

# INSPECTION REPORT

**NEWBROUGH CHURCH OF ENGLAND FIRST  
SCHOOL**

Fourstones, Hexham

LEA area: Northumberland

Unique reference number: 122298

Headteacher: Mr John Moore

Reporting inspector: Mr John Heap  
18824

Dates of inspection: 7 – 9 May 2002

Inspection number: 198531

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 to 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Susan Steven
Date of previous inspection:	10 November 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18824	John Heap	Registered inspector	Equal opportunities English Geography History Physical education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
19741	Trevor Smith	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
4237	Steven Toon	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Information and communication technology Design and technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
11510	Keith Oglesby	Team inspector	Mathematics Art Music Special educational needs	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Newbrough Church of England First School serves pupils aged three to nine years from a social background that shows very few signs of deprivation but some disadvantage. Most pupils live in the village or in nearby villages but some come from farther afield, including the nearest large town of Hexham. There are 55 pupils on roll, 24 boys and 31 girls. The school is much smaller than the average primary school in England and Wales. All of the pupils are white. Six pupils (11 per cent) are on the register of special educational needs and this is below the national average. One pupil (2 per cent) has a Statement of Special Educational Need and this is around the national average. The proportion of pupils (5 per cent) entitled to a free school meal is much lower than the national average. In general, few pupils move in and out of the school during the year. The levels of attainment of children entering the reception class are mixed, and within the normal range of abilities. There are three classes in the main school and two have mixed ages. There is also a 26 place designated nursery that opens in the mornings. Presently, there are 11 boys and 12 girls who attend. There are no children identified as having special educational needs in the nursery.

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

This is a good school at the heart of the local community. It has many strengths that are appreciated by the parents. Overall, pupils achieve well and attain the standards that they should. Teaching is good but there are areas to develop, particularly in the class for six and seven-year-olds that has undergone a number of changes recently. Overall, the school's provision and practices ensure that each pupil benefits equally from what the school offers. The headteacher provides strong leadership and management, despite a very heavy teaching commitment. The school provides good value for money.

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

- By the age of nine, pupils' attainment and achievement are good, overall. Particular strengths are writing, music and aspects of physical education.
- In the nursery, reception and Years 3 and 4, the quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very good.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- The provision for, and progress of, pupils with special educational needs are good.
- Overall, the leadership and management of the headteacher and governors are good.

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

- Overall, the co-ordination and management of subjects is unsatisfactory.
- The judging of pupils' levels of attainment and the use of data to help with lesson planning is weak in Years 1 and 2.

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

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

The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in November 1997. In relation to the key issues identified, there has been:

- good improvement in the use and application of information and communication skills in other subjects, which has led to good improvement in pupils' attainment;
- very good improvement in the resourcing of creative and physical development;
- overall, satisfactory improvement in the planning of the curriculum and teaching;
- insufficient improvement in the resourcing for curriculum co-ordinators.

The overall quality of teaching has improved satisfactorily and standards in mathematics and information and communication technology are better than they were.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
reading	A	B	C	D
writing	A	B	A	A
mathematics	A	A	C	D

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

Standards in 2001 are average in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing when compared with all schools. In comparison with similar schools, writing results are well above average; reading and mathematics results are below average. Proportions of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 are average in reading, below average in mathematics and well above average in writing. Teacher assessments in science are well above average. Over the last three years, results in reading, writing and mathematics exceeded the national average. The results in 2001 show a similar picture. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls. National trends have remained steady. The school's trends have been consistently above them, most particularly in writing.

Owing to the very small number of pupils presently aged seven, it is inappropriate to look at percentage proportions of pupils' attainment. This is because each pupil would equate to as much as 25 per cent and would give an unclear picture of attainment.

Overall, pupils are achieving the standards expected and those with special educational needs are making good progress in relation to their prior levels of attainment. This is particularly due to the challenging targets set for them in their individual education plans.

By the age of nine, standards seen during the inspection are above expectations in English, mathematics, science, geography, history and music and in line with expectations in art and design, design and technology and information and communication technology. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about physical education.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are keen, enthusiastic and like their school very much.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. By the age of nine pupils take on responsibilities well and show initiative. Younger pupils have too few opportunities to develop initiative. Relationships are excellent.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The attendance rate is in line with the national average. There were no unauthorised absences last year.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 4
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	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.*

Overall, teaching is good. It is strongest in nursery, reception and Years 3 and 4, where all of the good and better lessons were seen.

In nursery and reception, the teaching of literacy and numeracy is good. The particular strengths of teaching are the very effective development of basic skills, good knowledge and understanding of subjects, very strong management and control, and the teachers' high expectations. Children's learning is good because they work hard and show a lot of interest and concentrate well.

The strengths in Years 3 and 4 are the very good management of pupils, the high quality of questioning and the very strong knowledge and understanding of the teacher. Pupils learn well because they are very interested in what they do and continue to acquire basic skills, knowledge and understanding very strongly. The teaching in Years 1 and 2 has been affected by the long-term absence of the permanent teacher and the subsequent lack of stability. There are shortcomings in the judging of pupils' attainment and progress and in how this information can be most effectively used to help in the planning of future activities for individual pupils.

The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good, overall. Their needs are met well, mainly because the match of task to the individual is usually effective.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Overall good. It is particularly strong in nursery, reception and Years 3 to 4. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well. The contribution of the community and links with other schools are very strong. Provision for personal, social and health education is very good. There is a good range of activities outside lessons.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need are particularly well supported. Pupils receive equal provision. Management is good. Effective individual education plans make use of social and emotional targets as well as academic ones.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The provision makes a significant contribution to pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships. It is also important in shaping the view of the school as a large 'family'.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection, monitoring behaviour and ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. The management of the school is vigilant on safety matters, and pupils rightly feel secure. Procedures and practices for judging pupils' levels of attainment are unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2.
Relationship with parents	Parents' views about the school are very positive. They receive an abundance of information about the school and their children's curriculum. The reporting of pupils' progress and learning is generally satisfactory but there are omissions in the annual progress reports.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher is knowledgeable, committed and cares deeply about the school and the pursuit of improvement. He provides a very strong example in his teaching. Too few opportunities to manage subjects are available at the moment.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Strong support for management. Positive and open approach that enables them to be effective 'critical friends'. Monitoring visits are effective.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The priorities for development are identified accurately. Insufficient checking of the quality of teaching and performance in national tests.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Grants are used well for their designated purpose. A careful check is made by governors on income and expenditure. The school has good measures to ensure the efficient funding of services and resources.

Overall, the accommodation has strengths, such as the computer suite and good-sized rooms. However, the size and shape of the school hall makes the teaching of gymnastics difficult. Staffing levels and learning resources adequately support teaching throughout the school.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• The progress that their children are making.</li> <li>• The good standard of behaviour.</li> <li>• The good quality of the teaching.</li> <li>• They feel comfortable approaching the school.</li> <li>• The expectation of the child to work hard.</li> <li>• The closeness of the home/school relationship.</li> <li>• The amount of homework.</li> <li>• The information they receive about their child's progress.</li> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> <li>• The effective leadership and management.</li> <li>• The way the school helps their child become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	

Inspectors agree with the vast majority of positive comments made by parents. Inspectors recognise that the school has faced significant difficulties in staffing the Year 1 / 2 class and that the period of uncertainty has been difficult to manage. Consequently, the teaching, standards and progress in the present Year 1 and 2 are satisfactory.

### There were several comments written with the parents' questionnaires.

Inspectors totally agree that:

- the school is at the heart of the local community;
- resources are adequate for supporting pupils with special educational needs;
- the lack of a playtime in the afternoon does not seem to have an effect on pupils' behaviour or attitudes;
- the headteacher is highly approachable and willing to help.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Overall, the standards of work seen during the inspection are above expectations. They are higher in the nursery, reception and Years 3 / 4 classes. The Year 1 / 2 class has undergone a period of disruption due to staff changes and this has had an effect on standards.
2. By the age of seven, standards based on average points scores in the national tests for 2001 are average in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing when compared to all schools nationally. Compared with similar schools, results in writing are well above average and in reading and mathematics they are well below average. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 is average in reading, below average in mathematics and well above average in writing. Teacher assessments in science are well above average. Over the last three years, results in reading, writing and mathematics have exceeded the national average. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls.
3. Initial judgements of children entering the nursery indicate a range of attainments that are broadly average, overall. By the end of the reception class the children have achieved well and standards are above expectations. Highest standards are in personal, social, emotional and physical development.
4. At the age of seven, standards are at the expected level in reading, writing, mathematics and information and communication technology. Standards are above expectations in speaking and listening, and below expectations in science.
5. At the age of nine, standards are above expectations in English, mathematics and science and in line with expectations in information and communication technology.
6. In English, seven-year-old pupils learn to become fairly fluent readers. They develop sound skills for tackling unfamiliar words. These standards could be higher if the texts were more challenging. Pupils write interesting stories and accounts. Good development of writing skills in other subjects, such as history, helps pupils improve the range and quality of their writing. By the age of nine, many pupils become fluent readers of challenging texts. Their writing is well structured and interesting. Pupils retrieve information quickly from reference books and summarise it succinctly. Once again, good attention to developing reading and writing skills through other subjects helps improve the quality of their work. The skills of using a library are developing soundly, particularly since the improvements to the facility.
7. In mathematics, seven-year-old pupils develop an appropriate mathematical vocabulary. They carry out simple calculations accurately and have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of number facts. They understand simple fractions and can calculate halves and quarters of numbers. By the age of nine, pupils learn to handle mental arithmetic confidently. Most pupils use the four basic operations of number competently. They have a good knowledge of two- and three-dimensional shapes and their properties. They use a variety of methods to collate and represent data. Their mathematical vocabulary is well developed.

