

INSPECTION REPORT

MARTON GROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Middlesbrough

LEA area: Middlesbrough

Unique reference number: 111577

Headteacher: Mr Chris Gent

Reporting inspector: Miss Joyce Taylor
4275

Dates of inspection: 4th – 8th June 2001

Inspection number: 197627

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Lambton Road Middlesbrough
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev Sue Richardson
Date of previous inspection:	22 – 26 September 1997

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19807	Keith Osborne	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. Pupils' welfare, health and safety. Partnership with parents and carers.
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15551	Patricia Mitchell	Team inspector	Special educational needs Equal opportunities	
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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	1
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	5
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	7
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	9
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	11
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	12
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	13
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	15
THE WORK OF THE SPECIAL NEEDS BASES	15
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	17
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN	

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Marton Grove Primary School has 358 children and is bigger than most other schools. There is a nursery class for 52 part-time children and there are two special needs bases. The school is situated near the centre of Middlesbrough. Most of the children come from a nearby housing estate which is an area of significant deprivation. The percentage of children eligible for free school meals is about twice the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average but there is a high percentage of children with a special needs statement. This is because of the 21 children who are drawn from the wider area and who attend the special support bases. Generally the attainment of the children on entry to the nursery is poor. They enter the reception classes with well below average or poor attainment when they are four. There are no children with English as an additional language. The school has been identified as a Beacon School for writing to provide support to others in the teaching of literacy.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school with some excellent features. When compared with all schools the standards, by the end of Year 6, have been close to average for the past four years. When compared with similar schools the children who were in Year 6 in 2000 reached very high standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Their achievement over time was very good. In the current Year 6 there are more children with special needs but the standards have stayed the same. The teaching across the school is good with almost half very good. The leadership and management of the headteacher are excellent. He has a very clear view of what needs to be done. He has made changes to improve the standards of teaching and learning across the school. The headteacher is supported extremely well by the deputy, the assistant head and the teachers. The governors provide good support to the school. The school gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Almost half of the teaching is very good or excellent.
- The headteacher and senior staff provide excellent leadership.
- The children achieve well.
- The provision for the children in the special needs bases is excellent.
- The care and support of the children is very good.

What could be improved

- There are no major issues for action. However, there are minor issues the school should consider for action which are mentioned in the summary text and set out in paragraph 50 of the main report.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in September 1997. Aspects of the role of the governors and the children's standards in information and communications technology were criticised. The school has given good attention to these areas and they are now satisfactory or better. The school was strongly praised for many aspects of good work however it has made still more improvements since then. For example the teaching is better and aspects of English, mathematics and science are improved. The school's capacity for further improvement is very good.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	C	E	C	A	Well above average A above average B
mathematics	D	E	C	A	Average C Below average D
science	B	E	C	A	Well below average E

The grid above does not include children with learning difficulties from the special needs base who took their national tests alongside the other Year 6 children. When these children were included in the figures the standards were below average for English and mathematics and average for science. When compared with similar schools the standards were above average for English and mathematics and well above average for science. Over the past four years the standards have remained steady apart from 1999 when a higher number of children with special needs caused the results to dip. In 2000 the standards rose again and those children achieved very well during their time in the school. The school has set realistic targets for the children in Key Stage 2 to reach by the time they take their national tests. The children's standards in swimming are below average by the time they leave the school.

In the current Year 6, twenty-seven per cent of the children are on the register for special needs. This is a high percentage yet the children have still made good progress over time. When compared with the national picture the children who are now in Year 6 reach standards that are just below average in English and mathematics, and average in science. Judging by the children's standards when they took their Year 2 tests they have made up most of the lost ground and their achievement is very good. In Year 2 the children's attainment when they entered the reception classes was very low but about half of them are now reaching standards that are average for their age. They have become keen to learn and know how to concentrate and work hard. The children in the Foundations Stage reach standards that are well below average but their achievement during the past year has been good.

The children in the special needs bases achieve very well and make good progress. The children with special needs in the rest of the school achieve at a good level. By the time they leave the school higher attaining children reach good standards. The higher attaining children in Key Stage 1 reach good standards apart from writing. This is an area for improvement already being developed by the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The children like school and work well in their lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. In classes and around the school behaviour is very good. It is satisfactory overall at playtimes although sometimes bullying occurs.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The children support and help each other. They expect everyone to be quiet and work hard, and remind each other if this slips.

Attendance	Below average. There are a higher number of absences than is usual despite the good efforts of the school. There are good systems for checking why the children are away.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 6 years	aged 6-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	good	good

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

Over 75% of the teaching is good or better. This includes 39% that is very good or excellent. Only two unsatisfactory lessons were seen. The teachers have many strengths. In particular they have very good relationships with the children and manage difficult situations skilfully. This means that the children work hard and want to please their teachers. They answer questions confidently and their work shows imagination. The teachers tell the children what they have to learn and the children know they have to work hard to reach the targets. The teachers use interesting and exciting methods to make the children enthusiastic. This was seen, for example, in science in Year 5 where the pupils chose how to organise their test and record the results.

There are no significant weaknesses in the teaching but sometimes the discussion sessions last too long. This causes the children to become restless and the teachers then need to constantly quieten them. Also sometimes all the children in the class do the same level of work. This was seen, for example, in some history lessons in Key Stage 2 where all the children worked at the same task although some could have reached higher standards and the children with special needs found the work difficult. These aspects are already identified by the school for improvement.

English and mathematics are generally taught very well. The school uses the national frameworks and teaches the skills of reading, writing and numeracy carefully and effectively. The children with special needs are taught extremely well in the bases and well in the classes.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school uses the national guidelines and the teachers plan very interesting activities that stimulate the children.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Excellent in the bases and good in the rest of the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good. The opportunities for the pupils' moral and social development are very varied. Spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory. There are appropriate opportunities for the children to learn about different cultural groups.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The children's learning and welfare are checked very effectively and this helps them do well in their work and personal development.

The parents strongly support the school which works very well with them. There is a good range of activities outside lessons for the children in Key Stage 2.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. The headteacher has a very clear view of what the school needs to do and has constantly worked to improve the children's standards and learning opportunities. He is very strongly and effectively supported by the senior staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors are informed and respond well to the needs of the school. They fulfil all their requirements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school constantly checks on the teaching and the children's standards and takes good action to improve.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school uses its budget well to improve learning. The additional grants, like the special needs funds, are used very well.

The accommodation is good. The school is large and spread out with extra space that is used well; for example, the computer suite or parents' room. The outside of the building looks severe but the inside feels welcoming and is made attractive with displays of the children's work. There is a good number of staff and the learning resources are satisfactory. The school reviews its own work and seeks the opinions of the parents. The principles of best value are applied very well.

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 teaching is good. • The school is approachable. • The children are expected to work hard. • The children make good progress. • They like school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The activities outside lessons. • The amount of homework. • The information about how the children are getting on.

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views of the school. The areas the parents would like to see improved are already satisfactory or good when compared to other schools. The clubs and extra events are very good for the older children and are being extended to the younger pupils. The homework is good. The information for parents about their children is clear and readily available. It gives good details about what the children can do and identifies their targets for future work.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The children who are in the Nursery reach well below average standards in most of the areas of learning particularly in the development of spoken language, reading and writing. Their standards are average in physical development and in aspects of personal development like independence and confidence. They enter the nursery with very low standards in concentrating on their work and trying to do well. They enter the reception classes with well below average standards for their age but they continue to learn at a good pace. By the end of the Foundation Stage, about a third of the children reach average standards in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, and knowledge and understanding of the world. About half of them reach average standards in aspects of personal and emotional development and creative development. There is detailed assessment on entry to the nursery and ongoing records show that the children are learning quickly, particularly in understanding how to listen and complete their work. This is maintained well in the reception classes and many of the children have become attentive and interested learners. The children achieve well in the Foundation Stage.
2. At the end of Key Stage 1 the children's test results, over the past four years have given a picture of well below average standards in reading and writing when compared with the national average. In mathematics the standards are improving; they are still below average but are rising quite quickly. The standards in reading and writing are steadily rising as fast as other schools. At the time of the last inspection the standards were particularly low. There have been good improvements since then, especially in mathematics and science where, in 2000, almost a quarter of the children reached above average levels. Fewer than average reached the higher Level 3 in reading and none in writing.
3. At the end of Key Stage 2 the children's test results, over time, show good improvements. In 1996 the standards were below average for English and mathematics. Apart from 1999, the children now reach average standards. In science the school has always, apart from 1999, reached average or above average scores. The children achieve very well when these results are compared with their earlier standards. The school builds very effectively on the children's earlier learning as they move through the year groups. It provides time for them to develop an awareness of the need to work hard and achieve well in their first few years at school so that they can make rapid progress during Key Stage 2.
4. When compared with similar schools the children reach average standards by the end of Key Stage 1 and very high standards by the end of Key Stage 2. The standards in good learning habits, like concentrating and working

hard, improve rapidly in Key Stage 1. When these are in place, usually during Year 2, the children begin to make good progress in the curriculum subjects. The school sets targets for the children and these, with any test results, are rigorously analysed. As a result the staff are clear about the good progress the children make and know what is needed next in order to raise standards. The school's results always include the results of the children in the moderate learning difficulty unit. This has a considerable effect on the reported results and gives a false impression of the overall standards and achievement of the children at the end of each key stage. The standards appear to be lower when these extra pupils are included. Over the past few years the standards reached by the boys have been higher than the girls. There are many more girls on the special needs register than boys. In some classes all the children with extreme learning difficulties are girls. The more formal literacy and numeracy lessons and the frequent opportunities for the use of computers have supported the children and helped to improve the standards.

