

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **CANNING STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Benwell, Newcastle-upon-Tyne

LEA area: Newcastle-upon-Tyne

Unique reference number: 108461

Headteacher: Dame M Grant

Reporting inspector: Mr L Garner  
25507

Dates of inspection: 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> February 2001

Inspection number: 209167

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Wellfield Road Benwell Newcastle-upon-Tyne
Postcode:	NE4 8PA
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr W Muir
Date of previous inspection:	7 <sup>th</sup> December 1998

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
25507	Mr L Garner	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Art and design English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils' taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9970	Mr J Acaster	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23887	Mr P Nettleship	Team inspector	Mathematics History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
30590	Mr P Tuttle	Team inspector	Science Equal opportunities Design and communication technology	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
32057	Mrs J Gold	Team inspector	English Geography Special educational needs	
21312	Ms F Dryden	Team inspector	Music Physical education Religious education Foundation Stage	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Canning Street Primary School is a large inner-city school located in the North Benwell area of Newcastle. It has 364 pupils on roll between the ages of three and eleven, 176 girls and 188 boys. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (73%) is well above the national average. The percentage of pupils speaking English as an additional language (30%) is high. Most of these children come from Bangladesh and Pakistan, but there has been a recent intake of pupils from Eastern Europe, mainly from the Czech Republic. Nearly half of the pupils in school have been identified as having special educational needs; this is well above the national average. The attainment of children as they enter school in the nursery or reception class is very low compared to that seen in most children of their age. The school experiences high pupil turnover as families move in and out of the area. During this school year 40 pupils have left the school and 33 have joined.

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

This is a good school with several outstanding features. The school provides a safe and caring environment for its pupils and the relationships between adults and children are outstanding. The hard-working, dedicated teachers provide a good quality of teaching and value the contributions which pupils make. Parents value what the school is doing for their children and support the school well. The school provides good value for money.

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

- It provides very good, focused leadership that has brought about very good recent improvement, and has put the school in a good position to improve further.
- It gives children a very good start to their education because of the very good standards of teaching and provision in the nursery and reception classes.
- There is very good provision for pupils' social and moral development.
- Pupils' attitudes to the school are generally very good and they behave well.
- It cares for pupils very well.
- It works closely with its parents and carers who appreciate what the school does for their children.
- The quality of teaching provided is good overall.

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

- Standards in English, mathematics and science by continuing to raise levels of attainment.
- Standards in information and communication technology.
- Pupils' achievements in some foundation subjects.

*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 very good progress since it was last inspected in December 1998. The serious weaknesses that were identified in the leadership and management of the school have been addressed by the appointment of a new headteacher. The leadership of the school by the headteacher, senior managers and governors is now very good. This improvement in the leadership of the school has meant that the key issues linked to this area in the last report have been addressed. The roles and responsibilities of the school's senior managers have been identified and targets for improvement have been set.

Pupils' attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science has improved; they are generally achieving better standards than they have done in the past.

The provision made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved from sound to very good. Pupils' attendance, although still below the national average, has improved. There has been a particularly good improvement in the unauthorised absence figures. The quality of teaching observed was better than that seen in the previous inspection.

Policies for subjects and the schemes of work to guide teaching have been put in place and the use of assessment is more effective in the way it helps the teachers' planning of lessons. The school's links with parents and carers are now judged to be very good compared with a satisfactory judgement two years ago. The very good provision identified for the youngest pupils in the nursery and reception class has been maintained.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	E*	E	E	C
Mathematics	E*	E	E	B
Science	E*	E	D	B

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low below average	E*

Results for pupils aged eleven in the national tests in 2000 show that standards in English and mathematics are still well below the national average, and standards in science are below the national average. However, when standards are compared with those in similar schools they meet the average in English and exceed them in mathematics and science. Pupils in Year 6 last year have made very good progress from the standards their group achieved at the end of Key Stage 1.

The results of the national tests for pupils aged seven in the 2000 tests show lower standards. In reading, writing and mathematics they were well below the standards achieved by similar schools. However, there are a number of unusual factors that affected this group of pupils. Firstly, the group was recognised as entering school with lower than average attainment for the school; secondly these younger pupils who had moved schools took longer to adapt to the changes they were faced with and thirdly they had a period where they were taught by temporary teachers.

