pupils with special educational needs are able to take a full part in all activities in this school.

28. Every parent who responded to the questionnaire sent out prior to the inspection agreed that teaching was good at the school. Almost all were also happy with the amount of homework their children were expected to do. At the meeting for parents, all felt that the tasks set were well matched to pupils' capabilities. Inspection findings support parents' views. The school's policy statement gives clear guidance to teachers and parents on homework. Teachers make good use of homework as part of their strong commitment to raise standards, and the amount and quality effectively supports pupils' learning.

Pupils' enthusiasm for school is readily apparent. All show very good attitudes towards their work, enjoy very good relationships with everyone and willingly accept responsibility.

29. The previous inspection found that the majority of pupils had good attitudes to school and to learning. They are now very good largely as a result of the quality of teaching, providing pupils with challenging and interesting tasks which are well suited to their capabilities. Pupils are keen to take part in the wide range of activities available and willingly engage adults in conversation about their work. They enjoy coming to school and the majority approach their work with a genuine commitment and desire to learn.
30. Every parent who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that their child likes coming to school. All readily agree that the school is helping their child to become more mature. This confidence is well placed. Pupils enjoy taking part in assembly and they sing tunefully to the guitar accompaniment provided by six junior pupils. During lessons, pupils of all ages quickly settle down to work and persevere with things they find difficult. They usually listen carefully to their teacher and are proud of their completed work. For example, Year 2 pupils were desperate to show how well they could read and in a junior class English lesson everyone wanted to read aloud their introduction to their story for others to evaluate.
31. Pupils behave well during the school day. They are friendly and outgoing and get along very well with members of staff and with each other. Pupils of all ages mix freely, and during lessons they are usually well mannered and polite. All members of staff lead by example and address the pupils with the respect and consideration they deserve. Pupils respond similarly and their positive approach to learning helps to create a lively and vibrant atmosphere. Pupils listen carefully during lessons and usually wait their turn to answer their teacher's questions. On the odd occasion when pupils' enthusiasm gets the better of them, their teacher may have to remind them not to shout out. Pupils' behaviour during lunchtimes and playtimes is good and there is a pleasant family atmosphere in the playground with older pupils looking after younger ones. Teachers are often involved. One playtime, pupils from Class 1 were keen to act as horses, jumping the obstacles on the grass. Not wishing to disappoint their teacher, they asked if she would mind if they did not play throwing and catching with her today! The school has a very successful policy of social and educational inclusion and all pupils play energetically and happily together. Bullying, racism or other anti-social behaviour is very rare and any such incidents are dealt with firmly and very effectively. Teachers, whenever possible, encourage pupils to resolve their own

differences. Throughout the school there is a strong sense of community, and relationships between pupils and with members of staff are very good. There has been only one fixed-term exclusion during the last school year.

32. Pupils' personal development is very good. Lessons such as 'together time' where issues like saying sorry or the importance of keeping promises help pupils to become more mature and appreciate the feelings of others. Personal, social and health education and citizenship lessons effectively teach pupils about growing up, healthy foods, sex and drugs. The school council is an excellent forum for all pupils to discuss problems and collectively make decisions on any aspect of school life. All are fully included in special one-off activities such as the African drumming session or visit to a nearby artist's studio. The school does not provide a regular weekly programme of extra-curricular activities because of the difficulties with transport and the small numbers involved. However, a satisfactory range of activities such as dancing and camping in the school grounds are popular with pupils. Within each class, pupils willingly undertake a wide range of responsibilities, such as acting as monitors and helping to tidy away equipment. Pupils are independent and work very well on their own and in small groups. When required to do so, they can be relied upon to get on with their work and to complete any homework that is set.
33. Attendance levels were high at the time of the previous inspection, being better than the national average by one per cent. Attendance, based on current figures, is now satisfactory overall. This does not mean that things have deteriorated. Heavy snow last winter and the outbreak of foot and mouth disease meant that many pupils were unable to get to school. Attendance figures suffered and the school's total was about two per cent below the national average. An analysis of class registers showed that attendance, excluding these two periods, continues to be high. The two factors, which were out of the school's control, were solely responsible for the lower annual figure. The school's procedures for following up absences are thorough and so no unauthorised absences occur. The area served by the school includes a high proportion of isolated farms and this results in a relatively static population. As a result, the level of pupil mobility is low, causing little disruption to the school. All pupils arrive punctually and lessons start on time.