5. During the inspection the current work of the Year 2 children shows that their standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well below average and the standards in science are below average. The standards in reading have improved since last year as the school has changed and improved the way this is taught. Almost all of these children entered the reception classes with standards that were well below average in most of the areas of learning. Their achievement has been good and about half of them are reaching average standards now. The current Year 6 children include a high proportion of pupils on the special needs register. As a result their overall standards are just below average in mathematics and average in English and science. Fewer are likely to reach the higher Level 5 than last year. The children who are capable of harder work are stretched and reach higher standards than average, especially in mathematics. In writing in Key Stage 1 the school has rightly identified the need to push the potentially higher attaining children further as they do not always reach standards that are high enough.
6. The school has identified a strong link between the children's speaking and listening skills on entry and their later standards in most other subjects. The inspection team agrees with this finding. The children understand what they are learning but, especially in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, are often unable to talk about it fluently. As a result their writing and their reading comprehension are well below average. This has an effect on their written work in many other subjects. The overall good achievement of the children is due to the broad and exciting curriculum and the good quality teaching. By the time the children reach the end of Year 2 their use and understanding of spoken English is much improved. In the junior classes many of the children use spoken language confidently and write with flair.
7. By the end of each key stage the children's attainment in information and communication technology is average; they have an appropriate range of skills and a secure understanding. This is a good improvement since the last inspection when standards were well below average. The children use information communication technology appropriately to support other

subjects. In the other subjects of the curriculum the children reach average standards in both key stages. No judgement can be made on the attainment in music and physical education as too few lessons were seen.

8. For the children with special educational needs, work in English, mathematics and science is adapted for them at the right level. The work is based on careful assessments of what the children need. Experienced and competent learning support assistants help the pupils to learn and concentrate. In these lessons they often make very good progress. However adapted work is not always provided in other subjects such as history and this slows the children's progress, especially when there is no extra support. Pupils are identified and helped at an early age which contributes to the good progress they make. The children with emotional and behavioural difficulties make very good progress and are learning to control their behaviour and work well in the lessons.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. The pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good. The children are enthusiastic about coming to school. Many are in the playground early each morning. They are interested in lessons, for example a Year 6 lesson where they argued whether dogs should be allowed in public parks. The children enjoy a wide range of trips out of school and extra-curricular clubs in school.
10. Behaviour is good. There were eight short-term exclusions during the previous year. Although this is more than at the last inspection, they were a justified response to difficult behaviour, involving pupils who have attended several schools. The behaviour of most pupils in lessons is good or very good. In the playground, most pupils play well together. A small number, including some with identified special needs, show a range of untypical behaviour. There are some incidents of bullying between the pupils which are dealt with effectively by the school.
11. Pupils' personal development and relationships are very good. They understand well how their actions have an impact on others and they show respect for other people's beliefs and values. Initiative and personal responsibility are very good. The children are motivated to behave well and to respond positively to the school's expectations. The pupils take their homework seriously. One child wrote a note to the teacher to explain why he had done something different from the set work, which he had found difficult. Relationships between pupils themselves, and with adults are usually very good. The children respond well to the caring professional approach of the teachers and support staff, and are kind and helpful to each other in the playground. The pupils with special educational are interested in their work and join in all class activities and visits. All of the adults value their achievements and this helps to increase confidence and self-esteem.
12. Attendance in the last school year was well below the national average for primary schools. Most pupils attend regularly, and many have full attendance, but over one in ten of the children miss more than 3 weeks lessons each year, sometimes more. Non-attendance is especially high in the reception classes and this means that the children's progress is held back and bad patterns of attendance are set. Illness is the main recorded cause of absence. Punctuality is satisfactory overall. The school works hard to improve attendance but not all the children take enough notice of the school's expectations.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching is good. During the inspection only two of the lessons seen were unsatisfactory. Good quality teaching was seen in thirty two per cent of lessons and even better teaching in a further forty per cent. This is a substantial improvement on the previous inspection. Since then the headteacher and senior staff have increased their support of the teaching

through monitoring and advising the teachers how to improve. This better quality teaching is having a strong influence on the children's attitudes and standards are rising particularly for the higher attaining children. All of the teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding, including in information and communication technology, which was an area of weakness at the time of the last inspection. The staff are very keen to develop their work and respond well to new information from the curriculum coordinators and senior managers.

14. The quality of the teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. The adults have a very clear knowledge of how these young children learn. They focus on developing early skills of concentration and listening to help the children learn. The children are easily distracted, particularly in the nursery. Many of them do not concentrate readily and, in reception, still find it hard to pay attention if discussions last too long. There are strong links between the learning opportunities in the nursery and reception classes. In both the children are provided with many experiences to develop their speaking and comprehension. For example in the reception classes the children were encouraged to describe the detailed route taken by a story character. The staff carefully plan direct teaching sessions and provide good practical activities. This was seen in the nursery when the children had the opportunity to handle, chop, cook and eat vegetables. The staff are good at talking with the children develop their ideas when they are playing. For example in the nursery the staff talked about the best size and shape of bricks for building a strong wall. The curriculum planning is good. It is clear and shows what the children are to learn.
15. In the infant and junior classes the good or very good teaching accounts for almost three quarters of the lessons. The teachers show particular strengths in keeping a calm and purposeful atmosphere in the classrooms. They know the children well and handle problems skilfully. The children respond well to this and in the infant classes they are beginning to concentrate for longer periods of time. They know they need to work hard but many still find it difficult to keep their attention on their work. By the time they reach Key Stage 2 the children have learned to work, with good attention, for lengthy periods of time. They want to please their teacher by doing well and as a result their standards rapidly improve. A particular strength in the teaching is the way teachers talk about learning with the class. The teachers tell the children what they are to learn in each lesson and during the lessons they talk with the children about the lesson target and about what they have learned. Where there are children who waste time or are slow to follow instructions, in a Year 4 class for example, the other children tell them to hurry.
16. The teachers plan interesting work that the children enjoy. For example, in Year 5 the children were expected to complete their science work through choosing their own type of presentation. This developed the children's confidence and enthusiasm and their responses showed flair. There are very purposeful discussions and the teachers ask detailed questions to find out

what the children know. The lessons are planned in blocks and this means the teachers can really concentrate on certain subjects. It provides the children with good sequences of work that build on earlier learning. The teachers know the curriculum well and they know the next steps in each subject that will help the children achieve well. They check how well the children are learning as the work is completed and identify what the children find difficult. Times are identified for additional work that will help to improve the weaknesses that are found. In most lessons there is work of different levels for children who need it. This means that the higher attaining children are supported well and the teachers are aware of who these pupils are and how to keep up their attainment.

17. In English there is a good range of books that give the children a wide selection of stories and information. The teachers use the books well. The skills of using letter sounds and spelling to help reading and writing are taught very well during literacy lessons. The staff in the Foundation Stage are good at teaching the early skills and, as a result, most of the children are achieving well even though their standards are below or well below average. In Key Stage 1 these skills are also taught well but the children's below average standards in reading mean that in all subjects their work is affected by a difficulty in understanding written tasks. Writing is taught well but only about half of the children in Year 2 can record their own information effectively. In the junior classes the children make very rapid progress. There are very good opportunities for the children to apply their writing skills across the curriculum as a means of developing as confident writers.
18. In numeracy lessons the children are taught how to calculate and handle numbers systematically and very effectively throughout the infant and junior classes. As a result the children are able to use a range of calculation strategies when working out problems. The teachers understand the importance of counting and calculating and constantly reinforce this in lessons. Skilled support staff are effectively deployed and have a very positive effect on the children's learning.
19. Where the teaching is just satisfactory or unsatisfactory the discussions are too long and the children lose interest and become restless. This means the teachers need to apply firm methods to control the children and often interrupt the learning by calling for quiet. In some lessons, in history for example in Key Stage 2 and mathematics in a reception class, all of the children covered the same work although some of them could have done harder work and some found the task difficult. This meant that the children were not challenged properly and could have achieved at a faster rate.
20. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. The targets set in individual programmes are specific and detailed and allow the teachers to plan specially adapted work at the right level in English, mathematics and science. In these lessons pupils work with others of a similar ability and receive extra help. For example in a Year 2 mathematics lesson pupils with special educational needs work on problems using money. By using smaller amounts

of money and with additional help and discussion they are able to complete their work successfully. They enjoy their lessons, and so work hard. There are very good relationships between adults and pupils that help them to feel confident. The children in the special needs bases are taught very well. The staff are strongly committed to moving the children's learning forward in a steady and systematic way. There is a suitably challenging level of work for these pupils that ensures they succeed and gain confidence. Learning support assistants, working with special needs children in the bases and in the main classes, make a very good contribution and pupils benefit from this help.