Standards of work noted during inspection show that attainment in English and mathematics for the pupils in Year 6 and Year 2 are still well below those seen by most pupils of their age. However both year groups are not typical for the school. A large proportion of the Year 6 pupils have learning difficulties and there are a number of pupils in Year 2 who find it difficult to concentrate on the work they are doing. Other year groups, such as Year 1 and Year 4 are achieving standards that are much closer to the national expectations.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Most pupils show a real enthusiasm for school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The majority of the pupils behave well in classrooms, around the school and in the playground. The school is an orderly community.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships between pupils and staff and between pupils are very good and the emphasis the school places on developing pupils' awareness of citizenship makes a good contribution to their personal development.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory because it falls below the national average. However it is improving. Most parents now do not allow their children to stay away from school without a good reason.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good overall. Little unsatisfactory teaching was seen with 96 per cent being satisfactory or better, 70 per cent being good or better and over 25 per cent of lessons seen being judged to be very good or excellent. This good quality of teaching is making a major impact on the progress pupils make. The quality of the teaching provided in the nursery and reception classes is particularly effective. All the activities that children are asked to do have been planned well so that the skills they need to acquire are identified. Classrooms have colourful displays which encourage children's interest in their work. Teachers and support staff encourage the development of children's speaking and listening skills by asking questions that challenge them to explain what they are thinking and doing. Teachers throughout the school manage pupils' behaviour very well. Literacy and numeracy lessons are taught well throughout the school. Teaching is of equally high quality for all groups of pupils. Those who have special educational needs are catered for well in teachers' planning and by support staff in the classroom. Those pupils who have English as an additional language make good progress because of the classroom support and the additional extra group work they do with a specialist teacher.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements. However, in some of the foundation subjects, not all schemes are, as yet, fully implemented and the standard of work seen in some subjects does not reflect the objectives identified. The main strength of the evolving curriculum is the extent to which it is increasingly catering for the diversity of needs presented by the school's pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Many pupils in school experience difficulties in learning. Pupils' special learning needs are identified early and appropriate targets are set. The work they do in the classroom or in groups is pitched at the right level, and support staff and volunteer helpers provide valuable assistance.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The school caters well for pupils with a wide range of first languages. Good support in the classroom and extra support from specialist teachers mean that these children are able to get on as well as their classmates. A number of children from Eastern Europe have recently started school. They have been received well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision is very good overall and is a major factor in explaining why many pupils have such a good attitude to school. Pupils' spiritual development is good. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good and a strength of the school. It links well with the systems the school has in place to promote citizenship in its pupils. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school offers a very good level of care for its pupils. All staff provide good role models to pupils. They treat all with respect and value the contributions pupils make. Pupils' academic work is generally assessed well and this information used to plan future work.

The school has established a very good partnership with parents and carers. The information provided to parents is good. Parents have great confidence in the school and feel welcomed.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good overall. The excellent leadership qualities of the headteacher have transformed the way the school community works. She is well supported by the deputy head and they have formed a very effective team. The senior management team also makes a good contribution.
How well the governors fulfil their	The governors fulfil all their statutory duties. They now have a very good insight into the life of the school. Key governors, such as the



responsibilities	chair and vice-chair, bring enthusiasm and expertise to their roles which has a positive effect on the way the school is led.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school makes good use of a wide range of information gathered about pupils' personal and academic development. Test results are analysed well to identify areas for development and realistic targets set.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses its good resources very effectively. Spending is closely linked to educational priorities. Effective financial management systems are in place and the school applies the principles of best value in its work.

The school building provides a stimulating environment for its pupils.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• They find the headteacher and staff friendly and approachable.</li> <li>• They think the school is managed very well.</li> <li>• They think their children are taught well.</li> <li>• They feel welcome in school and feel their contributions are valued.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unusually, no views on improvement were expressed.</li> </ul>

The response of parents from the questionnaires and parents' meeting was very positive. The inspection team agree with the parents' positive views.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS**