The quality and range of learning opportunities for such a small school are very good.

34. The key factors responsible are:
- the headteacher's leadership;
 - teachers' level of expertise and their enthusiasm for teaching;
 - long hours of planning;
 - additional funding from a local trust fund.
35. As a result, a very good curriculum is being provided in this small school. The challenging activities help to motivate pupils, who invariably work hard in class. This represents an improvement from the previous inspection when some work was considered to lack challenge for certain groups. All enjoy coming to school and show very good attitudes towards their work. Children in the reception class are also very well provided for with interesting and exciting learning experiences covering all the early learning goals in the six areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum. A wide range of activities is planned, and there is a suitable balance between teacher-directed

tasks and self-initiated activities. Children are well prepared to begin work on the National Curriculum by the end of their reception year.

36. The quality of planning ensures that infant and junior aged pupils spend enough time on each National Curriculum subject, religious education and personal and social education and citizenship. In addition, a range of other experiences is provided. For example, all pupils in school benefit from ten swimming sessions each year, all have French lessons and Years 3 and 4 pupils learn how to play the guitar and electronic keyboard. Detailed planning means that lessons are very carefully structured so that no time is wasted and all pupils work at the right level. The match of work to pupils' ages and levels of attainment in the two mixed age classes is planned carefully. Pupils with special educational needs benefit greatly from the small numbers in each class and the satisfactory amount of individual support which is available. The criticism in the previous report over the quality of in-class support has been successfully addressed.
37. Much emphasis is placed on teaching literacy and numeracy. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are well established. Mathematical skills are used very well to support other subjects, for example, when pupils made graphs from their results after investigating favourite fruits as part of a healthy eating project and recording temperatures as liquids cooled. Opportunities to use literacy skills are also planned in all other subjects. For example, pupils write about the lifestyle of the Victorians or record the steps taken to make a wheeled vehicle in design and technology. Curriculum provision for information and communication technology has improved significantly since the previous inspection, due to the increasing expertise of all teachers and much better resources. Pupils use computers to help them with their work in most lessons, using the Internet for researching information and sending e-mail messages being typical examples. By the time they are ready to leave the school, aged nine, all show an advanced level of skill.
38. There is an appropriate sex education policy. Pupils are taught about drugs as part of their science lessons when studying healthy eating. From an early age, pupils are being taught most effectively how different types of drugs are misused.
39. Very good links are established with the pre-school group which meets in the school hall twice each week. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, and care is taken to make the transition from this school to the nearby middle school as smooth as possible.
40. Other opportunities are taken to enhance pupils' learning through European sponsored initiatives such as the links maintained with France through the Socrates Project and sporting activities with neighbouring schools. Visits to places of interest are also used well to improve pupils' first hand experiences wherever possible, despite the distances involved and the cost of these trips. A satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities is provided for a school of this size. These are provided throughout the year as one-off special occasions, adding to the breadth of learning experiences for pupils. Camping in the school grounds is one of the more popular activities. Opportunities are also taken to involve children with outside expertise in art, dance, music and games. Frequent visitors and a range of interesting visits, funded in part by the local trust fund effectively add further interest for pupils.
41. The school is committed to the principals of equality of opportunity, and no pupils are excluded from any activity by reason of race, gender, social circumstance or ability. For example care is taken to make sure pupils with special educational needs do not miss out when they are taught for a short time out of the classroom by the special

educational needs assistant who is also the dinnertime helper. The breadth, balance and relevance of the curriculum on offer is an outstanding feature of this small school and largely responsible for every pupil achieving their full potential.

Parents' views of the school are very positive.