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

21. The Foundation Stage curriculum is well planned. There is a range of stimulating learning activities covering all the areas of learning. The school is implementing the national standards for pupils under 6 years very well and the children are settling down to learn with interest and enthusiasm. The Key Stage 1 and 2 curriculum meets all statutory requirements. The school uses the nationally recommended schemes of work to develop effective planning. As a result there is a good range of curriculum experiences in all the subjects. The school gives greater than usual attention to teaching the children how to learn effectively during their infant years. They are told what they need to learn next and taught to think carefully about their work. By the time the children reach Year 3 they cope well with the interesting work they are given. Where the staff have identified areas for improvement, as in aspects of practical science, they have introduced a checklist to ensure the skills are taught. This improves the standards the pupils achieve. The school has used the nationally recommended strategies very effectively to raise standards in literacy and numeracy.
22. The same curriculum is available to all the children, including those in the special needs bases. Timetabled lessons in all year groups ensure that personal, social and health education is taught systematically and effectively.
23. The provision of extra-curricular opportunities is good for Key Stage 2. There is, for example, a computer club, sports and science activities and opportunities for the children to sing in the choir. The children enjoy these activities and their learning is supported. The school is planning to extend the sessions to include the infant pupils.
24. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good overall with some excellent features. The children are very well integrated into school, they receive work that is adapted so that they can understand it and succeed in it. Any problems are identified at an early age and strategies are well thought out to help on an individual basis. These are written in individual education programmes that have clear targets for pupils to reach. Progress against the targets is reviewed regularly. The pupils with special educational

needs are full, respected and valued members of the school. The high attaining children are given good support and, for the most part, achieve well.

25. The local community makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. Ministers from the local Anglican and Methodist churches are members of the governing body. They regularly lead assemblies and use these opportunities to support the religious education curriculum. Through the local community centre additional sports coaching is provided and the local newspaper sponsors a scheme to improve reading. The school has satisfactory links with other primary schools in Middlesbrough. Together with two other schools also identified as Beacon Schools, it is forming a cluster arrangement, to share good practice in writing. It has good links with one of the local secondary schools to which pupils transfer at 11, and uses some of its facilities, like the sports areas, to enrich the curriculum.
26. The standards of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of the school are good. The pupils' moral and social education is very good. The spiritual provision is satisfactory and the cultural aspect is good for the pupils' experience of their own culture and sound for their knowledge and understanding of other cultures. These findings closely reflect those of the previous inspection.
27. The spiritual provision for the pupils is supported well by a good policy and advice for the act of worship. The children are well behaved and attentive in the variety of interesting and stimulating assemblies that the school provides. The Anglican and Methodist ministers share with them how faith is important in their lives. The spiritual dimension is further supported by the links which the school has with the local churches. There are regular visits, such as the 'baptism' service for the Key Stage 1 pupils.
28. Some special moments illuminate lessons. The younger special needs class were mesmerised when the patterns that they had designed on the computer appeared from the printer. Some Key Stage 2 pupils were held spellbound by a teacher's presentation of literature. At times children are given opportunities to reflect and apply their values to their daily lives, such as the reception children who 'rewrote' the story of the Little Red Hen to give it a positive message with the participants saying 'we will' rather than 'we won't!'
29. The provision for moral and social development is very good. The school's mission statement and code of behaviour are displayed in each class. There are very good policies that give a consistent approach to the moral and social development of the pupils. The staff have good systems for managing any bad behaviour. The children's personal and social development is well supported by the very good relations that exist between the teachers and children. Several instances were seen where potential problems were skilfully handled by teachers. The children know right from wrong. They respect the fabric of the school. Staff foster this caring ethos through some carefully created displays in classrooms and the public areas around school.

30. Social development is supported through the school council, where pupils take their responsibilities seriously and make worthwhile proposals, such as improvements for the playground environment. They organise and participate in fund-raising. The school has sound links with the local community with events like Harvest Festival being shared with senior citizens. The oldest pupils go on an annual residential visit. The school is a community where all children are valued, and the staff work very hard to build positive self-images and to give pupils a high self-esteem.
31. The school has made good provision for pupils to develop their experience of their own culture through visits to the theatre and visits from actors. Various locations for learning are included in the curriculum, such as museums, galleries, historical locations and geographical field trips to places in the locality and beyond. Curriculum opportunities are provided for pupils listen to music from a variety of cultures. Displays around school give them the opportunity to consider the works of famous artists. The school is satisfactorily developing the provision for understanding other cultural traditions. For example the pupils enjoyed the celebration of the 'Mardi Gras' carnival. The school includes festivals from other world religions and cultures in the assemblies and this is supported by work in religious education lessons. Visits are made by Key Stage 2 pupils to a Mosque.
32. The school's resources for multi-culture and other world religions are of good quality and are being extended. Children are beginning to use the Internet to gain insights into different regions. These good developments should now be extended to give pupils more insights into the diverse cultures represented in the closer neighbourhood.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The school's procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. All of the staff have been trained in child protection issues. Personal support and guidance for the pupils is very good. The staff know the children well and the school's systems for support, which include home visits where necessary, are effective. The teachers monitor personal development as part of their assessment of the pupils performance, and there is an effective procedure for referral to the head teacher if necessary.
34. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good overall, with very good monitoring procedures to identify which pupils have poor attendance. Appropriate use is made of the education welfare service to follow up absences and teachers make home visits in some cases. Most of the children respond well to these systems and are regular and punctual attenders and some children have shown a very good improvement in their attendance. Some continue with infrequent attendance despite the best efforts of the school. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very effective. The school has a consistent approach to unsatisfactory behaviour. The staff all expect the children to behave well and the teachers ensure that learning takes place without interruptions. The

procedures for managing behaviour are good. The school makes great efforts to avoid suspensions, and enlists the support of parents whenever possible.

35. The systems for assessing pupils' performance have improved since the previous inspection. In English mathematics and science they are excellent. The procedures for monitoring how well the pupils are progressing in these subjects are very good. The school collects the data from the baseline and the national tests each year for five, seven and eleven year olds. Additionally, all the children in Key Stage 2 take annual literacy and numeracy tests as well as separate tests for reading and spelling. As a result the school has a considerable amount of information about the children and can identify their attainment in English, mathematics and science each year. The school is able to track individual progress accurately and makes predictions about what levels each child is likely to achieve by the age of seven and eleven. The school also examines the data for any other features and as a result, investigations in science, writing and aspects of the mathematics curriculum have received attention and standards have improved.
36. The use of assessment information to guide curriculum planning in these subjects is very good. Class targets are set in English, mathematics and science. These are also being developed for information and communication technology. Across the school personal targets are set for reading, writing and in mathematics. This is an excellent system. The children are very involved in their own targets and teachers and pupils refer to them daily. When they are reached both children and teachers celebrate the success. These targets have very realistic time scales attached to them and act as strong motivation for the children. The higher attaining children benefit from this system as they are set advanced targets to stretch them and help them reach high standards.
37. There are not yet any formal systems in place to assess the standards of attainment in the foundation subjects. Therefore the next steps needed to move children to the next level do not feature in the teachers' planning. The school has identified this weakness and has planned to use assessment strategies based on those developed for the core subjects using information and communication technology as the first step. One result of the lack of formal systems is that the school does not know the exact proportion of children in the previous Year 6 who were able to swim 25 metres.
38. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs is very good. As soon as pupils are identified as having difficulties, they are assessed and strategies are put in place to support them. A detailed individual programme is written and progress towards the targets is assessed and recorded regularly, with new targets set termly. The reviews include evidence of progress made. Opportunities are provided to discuss whether enough progress has been made or if the provision needs to be changed. The school has begun to target groups of pupils with particular needs. This is proving to be very successful in raising the attainment of a group of pupils with difficulties in reading by using a variety of extra strategies. The provision

indicated in statements of special educational need is fully implemented.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

39. The parents' views of the school are very good, particularly of its learning provision. A few parents raised concerns about bullying, behaviour, homework and the range of clubs and after-school activities.