8. In science, the majority of seven-year-old pupils classify materials according to various properties and can record their findings. They make predictions based on everyday observations and their own experiences. By the age of nine, the majority of pupils suggest reasons why different animals are suited to their habitats. They make accurate classifications and recognise the effects of forces. They know and can use the correct scientific vocabulary at the right time.
9. In information and communication technology, pupils are increasingly confident when using their skills, understanding and knowledge to support most learning. These are significant achievements, given the recent development of the subject. Seven-year-olds competently amend mistakes and use the mouse well to control their actions. They are quick to use simple databases to retrieve information in graphical form. By the age of nine, pupils are using the Internet and CD ROMs to find information. They use competently a range of programs to assist their learning in mathematics. Pupils work effectively in pairs or individually.
10. By the age of nine, standards in literacy are good and satisfactory in numeracy. In literacy, seven-year-olds use their reading and writing skills adequately to find more information about transport and write-up their findings. They also write about their 'author of the week'. Nine-year-olds are involved with a much wider range of writing, for example:
  - writing articles for the class newspaper;
  - describing people and events from history.
 In numeracy, seven-year-olds have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of how to use number in their work in the classroom and beyond. However, their numeracy skills in practical situations, such as shopping, are less secure. Nine-year-olds are much more competent because they have been taught well and their knowledge, skills and understanding have been promoted by the improvements in provision for information and communication technology. These pupils have good practical skills, such as measuring and estimating, that give them the skills and confidence to do challenging work.
11. By the age of seven, standards of attainment are in line with expectations in art and design, design and technology, geography and history. Standards in music are above expectations. There is insufficient information to judge securely the overall attainment in physical education.
12. By the age of nine, standards are above expectations in geography, history and music. Standards in art and design and design and technology are at the expected level. There is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about physical education. However, in the areas of dance, rugby and swimming standards are above expectations.
13. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress against their personal targets. This is because the school works successfully to include everybody equally in everything the school does and relationships are very good.

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

14. Overall, attitudes to learning continue to be very good, as identified in the previous report. Pupils enjoy school and are generally very keen to make the most of all opportunities offered to them, including those staged outside lesson times. They act sensibly and respond well. However, in Years 1 and 2, pupils' attitudes are not always

quite as positive as those observed elsewhere in the school but this is understandable as, at present, the class does not have a permanent teacher.

15. Behaviour throughout the school continues to be very good both in and out of class. Pupils are a credit to their school. They display high levels of self-discipline and follow school rules and routines closely and usually without prompting. Bullying is very rare and there have been no exclusions. Pupils genuinely care for their school, and treat its fabric and facilities with great respect.
16. Pupils' personal development remains very strong. They are confident, articulate learners who are considerate. They fully understand the impact of their actions upon others. The youngest children are well settled into school life. They share and take turns without fuss and are already developing very good work habits. Pupils work well independently and are keen to take on any responsibilities they are offered around school to help their teachers. The quality of relationships remains excellent. There is a relaxed and harmonious atmosphere in the school. Pupils work well together, are friendly, very polite and always ready to help.
17. Attendance is satisfactory and the national norm, but has fallen since the last inspection on account of the recent Foot and Mouth epidemic preventing some children from coming to school and a long-term absence through illness. Punctuality is good. Almost all pupils arrive on time and lessons start promptly.
18. Good adult care for pupils with special educational needs ensures that they have positive attitudes to learning. They respond well to the good support given by teachers, teaching assistants and support staff. As a result they play a full part in lessons and are keen to get on and do well.

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

19. Overall, the quality of teaching is good and this promotes effective learning. In all the lessons, the standard of teaching is always satisfactory or better, and over a third of lessons are very good or excellent. This is an improvement on the standard reported in the last report because the proportion of good and better lessons has increased, and the proportion of very good and better lessons has also increased. This is a commendable position because the school has undergone significant changes to personnel since the last inspection, most particularly in the Year 1 / 2 class this school year. During the inspection, it was only possible to observe two temporary supply teachers in this infant class.
20. In the nursery and reception classes, the quality of teaching and learning is good with some very good features. The particular strengths are:
  - the very good teaching of basic skills;
  - the high expectations; and
  - the very effective management of the children.In the majority of lessons, basic skills are taught very well. For example, in a reception music lesson all children were taught to respond, explore and communicate in music, song and actions. Children were totally involved in the lesson which was busy, varied and encouraging. Higher attaining children went on to learning non-action songs and this clearly stretched them. All staff have high expectations of behaviour and work and they make them clear. In a nursery session, the assistant made it clear that cutting with scissors needed to be careful and accurate. The children remained on task for a long period and maintained good control of the scissors. In almost all of the lessons, the management of the class was very good. Children race to the challenges set, follow

the clear instructions and get on with their activities. Parents support the teachers well by doing some 'homework' every night. All of these attributes are made possible by the good knowledge and understanding that the staff have about the way young children learn.

21. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. An area for improvement is in the unsatisfactory use of judgements of pupils' attainment to guide future teaching. In the better lessons, the pace is brisk and the questioning builds confidence. For example, in a mathematics lesson, pupils responded to the questions and gave the teacher a clear view of their knowledge and understanding. Higher attaining pupils volunteered "I know what the dot is for" as they worked out their money sums. Generally, the management of the pupils is good but on occasion a lack of strong control led to over-exuberance and the shouting-out of answers reduced the impact of the lesson. The very best lesson was taught by the music teacher who showed that her effective judging and recording of previous achievements meant that she was able to make the most of the time available and all the pupils made gains in their learning. Unfortunately, this was not evident in the work of the other teachers and because of this omission, pupils were too often engaged in tasks that did not stretch them and left them with an unsatisfactory view of their own learning. For example, in science, the work on the water cycle was little more than colouring-in a worksheet. This is made worse by the weaknesses in collecting pupils' work, and much of it was undated, loose in folders, incomplete and not marked.

22. In Years 3 and 4, the quality of teaching and learning is good, with several very good features. The particularly strong elements are:

- the teacher's knowledge and understanding of the subjects he teaches and the links between them;
- the quality of questioning in lessons that brings out pupils' knowledge and maintains their interest;
- the very effective management of the pupils.

In the very best lesson, the organisation and preparation for a visit to Wallington Hall were exemplary. Pupils were very clear about the purpose of the visit and the learning was fostered by open-ended questioning and freedom to choose activities. Consequently, the pupils learned a lot in a wide range of subjects and no time was wasted. Pupils were well motivated by the teacher's interest, enthusiasm and skill in linking together all the strands of the visit. Pupils and staff have high expectations and they are met. In a literacy lesson, the interest and expertise were in evidence again and the teacher showed clearly that one of his strongest skills is in the identification of pupils' views and using them to illustrate his teaching points. Consequently, new learning takes place and exemplars are obvious:

- 'Which adjectives do we use?'
- 'When are plurals needed?'
- 'When is the exclamation mark helpful to the lesson?'

Whether the lesson takes place in the classroom, on the field or at another venue a good learning environment is established. The teacher's aim, to include all pupils equally, is exemplified in a mathematics lesson; he hears the barely audible contribution from the corner of the class whilst there is an acceptable chorus of replies. He achieves silence quickly, and the pupils listen to the quieter pupil and respect his views.

23. Overall, teachers' marking is satisfactory. However, the quality of marking is much better in Years 3 and 4 than it is in Years 1 and 2. In the class for older pupils, the comments in books are supportive, capture the essence of the work but challenge the writer. In the younger class, the marking is rarely much more than a tick and often fails

to point the way towards improvement. Consequently, pupils have little idea of how they are doing. Throughout Years 1 to 4, the use of homework is satisfactory.

24. Overall, the teaching of literacy and numeracy is good. The school has implemented the national strategies effectively. The majority of teachers use the skills learned in literacy lessons to improve the work in other subjects, for example, good writing in Year 3 / 4 history work. Numeracy skills are used in science to develop graphs from data and to measure in subjects such as design and technology and when pupils have gone out on visits. Since the opening of the computer suite, there has been effective use of the machines to word process work and to find information from the Internet and CD ROMs. Teachers' skills are developing in all of these areas and this is due to timely training and their own wish to improve.
25. Overall, the quality of teaching is good in English, mathematics, science and physical education. It is very good in music and satisfactory in art and design.
26. The school keeps good records of progress made by pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans are kept up to date and have realistic and specific targets with notes on how well these are working. Generally, these plans are used well to match work to ability. In some class lessons they are less well used, as when all abilities do the same work. Teachers have very good relationships with the support staff and they work together well. This makes a significant contribution to the progress made by pupils with special educational needs, for example, in the way that all adults co-operate to make the learning support as unobtrusive as possible. Support staff are well prepared and familiar with both pupils' personal targets and what is to be taught in the lesson.