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

1. In the 2000 national end of key stage tests for eleven-year-olds, the Year 6 results were well below the national average in English and mathematics and below the average for science. However, the picture is different when results are compared with similar schools. These are schools that have over 50 per cent of pupils who are eligible for free school meals. Here, standards in English match those seen, and standards in mathematics and science exceed those seen in similar schools. When standards are compared to the results this year group achieved at the end of Key Stage 1 they show good progress in mathematics and science and satisfactory progress in English. However, these comparisons are less valid because in the last two years many pupils from a school that closed, came to Canning Street. A better view of the way standards have changed is given when we compare the way they have improved compared with national averages over the past four years. In the years from 1996 to 1998 standards in the three subjects made little improvement. Since the present headteacher was appointed and pupils from her former school arrived two years ago, standards have improved dramatically and much more than the improvement in the national average.
2. The number of pupils achieving the national recognised level (Level 4) by the time they leave school has risen in two years from 24 per cent to 50 per cent in English; from 17 per cent to 79 per cent in science and from seven per cent to 62 per cent in mathematics! These are remarkable improvements and standards are now much closer to the national averages.
3. In the 2000 tests the seven-year-olds at the end of Key Stage 1 did less well. Their standards were generally very low when compared with schools nationally and well below the standards seen in similar schools. However there were unusual circumstances which affected these results. Firstly, the year group was identified as one in which the attainment on entry to school was lower than that seen in most year groups. Secondly, many of these young pupils experienced the change to a school building which was very different from their old one, and took longer to adjust to this than older children. Thirdly, half of the year group had periods when they were taught by temporary teachers.
4. The standards seen on inspection show that the attainment of the pupils in the present Year 2 and Year 6 are generally well below that seen by most pupils of their age. However this does not accurately reflect what is happening in the school as a whole. Both year groups have greater learning problems than others in school. A high proportion of the present Year 6 are on the school's register of special educational needs, and, although they try hard are unlikely to achieve the standards of last year's leavers. Year 2 pupils are very immature and there are a number who have been identified as having behaviour difficulties. This means that teachers have to spend much more time in lessons on pupil management and therefore less time on activities which enable pupils to learn new skills. The work seen in other year groups such as Year 1 and Year 4 shows that their attainment is much closer to the levels expected nationally for pupils of their age.

5. In English, pupils' speaking and listening skills are generally underdeveloped. Some pupils speak little English when they start school, and the latest group of pupils, of all ages, to join the school from Eastern Europe have had little formal education. This affects the standards pupils attain in many subjects of the curriculum. Pupils are developing their number skills well in mathematics. They spend less time on problem-solving activities and this is reflected in the standards they achieve. However, problem solving and investigations in science are done well and this explains why standards in this subject are near to the nationally expected levels.
6. Standards in information and communication technology are close to those expected by the end of Key Stage 1 and pupils have made good progress. The areas covered by pupils in Key Stage 2 in word processing and combining text and pictures are also of a satisfactory standard. However, some areas of the subject, such as the use of computers to control models are not yet fully covered and so pupils do not, as yet, achieve the nationally expected standards. The recently acquired computer suite, with enough computers to cater for full classes is already making a positive impact on pupils' learning. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 in religious education are below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. However, pupils in other year groups are working at the expected level.
7. In the other subjects of the National Curriculum, art and design, information and communication technology, geography, history, music and physical education pupils generally make satisfactory progress in their learning but seldom achieve the level expected for their age. There are two main reasons for this. Firstly, the school has understandably concentrated its efforts in the last two years on literacy, numeracy and science. Secondly, the good policy documents which have recently been written, have not yet been fully implemented.
8. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress in their learning. This is because their needs are quickly identified and teachers, support staff and volunteer helpers give them good support. The school treats all pupils according to their needs and therefore pupils with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, sometimes work together and sometimes separately. Effective support is provided whichever system is used.
9. Children enter school with levels of attainment that are very low compared with that which is typical for their age. They make very good progress in the nursery and reception classes.
10. Pupils of all levels of attainment throughout the school are making good, and often very good, progress. They are achieving well considering the levels they started from. Standards are rising and have been shown to be better than similar schools by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils' very good progress is now securely underpinned by good teaching, and the school's very good ethos which now sets a high priority on achievement, and secures very good attitudes to learning and good behaviour from pupils.

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

11. Pupils have very good attitudes to school. They show interest and enthusiasm and are keen to learn. The results of the parents' questionnaire were that parents felt their children liked school.

12. Pupils listen attentively to teachers during lessons and as pupils get older they show more confidence in asking questions. From the time they start school, pupils who speak English as an additional language converse well with each other in their own language. This secure understanding of how language works stands them in good stead when they begin to learn English words. They make very good progress. All pupils generally co-operate when working in pairs and in groups and play together well. Pupils value each other's contributions and ideas during discussions. High value is placed upon pupils and their work and this is celebrated in a whole-school assembly held weekly.
13. Behaviour of the pupils in classrooms, around the school and on the playground is generally good. This finding is supported by parents' views. Praise is given for good work and behaviour and pupils receive this with pride. Minor incidences of inappropriate behaviour from infants in a few lessons are attributed to these pupils having undeveloped social skills. Staff deal sensitively with these pupils, helping them build up skills. Pupils generally have a clear understanding of the impact of their actions on others. They have been brought to a better understanding as a result of the success of the school's planned focus on pupils' personal development and citizenship. No incidences of bullying were seen during the inspection, and pupils are confident that should incidents occur they would be dealt with immediately. There have been no exclusions from the school in the last academic year.
14. Personal relationships are good. Relationships between the pupils and teachers are very good. Adults in school present good role models and pupils show a genuine care and appreciation for each other. Teachers know their pupils well. Supervision by the lunch assistants is well organised and they have good relationships with pupils. Pupils are courteous and welcoming of visitors to the school. Pupils are encouraged to act responsibly and older pupils are given opportunities to serve the school community, for example by being a member of the school council. Opportunities are provided for pupils to express their views and feelings in lessons including personal, social and health education sessions and in 'circle time' when they sit and discuss topics which are important to them.
15. Pupils who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make up the majority of the pupil numbers. All groups respond positively to the very good support offered by the school.
16. When attending a conference organised by the local authority a pupil from the school council read out:

*'The behaviour and attitude of children has improved because we are all working together to make our school a nicer place in which to be happy. We have learned to respect each other, by showing good manners and understanding of how others feel'.*

This pupil's view of the school was in evidence during the inspection week.

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

17. The quality of teaching is good overall and this is a significant factor contributing to the good progress pupils are now making. The teaching of the children in the Foundation Stage in the nursery and reception classes is very effective and this helps children to make very good progress from a very low base. Teaching in the other two key stages is good.

18. Teaching quality has improved significantly since the last inspection. Then 30 per cent of teaching was judged to be good or better, the figure for good or better teaching in this inspection was 70 per cent. Teaching in the classes for the Foundation Stage, the nursery and reception classes, was of a very good quality with over 90 per cent very good or excellent. Nearly 60 per cent of the lessons seen in Key Stage 1 (Year 1 and Year 2) were good or better. In Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6) 70 per cent of lessons reached the same standard.
19. There are common strengths in teaching throughout the school. The most important is that teachers maintain very good relationships with their pupils whilst keeping good order in lessons. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. They succeed in interesting pupils in the work they are doing and motivating them to try hard and behave well. Most lessons are well planned and organised. Most teachers use their day-to-day assessment of what pupils have learned effectively when they plan future lessons. Homework is used well throughout the school with the home-school reading partnership being particularly effective. The weekly homework club held after school is attended by many pupils who appreciate the help given by teachers. One pupil comments: 'If I went straight home I'd want to play out! Here I can concentrate on my work'.
20. When teaching is very good teachers are very clear about what pupils are to learn from the purposeful activities they plan for them. They share these objectives with their pupils and make very good use of challenging questions to help pupils think deeply about their work. The lessons are well structured and move along at a good pace so that pupils' attention is held. Teaching of this quality was seen in an English lesson for the 'middle group' of the Year 6 pupils. The end of the lesson was very well used to consolidate what pupils had learned. They were reminded that the main clause in a sentence held the most important message, and that this was often connected to a clause which added to this. For example, 'I can see a sparrow hawk although there are no sparrows to be seen'. A design and technology lesson for pupils in Year 1 also used the end session well; pupils discuss what 'strong' and 'stable' structures are and the teacher explains what is going to happen next week and suggests new ways pupils might work together to be more effective.
21. In the small number of unsatisfactory lessons, and some unsatisfactory aspects of satisfactory lessons, some common factors may be identified. Firstly, the usually strong pupil management systems do not work as well as they normally do. Small groups of pupils are able to spoil the learning opportunities for the majority of the class. Secondly, work is occasionally not matched to pupil needs or teachers are not confident in the topics they are teaching.
22. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs, who make up just over half of the school population is good. Teachers know their pupils very well and plan work which will meet their needs. Support staff and the volunteer helpers, parents and members of the local community are used well. They have clear guidance about their role and what their groups are expected to learn. This careful planning is also seen in classes which have pupils from Eastern Europe and special provision is helping them to settle well into school life.