40. The school's links with parents are very good. For example, in response to requests, there have been demonstration lessons on numeracy and in reading to show the parents how the school is now teaching these subjects. There is a detailed programme for home-school liaison at the pre-school stage and in Key Stage 1 and 2 if necessary. There is an adult education programme for parents and courses on, for example, family literacy and numeracy, and information and communication technology. The parents' involvement in the work of the school is good. They help with fund raising events and on trips. There are plans to involve parents and pupils in the development of the playground and a course for parents to train as classroom assistants is planned. Parents accept their responsibility to help the school with homework and reading diaries include space for parents to sign.
41. Information provided for the parents, particularly about the pupils' progress is good. Reports list what the pupils can do, and in some cases what they cannot do. The annual report of the governors is well presented, in broadsheet style, and there is a range of other leaflets and newsletters. The school's web site is a useful guide to the school itself; its teachers and the topics studied each year. The home-school liaison teacher provides a resource bank of medical and welfare information for parents.
42. The parents are informed as soon as a pupil is identified as needing extra help. The home-school liaison teacher helps the parents to understand the provision for their child and how they can help at home. Parents are invited to attend review meetings and have individual programme targets discussed with them. They are often involved in helping the pupils at home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

43. This is a very strong aspect of the school, as it was at the time of the last inspection. The headteacher has been at the school for nineteen years and he very successfully moves the school forward. He responds energetically to new national initiatives and provides the staff with clear, purposeful leadership focused on school improvement. He has set up extremely effective systems and structures for management and communication, which are helping the school to develop. The open and confident discussions, that involve all the teachers, make sure that new ideas and requirements are clearly understood by all. The staff respond very well to this system and are very strongly committed to supporting the school and doing their best to put the new ideas into place. The headteacher has built up a very good sense of team spirit and a shared commitment to improvement. He leads the school excellently, together with the deputy and assistant head, and has trained the coordinators to lead their subjects very effectively. All of the coordinators take responsibility for their curriculum areas and are having a significant impact on the teaching and learning in their subjects across the school. This is because they monitor and evaluate the teaching and learning in the classes and look at the children's completed work. The coordinators then identify the strengths and weaknesses and discuss these with individual teachers or at staff meetings as a means of improving the provision.

44. The governors fulfil their role well and provide the school with positive, well-informed support. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection. They have clear insights into the school's strengths and weaknesses, and share the headteacher's concern to improve the school. They have a good overview of the school's priorities and a sound grasp of the budget which is needed to finance these. The governors carry out their statutory duties satisfactorily.
45. The school improvement planning process is very good. Priorities are closely linked to both the school's needs and to national initiatives. Clear costings mean that the implications for the school's budget have been considered. The headteacher, the senior management team and the governors systematically monitor progress towards the school's goals and evaluate the impact of their decisions through their regular schedule of meetings throughout the year. In addition, the headteacher has established a system of involving all the teachers in establishing and monitoring the priorities as a means of sharing information and developments. This has successfully become accepted practice in the school.
46. The management of special educational needs is very effective. There is a good policy in place based on the national recommendations. This is very effectively implemented throughout the school and contributes to the good achievement made. The coordinator reviews what is in place and constantly tries to improve it, for example she has begun a system of targeting particular groups of pupils. This is proving successful in raising achievement.
47. Financial planning and monitoring are good. The headteacher and governors are skilled in tracking down and making imaginative use of grants and additional sources of funding to meet needs in the school. Recent good examples of this are the targeting of grant money to raise the standards in Key Stage 1 and to improve the playground. Financial control is also good. Procedures for using and accounting for funds are properly set up.
48. The school applies the principles of best value very well. Both the governors and the senior staff consider carefully the best way to use their resources to match the school's priorities. The school rightly involves members of its community in its consultation process, and the views of parents are sought by questionnaire. The headteacher asked the parents for their opinions on aspects they would like to see improved or clarified. As a result the parents were invited to meetings and sample lessons showing how numeracy and reading are taught. The parents found this helpful and appreciated the opportunity to gain a clearer understanding of the work of the school.
49. The school has a sufficient number of teaching staff. They are suitably qualified and match the demands of the curriculum. Although the level of support staff is not high they make a valuable contribution to the pupils' learning. All the staff received training in the literacy and numeracy strategies. They are also given the opportunity to attend other courses to

further their professional development. There are very good procedures in place for inducting new members of staff into the procedures of the school. The resources needed to teach the curriculum are satisfactory. The school is very large and provides good accommodation for teaching and learning. The additional areas within the school are used well and the recent provision of a computer room is a good improvement. The premises are very clean and tidy throughout and are very well maintained by the caretaker and cleaning staff.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

50. There are no major issues for action however the headteacher, governors and staff should consider the following minor issues for inclusion in an additional section to be added to the school improvement plan.
- (a) Improve the standards in writing for the higher attaining children in Key Stage 1. (paragraphs 72, 77)
- (b) Improve attendance by:
- continuing to develop effective strategies to widen the parents' awareness of the needs for regular attendance;
 - working particularly with the parents of children in the Foundation Stage as a means of establishing better patterns of attendance at an early age.
- (paragraph 12)
- (c) Improve the standards in swimming in Year 6 by monitoring and evaluating the children's progress and ensuring their achievements are satisfactory.
- (paragraph 123)

THE PROVISION FOR CHILDREN IN THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS BASES.

51. The infant assessment class and the junior support base for pupils with learning difficulties provide excellent education. In both bases the pupils achieve very well. They learn to control their behaviour and develop self-confidence and self-esteem. This is due to very good teaching and high quality support from the learning support assistants. The environment is secure and there are clear and consistent standards of behaviour expected. The children's individual programmes are of very good quality, they are relevant and based on a detailed assessment of what individual children need. For example, a pupil who joined the infant assessment class two years ago with very little spoken language has just reached a high standard in the national tests for English and mathematics.
52. The teaching and learning are very good. The teachers have a very good knowledge of the pupils. They plan challenging work that the pupils respond to extremely well, sustaining the effort and concentration needed to succeed. Teaching is in small steps and is adapted to meet individual needs. For example in the infant base during a mathematics lesson each pupil was asked questions according to their ability. One pupil pointed to a number 5, another pupil pointed to two numbers that add up to 10 and another pupil

added up all the numbers in a row and explained how he did it. The teachers are enthusiastic and activities are well chosen to interest pupils who listen and are motivated to work hard. In the infant class the good range of activities and brisk pace help to keep the interest of those pupils with a very short attention span.

53. In the junior support base the pupils are told what they will be learning and are asked at the end if they have learnt it. This is helping them to know what is expected of them and how they are succeeding. When work is marked it is discussed with the pupils individually so that they also know what they need to do to improve. Questioning is used very well to encourage the pupils to express their ideas. For example the pupils suggest ways to start a story. One suggests 'Once upon a time'. Skilful questioning by the teacher extends the vocabulary and results in a variety of beginnings such as 'One summers evening'. Because their contributions are praised the pupils are keen to answer questions and become more confident in expressing themselves. The pupils' work is valued and they take pride in it, presenting it well. There are very good relationships between the adults and the children, encouraging them and building confidence. Class management is very good resulting in high standards of behaviour and a pleasant working atmosphere in both the classrooms.
54. The pupils receive a very well thought out curriculum. This is based on the mainstream curriculum, but is flexible, depending on the age and special needs of the children. The literacy and the numeracy hours are very effectively implemented within the resource bases resulting in very good achievement. For other subjects the aim is to integrate the junior pupils with their peer groups as much as possible, according to their individual needs. This integration is well planned and monitored carefully. For example, Year 5 pupils from the junior base join their class for a visit to Beamish as part of a history project. In the junior base information and communication technology is used very well to support the learning across all subject areas. The children use a programmable floor robot successfully to help them understand clockwise, anti-clockwise and right angles. Responsibility and independence are encouraged and the pupils in the junior base organise and manage the 'red nose day' money raising activities themselves. They use the local environment well to support their studies and use the Internet to research before they go out on their field trips.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	78
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	55

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
8	32	32	25	3	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	332
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	169

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	15
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	117

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	24
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.7
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	34	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	27	25
	Girls	13	12	12
	Total	38	39	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75 (69)	75 (64)	73 (64)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	26	25
	Girls	13	12	10
	Total	38	38	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75 (69)	75 (64)	69 (69)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	33	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	23	28
	Girls	13	11	13
	Total	34	34	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69 (62)	69 (54)	84 (62)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	22	26
	Girls	14	11	12
	Total	33	33	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (50)	67 (48)	78 (70)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	0
Any other minority ethnic group	5

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	8	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)	17.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	20.3

Education support staff: Y[] – Y[]