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

27. Overall, there has been satisfactory improvement in the planning of the curriculum. The school offers a good range of learning opportunities that stimulate pupils' interests effectively and contribute significantly to their positive attitudes to school and their learning. Provision is very good for children in the nursery, reception and Years 3 and 4, and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Personal and social development is a particular strength, particularly in the encouragement of responsibility and initiative. The consistently high expectations of staff, adults and pupils in the school to respect and value each individual contribute to a community in which high standards of attainment and achievement are celebrated and shared by all. The use of the immediate and local environment forges strong links with the school's community and raises children's appreciation and understanding of ways in which they can contribute.
28. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. The provision is broad and balanced and appropriately enhanced by the programmes for collective worship and personal and social education, including drugs awareness and sex education. Provision and planning for literacy are good and continue to be more effective than those for numeracy which is satisfactory. There have been significant improvements in the provision for information and communication technology which had not had sufficient time allocation at the time of the last inspection. A clear, well-planned scheme for information and communications technology, linked closely to national guidance, provides a good structure for pupils to successfully develop new knowledge and skills. There is sufficient time for access to the subject.

29. Planning of the curriculum for Years 1 and 2 does not provide sufficient guidance to ensure systematic development of knowledge, skills and understanding in science and design technology. This means that it is difficult to use the judgements of pupils' attainment to plan appropriate levels of challenge that match individual needs and abilities.
30. The school ensures that all pupils receive equal access to the curriculum, including those with special educational needs. Curricular provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs is good. The school is successful in involving such pupils in all aspects of school life, such as music or visits. Specialist teaching and advice are usually available; the school employs its own adviser when needed. This teacher checks on pupils' progress and helps both teachers and parents with ideas for learning activities. Pupils' individual targets are well thought out and their progress is reviewed regularly. These include goals for literacy, numeracy, behaviour and social development. The support from teachers, support assistants, parents, pupils and the special educational needs co-ordinator is very effective, and ensures that all pupils are included equally in all the school's activities.
31. Provision of activities outside lesson times continues to be a strength and greatly enjoyed by participating pupils. Activities such as dance, music and sport strengthen links with the community and enrich the educational opportunities for pupils.
32. Overall, provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and continues to be a strength of the school. The religious foundations of the school and close links with the local churches contribute effectively to the high expectations set for the quality of relationships within the school and with its community.
33. Provision for spiritual development is very good. Assemblies form a fundamental platform for developing an awareness of spirituality. A section of the hall provides a religious focus with good balance of information on church festivals and ecumenical calendar and a small, but effective, set of religious artefacts. Pupils enter the hall for assembly in a calm and orderly manner which promotes the special nature of the shared occasion. The headteacher and members of the local clergy provide very relevant links through pupils' own experiences to help them empathise with feelings of others in very different circumstances. This is used to raise awareness of the personal nature of spirituality and insights into Christian values and beliefs. Very good opportunities for quiet reflection are used effectively and emphasise the importance of individuals making their own contributions to school life and the community. For example, the care and time teachers take to present the work of pupils well, make the valuing of them as people explicit and celebrate individual talent and achievement.
34. Provision for moral development is very good. High expectations are set for pupils' moral values. Pupils develop a clear sense of right and wrong and an understanding of the reasons underpinning these expectations. The school's emphasis on honesty and trust are reflected through the example of all staff and adults in the school. Good use is made of the curriculum to explore moral issues and different values such as the studies of life in Victorian Times and the Second World War. The positive recognition of good examples has led to very good consistency and provision across the school in classes and at lunch and playtimes. Opportunities within the curriculum are used to raise issues of accountability and moral values.



35. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. The quality of relationships within the school remains a major strength. Children know the expectations made of them and how they can contribute to the school as a community. They show concern for others in the wider world through stories and accounts of children in very different circumstances and the importance of contributions to charities. Simulated experiences of living conditions and differences of lifestyles in different times and circumstances add to the understanding of the importance of friends. A further strength is the relationship between the school and its community. This is fostered through visiting speakers and a good range of activities involving the children, such as local fairs and events.
36. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Local traditions and events in the church calendar are included within the school curriculum and these are supported by a good range of activities outside lessons. For instance, pupils contribute to local festivals and learn traditional dances and customs first hand, in activities led by members of the community such as Morris dancing. Beginning in the nursery and extending through to the end of Year 4, pupils develop a strong sense of their own culture and tradition through local visits and studies focusing on the community and immediate environment. The school includes a programme of study for raising awareness of other cultures. This is particularly well developed in historical, geographical and religious contexts. Opportunities remain for this to be an even more prominent feature through developing displays and increasing the range of visitors to the school. Effective links have been forged with four schools in a family group. This has attracted substantial additional funding towards the information and communication technology provision and other joint initiatives to broaden the curriculum. Essential access to a shared information and communication technology technician has proved a valuable asset in supporting the maintenance and development of costly resources. Governors make substantial commitments to the school and help forge strong links and support with the community.
37. The involvement and lead set by the headteacher's substantial personal commitment make a considerable contribution to the successful development of the high quality provision for these aspects of the curriculum.

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

38. The school continues to take very good care of its pupils. All necessary health and safety procedures are in place, and close attention is paid to them by all staff to ensure they operate properly. Child protection measures work well, and these reflect local authority guidelines with the headteacher having designated responsibility for liaising with outside agencies.
39. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development remain effective and continue to make a positive contribution to the standards achieved. Teachers know their pupils very well, have excellent relationships with them, and continue to successfully promote very high standards of behaviour, both in and out of class. Praise and rewards are used effectively to encourage effort and significant achievements are celebrated. For example, music awards and 'Start of the Week' awards were presented at the Ascension Day service which was attended by many parents.
40. The school has effective systems to share information on pupils' special educational needs and the support that is being given. There are good records of pupils' progress. In lessons, teachers support pupils well, reminding them of their targets and praising

each small step. Recent changes of teacher in one class have meant that support has been less effective for a short time. Provision for supporting personal development is very good for all pupils; this helps the special needs pupils because they do not feel singled out. Teaching assistants know the pupils very well and are involved in reviewing the individual education plans.

41. Attendance is monitored thoroughly. Registers are maintained properly and there are suitable arrangements to follow up any unexplained absences, although these are very rare.
42. Overall, procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. The procedures and use of information are good in nursery, reception and Years 3 and 4. Recent initiatives include:
  - the introduction of reading tests and weekly spelling tests;
  - the use of government developed national tests for use in years other than the statutory Year 2.

However, the procedures and use of data are unsatisfactory in the Year 1 / 2 class. The main reason for this is that the class lacks clear and challenging lesson objectives. Consequently, this means that the opportunities to judge pupils' attainment and progress are too vague and therefore provide little assistance in planning the progression of further learning opportunities for individual pupils. This is a shortcoming in a class that has such a wide range of attainment and maturity levels. It also means that pupils duplicate some work, for instance, in completing commercially produced worksheets. There is also a lack of a record that tracks pupils' achievements from year to year.

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

43. Parents' views about the school continue to be very positive, and no significant reservations were aired about any areas of its provision through the questionnaire or at the parents' meeting with inspectors. A close partnership has been maintained with them since the last inspection and as a result parents continue to provide very good support for their children's learning, particularly at home and through activities of the Friends Association. The school sees these links as being very important in a child's education and, as a consequence, every opportunity is taken to promote and develop them. For example, around 20 parents are currently learning about information and communication technology through an after-school training initiative.
44. The quality of information provided by the school remains broadly satisfactory, although some of it, particularly in respect of pupils' progress, is not as good as at the time of the last inspection. Whilst on-going correspondence and newsletters continue to keep parents well informed about school life generally, pupils' annual reports do not meet statutory requirements. They do not report on design and technology, and there is no clear distinction between history and geography. The prospectus and governors' annual report are also incomplete. Both lack details about authorised absence, and the latter does not include a section informing parents about the progress made by the school in addressing issues raised at the last inspection.
45. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed of their children's progress and have opportunities to be fully involved in their work. The headteacher has won the trust of many parents by his caring, patient and professional approach and his very good relationships with these pupils. Where communication has occasionally broken down for any reason, the school has worked hard to resume good relationships and provide effective support.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The headteacher continues to provide inspiring and effective leadership in the following areas:

- the quality of his teaching;
- the way in which he involves the whole community in the education and support of the pupils in their care, including the important links with the local cluster of schools;
- the successful quest to improve resources, such as the computer suite.

The vast majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire consider leadership and management to be strong. The governors in their meetings with inspectors endorsed the view of a hard-working and committed professional. These are strengths that have been maintained since the last inspection. The headteacher has also presided over a good improvement in the quality of teaching. However, he has been less successful in delegating responsibility to colleagues and he carries a very wide range of responsibilities himself. Significant reasons for this have been:

- the large turnover of staff, that has meant that skilful teachers have been introduced who need time and training to understand the key roles that they are to fulfil;
- the 90 per cent teaching commitment that he has. Inevitably, this leaves little room for manoeuvre in freeing colleagues to do the work normally expected of a co-ordinator.

Owing to these constraints he has found it difficult to improve greatly on the monitoring of teaching and learning. There has been insufficient progress in this area of the work.

47. Overall, the deployment of teachers as subject co-ordinators is unsatisfactory. This is because:

- they have not had sufficient resources to allow them to monitor teaching and standards;
- the co-ordinators have not been required to prepare a detailed action plan for their subject that recognises the priorities identified in the school development plan.