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

23. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school is good. It is particularly strong in the nursery. These findings represent a significant improvement on those of the previous report. The main areas of curriculum progress are:
- the provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education;
  - the development of the National Numeracy Strategy;
  - the revision and improvement of policy documents;
  - the establishment of schemes of work across the curriculum.
24. Revised policies and new schemes provide good levels of guidance for teachers in most subjects. They ensure that there is good progression of work, both within and across year groups. However, they are far from being fully implemented. Much of the work seen does not yet reflect the aims and intended objectives outlined in the policies, especially at Key Stage 2. For example, in history, much work is copied and all pupils tend to do the same things.
25. English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology are given due emphasis on the timetable. However, in other National Curriculum subjects the coverage is uneven. For example, children are not having sufficient opportunity to develop their practical skills in design and technology, especially at Key Stage 2. The school rightly plans to have an audit to restore a better balance amongst the subjects. Strategies for teaching literacy are good. The literacy hour is well established and teachers are confident in its delivery. Strategies for teaching numeracy are satisfactory. They have improved since the last inspection. However, pupils continue to have too few opportunities to undertake mathematical problem-solving investigations.
26. Pupils with special educational needs make consistently good progress due to the good curriculum provision. This is equally true of those children for whom English is an additional language. The curriculum is well delivered by teachers and classroom assistants alike. Individual education action plans, drawn up by the teachers, are clear and purposeful. However, the main strength of the rapidly evolving curriculum is the extent to which it is increasingly catering for the diversity of needs presented by the school's pupils.
27. Pupils of all ages and abilities benefit from a curriculum that is well focused on their personal, social and health education needs. This is now a strength of the school. Time for discussion 'circle time' is used very well in many classes. Pupils discuss issues such as caring for others or how to resolve conflicts. They develop a growing awareness of the effect that their actions have on others. Aspects of 'citizenship' enable them to have a genuine sense of belonging to a school and to a wider community. Issues which pupils have to face, such as drugs awareness, are openly presented, both to pupils and parents. Sex education is sensitively developed with a respect for the different religious codes represented at the school. The school nurse contributes well to the teaching. Visiting theatre groups are used to promote health issues. The school also places great emphasis on raising levels of pupil self-esteem. The success of this policy is seen in the pride that pupils have in their achievements. The extent to which such achievements are then celebrated by the class and the school is truly impressive.
28. The equality of access to the curriculum is satisfactory. Very good systems are in place that enable children to arrive at the school, sometimes with no English, and immediately begin their learning. All children are able to benefit from a full curriculum

from their arrival. However, the needs of more able pupils are not always sufficiently recognised and more challenging work could be set for these children.

29. Extra-curricular activities are good, considering constraints under which the school operates. Many pupils are bussed home at the end of the school day, so most activities have to take place over lunch-time. One very popular event is the weekly homework club. Over 100 children and many teachers were present at the session observed. Other clubs that operate at least part of each year include football, music, swimming, computers, tabletop football and trampolining. Money for some extra-curricular activities is provided by business partnership links.
30. The contribution of the community to the pupils' learning is very good. The headteacher works extremely hard to use a whole range of community projects and events as stimuli for the pupils. Some of these links bring with them outside expertise, such as artists and musicians. They also broaden the horizons of those pupils engaged in the various projects. For example, the recent Shrievalty Project allowed them opportunities to meet with, and perform to, the councillors of the City of Newcastle, as a climax to the work they had undertaken.

### **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development**

31. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is generally very good and a particular strength of the school is its provision for moral and social development. This provision has improved since the previous inspection.
32. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Pupils develop their spiritual awareness in assemblies. They have a chance for personal reflection as they listen to introductory music as they enter assemblies, then again as they pray at the end. In one assembly, pupils expressed their feelings of wonder as a teacher used a brightly coloured bag and multicoloured ribbons in engendering a feeling of happiness in the story she used. Younger pupils at the school have the opportunity to gain self-esteem when showing their work in lessons. In a Year 1 art and design and information and communication technology lesson, a pupil beams with pleasure and satisfaction when fixing the last straw in place when making a model from straws. Older pupils are given an opportunity to perform and experience Latin American music when using a variety of drums in music sessions. All pupils have opportunities to reflect on their own achievements and to share and appreciate the success of others in lessons and in assemblies. In one assembly the pupils celebrated the success of some teachers when staff received certificates for achievement in information and communication technology.
33. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good and is a strength of the school. The school cultivates a very good moral code that teaches right from wrong and also teaches very good citizenship. The behaviour of pupils in lessons, around the school and on the playground is generally good, showing the effectiveness of this moral code. There is provision for rewarding good behaviour and a clear strategy in place for dealing with non-conformance. Pupils learn about moral issues, such as being non-racist. The school has developed a real sense of acceptance and understanding of the different peoples in a multicultural society. Pupils are given opportunities to learn about caring for the environment when, for example, they study the effects of litter and how to overcome this problem.
34. Provision for pupils' social development is also very good and again a strength of the school. The school has a very good sense of community and older pupils are given

opportunities to take on monitoring duties, helping younger children to settle in school. Pupils generally work well together and there is good evidence of collaborative learning in lessons. Some of the younger pupils at the school are still developing their social skills but they are provided with very good guidance and help from their teachers and supporting staff. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop an understanding of their own roles as part of the school community. Pupils from the school council have represented the school at a Newcastle conference and spoke well on the school's behalf.