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	228

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	60

Number of pupils per FTE adult	8.7
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	687050
Total expenditure	688634
Expenditure per pupil	1877
Balance brought forward from previous year	46859
Balance carried forward to next year	45275

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	358
Number of questionnaires returned	99

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	54	41	3	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	66	31	1	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	34	54	4	4	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	49	11	2	2
The teaching is good.	70	27	2	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	59	34	3	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	25	3	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	29	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	53	41	4	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	52	34	6	2	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	52	40	4	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	37	22	17	4	19

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

55. In the nursery and reception classes the children make good progress in their learning and they achieve well. Although they come into the nursery with a range of attainment, their overall standards are very low except in aspects of physical development and personal development which are average. By the time they move into the reception class the assessments by the teachers show the children's attainment to be still well below average levels but they have made up a considerable amount of their learning.
56. During the inspection the children's overall standards were judged to be well below average in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development, average in physical development and some aspects of personal and emotional development. These standards are very similar to those at the time of the previous inspection. The children use and understand a very limited range of English vocabulary when they enter the school. In the nursery class many of them speak very briefly using simple words. An unusually high proportion of the children find it hard to put their thoughts into words and use sentences to communicate their ideas. As a result their unsatisfactory attainment in speaking and listening reduces their success in the other areas. The children achieve well. The proportion of children reaching average standards increases as they move through the Foundation Stage. The main reason for this is the good teaching they receive from their teachers, the nursery nurse and classroom support staff.
57. The provision for the children's learning is good. The staff plan carefully to ensure the activities are interesting and challenging. In the nursery many activities reflect everyday events in the children's lives, like cooking and being at home. The curriculum is planned along similar lines in both the nursery and reception classes. It includes a good balance of direct teaching and opportunities for investigation and play. The curriculum for communication, language and literacy, and mathematics is moving towards the nationally recommended schemes for Key Stage 1 in the reception classes in a way that provides a very good link with the work of the nursery. There is early preparation for the work the children will begin in Year 1. There are class lessons in literacy and numeracy to help the children settle to learning in a slightly more formal style.
58. The staff are very thoughtful in the way they design activities to interest and involve the children using aspects of the local environment and natural events. The teaching and learning in the outside areas is developing appropriately. It is stronger in the nursery but there are planned opportunities for the reception children to learn outside. There are good relationships with the parents and the children become familiar with the next stage of their

learning before moving into new classes. This is handled well.

Personal, social and emotional development

59. This area of learning is given good attention. The children enter the nursery with confidence and independence that is already of an average standard. This is maintained through the reception classes. Many of the children have difficulty in sharing and are not very aware of the needs of others. They are not likely to reach the expected standard in these aspects by the time they leave the Foundation Stage.
60. The teaching in this area is good in both the nursery and reception classes. In the nursery the children usually play near others and watch each other and sometimes they play together. They are encouraged to sit together and shown how to use the resources and to share them. The children chat to each other confidently using a fairly limited vocabulary. Other children often take notice of the talk but there are many occasions when they do not respond. In the reception class the children are interested in each other and play nearby each other happily and there is more cooperation and conversation forms a real part of play. For example in the home corner the children tell each other what to do. The vocabulary is still limited but used appropriately and influences the behaviour of others.
61. The children are aware of the classroom rules and routines and respond well to instructions. Some of them still show very immature behaviour. For example, some of them sit and stare at strangers or seek attention with frequent demands. Most respond well to visitors and are chatty and relaxed. The teachers encourage the children to listen and contribute to the discussions.

Communication, language and literacy

62. The pupils' attainments in this area are well below average. The highest attainers reach an average level in their reading and writing skills. Although the children speak with confidence many of them do not express themselves clearly or well. Many of the children in both the nursery and reception classes have little fluency when speaking. The nursery children usually speak fairly confidently to the adults during play activities but very few of them speak at length. Most of the children communicate with very short statements or actions and often respond to questions with single words. The children have a limited understanding of what is said beyond the words that are very familiar in the school setting. The staff work hard to introduce these words and ensure the children can organise themselves to work and play happily. The children are given many opportunities to speak and listen, and this area receives good attention.
63. In the reception classes the children are more experienced in using the language linked to their learning. They refer to a number of geographical features linked to journeys following work based on a storybook but their

words are sometimes used wrongly and in the wrong order. Their use of nouns and verbs is limited to those that are familiar and very few children use interesting or unusual words. The teaching in all of the classes is good and the staff concentrate on teaching social language and sentences to support the children's learning. The staff demonstrate longer responses and encourage the children to repeat after them. This usefully enlarges the children's range of words.

64. There are areas for the children to play write that they sometimes use, pretending to write notes. In the nursery the children are able to use pencils and crayons properly and make simple pictures and marks. They are beginning to understand the purposes of writing and some try to copy their names onto their work. The staff watch closely and help the children form letters and hold their pencils correctly. In the reception class the children are beginning to attempt early writing on their own but this is still at a very early stage. They understand the meaning of reading and writing and most know that words are different from pictures. The children have made very good progress in the basic skills of using phonics. In the nursery the oldest children can name the sounds that start their own names. In the reception classes they can recall the phonic sounds of most letters of the alphabet and recognise many of the letters when written down. This aspect of their learning reaches average standards. When handling books the children in the nursery show interest and most of them handle books correctly. Few take notice of the text but they look at the pictures of favourite stories and particularly enjoy 'flap-up' books. In reception the children are able to retell aspect of the stories in their reading books but their attention easily wanders and the average and lower attaining children rely heavily on recall. They are able to link phonics to the letters in the words but often, following this procedure, they still cannot read the word. Some of the children are able to read simple sentences using word building and by recognising some of the words in the text.

Mathematical development

65. The children's overall attainment in mathematics is well below average in the nursery and reception classes. They are not likely to meet the nationally expected goals by the time they leave reception. Most of the children arrive in the nursery with very low development in mathematics and achieve well during the Foundation Stage. The teaching is good and stimulates the children. There are many very good activities provided which challenge the children's thinking. For example in the nursery, the children chopped large vegetables into small pieces following work on the 'enormous turnip' story. Few of them saw natural patterns in the vegetables. When their attention was drawn to these features they showed interest but made little comment. They can recognise the number 4 as many of them are four years old and they can sing a song about the number. Some can count to about eight and join in when there is an opportunity to count together. During their play activities many of the children explore the mathematical resources such as bricks and repeating printing activities. When playing in the home area they do not

match the cutlery and crockery.

66. In reception the teaching of mathematics varies in quality. Some time is wasted through over-long discussions. Where the children are given challenging work they achieve well but when they all complete the same tasks some of the children are not working as well as they could. When the teachers are clear about what they want the children to learn and provide a good range of experiences the children learn quickly. They can copy repeating patterns of two colours and can suggest other ways of making the patterns. They enjoy counting and show pleasure when they know the right number. They can count to ten and the higher attainers can count quantities beyond ten and recognise the written numbers. This is average attainment for children of this age and shows that about half of the children have made very good gains in numeracy. In the other areas of mathematics the children's standards are lower. The play activities provided in the reception classes give the children many opportunities to extend their learning of quantity, order and size. This good provision is strongly supporting the children's mathematical development.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

67. The children's attainment in this area is well below average. In both the nursery and reception classes the teaching is generally good. The majority of the children have had little previous experience with paint, crayons and construction toys and have few opportunities to visit beyond the immediate location. They have little general knowledge. For example few were able to name the selection of vegetables provided by the staff. The play activities support this area well in the nursery and the children explore and investigate the resources. The learning in the nursery is developed well during the good discussions with the teacher and nursery nurse. The children cook and taste their vegetables for example, and find this interesting and exciting. They use resources like play dough, sand and water to develop their understanding of materials. They have regular access to a computer and show interest and enjoyment when using it. Some of the younger children have little earlier experience of the mouse and handle it incorrectly. They can talk about the features of the curriculum but have a limited range of vocabulary and need prompting by the teacher.
68. In the reception classes the children are learning about journeys and are able to talk about some of the features seen on a map. Their use of geographic and descriptive language is weak but some of them show good recall of the story their work is based on. They can show where the hen walked and what she passed on the way. The teacher drew information from the children through careful questioning and reminded them about what had already been said. As a result they learned new ideas like recording a route on paper. The children are familiar with the computer and use the mouse confidently to direct their work. Their standards in this aspect of their work are average. In both the nursery and reception classes the children's achievement is good in this area of learning.

Creative development

69. The children's attainment is well below the average standard for their age. The activities provide appropriate opportunities for them to develop skills and to use them in a good range of situations. For example they are taught to look carefully and record what they can see. In the nursery the children have made studies of plants showing the leaves and stems. These are very simple pictures with accurate colours but very little attention given to shape or proportion. When the children paint by themselves almost all of them apply paint to the paper indiscriminately without much attention to shape or colour. In reception the children show greater care and attention to detail. They use colour realistically and draw recognisable pictures of people and objects. They enjoy music sessions and sing familiar rhymes. They use the creative play areas with enjoyment but do not use their imagination to create situations. The children's achievement is satisfactory in this area.