This amounts to insufficient progress on this issue that was identified in the last report.

48. The governing body is effective in the way that it fulfils its responsibilities and gives high priority to achieving the very secure school aims. Much of the detailed work is carried out successfully in the committees that have been formed. The governors have a good view of the strengths and areas for development because they have very close contact with the school. This is most apparent through the focused visits and reports to the full governing body that take place on a regular basis. This work is guided and supported by the very useful monitoring and evaluation policy. A good example has been the recent monitoring and assessment of the quality of writing and spelling in the school. The governors are closely involved in the setting of targets and, again, the level of information that they have is commendably wide. For example:

- information from the government on national test results and trends;
- information from internal school testing;
- access to the year-group records of pupils' achievements that are drawn-up by the teachers.

Governors give a great deal of assistance with the formulation of the school development plan and they are acutely aware that they need to give the headteacher a great deal of support with this work. They have been highly supportive of initiatives such as the development of the library and the computer suite.

49. The detailed school development plan provides clear guidance and direction. It benefits from:
- the extensive review of provision and achievements that run alongside each other;
  - the input from governors and community;
  - the clear aims that the school seeks to achieve.
- The priorities that are set out are appropriate and there is evidence that the school achieves many of them. For example:
- the raising of standards in literacy and numeracy;
  - the raising of opportunities and attainment in information technology, including the wider community;
  - the operation of the new library;
- This clarity of focus and will to improve are good and the staff are keen to help the headteacher progress matters further.
50. Financial management is good and the control of the tight budget is effective. In pursuit of this work the school benefits from the financial expertise of the chair of the finance committee. The school has correctly identified that staff are the key resource and that is where the major funding priorities have been identified. To support this strong line there have been significant savings made in other areas of expenditure, such as the necessary utilities of electricity and water. The governing body has a clear scheme of delegation and this enables the headteacher and secretary to have effective day-to-day arrangements for tracking income and expenditure. The most recent audit by the local education authority identified a small number of relatively minor areas for improvement and these are being resolved appropriately through a well worked-out action plan. The school has successfully sought grants for a range of purposes and these have been well spent for the benefit of pupils. Best value is achieved through a variety of means and the school takes seriously its responsibilities in terms of considering the cost-effectiveness of its decisions.
51. The school manages its provision for special educational needs effectively. The loss of the co-ordinator has been dealt with well, as the headteacher has taken over for the time being. However, this adds significantly to his heavy workload. There is a governor who is responsible for special educational needs who is well informed and takes an active role. Both teachers and assistants have undertaken training to help them deal with specific cases, for example, autism. All staff know the procedures to be followed and what to do when things are not working well. Records of pupils' progress are kept carefully and used in planning support. The headteacher takes the lead in maintaining good communication with other agencies and schools. The governors make appropriate use of money to support pupils with special educational needs.
52. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is satisfactory. The arrangements for performance management are sound and there are appropriate arrangements in place to support teachers new to the school. The headteacher regards this as an important role for him to deal with and, considering his own teaching commitment, he manages it well. However, there has been insufficient training for subject co-ordinators, particularly if the areas of lesson observation and sampling pupils' work.
53. Overall, the range of learning resources is adequate to support teaching and learning. The recent improvements in information and communication technology and the library are welcome and important advances.

54. Accommodation is good. There have been significant improvements to the building that have led to needed developments in:
- the physical and creative development of the youngest children;
  - access to the library and the development of skills;
  - the provision for information and communication technology.

The internal and external provision supports teaching and learning in almost all aspects of the curriculum. However, the shape of the hall makes it difficult to get out the full range of apparatus for gymnastics. The headteacher is working extremely hard to raise grant-aid that will provide the school and the local community with a sports hall. The building for eating lunch is across the main road that leads into the village. Again, the headteacher and governors have formulated plans to bring the facilities onto one site if the sports hall arrangements go forward. The small numbers in the school mean that movement around the building is calm and there are few disruptions for those with emotional or learning difficulties. Outside areas are easy to supervise and the rare incidents can be dealt with quickly.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. To develop further this good school, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (a) Improve co-ordination of subject areas by:
- involving subject co-ordinators in the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning;
  - providing co-ordinators with relevant training in the skills of managing a subject area;
  - developing action plans for all subjects that will support the identified priorities for the school.
- (Paragraphs: 46, 47, 52, 80, 86, 93, 95, 103, 111)
- (b) Improve the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 by:
- introducing records that track pupils' learning and progress throughout the school;
  - ensuring that there are regular and consistent times for sampling all pupils' work;
  - devise and implement a portfolio of pupils' work that contains samples of work that are to matched National Curriculum levels of attainment.
- (Paragraphs: 21, 23, 29, 42, 85, 93)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important areas for improvement should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- the governing body should ensure that all statutory requirements are met by updating the entries in:
    - the governors' annual report to parents;
    - the prospectus;
    - the pupils' annual progress reports
- (Paragraph 44)

In the current school development plan, the school has appropriately identified the development of English, mathematics, science and information technology as priorities and these are further supported by the general targets drawn up by co-ordinators. Furthermore, improvements in subject co-ordination are also rightly identified.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	29
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	17

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	1	10	13	5	0	0	0
Percentage	3	34	45	17	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	12	55
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	6

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

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.9

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

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



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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	11	6	17

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above		14	17	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (92)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above		14	16	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (92)	94 (100)	94 (92)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

*The number of boys and girls as individual groups is small, so these results have been omitted from the table. The results of the group as a whole (boys and girls together) have been included. Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.*

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	44
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.2
Average class size	18.3

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y4**

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	15

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	10
Number of pupils per FTE adult	8

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

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

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

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

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001/2
	£
Total income	185109
Total expenditure	185133
Expenditure per pupil	2608
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	80
Number of questionnaires returned	59

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	76	22	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	34	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	74	24	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	48	4	0	2
The teaching is good.	73	25	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	59	32	8	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	12	3	5	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	83	15	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	68	24	7	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	69	22	3	2	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	72	22	0	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	62	29	3	2	3

### Other issues raised by parents

**There were several comments written with the parents' questionnaires.**

Inspectors totally agree that:

- the school is at the heart of the local community.
- resources are adequate for supporting pupils with special educational needs.
- the lack of a playtime in the afternoon does not seem to have an effect on pupils' behaviour or attitudes.
- the headteacher is highly approachable and willing to help.

## **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**

56. The school provides part-time education for three and four year olds. Currently, twenty-six children are admitted for three mornings and thirteen older children for an additional two mornings per week. Children transfer to the reception class for the start of their full time education. They arrive with a normal range of abilities. By the end of the reception year, most pupils have made at least satisfactory progress and reached the expected national Early Learning Goals in all aspects. Progress since the last inspection has been sustained and improvements have been made in the provision for creative and role play and physical development.
57. The school has made good progress in implementing the new national guidance for children in nursery and reception classes. Teaching and learning is good or very good.

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

58. The majority of pupils enter the nursery with satisfactory personal and social skills for their age. They make good progress and by the time they leave reception they exceed the Early Learning Goals in this area. Children work and play well together. They assume complementary roles in the garden centre and domestic play area. Children engage successfully in activities not directly led by the teacher or assistant and access tools and materials confidently. The majority of pupils share resources sensibly and fairly. They respond speedily and positively to adult support that is very occasionally required. They quickly acquire the skills and patience to listen to others and to take turns. Children confidently contribute in discussions and speak about their families and friends. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong and want to give of their best and greatly enjoy praise. Very good relationships are formed with adults and genuine trust and respect are quickly secured so that children are confident to ask for help when needed. Soon they use their own initiative to mix colours or choose from a range of activities. Children at the end of their nursery stage are helpful to younger children and eagerly demonstrate how to access and return equipment and materials. Children respond well to prompts and reminders about equipment they have not put away properly. Most children change for physical education with minimal help and there are few incidences of reluctance.
59. The quality of teaching and learning in this aspect is very good. The very good quality of relationships developed between the children and their teachers, nursery nurse and teaching assistant helps them settle quickly into school. Expectations are made clear to children and tasks are set that ensure they can gain confidence by achieving within a range of levels. The teaching staff and adults focus on specific activities and through sensitive guidance, example and coaching raise expectations and standards of children's achievements. Children quickly learn to make choices and work independently with confidence and assurance.

### **Communications Language and Literacy**

60. Children listen very attentively to class stories and follow pictures and recognise some high frequency words. They eagerly express their views of the characters of the story and use pictorial clues to add information. They use language they have heard in the story and make logical predictions when prompted. The majority of children show good recall of nursery rhymes and poems and enjoy repetition and changes in tone, volume

and tempo. Children recognise the sounds of initial letters and match their own and others' names successfully. They extend this to words they have used in the context of their activities or stories. The use of reading bags and 'story sacks', for reading and playing supporting activities at home with parents, has proved very popular and strengthens pupils' enjoyment and improves progress in reading. Many of the activities include opportunities for mark making and early writing, making shopping lists or records of items in the centre. They confidently provide their interpretation of this early writing and understand its intended purpose. By the end of the Foundation Stage children are on target to achieve the Early Learning Goals. They successfully match words to pictures on sight or using the initial letter sounds. The majority of children have sufficient control of pencils and other writing implements to make legible copies of their names. Further use of words in the environment of the classroom should extend children's word recognition skills.