35. Cultural development is well promoted overall. Pupils show a good awareness of their local culture in their study of the work of Richard Grainger, 'the master builder of Newcastle'. Their visits to Grainger Town and the centre of Newcastle help to extend their cultural awareness. The older pupils make a study of their immediate locality of Benwell. They see from the photographic evidence provided how the area has changed. Major world faiths are covered as part of the religious education curriculum and make a contribution to pupils' awareness of other cultures. Many displays in school emphasise the importance of the individual whatever their religion or colour. The close contacts with Newcastle United Football Club, and the visits pupils make to meet the players, give them good opportunities to have role models from a range of ethnic backgrounds.

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

36. The school provides a very good standard of care and welfare for all its pupils, regardless of their ethnic background or standards they have achieved. They have improved significantly in all areas since the previous inspection. School work is now assessed well, and this is used very well to adjust the ongoing planning of what the children should be taught. Pupils are very well guided and supported as to their educational and personal development. The school provides a safe, clean and attractive base in which children may grow in respect and confidence to develop an understanding of others and of the world around them.
37. Under the leadership of the headteacher, who is very aware of her children as individuals, teachers and support staff know their pupils very well. The school is keen to know as much as possible about the background of all its learners. This is helpful in understanding and promoting their development. It is a strong feature of the school. Any special difficulties are addressed with sensitivity, and if parents are in need of advice or guidance, every effort is made to draw in appropriate expertise. The school nurse often plays a key role in these matters. The school provides a valuable role in spreading awareness of what assistance is available from the authorities. It also seeks to promote among its pupils positive relationships with the uniformed authorities, such as the police force and fire service. It introduces its pupils well to civic life.
38. All staff provide very good role models. They are positive and consistent in their attitudes. They treat all children and adults with respect and value what they say. They are encouraging, and praise frequently. They show understanding and humour. They co-operate well together. In this way, pupils are led very well, by example, into an appreciation of what makes for an orderly and happy environment.
39. Pupils are very well supervised from their earliest times within school. Teachers ensure that they move through the school safely, and midday assistants are very careful in watching over their activities during lunch-time. Pupils tend to form good habits, and know that loose behaviour will be quickly picked up. When making



escorted visits from school, pupils naturally conform to the good patterns developed within it.

40. The school has very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. School rules are few and simple and easily understood. The sanctions system based on yellow and red cards has similar strengths, and is very effective. Pupils also appreciate the rewards available, and vie with each other to receive them. Names of those especially noticed for good behaviour are displayed on the 'Wall of Fame'. Children enjoy the weekly assembly at which these and other achievements are celebrated. 'Circle time' to further develop pupils' understanding as to why people behave as they do, is put to good use in some classes but is not yet a consistent feature of provision in all classes.
41. Unsatisfactory behaviour is recorded and monitored very thoroughly. The headteacher is often engaged in addressing behavioural problems, which she does very effectively. Pupil files contain many notes regarding concerns over behavioural and other matters referred to the headteacher. These are always very fully considered. Parents report that bullying is dealt with promptly. Pupils report that it continues to occur, however. They know to report it to a teacher or supervisor.
42. The school now has very good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance. Registration is swift and effective. The information is used daily by the school secretary, and she monitors absence and lateness carefully. Prompt contact is made where there may be doubts about absence. The education welfare officer makes home visits to follow up pupils who are absent more than others. If necessary she may call for the help of colleagues who can assist in translating. The headteacher monitors the overall attendance situation monthly.
43. Child protection arrangements are very good. The headteacher is very experienced and has served on the local main child protection committee. She is assisted in her responsibilities within school by the deputy headteacher, and individual teachers are used to supply information for case conferences. There is much good awareness of child protection within school, and all support staff are made aware of the procedures.
44. The school provides very well for the health and safety of its pupils. Their awareness of health and safety matters is appropriately promoted within the curriculum, principally through science. Pupils' illnesses and accidents are very well attended to by the trained first aid staff. The chair of governors is professionally qualified in health and safety and makes a good contribution to the effectiveness of this area of school life.
45. Assessment procedures operating in the school are good. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection. A very thorough assessment performance report details how improvements have been made as a result of accurate assessment. For example, gains in mathematics at Key Stage 1 and science in Key Stage 2 can be directly linked to accurate analysis of test results. Annual testing procedures are now fully in place. On entry to the school, baseline measurements are established in English and mathematics. These tests highlight any child who may need special educational needs provision. Annual assessments are then undertaken in reading and mathematics via a battery of standardised tests. These allow comparisons to be made with children nationally. In addition to these annual tests, teachers have recently produced a very good list of half-termly checks across all subjects. It is based upon the new curriculum guidelines that the school has adopted (with some adaptations) as its schemes of work. These tests and

tasks, taken at the end of each unit, will enable teachers to gauge the success of the teaching and learning. Regular assessment is now very well established, particularly in English and mathematics. Teachers have very good skills at setting questions, at the beginning and end of lessons, to find out what has been learned and what needs further explanation or practice. Many examples are seen of modifications being made to planning, arising from experiences during the lesson.