Physical development

70. The children have a satisfactory level of physical skills both when moving around and when using resources. They are active and use appropriate control. In their outside play and physical education sessions the children move with awareness of space and generally avoid collisions well. They move with care and precision. They can co-ordinate themselves effectively to play class games and with each other. When using small tools the children in all the classes show appropriate skills and have learned to use the resources confidently and to control them carefully. They use paintbrushes and control the computer appropriately. The teaching is good and the staff provide frequent opportunities for the development of physical skills and offer a wide range of resources. There are outside sessions in the reception class in addition to playtimes. At the moment there is no separate play area for the reception children but the school has already made plans to provide a secure play area that can be used at playtimes and other times to provide further opportunities to learn outside.

ENGLISH

71. The children's standards in English are broadly average at the age of eleven. This was also the case in the National Curriculum tests for 2000. However, when compared with similar schools the pupils' standards were high. The school has set targets for the current Year 6 children and expects them to be close to the national average this year although fewer than average are likely to reach the higher level 5. Inspection findings confirm this. About a quarter of the pupils are on the special needs register in Year 6. Despite this the pupils have made very good progress. Two key factors for this are the very good teaching and the children's positive attitudes towards their learning.

72. The standards reached by pupils at the age of seven are well below the national average, but are average when compared with similar schools. The children come into the nursery with poor literacy skills, but by the time they are seven they have made good progress. There is a very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 2. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is good and sometimes very good and the children are keen to learn.
73. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented very well. Lessons are well planned and tasks are chosen carefully so that the children are interested and well motivated. The children are encouraged to be responsible for their own learning. All have personal targets to improve their reading and writing. They take these very seriously and show tremendous pride in their achievements. Lower achieving pupils and pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. Adapted work is usually provided for them and sometimes they receive extra support in their lessons. Higher achieving pupils are given sufficiently challenging work and an average proportion are now reaching higher levels in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1 a small proportion reach higher levels in reading but none of the children reach above average levels in writing. This has been identified as an area of weakness by the school and is target for improvement. Assessment procedures in English are excellent and are identifying the individual needs of the children to raise the standards in English and in writing in Key Stage 1 in particular. This is contributing to the very good progress that the pupils are making. The school uses several additional ways of supporting the children, in small groups or individually, and these are helping to raise the standards for individual children.
74. The children's standards of listening skills are average throughout the school. The standards of speaking have improved significantly since the last inspection although they are still well below average in Year 1. Teachers have worked hard to improve this and there are now many planned activities to improve both the children's speaking and listening skills. In Key Stage 1, the children listen carefully to their teachers and to each other and are keen to answer questions. The teachers value the pupils' responses and this gives them confidence to speak. In Year 2 the teachers take opportunities to extend children's answers, often insisting that children compose their answers as full sentences. This is helping to develop the children's fluency. When reading aloud the children are developing an expressive tone that enlivens their work.
75. By the age of eleven the pupils' speaking skills are only just below that which is expected for their age. They are very confident speakers and listeners. Their answers show that they listen carefully but their use of grammar and their choice of vocabulary is sometimes weak. The teachers question children well to ensure these skills develop daily and very good progress is made. The adults demonstrate reading very well and this helps the children when they respond. An example of this was seen in Year 5 in their work on 'Black Beauty' and in Year 4's work on 'The Legend of The Lambton Worm' when excitement or unhappiness was shown in the tone of voice. The children have

been taught well and respond accurately to the punctuation. This results in lively, fluent reading which engages the listener very well.

76. Most pupils achieve very well in their reading. Reading skills are very successfully taught as part of the daily literacy lessons and through guided reading sessions. By the end of Key Stage 2, the higher achieving pupils read fluently and with confidence. The teachers are good at teaching the children a variety of ways to read unfamiliar words and the 'Better Reading' initiative gives regular individual help to some of the children. Pupils take home reading books regularly and the home school reading diaries are used well. They contain many supportive and encouraging comments from both parents and teachers. The teachers' guided reading records which support the pupils' individual reading targets are excellent. The pupils are encouraged to write book reviews that show their understanding of the main points of the story. They are also encouraged to make evaluative comments and this is developing their skills as critical readers.
77. A love of reading is being developed well by the teachers and all classrooms have attractive, well stocked reading areas where children can browse. Older and higher achieving pupils use the contents, index and glossary information in non-fiction books effectively. Very good teaching has ensured that when searching for information, for example, in their history lessons, the pupils are able to scan text quickly and successfully. The pupils with special educational needs are supported well through the school's reading scheme books and regular help. Older children are knowledgeable about books and nearly all have favourite authors. The library is spacious, attractive and well stocked. All classes use it weekly and the children have a good understanding of how to find and use the books they need. The school plans to encourage more parents and children to use the library after school. Some children also use the local library and the school makes regular visits for special events.
78. Pupils of all abilities make very good progress in developing their writing skills. The coordinator has made good use of assessment results. She identified that the standards of writing were a problem. As a result, careful planning and very good teaching has resulted in improvements in all aspects of writing. More work is planned to continue the improvements particularly in Key Stage 1. The last report expressed concern about the standards of the children's spelling and the quality of their handwriting. These have now been improved and the children's evident pride in their work can be seen in most of the writing books. Regular spelling and handwriting practice are provided. There are, however, some variations between classes in the same year group when some teachers' have different ideas of how well the children should do. The coordinator's own monitoring of children's work has also confirmed this.
79. The pupils are given an extensive range of opportunities to apply their writing skills in other subjects. For example, they write instructions as part of their work in design and technology and write accounts of what it is like to be an evacuee during World War 2. They write extensively as part of their science work and there are many opportunities for them to share their opinions about

their world in their personal and social education lessons. This is a strength of the English curriculum. In addition, all teachers provide a wide range of opportunities for children to write as part of their literacy lessons. They write stories, letters and accounts, describe characters and plots, write play-scripts and poems. There are opportunities for pupils to rewrite work to improve spelling and punctuation as well as opportunities for them to develop their skills of drafting and revising their work on paper or using the computer.

80. The leadership of the coordinator is excellent. Through careful and regular monitoring of teaching and the work the children produce, standards are rising. Overall the teaching of English throughout the school is very good. No lessons seen were unsatisfactory. Teachers are enthusiastic and are encouraging children to share their love of language and of literature through, for example, their enjoyment of some of the stories. In the best lessons the teachers are skilful questioners, checking understanding carefully and further developing the children's literacy skills by helping them explain themselves clearly. Relationships are very good as is the children's behaviour. There is a high level of respect and courtesy when considering the opinions and views of others and all listen carefully during discussions. This ensures that the children are confident to share their ideas with the class. Homework is set regularly and the high quality seen in many homework books show that both parents and children support this. Overall the teachers' marking is good. The best examples tell children exactly what to do to improve and achieve a higher level. There are, however, some examples of teachers who are not so clear about this aspect. Through her monitoring the coordinator has plans to improve this so that there is a more consistent approach across the school.

MATHEMATICS

81. The children's standards at the end of Year 2 in the tests taken in 2000, were well below the national average. When compared with similar schools the pupils' attainment was close to average. The number of children reaching a higher level is the same as other schools. This is because the school sets work at the right level for the higher achieving children that challenges and extends them. There has been a gradual increase in standards since the last inspection, but they are still well below the national average. However, there is a large proportion of children with special educational needs and, taking this into account, the achievement in Key Stage 1 is good. This is built upon in Key Stage 2. In the tests taken in the Year 2000, the standards reached by the children in Year 6 were below the national average, but when they are compared with similar schools they are very high. The number reaching a higher level is the same as in other schools.
82. The work seen during the inspection indicates that the targets set for this year are realistic and attainable. The school analyses results and sets targets to show where the pupils could improve. This is leading to better standards in the subject.