61. The regular contribution of parents and adults to the development of children's reading makes a significant and positive impact on progress. Comments are recorded regularly and this may be usefully extended to highlight specific words or errors that may require additional support. The quality of teaching and learning in this aspect is very good. Lessons and learning objectives are clearly planned and well targeted to the needs of individual children. The quality of questioning is very good and offers substantial challenge with sensitivity. Activities provide a good range of opportunities to develop literacy skills and by the end of the Foundation Stage children are confident in writing their names and making their own sentences.

### **Mathematical Development**

62. Children's mathematical skills are slightly below nationally expected levels on entry to the nursery and by the end of the Foundation Stage most have achieved the Early Learning Goals. Children count forwards and backwards to ten and by the end of the reception class many count in tens using a number square. They respond accurately when increasing or decreasing numbers by one or more. Children use a good range of mathematical language by the end of the Foundation Stage and know the names of basic shapes and counting rhymes. Children successfully match cards involving attributes of shape, colour and position. This is effectively reinforced through computer programs. A good range of activities is used to stimulate counting and number activities. They successfully use computer programs, combining visual and audio information, to match number related to quantities and recognise shapes, which are longer, shorter, thick and thin. A number of pupils have exceeded the challenge presented by these programs and are ready for further challenge. In the reception class more formal numeracy sessions have been introduced. Pupils contribute well to discussion and sustain interest in extending mathematical language to describe operations of adding and subtracting and counting. They work well and follow up in small groups on focused activities. The time for plenary sessions may be usefully extended to reinforce learning. Pupils respond well to counting in the environment of the classrooms, counting the legs on their paintings of creatures, days of the week and matching written numbers with figures. Opportunities for counting in the context of the day are used well and support arrangements for making groups and sharing drinks and snacks.
63. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers promote the use of mathematical language and skills well. They use the environment of the classroom and opportunities in activities to involve counting and the use of number. Children show good levels of understanding and confidence in their talk and use of mathematics in practical activities.

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

64. Children enter the nursery with a sound knowledge of the world around them. Activities provided in the school extend their experiences through the nursery and reception years, and the children are on target to achieve the Early Learning Goals. Specific topics successfully stimulate and expand children's interests. Children paint daffodils they have carefully observed with hand lenses and paintings show good levels of detail, shape and form. They recognise and use the name of common colours. The school pond is used to collect species for observation. Pupils describe their development and match stages in their changes to three-dimensional models. The use of a time line and simple recording may usefully extend this activity. A visit to the local garden centre has resulted in a similar area being created in the classroom. Pupils grow seeds and use the area for role-play. Children transplant seeds they have grown in the outside area. They enjoy identifying specialist gardening tools and using their technical names. Children recall the conditions to support healthy growth.
65. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. A good range of activities extends and develops early scientific concepts in science, mathematics and information and communication technology. The use of equipment such as hand lenses enhances the responses of children and raises their standards of detailed observation and quality of detail in painting.

## **Physical Development**

66. On entry to the nursery children show the normal range of physical development. By the time they leave reception the majority reach the expected learning goals or exceed them. Children have a rich range of opportunities in outdoor and indoor activity areas.
67. Children move with confidence and show awareness of the need to move carefully. They use the large indoor climbing equipment to develop confidence and skills in balancing, jumping and landing safely and finding a variety of different ways of travelling. In moving between pieces of equipment or travelling on equipment children show good awareness of others and respect their personal space. Children march to music and show good responses which match different tempo and rhythms.
68. They show good levels of fine motor skills in their handling of paintbrushes, a variety of writing implements, scissors and control of the computer mouse.
69. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Activities are carefully planned and organised and provide access to a good range of activities. Access to the large play area is more restricted for pupils in the reception class and opportunities to share this facility are not yet fully explored.

## **Creative Development**

70. Children make good progress in the use of role play, construction and painting areas and are on target to reach the Early Learning Goals. They sustain small world play effectively in pairs or individually and create contexts for their play which relate to their own experiences or are fictionally based. They select and cut out pictures and arrange these as a collage using the space available well. They make pictures and early writing symbols using various mark-making tools including pencil, crayon, felt pen and paint showing good levels of control and confidently read messages they have composed. Children use paints to successfully explore mixing of colours. This is extended in

reception to mix colours to closely match items of real fruit and paint models of the specimens made previously.

71. Children have re-created a domestic play area and use this frequently to act out meal times and wash days, using a variety of language. Some children have repeatedly returned to specific roles and sustain and develop this play. Pupils explore the use of percussion instruments to accompany music and choose a variety of ways to make different sounds.
72. The quality of teaching and learning in this aspect is good. Activities are well planned and often allow an element of choice although responses to children's own initiatives have been developed such as in the case of the domestic area. The whole ethos of encouraging children to express their feelings and views successfully encourages a more individual and creative response.

## ENGLISH

73. Overall, standards of attainment seen during the inspection are in line with expectations by the age of seven and above expectations by the age of nine. This is a similar finding to that of the previous inspection. Results in the 2001 national tests confirm the inspection findings at the age of seven. In these tests, all the seven-year-olds reached the expected Level 2 in writing, and around eight out of ten, in reading. Close to a quarter of the pupils reached the higher Level 3 in reading and writing. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls. These results are sufficiently high for the group of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress in relation to their prior learning.
74. Standards in speaking and listening are above expectations at the ages of seven and nine. Throughout the school pupils talk confidently about their work and listen well in and outside lessons. By the age of seven, they are beginning to express their ideas, state opinions and give reasons, for example, when they are describing their favourite author or book. By the age of nine, pupils are capable of reflecting on important issues, for instance, similarities and differences in history, issues about pollution in geography and respecting others whilst out on a school trip. They do this in a mature way and give their considered response thereafter. They listen carefully to the views of others, both pupil and adult, and often arrive at a personal view. Higher attainers are interesting and entertaining describers of the books they read and they bring a lot of enthusiasm to the task. Most of the pupils are developing good technical vocabularies in subjects, such as science, for example, the descriptive language related to water moving through a plant.
75. Standards in reading are in line with expectations at the age of seven and above expectations at the age of nine. The majority of seven-year-old pupils read accurately a range of simple texts and with growing confidence. For the majority these texts are too easy. Higher attaining pupils are becoming fluent, expressive readers with adequate comprehension skills. Most pupils recognise letters by name and sound and are beginning to blend them when 'building' unfamiliar words. They use pictures or clues in the text of the book to read and understand unfamiliar words. Most pupils retell stories and predict appropriate endings to unfamiliar text or books. By the age of nine, pupils are reading independently from a range of challenging fiction. Higher attaining pupils are developing their skimming and scanning skills, to quickly find information from books. Independent research skills are being developed through their weekly session in the library. All pupils are making good use of the library to extend their interest and enjoyment of books. Nine-year-olds are making good progress in their reading skills as they develop a growing technical vocabulary using dictionaries and thesauri with ease.



They enjoy reading and are able to use and identify the contents page, index and glossary in a range of text.

76. Standards in writing are at the expected level at the age of seven and above expectations at the age of nine. By the age of seven, most higher attainers write simple, imaginative stories and short factual accounts. These higher attainers link their ideas and are beginning to use descriptive phrases. Pupils are successfully developing the knowledge, understanding and skills required to write for different purposes: writing book reviews, lists, picture sequence stories and captions for advertisements. Common three-letter words are usually spelt correctly and attempts at longer words sound sensible. Early punctuation skills are developing. Attainment in handwriting and presentation is satisfactory. There are examples of drafting and re-drafting writing. Nine-year-olds' spellings are increasingly accurate and pupils make good use of dictionaries. Pupils successfully plan and redraft stories on the computer. Higher attainers have become increasingly proficient in developing and using their emerging literacy skills, for example, they keep the reader in mind as they write and provide sufficient detail to interest and inform. Basic skills are given importance, shown in the legible, joined and neat handwriting and the accurate punctuation. The school has earmarked writing for development in recent times and there have been improvements in the quality of handwriting and reading.
77. Literacy skills are developed well, mainly because the National Literacy Strategy has been implemented effectively and the school finds plenty of opportunities to practise and consolidate skills in other subjects. Often pupils produce their best work in subjects such as history because they are very interested in topics like World War Two and the Victorians. The impetus for this work often comes from the interesting visits that are undertaken. Important work is also done in science, particularly when they use a range of forms of writing to describe light and colour and in stories about people coming from another planet in their Earth and space work. Pupils in Year 4 write about their opinions concerning pollution and its effects on the local environment. A further development of literacy skills comes from the improved library area. The books are used well to increase knowledge and understanding of the topics they are following and the newly installed computerised indexing system is assisting pupils in their use of the library. Attitudes to books and reading are enhanced by the attractive area and the use of good displays that promote, for instance, the author of the week.
78. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They collaborate or work independently, when the occasion demands. Pupils enjoy their reading and most have a favourite author or book. Behaviour is generally very good. The improvements in spelling and handwriting have helped the pupils show a greater pride in their work.
79. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. However, this reflects the quality of the work in the Year 3 / 4 class. Good oracy and literacy skills are developed because the teacher plans carefully, brings enormous interest and expertise to the lessons and he ensures that the resources support effective learning. For example, small whiteboards were used in one lesson so that all pupils could indicate clearly what they understood as answers to the questions asked. The teacher knows his class very well and plans the work so that each individual learns from the experience. During the visit to Wallington Hall, he challenged all pupils to look and think and talk. He gave them opportunities to record either in writing or by drawing and did not hand out a plethora of worksheets. Computers are used well by pupils to draft their writing and they are encouraged to re-draft their work as appropriate. The teacher has a wide knowledge and understanding of the subject and he uses this particularly well when he is linking work to other subjects, for example, bringing out pupils' thoughts about being an evacuee in World

War II. Homework is used well in Years 3 / 4 to follow-up work started in the lesson and the pupils are quite enthusiastic about doing it. In the work sample for Years 1 and 2, the majority of work was done on rather limiting commercially produced worksheets. There were insufficient examples of extended writing. The teaching of reading has ensured that the Year 2 pupils have adequate basic skills but the books that they read to inspectors were too easy and lacked challenge. Each of these shortcomings need to be studied by the co-ordinator in the process of checking on teaching and standards.