46. A weaker area of assessment is the monitoring of pupils' work. Neither the senior management team, nor the curriculum co-ordinators, gain an overview of what the children are actually doing in their books. As a consequence, important weaknesses are not being identified:
- aims and objectives, outlined in many of the good quality policy documents, are not being followed (for example in mathematics, religious education and history);
  - appropriate work is not being set for pupils capable of reaching above average standards (impacting on overall standards at the end of both key stages);
  - important areas are being missed (investigational work and practical activities).
47. Some teachers are not sufficiently familiar with National Curriculum levels. Consequently, they are not certain of the work needed to raise standards above the average level. There are portfolios of children's work for English, mathematics and science. However they are of very limited value. They do not contain enough samples of work to allow comparisons to be made in assessing, with accuracy, the standards which individual pupils are reaching in the different areas of study.
48. Two new initiatives have recently been introduced. Firstly, pupils are being encouraged to assess themselves and to set their own targets. This helps them to be more aware of what needs to be improved and enables them to measure their own rate of progress. Secondly, the school is attempting to identify all pupils who show an aptitude that is above average in any area, both in and out of school.
49. Since the previous inspection, the school has become much more skilled at using assessment information to raise standards. The analysis of test results is now very good. The headteacher and staff scrutinise the evidence in detail. The assessment co-ordinator processes results of all annual tests to produce graphs. These show the rates of progress made by a range of different groups within the school. This links well with the good work the school is doing to monitor the work of the large number of pupils with special educational needs. Good analysis of the achievement of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds has confirmed the good progress made by pupils who speak English as an additional language; they have made better progress than many pupils from a white ethnic background. This information enables teaching to be better targeted, meeting needs identified by precise analysis. It also helps the school to make better predictions of the levels which pupils are likely to reach by the end of each key stage. At present the school forecasts which pupils are expected to reach average and better standards. It targets those who, with extra coaching, could reach the average level. However, it does not always identify the pupils expected to reach the above average standard, or those who, with extra coaching, could also attain this level.

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

50. Parental partnership, previously judged to be satisfactory, has improved and is now good. The school works positively at all levels to secure very effective links with

parents. As a result, parents are now, in various ways, making a good impact on the progress made by their children.

51. Parents and carers have very favourable opinions of the school. They report that their children like their school life very much. Parents and carers feel very welcome in school. They find the headteacher and staff very friendly and approachable. They think the school is led and managed very well. Teaching is of high quality, and consequently they see their children working hard, making good progress and becoming more mature. Parents are kept well informed, and they recognise that the school wishes to work closely with them. Very few disagree on these matters. This very positive assessment is shared by the inspection team.
52. The school's prospectus has been thoroughly revised. It is now very clear and comprehensive. The annual report of the governing body is similarly well produced.
53. In addition to this core material the school offers much more for the guidance of parents and carers:
  - nursery literature helpfully explains its activities and routines;
  - parent-friendly touches include a daily statement of the lunch-time menu;
  - many notices and signs are displayed in community languages;
  - much general welfare literature is visible to help parents;
  - parental notice boards in the main school are well maintained, including, in one case, an overview of what children are to learn during the term ahead;
  - all parents are supplied termly with an outline of the proposed homework.
54. The school often sends letters to parents regarding visits and other administrative matters. It frequently thanks them for their support and participation. The design of the school, with classroom doors opening onto the playground, enables parents and teachers routinely to speak easily to one another. Much use is made of this. For any other matter the headteacher tries to keep herself readily available without appointment. Parents are very appreciative of her lively personal care and attention. It is a cornerstone of their regard for the school. A member of the school's support staff is able to give good support to some parents of ethnic minority pupils who need written letters translated orally.
55. Information regarding children's progress in school is provided by two parents' meetings annually, in the Autumn and Summer terms. The annual written report follows the Summer term meeting. Reports are of satisfactory standard, describing what each child has achieved in each subject during the year and indicating target areas for improvement. Coverage is often rather brief, however, and the reporting form is shortly to be revised. Parents also gain day-to-day knowledge of how their children are doing through the school's regular homework and reading expectations. The school's weekly homework club is very well attended and, by visiting it, parents are able to see the pleasure their children take in communal after-school study. Parents are appropriately consulted regarding the preparation and review of individual education plans for children on the school's register of special educational needs.
56. Parents and carers are invited into assemblies, and to other events outside school, in which their children are taking part. They are encouraged to feel an integral part of what the school is aiming to achieve for their children. Their participation is sought as much as possible.