83. The very successful implementation of the Numeracy Strategy in the school has been a major factor in the raising of standards. The teachers have all received training and are very familiar with the new recommendations. A particular strength is the mental arithmetic part of the lesson. The teachers are skilful in delivering this part to ensure that all the children are involved. They use good ways of working and resources and pupils enjoy the lessons. The children eagerly respond to the questioning and are keen to answer. A good example was seen in Year 5, with children using their white-boards to show their answers when they were adding two digit numbers. Lessons are very well planned and clearly identify what the children are to learn. This is discussed with the children. In the best lessons the teachers refer to the targets during the lesson to check what the children are learning. In most lessons the session at the end is used well, to evaluate and reinforce what has been learned and to correct any misunderstandings. This helps the teachers to plan future lessons. A good example was seen in Year 3 when the children were learning about right angles and turns. The teacher picked up aspects the children had misunderstood and clarified them.
84. The teachers plan work at different levels, and pupils with special educational needs are particularly supported in this way. They make good progress in developing their basic skills in mathematics in relation to their ability. There is no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls overall though in Years 3 and 4 there are more girls in the lower attaining groups.
85. The quality of teaching throughout the school is very good. Over half of the lessons seen were either very good or excellent. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Excellent lessons were seen in Years 4, 5 and 6. These lessons were conducted at a very brisk pace and had a high level of challenge for all the pupils. The teachers used extremely effective strategies, like working with a partner or sharing answers, to keep the children on task. As a result, they made very good progress in the lessons. Pupils throughout the school work well during the lessons. They behave well and sustain their concentration. This is because interesting activities are planned by the teachers. In Key Stage 1 where the lessons were always good or very good, the teachers provide interesting resources to improve the learning and maintain the pupils' interest. By the end of Key Stage 1, the children have a good understanding of basic number skills and place value. Many are, for example, becoming skilled at solving money and number problems. There are fewer opportunities for pupils to collect, record or interpret information on graphs. In Key Stage 2, the pupils' knowledge is developed well and they use a good variety of approaches to problem solving involving 'real life' situations. In many classes the teachers encourage the pupils to explain their answers and this helps to build up their confidence and understanding of what is being learned.
86. In the more ordinary lessons the pace occasionally slows and, as a result, the children do not have enough time to complete their written tasks. In other lessons where there is a brisk pace, the teachers set time targets for the pupils to finish their work. For example, in Year 5 the teacher constantly reminded the class how much work they should have completed by a certain

time. The teachers have good relationships with the pupils and this motivates the children to work hard. They manage the pupils well and as a result the children are attentive and well behaved during the lessons. This was seen in an excellent lesson in Year 6 where the teacher had extremely good control and rapport with the class and was able to set challenging work that the children handled well. A strong feature is the teachers' good subject knowledge. They ask challenging and open-ended questions to consolidate the children's previous knowledge and reinforce their learning.

87. The subject is managed very effectively by the coordinator. She has observed the teaching and given written feedback to the teachers to help them improve their delivery. She has led training sessions for the staff.

SCIENCE

88. Standards in science are just below the national average for Key Stage 1 and are in line with the national average for Key Stage 2. The children achieve well in both key stages. The good quality teaching ensures that by the end of Key Stage 1 many of the pupils have acquired appropriate learning skills. This proportion is less than average but the children are able to make good progress through Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1 an average number of pupils reach higher standards. This is because these children have better understanding of the scientific language used and are able to express their own views clearly. The school is aware of the need for language support in science and is currently looking at ways of providing this.
89. From previous assessments the school has identified the need to develop the children's skills in experimenting and investigating. This has been improved through helping the teachers to prepare their lessons more effectively and as a result there are now satisfactory standards at the end of Key Stage 2. Separate books and assessment sheets to record investigations have been helpful in identifying the progress that the children have made.
90. Science is taught well in both key stages and has improved since the last inspection. In Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching is good and in Key Stage 2 it ranges from good to excellent. As a result the pupils enjoy science. They work together very well and are well behaved. The teachers have good subject knowledge and the children's work is challenging and matches what they need next. In the best lessons the children are expected to make decisions for themselves. For example in Year 5 the children were asked how to test the grip of a range of shoes soles. The children decided how to organise their experiment to test the grip of the shoe soles. They worked hard and recorded their findings carefully and often imaginatively. The practical nature of much of the learning and the stimulating contexts support the work.
91. The infant pupils learn to use scientific skills like observation and classification. They can conduct simple tests and are learning how to record their findings in a variety of ways. In Key Stage 2 the teachers build very effectively on these skills and by Year 6 the pupils can record the processes,

methods and results of investigations. The teachers discuss the children's work with them during lessons and help them understand what is happening. They ask difficult questions and expect the children to think hard and remember what they learned earlier in order to find the answers. The pupils' know how well they are doing and what they need to learn next. The activities often have a time-target to help the children work quickly. At the end of the lessons the teachers clarify what has been learned and check that the children have understood. The pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported in class by well planned activities that challenge them at the right level and they make good progress.

92. The school has adopted the nationally recommended guidelines for science. The teachers' good understanding of the subject and rigorous support from the coordinator ensure lessons are exciting and challenging. This is proving to be effective and is contributing successfully to the raising of standards.
93. Increasing opportunities are provided in science for pupils to use computers for data handling and presenting scientific information. They are also beginning to use computers for information retrieval; for example Year 4 pupils have created a database on the planet system incorporating information retrieved from a CD-ROM.
94. The coordinator is very effective. She monitors and evaluates the quality of the teaching and learning and checks the children's standards. Following this she gives advice to the teachers helping them improve their work.

ART AND DESIGN

95. The standard of work seen was average in both key stages although it was good in Year 4. The children's learning develops at a good pace and their achievement is good. The standards are the same as at the time of the previous inspection.
96. The children in Key Stage 1 use their sketchbooks effectively, for example, to practise drawing portraits. They are learning to sketch using pencils and colour. Their work with paint shows a development of shade in pictures of the beach. They have learned to blend the sand into the sea with horizontal strokes. There is good development from the work of the Foundation Stage.
97. In the junior classes there is a wide range of artwork displayed. From year to year the tasks are appropriately developed and show increasing maturity in the work. In Year 3 for example the children have studied Matisse and have produced paintings with simple, bold features. In Year 5 the children have adapted the work of Kandinsky and produced stylish colourful pictures with greater attention to atmosphere than the younger children achieved. In Year 4 the children have made pictures based on their history work. There are ancient Egyptian pictures and work linked with the fire of London. Some of this work is of a good standard and use of the computer, to work in an abstract style, is particularly effective. In Year 6 the children are able to use

their skills to draw in detail and recall how to represent shapes and patterns. The children's work shows an increased sense of design and demonstrates greater control of the resources as the children move through the school.

98. Three lessons were observed in the junior classes. The teachers are using the nationally recommended curriculum effectively to provide an appropriate range of work. This develops the children's skills and enjoyment of art as they move through the school. Staff plan their lessons carefully and they are extending the lessons into new areas. This has helped the children achieve well and learn how to use colour and shape to create attractive and interesting effects. The children's work shows a good level of confidence and, while the tasks are challenging, the children have responded well. Almost all of the work follows designs provided by the teachers and there is little individuality in style. Although the children are learning a good range of skills they do not have enough opportunity to decide how to carry out their work for themselves. Where this happens, in Year 4, the children's standards rise.
99. The coordinator has been absent for some time but other members of staff are working together effectively to lead the subject. The teachers are supported through discussion and the sharing of ideas. The staff are using the nationally recommended guidelines and this offers satisfactory support in planning the curriculum.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. The children's standards are average and their achievement is good. This is the same as the time of the last inspection.
101. No lessons were observed in design and technology during the week of the inspection, so it is not possible to form a judgement on the quality of teaching and learning. The pupils reported that they enjoy the practical tasks of designing and making. Their evaluation sheets and design folders show that they have experience of evaluating their products. Their completed work shows an appropriate range of work covered.
102. In Key Stage 1 the children use construction kits to learn how to make and take apart their designs. They will be using food later in the term to learn how change and adapt designs to suit preferences. In Key Stage 2 the children have been designing and making money containers in Year 4. These show an appropriate use of materials that have been identified on the children's planning sheets. By the time the children are in Year 6 they can design artefacts and evaluate the success of their work. They have made slippers and considered how effective their design was in terms of real use.
103. The coordinator has only recently been appointed and has not yet had the opportunity to promote the raising of standards in the subject. There is an appropriate range of tools, equipment and materials which are organised well and used to support the learning. The school has adopted the nationally recommended guidelines. There is evidence from the classroom displays that

food, textile and construction technology are given due weight in the curriculum

GEOGRAPHY

104. The standards at the end of both key stages are average and are the same as at the time of the last inspection. The children's achievements are good.
105. In Key Stage 1 the pupils can name the countries of the United Kingdom and make reasonable attempts to locate places on a map. They understand how the climate differs in some countries from where they live. They know something of their own locality and can talk about the buildings they pass on the way to school and of the new buildings that are being constructed. In Key Stage 2 these skills have been developed appropriately. As a result by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils understand aspects of physical geography like the water cycle and can describe the journey of a river knowing such terms as tributary or meander. Their mapping skills are well developed and they understand the points of a compass, and use this knowledge to find different places on a map. They understand how the environment can be damaged by pollution and can identify differences and similarities between different localities and countries.
106. In the lessons seen, the teaching was mainly satisfactory. It was good in Year 3. This lesson was planned effectively and the local environment was used well to develop the pupils' geographical skills during a visit to the local park. In the more ordinary lessons the pace slowed because the teachers spent too much time talking to the pupils and this resulted in some restless behaviour.
107. The coordinator is enthusiastic and leads the subject well. She has a good knowledge of the subject and offers advice to colleagues. Resources for the subject have been improved and are satisfactory.