80. Management of the subject is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and hardworking and has considerable subject expertise. Staff are supported well in the planning of literacy lessons. However, the co-ordinator has not been released to check on the quality of teaching and learning. Consequently, co-ordination and development of the subject are less effective than they should be. It means that the literacy co-ordinator does not have a clear overview of standards or the particular areas and reasons why standards in reading and writing have varied. The development plans, although relevant and useful, are not tightly prioritised in order to raise standards. Resources are sufficient, with many high quality reading materials. The subject makes an effective contribution to the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Special events, such as theatre group visits, enhance the curriculum well and help to accustom pupils to resources and experiences that pupils in other circumstances can access more readily. The newly developed library area is very inviting, and pupils are very positive about its worth. Teachers create a good and supportive environment for learning literacy skills, knowledge and understanding through the many labels, lists, instructions and reminders that are carefully displayed on walls.

## **MATHEMATICS**

81. Pupils' attainment by the age of nine is above the national expectation. Standards have improved since the time of the last inspection, when they were in line with expectations. The main reasons for this improvement are the good teaching and pupils who work hard and want to learn. By the age of seven, attainment is around the national expectation. This is a similar picture to that seen at the previous inspection. Pupils make a good start in the youngest classes but the teaching in Years 1 and 2 is not yet good enough to raise standards. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that teachers' expectations have been too low and that some pupils could do more work. In all classes, pupils with special educational needs are supported very well and they make at least satisfactory progress. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls.
82. By the age of seven, most pupils have a sound knowledge of the value of numbers up to 100. They count forward and back in 10s and 2s, recognise odd and even numbers and most can complete a sequence of numbers up to 50. All pupils can do simple addition and subtraction accurately; higher attaining pupils show that they understand tens and units when they break larger numbers into two parts before subtracting. Most can round to the nearest 10. Pupils just reach a satisfactory level of competence in their number work because they practise regularly, using a large number of worksheets. They are less confident when teachers ask them to think for themselves or use mathematics in real situations. For example, in one lesson on shopping, even the higher attainers struggled to choose the minimum number of coins to pay for things. Pupils measure length and weight with reasonable accuracy; higher attainers can make sensible estimates first, for example when they measure parts of the body. Most know the names of shapes up to six sides and can recognise these. Pupils tell the time accurately, using half-hours and know halves and quarters in fractions.

However, some pupils could do more. In many lessons teachers give all pupils the same work to do, so higher attaining pupils do not have a chance, for example, to explore digital time, harder fractions or simple decimals. This is the main reason for the low number of pupils who reach the higher than expected Level 3. This depresses the school's results when compared to similar schools.

83. By the age of nine, most pupils understand place value up to at least 1000 and know most of the multiplication facts up to 100. They know how these are related, for example, that multiplying is repeated addition and is the reverse of division. This helps pupils of all abilities when they do mental and written calculations using all four number operations. A strong feature of this work is the way that pupils look and think before they answer, considering what sort of calculation is needed. Teachers encourage this with challenging oral and mental work followed by tasks which cannot be answered by merely repeating a process. Pupils work with decimals to two places, most can put these in the right order and multiply or divide by 10. They are less confident with fractions. Very few pupils convert quickly from decimals to fractions, although most can say when two fractions are equivalent. They are beginning to make good progress on these because the school makes effective use of information and communication technology. All pupils practise regularly with a good mathematics program. This uses graphics to illustrate grouping, sharing and fraction work in a variety of clear and helpful ways which help pupils to understand. The program also works well by challenging pupils on shape, area and perimeter. This, together with the well-planned practical work in lessons, means that pupils have a good grasp of these ideas. All pupils explain reflective symmetry and measure accurately the angles of 45, 90 and 180 degrees. Pupils convert units of measure quickly; for example, most express 2.5 metres in several different ways. They make and interpret simple bar charts and a few pupils extract information from more complex charts such as railway timetables.
84. Teaching and learning in Years 3 and 4 are very good. The teacher shares his enthusiasm for the subject and involves all pupils in learning alongside him. For example, in one discussion the teacher said "I just can't make any sense of this, you will all have to help me." As a result, pupils went to work determined to find a solution. Good questions help to build understanding and confidence, they lead pupils to new ways of thinking without giving away the answers. Lessons move along at a good pace and no time is wasted; yet pupils have time to think before they explain. A particular strength of the teaching is the way that everyone is included. For example, in one lesson the teacher dealt with an excited chorus of answers yet managed to spot a timid but valuable contribution from one young pupil. This is one of the reasons why relationships are so good and pupils work as hard as they do. Another reason is that books are carefully marked, with praise where due. However, there are few opportunities for pupils to practise writing down how they solved a problem or to describe their thinking, though they do this well orally. The teacher rightly encourages pupils to increase their understanding of mathematical ideas through exploring, sharing ideas and practical experience. This is effective because pupils are skilfully led to new discoveries. For example, pupils were able to work out the heights of trees and walls in Wallington Hall from their work on triangles. However, the more able pupils occasionally need an extra challenge, for example, in a lesson on shape some pupils who already knew the difference between two- and three-dimensional shapes had to do the same task as everyone else. Teachers make satisfactory use of homework to consolidate learning.
85. Only one lesson was seen in Years 1 and 2, this was by a temporary teacher and was satisfactory. Pupils' previous work indicates that there have been weaknesses in the teaching. Teachers do not always plan work to meet the needs of different abilities

within the class. Too often, pupils of different ages and abilities are given the same work. This means that the highest attaining pupils are not being challenged sufficiently and do not make as much progress as they should. However, this was not the case in the lesson seen during the inspection. Another weakness is the marking and presentation of work. Most commercially prepared worksheets are marked, but often this is a tick with no comment to encourage pupils to improve. Some pupils reverse numbers and these are not corrected. Sheets are not dated and not kept in good order; this does not encourage pupils to take pride in their work or see how they are improving. The most recent work is of a higher standard but overall, teaching is not as strong as in the other classes and pupils do not make progress at the same rate.

86. The co-ordinator for mathematics is the headteacher who has an almost full teaching timetable. In his own class, the National Numeracy Strategy is securely in place, standards have improved and leadership is by example. However, the school has not kept a close enough eye on what is happening in other classes, particularly in Years 1 and 2. There has been some useful monitoring of lessons by governors but no one has managed to have a regular look at the quality of pupils' work or to check that they are learning at a fast enough rate. The other weakness in leadership is in the use of assessment. The school collects a vast amount of data from national or standardised tests and the maths lessons in the computer suite. Some of this is used to check pupils' progress and to see where changes need to be made in the curriculum. However, it is not always used effectively in planning work at the right level for all pupils.

## **SCIENCE**

87. Attainments of pupils at the age of seven are in line with national expectations. Satisfactory progress has been made, since the last inspection. Pupils' attainments in scientific enquiry and the number of pupils achieving higher than average attainment has generally improved, although the very small number of pupils in Year 2 limits the significance of comparison with previous year groups. Attainment by the age of nine is above the national expectation and the good standards since the last inspection have been maintained.
88. It was not possible to observe science lessons in Key Stage 1. Discussions with pupils and scrutiny of their available work show they continue to have particular strengths in their knowledge of life and living processes. They have a satisfactory knowledge of the basic conditions for animals to remain healthy. A project about the care and well being of pets shows good awareness of their responsibilities. Pupils use different sources of information for reference including computers, books and information leaflets. They understand the process from seed to plant. They sort materials using criteria such as rough and smooth and name a satisfactory range of common materials they use in school and home. Pupils' knowledge of physical processes is satisfactory. They understand basic safety issues concerning electricity and recall relevant facts about light sources.
89. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of their investigations and previous work is made difficult to assess because of the unavailability of recorded work or difficulty in finding relevant samples among poorly organised loose papers, often undated and incomplete.
90. By the age of nine pupils use a good range of appropriate scientific methods and equipment to test their ideas. Their attainments in scientific enquiry are above standards expected nationally. They learn effectively from a mix of teacher demonstration and conducting their own investigations, such as tracking the movement of water through plants. Pupils' responses to questions, in class or small group

discussions, successfully develop their use of reflection and reasoning to interpret and explain observations they make. They show a clear awareness of conditions for setting up fair tests, with good regard for safety, and make relevant comparisons of different effects of light, water and soil conditions on plant growth. Pupils successfully present the results of investigations, as a class or individually, in tabulated and graphical form to support their conclusions. In addition to recording results, pupils produce a good range of detailed, annotated and labelled diagrams.