42. The strong support of parents and friendly atmosphere reported in the previous inspection still exist today. The response by parents to the questionnaires saw twice as many forms returned this time and the attendance at the meeting prior to the inspection was good with most families represented. Virtually all of those who attended the meeting for parents prior to the inspection showed pride in the growing reputation of the school and were very supportive in their comments. An analysis of the returned questionnaires shows an overwhelming majority of parents are very happy with school and confident that their children are getting a good education. Parent governors report that parents appreciate the family atmosphere within the school and the approachability of the headteacher and staff. Inspection findings confirm parents' positive views. Pupils are very well taught by a talented and caring staff who expect them to work hard and do their best at all times. All those who responded to the questionnaire agree that the school is helping their children to become more mature and responsible.
43. There is a strong commitment by the school to work closely with parents for the benefit of pupils and this helps to foster the very good relationships and parents' positive views. Parents, spoken to by the inspection team, confirm that they feel welcome in school and are kept well informed about how their child is getting on. School reports are informative and clearly describe pupils' progress in each curriculum area as well as giving targets for improvement. On the questionnaire, all parents unanimously agreed that their child is making good progress. Parents of pupils with special educational needs, and those with more able pupils, had no concerns about the school's provision for both groups of pupils.
44. Parents play their part in the partnership with school in a number of ways. Their interest in their children's progress is evident from their involvement in the home reading programme, help given with homework and the fund-raising activities of the active Friends of Greenhaugh Association. Attendance at special assemblies and concerts is always very good despite the isolation and widespread catchment area. The continuing development of the pre-school group is opening up even more opportunities for links with prospective parents and shows the commitment to further build on the school's well-deserved reputation within this rural community.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The amount of time allocated for classroom assistants to support pupils in the infant class.

45. In common with most small schools, the two classes at Greenhaugh are of mixed age groups with relatively low numbers in each. In most schools, teachers benefit from the support of a classroom assistant or volunteer parent helpers, particularly to help with children in the Foundation Stage and those in the infant class. Few parents in this locality are able to give help on a regular basis as most work full time and so the school has appointed a classroom assistant for four hours each week. Her time is shared equally between the infant and junior classes. This is woefully inadequate to meet the needs of pupils in both classes. The amount the school is spending to

provide classroom support assistants is well below the average for schools of a similar size.

46. The problems faced by the infant class teacher have been made more acute with a larger than normal intake of children in the reception year. The teacher works under a lot of pressure to provide effectively for three age groups covering two key stages, the Foundation Stage for reception children and Key Stage 1 for Year 1 and 2 pupils. She does this very successfully. Lesson planning is meticulous, covering the statutory requirements of the Foundation Stage curriculum and National Curriculum very well.
47. In order to meet the needs of each year group and the different ability levels within each group, the class teacher often sets individual or group tasks. After a short whole class introductory session, the teacher focuses her attention on a particular group of pupils whilst others work independently of her on assigned tasks. However, teacher and pupils in this focus group are frequently interrupted as other pupils need help or finish tasks early. Without additional support, there are occasions when pupils lose concentration or mark time with an undemanding activity until their teacher is free. During the inspection, for example, children in the reception year were given the opportunity to use large wheeled toys in the hall with the classroom-dividing screen to the hall removed. Apart from the noise that this generated, pupils in Year 1 and 2, who were making wheels and axles in a design and technology lesson with teacher guidance, were frequently interrupted. Children in the hall needed adult support to set challenges and help to maintain their interest as well as to settle minor disagreements. It is a credit to even the youngest children in this class that they have such positive attitudes to their work and behave so well. Many show initiative by moving on to a different activity by themselves, finding their own resources or materials. All enjoy very good relationships and willingly help one another, easing the pressure on the busy class teacher.
48. The school needs to urgently review the present deployment of the classroom assistant and with another six pupils due to start in reception next year, increase provision to take account of the rising numbers in the infant class. Furthermore, under the present arrangements, it will prove to be very difficult to make effective use of the proposed outdoor area by giving children free access to it with proper supervision.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

49. This is an effective small school where the many strengths far outweigh any weaknesses. As a result, no major faults were found. In order to raise standards further and improve the quality of provision for pupils in the infant department of the school, the headteacher and governors should:

- increase the level of support available to the class teacher.
(paragraphs 2, 18, 45-48)

The following less important weaknesses should also be considered by the school:

- implement the plans for an outdoor area and ensure that children in the Foundation Stage have free access to it;
(paragraphs 2, 18)
- improve the appearance of and quality of books in the small school library.
(paragraph 18)

Both of the above less important weaknesses have been identified by the school and feature as areas for improvement in the current school development plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	12
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	8

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	5	6	0	0	0	0
Percentage	8	42	50	0	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	27
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4

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	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.2
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	18
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	1	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 – Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	11.7
Average class size	13.5

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
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	£
Total income	101,580
Total expenditure	103,517
Expenditure per pupil	4,501
Balance brought forward from previous year	23,442
Balance carried forward to next year	21,505

Recruitment of teachers

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

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	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	27
Number of questionnaires returned	22

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	77	23	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	41	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	59	5	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	59	9	0	0
The teaching is good.	73	27	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	59	41	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	82	18	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	27	5	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	59	41	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	77	23	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	41	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	41	14	5	14