HISTORY

108. The standards in history are average at the end of both key stages. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The children achieve well in both key stages.
109. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are beginning to develop a sense of chronology and understand change over time in everyday life. They can explain how the lives of people in the past are different from their own. They can relate such events as the great fire of London and talk about people from the past such as Florence Nightingale or Samuel Pepys. In Key Stage 2, pupils develop their understanding of chronology by studying topics such as the ancient Egyptians, Romans, Tudors or Victorian England. In their study of Britain since 1930 and the Second World War, they show an understanding of social development and change.

110. Only two history lessons were observed during the inspection and in these the teaching was good. The teachers demonstrated good knowledge of history and their enthusiasm communicated itself to the pupils motivating them to work hard. Good use is made of visitors such as older, knowledgeable residents who come to talk to the children. During the inspection there was a 'Viking presentation' which brought the subject to life for the pupils in Year 3. The use of visits to museums and other places of historical interest such as Eden Camp are used very well to extend the pupils' knowledge and understanding.
111. The coordinator is enthusiastic and leads the subject well. She supports colleagues by discussion and sampling pupils' work. Resources for the subject are satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

112. The children's standards are average in both key stages. In most classes there are children who are reaching higher than average standards. This is an improvement since the last inspection when the standards were unsatisfactory. The children are achieving well.
113. The recent introduction of a weekly class lesson in the computer room means that the pupils are successfully acquiring the skills, knowledge and understanding for using the computers and programs that they need. In addition to this the teachers have a secure and often good understanding of how to use the computers and they know which programs to select. The standards in teaching are good.
114. In Key Stage 1 the pupils make good progress and they achieve well. The children in Year 1 show that they are gaining appropriate skills in using the mouse and keyboard and can enter and change text. They are taught to use a range of interesting programs and can move objects around the screen. They use an art program and can make exciting patterns and pictures with bright colours and images of different sizes. The teachers employ skilful questioning to ensure understanding and pupils respond well to the invitation to show the class what they can do. By the end of Year 2 the pupils are loading programs and beginning to save their work. They can use a word-processor to write for particular purposes and can change their work and add to it. Their work supports other areas of the curriculum like art and mathematics. For example, they use the paint program to construct patterns and pictures using mathematical shapes. The children enjoy the lessons and they are interested in this technology. They pay close attention in the lessons and this supports their learning.
115. In Key Stage 2 the children are making good progress. The teachers confidently manage the use of the computer room to instruct the classes in the weekly lesson. They expect the children to do well and there is always a brisk pace to the lesson. They question and direct the children effectively in order to improve the pupils' skills. The children are very well behaved, keen

and attentive. The work is generally stimulating. It is linked to other aspects of their learning, for example pupils in Year 6 have published newspaper front pages based on Second World War events. Year 5 pupils have searched the Internet to find out about the works of Georges Braque and Andy Warhol for studies in Art. The children with special needs are well supported and make good progress because of the care teachers take to make sure their work suits their needs.

116. The school is appropriately resourced for the subject, and will be well resourced by the end of the current year when the computer room is expanded and more computers have been installed. The teachers are still receiving training from the coordinator but they already have the knowledge and confidence to teach well. The work is supported well by the computer club, whose membership changes each term to give all ages an opportunity to participate and improve their skills.
117. The new coordinator is very effective, she has expertise and enthusiasm. She supports her colleagues well and has had a positive impact in raising standards. The clear and effective management of the subject is contributing significantly to the improvement in the children's standards.

MUSIC

118. Not enough music lessons were seen to make an overall judgement on standards however the school focuses well on singing and on listening to and appraising music.
119. During the two hymn practices the children of all ages sang enthusiastically with a good sense of rhythm and pitch. All the adults joined in well and showed enthusiasm for singing. A brief analysis of Year 5 singing, however, showed that the standards in singing for these children was lower than expected for their age and the children lacked enthusiasm and confidence.
120. Five lessons were observed, three of these were good or better, the two lessons taught by the visiting music specialists were satisfactory. In the very good lesson, taught by the music coordinator, the children were learning to perform a song in two parts, adding percussion instruments to keep the beat. They learnt how to maintain a repeated pattern whilst others were singing the words and were introduced to new musical vocabulary such as ostinato. These children reached standards that are higher than those expected for their age. Pupils in Year 4 were able to express their feelings as they listen to selections from Carnival of the Animals by Saint Saens and from Swan Lake by Tchaikowsky. Their reactions to the music were very mature and this task was a very good way of developing their literacy skills. The children in the special needs assessment class enjoy singing action songs and play their accompanying instruments sensibly. One child was observed learning to play the cornet and four children learning to play the violin. They all concentrated well and are reaching the standards expected. The teachers who were observed enjoy teaching music and their subject knowledge is good.

121. The music curriculum is enhanced by provision for pupils in the choir to sing in places like the local church, the cathedral and for charity at Christmas. Regular visits by music groups such as strings, brass and 'New Horizons', who worked with Year 6 as part of their work on World War 2, bring music alive for the pupils. The children who attend the extra curricular choir practice each week enjoy their singing. An impromptu unaccompanied performance of their favourite song showed their finely tuned sense of performance. Without a conductor, one child immediately took the lead and all joined in enthusiastically. Last year's choir were invited to perform with the Middlesborough Philharmonic. This has encouraged children to join the choir.

122. The coordinator has a clear vision about how to improve the music provision. She has identified that there are too few opportunities for the pupils to compose and perform their own compositions. This is an aspect identified for improvement.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

123. Not enough physical education lessons were seen to judge overall standards. In the lessons that were seen, full attention was given to the need for children to warm up. Good use was made of pupils to demonstrate their developing skills. Children were given regular advice on how to improve and the teacher's demonstrations led to improved performances. The pupils are keen and enjoy their physical education work. Relationships are good and the children behave well and listen attentively.
124. The children develop their throwing and catching skills well. By the time they are eleven most children can successfully hit the ball with a bat, bowl underarm in an effective way and field the ball as part of their cricket skills. They are developing their sense of fair play well. Although 75% of Year 6 children are likely to be able to swim the required 25 metres by the end of the school year the other 25% will not. The school's policy of taking children to learn to swim when they are in Year 1 is a good one, but the lack of a formal assessment system in physical education has resulted in too few children attaining the required distance. The below average level of attainment in Year 6 in swimming last year was partly caused by the closure of the local pool for a period of twelve months.
125. The coordinator leads the subject effectively. She is clear about what needs to be done next. She successfully monitors teachers' planning to check that the programmes of study are being taught and offers advice and support to her colleagues. A good range of extra curricular clubs support the curriculum. These include football, netball and badminton. The school's football and netball teams have been very successful. They have been placed first or second in the local tournaments. Children who are talented in sport are identified and outside support is sought to further develop their skills.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

126. Attainment in religious education meets the standards set out in the Agreed Syllabus and pupils achieve satisfactorily in both key stages. This is the same as the time of the previous inspection.
127. In the two lessons observed, the quality of teaching was very good. The teachers had good subject knowledge. Artefacts and illustrations were used very well with a Year 3 class to investigate aspects of the Jewish Faith. When comparing a family Bible with the Torah the children were amazed at the quality and age of the books and were especially interested in the gold leaf in the Bible. In a well managed discussion the children responded enthusiastically to the opportunity to create a new 'ten commandments', demonstrating their ability to recall previous learning and to apply religious education to their daily lives. A Year 5 class successfully employed prior learning to imagine what life is like as a child of Islam. The very good relationships that exist between staff and pupils promote confident

expressions of opinion. Aspects of Islam are taught systematically throughout the school to give pupils knowledge and understanding in depth of a different world faith from Christianity.

128. Effective use is made of resources to study the customs, symbols and traditions of the Christian and other major world faiths. Good use is made of local places of worship; for example Key Stage 1 children visit the local Anglican church for a baptism ceremony and Key Stage 2 pupils visit a local mosque. A useful link has also been developed with the local Methodist church. Visits are made on regular occasions, to celebrate festivals, to gain knowledge and understanding of aspects of each faith and to compare traditions, symbols and artefacts. The school has also effectively used a link with three European schools, through the Socrates Project, to celebrate Lent with a 'Mardi-Gras' Festival.
129. The subject is led well. The documentation provided to help the staff is effective and helpful, and the scheme of work makes sure that lessons build on earlier learning. The coordinator has identified the need to provide further help to each key stage to make sure that lessons are truly based on the Agreed Syllabus. She has developed a good quality collection of artefacts, posters and resources to support the subject.