91. Pupils' knowledge of life and living processes by the age of nine is above national expectations. They recall parts of the human body and know conditions for healthy growth. They recall relevant facts about light and shadows and reflection through plain mirrors. They explain in good detail from diagrams how mirrors work in periscope arrangements.
92. Pupils' attitudes to science are very positive in both key stages. Their contribution through speaking and listening is good and their eagerness to learn reflects the good range of experiences provided within the supportive ethos of the school.
93. No teaching of science was observed in Years 1 and 2. The class teacher, who was also the co-ordinator for science in Years 1 and 2, has left recently. Insufficient samples of pupils' work restricted discussions to assess the impact of teaching. Planning and standards of the work available and progress in scientific enquiry lead to a judgement that teaching was satisfactory overall. The effectiveness of co-ordination of the subject across Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory. Long-term planning, though linked to national guidance, provides insufficient support for teachers to build on previous work systematically or to plan focused learning objectives to guide future planning. Although records are kept of coverage of the national programmes of study there is insufficient judgement about pupils' standards of attainment to assess their levels of understanding and future needs. The previous inspection's recommendation to develop a portfolio of pupils' work to improve assessment in Years 1 and 2 has not been done.
94. In Years 3 and 4, the quality of teaching is good. The format for planning lessons clearly defines learning objectives. This leads to a clearer understanding of what is expected of pupils and helps pupils judge their own attainments and progress. High expectations, personal enthusiasm and good pace in lessons impact positively on pupils' attainments. Good demonstrations of sophisticated techniques, equipment and scientific terminology support and raise the levels of thoroughness in pupils' own investigations. Good levels of challenge for higher attaining pupils and amended expectations for different needs and abilities of pupils provide equal opportunity for all pupils. The teaching assistant provides effective support for all pupils.
95. The management of the subject is unsatisfactory. There is insufficient development in monitoring the quality of teaching to identify and develop successful practice. The planning and systems to judge pupils' attainment need further development to support a better match of work to pupils' needs and abilities. Pupils use their numeracy skills adequately when they conduct experiments and present their findings. Resources are adequate.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

96. Owing to timetable restrictions it was not possible to see any lessons during the inspection. However, there is a sufficient range of evidence from previous work and discussions with pupils and staff to make a judgement on standards.

97. By the age of nine, pupils' attainment is broadly in line with national expectations. Pupils achieve good standards in drawing and painting and this was seen at the time of the last inspection and remains a strength. This work is often inspired by visits out of school. Pupils show that they can observe, collect information and experiment confidently. There was less evidence available in the Year 1 and 2 class, partly because of the changes of teacher. However, from the examples seen and the good quality of the painting in the nursery and reception classes, it can be said that standards are broadly in line with national expectations by the age of seven.
98. Pupils in Year 4 create well the effects they need by choosing and mixing paint. For example, they make sensitive interpretations of sea, sky, clouds and landscapes, after fieldtrips. This is strong because the teacher has high expectations and gives pupils enough opportunities to develop their skills in a range of contexts. Pupils show restraint when they decide what information to include and show mature ideas on composition, for instance, when they add figures to their backgrounds in the paintings of Cragside House and Gardens. Teachers encourage the use of sketchbooks to collect ideas. This helps pupils to look closely and notice important elements. For example, pupils returned from visits to Wallington Hall or the River Tyne and use their notes well to make careful sketches. Pupils' drawing skills are generally good; many are beginning to show distance and tones in their sketches. Aside from painting and sketching, pupils have much less skill and experience in processes such as printmaking, fabric, collage and sculpture. Some of this work is introduced in the nursery and reception classes but is not developed sufficiently in later years.
99. Overall, teaching is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy their art lessons and are proud of the work in their files. They like having the chance to spend a long time on their best work. They talk about what they do, to each other and to adults and suggest how it might be improved. They know about the work of several artists, for example Turner and Monet, and say what they like about them. This good attitude comes from teachers who value the subject and challenge pupils to extend their skills.
100. The subject co-ordinator has been able to put in place a useful policy and framework which give clear guidance on all areas of the art curriculum. The school is aware that the next step is to look at the ways that skills and knowledge are developed across the whole school, for example, by choosing tasks for every class to try. The co-ordinator has made a start on this, although there has been no opportunity yet to monitor lessons or planning. The school is also aware that the breadth and balance of the curriculum needs looking at. Painting and sketching are strengths but these take up most of the allocated time. There is insufficient emphasis on three-dimensional or textile work. The school is beginning to make good use of information and communication technology, for example when working from digital photographs of the 'Angel of the North' or finding examples of artists' work. Overall, the subject makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

101. Only one lesson of design and technology was observed during the period of the inspection. Scrutiny of teachers' planning and exemplars of pupils' work led to the judgement that standards attained by pupils throughout the school meet national expectations. However, issues arising from the previous inspection have not been dealt with. For example, staff have not received the support and guidance on developing pupils' skills in the use of tools and materials as they move through the school and this has resulted in unsatisfactory progress in this subject.
102. By the age of seven, pupils use a restricted range of materials and tools to produce satisfactory artefacts. They mix and shape salt dough to model and discuss the changes in the material when dry. Pupils show initiative in using available materials to represent different forms of transport. By the age of nine, pupils make structures which have properties of rigidity and strength. They devise simple tests and make comparisons to improve their designs and techniques. They plan and use elementary paper technology to make designs for masks and produce cards for special occasions.
103. The continued lack of co-ordination of this subject has resulted in unsatisfactory development. While planning is linked to national guidance there is no clear structure for systematically developing techniques and the use of tools and materials. As a consequence progress in developing the opportunities for pupils to make suitable choices in material and techniques has been unsatisfactory. There is little evidence of the use of information and communication technology.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

104. It was only possible to see one lesson from each of these subjects. Consequently, it is not possible to make a secure judgement about teaching in these subjects. Evidence has been drawn from pupils' present and past work, from teachers' plans and from discussions with staff and pupils. On the basis of this evidence, it is judged that pupils' attainment in history and geography is in line with that expected for seven-year-olds. By the age of nine, attainment is in line with expectations in geography and above expectations in history. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards the targets set for them. These are similar judgements to the last inspection.
105. By the age of seven, pupils' awareness of the past is developing. They demonstrate factual knowledge of aspects of the past beyond living memory and they recognise similarities and differences between their own lives and the lives of people in the past. For example, they are able to compare and contrast the forms of earlier transport with those of today. They are also able to retain facts such as details from the life of Guy Fawkes. Their understanding of the value of handling and talking about artefacts is developing.
106. By the age of seven, pupils name and identify, on a map, the countries of Great Britain. They can describe the area around the school, construct simple maps and some use accurately the four main points of the compass. For example:
  - higher and average attainers know the main points of the compass and the highest attainers describe accurately and succinctly their journey to school and provide lots of detail;
  - lower attainers provide a satisfactory description of their journey to school and point out landmarks, such as the bridge and the river.

107. By the age of nine, pupils demonstrate factual knowledge of the history of Britain. For example, they are able to talk about and illustrate, with examples, the lives of people at different levels of society in Victorian times. They talk sensibly about social changes, such as the reduction in child labour and the impact of poverty on living and working conditions. Pupils are aware of some of the similarities and differences, for instance, the use today of workbooks and chalkboards in Victorian times. Pupils illustrate their knowledge of the Second World War, with reference to local history and empathising with the children evacuated out of the cities and into the countryside. Pupils' knowledge of historical facts is expanding, for example, in relation to important figures such as Churchill and Hitler.
108. By the age of nine, pupils describe geographical features and landmarks in a range of places, using appropriate vocabulary. For example:
- in Newbrough, they develop their earlier learning to include finding a further range of places on local maps;
  - in London, they read the underground map and identify the very famous places of interest, such as Buckingham Palace;
  - other map work includes links with religious education, to study Palestine.
- On a broader front, pupils draw conclusions about the good and bad aspects of life in a village. One of the main interests here relates to pollution and the effects that it has on the local area. Pupils are also clear about the effects of the foot and mouth epidemic and they understand aspects of human geography from this, such as the importance of sheep and cattle farming to the area.
109. Children's response to geography and history is generally good. The majority of pupils sustain concentration throughout lessons. They contribute and offer opinions, for example when looking at maps and finding landmarks. Their behaviour in lessons is generally good and they share resources.
110. In the satisfactory geography lesson, the planning was clear and the teacher gave the pupils ample opportunities to show their knowledge about the United Kingdom. This was good consolidation of learning for the pupils in Year 2 and new learning for the Year 1 pupils. There were adequate resources to hand and sufficient support was provided for those that needed it. Expectations were adequate in relation to the level of challenge in the tasks and this meant that pupils were motivated and explained reasonably well their learning. The teacher introduced little sayings that helped the pupils memorise and understand facts, such as the constituent countries of the United Kingdom and the points of the compass. The management of the pupils was insufficiently strong and so there was too much shouting out and this reduced the impact of the lesson, most particularly for the Year 1 pupils.
111. Management of the subjects is unsatisfactory. Insufficient attention is paid to checking the quality of teaching and learning and the standards achieved. However, the targets set in the co-ordinator's review are appropriate and point to a willingness to improve provision. There is insufficient evidence, in Years 1 and 2, of pupils' work being judged to guide and support the planning for future lessons. Where this is done in other parts of the school it leads to better quality teaching. The subjects make a satisfactory contribution to the development of pupils' personal development. For instance, a significant strength of the provision is the use of visits to give pupils first-hand experience and give impetus to the topic. Resources for the subjects are adequate and improving, most particularly with the developments in information and communication technology.



## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

112. There has been significant improvement since the last inspection. Throughout the school, standards are in line with national expectations, having been below at the time of the previous inspection.
113. By the ages of seven and nine pupils operate computers successfully and efficiently. They open commercially produced programs and make selections of specific activities from the presented menus. They use the mouse to move the screen cursor and show efficient levels of competence in the use of the keyboard for initiating actions from screen instructions or for typing in words. They use effectively the word-processing packages for a range of purposes and particularly in presenting work for display. They amend mistakes competently and save work at various stages and retrieve this when required. Pupils learn quickly how to find specific data from an encyclopaedia database. They use successfully the search facility to refine their area of interest and are highly motivated by the rapidity of response and the quality of graphics and sounds. They successfully use a range of software in support of numeracy and literacy and make increasing use of programs to present their information. This is particularly the case with simple data handling programs to present graphical information. The use of simulation software programs shows pupils' quick and efficient grasp of instructions and confidence. Roamers are available for developing skills in control although these were not in use at the time of the inspection. By the end of Year 4, pupils access programs through the local Intranet as well as from CD ROMS. They sustain concentration and effort throughout the sessions in the dedicated computer suite. They work independently or in pairs and use discussion well to work out problems and responses. They respond well to the use of integrated learning software in support of mathematics and maintain high levels of motivation during these timed sessions. There is an element of the program which traces progress and these show pupils making good gains in mathematical operations.
114. Pupils' attitudes are very positive and they clearly enjoy using this resource. The underlying values of the school in developing the confidence of pupils to work independently and sustain their efforts conscientiously contribute to the success of this development.
115. The improvements gained in developing the computer suite, increasing the number of machines and acquiring new programs have had a very positive impact on pupils' attainment. The regular use of the suite has accelerated the development of skills and competence of pupils in the operation of equipment. They are efficient and skilful enough to use software effectively to support their work and extend their learning. The recently appointed co-ordinator has also made a significant contribution to the improvements. Long-term plans provide clear links to national guidance and give teachers a clear structure for increasing development of pupils' knowledge and skills as they move through the school. Exemplars of planning provide very useful links to learning objectives that link closely to nationally expected standards. These provide useful support for teachers to plan work at appropriate levels of challenge that match individual pupils' levels of attainment and need. The co-ordinator has specific time to work with pupils in Year 2 and uses this effectively to develop pupils' skills and monitor their progress and implementation of the scheme. This is a useful beginning to developing the role of the co-ordinator but will require further extension to identify strengths and areas for development in teaching across the school.

## MUSIC

116. Throughout the school, attainment is above national expectations. All classes enjoy, and benefit from, lessons provided by a part-time specialist teacher because:
- pupils look forward to these lessons and work hard;
  - teaching is very good;
  - the music programme is broad and balanced.
- Boys and girls join in with equal enthusiasm and are making good progress in all areas of music. The quality of the singing is a strength but pupils are also achieving well in composing and playing. They listen critically to their own work and that of others and try to improve. The school arranges lessons so that pupils practise and perform in small groups as well as whole classes. This helps pupils of all abilities to show what they can do and make rapid progress.
117. By the age of seven pupils sing well. They hold a tune in a two-part song, project their voices without shouting and have a good sense of rhythm. This is mainly because the teacher provides a very good model: she sings and plays well, chooses good songs and teaches with infectious enthusiasm and humour. Pupils can play tuned and untuned percussion with control and sensitivity. They use simple notation, and compose and improve a repeated pattern. Pupils combine successfully two musical elements, for example, drone and voice.
118. By the age of nine, all pupils have a good musical vocabulary, for example they know and understand pitch, ostinato, texture and duration. They use these when creating and improving percussion parts to tunes. Some higher attaining pupils compose melody to match words or vice versa, for example, in one lesson the class was rehearsing a pupil's own song for public performance. Pupils use basic notation when they act as conductors with a partner. The quality of singing continues to improve; groups stay together with clear words and good timing. One of the reasons for this good progress is that songs are often linked to school events and pupils are keen to do well. For example, the teachers prepared some popular songs to fit drama work on World War Two. Pupils listen to recorded music, and to each other, with increased understanding of musical elements and mood. Thus, when asked for "a lovely long sustained note that sends shivers down my spine", the class did just that.
119. Overall, the teaching is very good. Strengths include:
- the very good pace of music lessons that ensures that no time is wasted, and in most lessons the teacher fits in three or four activities;
  - there is a good mix of enjoyment and hard work, so pupils stay motivated and learn;
  - the accurate use of day-to-day judgements of pupils' attainment in planning the lessons. The teacher keeps brief notes on how well classes or individuals have gained knowledge and understanding. She then prepares work for the next lesson to make sure that pupils succeed. This was seen when Year 4 struggled with some ideas on pitch and duration. The teacher gave pupils the opportunity to practise these on a computer program and then returned to the instruments with a well-chosen new task. As a result, all pupils now understand these ideas.
120. Leadership in the subject is good. Consequently, the provision continues to make progress. At the time of the last inspection, standards in music were also above expectations and the school has maintained this good picture. Since the last inspection, the school has improved the stock of instruments, revised the programme of work, introduced keyboard lessons and made a sound start to using information and communication technology to enhance the teaching. The pupils enjoy the computer lessons, particularly when they compose, change musical elements and hear the

results instantly. These lessons make a useful contribution to learning. However, the school is looking closely at the results of this work and rightly believes that computer work at this age should be secondary to other music making activities.

121. The school takes every opportunity to learn about music from other cultures. There is a good collection of recorded music and visitors, such as the African drummers, enrich the programme. Pupils play and sing at many community events and there are useful links with other schools. Volunteers, including governors, help regularly by playing the piano or sharing skills. The school provides a fine start to the pupils' musical education and this makes a good contribution to their personal development. The pupils respond to music making as they do to poetry, art and literature. They are open, appreciative and love challenges. The school is well placed to improve standards further.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

122. It was not possible to see the full range of work during the inspection, although planning shows that the programme is sufficiently broad and balanced. Consequently, an overall judgement on attainment, achievement and the progress of pupils with special educational needs is not possible. Lessons of dance and games were seen in Years 3 and 4. Attainment in these two aspects is above expectations. In the limited range of lessons observed there is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Standards in swimming are well above expectations, with all pupils swimming 25 metres by the time they leave the school.
123. By the age of nine, pupils' dance skills are at the expected level. They eagerly dance and clap in time to the music. They have a good recall for the dances and the music that they have learned previously and the majority show that they can perform skilfully and with a lightness of touch. Pupils are positively critical of their own and others' performance and they identify well the improvements in performance that are needed. Pupils' rugby skills are good. The majority of pupils:
- give and take a pass skilfully;
  - show co-ordination in their movements and control the ball well;
  - are aware of the quality of others' work and competently share their view with the class;
  - enjoy the activities and particularly respond to the mildly competitive parts of the lessons.
- The highest attainers pass, score tries and evade defenders very well.
124. Pupils respond very well to the good climate for learning that the staff promote. They enjoy the activities and appreciate the teacher's constant attempts to put the skills and performance in a context, for example, setting-up small game situations in the rugby lesson and explaining the social and community settings that encourage the growth of dance.
125. The quality of teaching in the Year 3 / 4 class is good. In the rugby lesson, the teacher uses questioning effectively, for instance, by drawing attention to the effects of exercise on the body; asking pupils to criticise the performance of pupils and asking pupils to describe their actions. As a result, pupils are clear about what they are doing and how to improve on their performance. They also make appropriate links between tiredness and dropping the ball when it is passed to them. The lessons move along at a brisk pace and the resources are sufficient to support all pupils' learning. Consequently, all pupils are consistently engaged in the activities, maintain their interest and improve specific skills and techniques. Lessons begin with an adequate warm-up and there is constant referral to pupils' skills and the next stage of development for the individual.

The effective teaching in the dance lessons is fostered by the added input of a volunteer, retired teacher.

126. Overall, management of the subject is satisfactory. The strengths are related to the promotion of the school's involvement with other local schools in competitive sport. The school often competes very well against schools that have a much greater number of pupils from which to choose. The curriculum follows national guidelines and is enriched by successful involvement in local activities, such as:

- the dancers in the annual Hexham Gathering;
- the involvement of expert coaches in rugby, soccer and cricket;
- using the facilities at the local high school and sports college.

The programme of study is reduced in gymnastics because of the rather narrow hall which affects the use of apparatus. The headteacher is attempting to overcome this difficulty and provide the community with an extra resource by seeking grants to build a sports hall. There is also a helpful initiative to introduce 'Top Sport' gymnastics to Year 1. The other aspects of the accommodation, such as the field and hard-play areas, are good. Pupils' achievements are judged as satisfactory and these have an appropriate effect on lesson planning.

127. The subject provides good support for the school's very effective provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is most noticeable in the development of a strong tradition of fair play and sportsmanship.