57. The positive attitudes shown throughout the school towards supporting parents and their children are resulting in a much-increased level of co-operation and interest.
- Greatly improved attendance is clear evidence of this. Almost all children arrive in time for registration. Whole-school attendance has risen by three per cent since the previous inspection to become regularly well above 90 per cent. Unauthorised absence has been reduced from four per cent three years ago to 0.5 per cent now.
  - Similarly, most parents understand the school's authoritative but supportive behaviour system and are helpful in giving it their backing. The level of parental satisfaction with behaviour is higher than formerly.
  - Most parents are quietly supportive of learning at home. They help to select books with their children in the nursery. They ensure, throughout the school, that reading books are returned. Many take their children to a local library.
  - Much interest is now shown in accompanying school visits.
  - A small number of parents help regularly in school. Some have gone on to train as classroom assistants. They provide much-valued support. A few parents have contributed their experiences to lessons. One parent regularly runs sports sessions. Many support their children's charitable activities.
  - The school has a full complement of parent-governors, and recently had to hold an election from among applicants, for the first time in its history.
58. Parents and carers are generally very appreciative of what the school offers to them and their children, and are increasingly confident in giving it their full trust and backing. This confidence in the school contributes to the view that future progress in standards is likely.

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

59. The headteacher provides very good leadership for the school. She has already led the school through two years of improvement and has a clear vision of educational direction for the future. She has set a clear agenda to raise standards and all staff support her in this. She sets a very good example in her high level of concern for the pupils and has provided a caring atmosphere for them. This is one of the main reasons why children enjoy coming to school and usually do their best in lessons. The regard in which she is held by parents can, perhaps, be typified by the fact that when her former school was closed, virtually all parents brought their children to Canning Street Primary School. She has created a strong, cohesive team of dedicated teachers and support staff who provide good teaching. There is a strong sense of common purpose and a shared pride in the improvements which have been achieved.
60. Parents recognise the major contribution the headteacher has made and appreciate the fact that they are welcomed into school if they have problems.
61. The headteacher works in a close and effective partnership with her deputy. Their different skills complement each other well. There is a large senior management team in place, and this recently established group is providing a good service by discussing policy documents and dealing with day-to-day problems as they arise.

They are also becoming involved in monitoring the quality of teaching of their colleagues.

62. The well organised and caring governing body makes a very good contribution to the way the school is led. They have a good understanding of the standards now being achieved and appreciate the recent school improvements. They are involved in producing important school documents such as the school development plan and the school budget. They work closely with the headteacher and other school staff and key governors, such as the chair and vice-chair who are frequent visitors to school. The governing body fulfils its responsibility for oversight of the school well and meets all its statutory responsibilities.
63. The work of the school is monitored well. The headteacher has established a good system for herself and other senior staff to observe teachers at work on a regular basis. This means that they have a good awareness of the standards achieved and the quality of teaching. This monitoring has concentrated up until now, on literacy and numeracy, in line with national priorities. The school recognises that monitoring standards in some of the foundation subjects, such as history or geography, needs to be developed further, in particular by looking at the work pupils are doing.

### **Staffing**

64. There is a sound match between the number, experience and qualifications of teachers and the needs of the Foundation Stage and the Primary National Curriculum. Previous training has ensured that all teachers are competent to teach literacy and numeracy, in line with the National Strategy requirements. Two teachers and designated teaching assistants give good support to groups of pupils across the full range of abilities, including pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Staff have a clear understanding of their roles and the roles of other colleagues in the teaching and support of pupils.
65. The school has a clear policy, adopted from the local education authority, for the induction of new teachers and newly qualified teachers. The programme for the newly qualified teachers includes the appointment of a teacher mentor, weekly planned time out of classroom, in-school support, and the monitoring of teaching and progress made.

### **Accommodation**

66. Accommodation is very good. The design of the school promotes easy communication with parents. It is light and modern, with architectural features which uplift the spirit, including a secret garden suntrap. Classrooms are generally adequate in size. They are paired in year groups, which assists teacher co-operation and the easy assembling of ability sets. Each year group base contains an entrance bay in which individual or small group work may take place. Noise from nearby classrooms can occasionally be a problem.
67. The school has an attractive central library, used principally by groups withdrawn from classes. Many other teaching rooms are available, including a good-sized hall and a similar, separate gym. The pleasant nursery contains all sorts of areas for children to explore. The outside hard play area and school field are large, but lack of effective fencing for the latter is a considerable drawback.

68. The accommodation is considerably enhanced by a consistently very high quality of display throughout the school, and the standard of cleanliness with which the premises and equipment are kept. This adds much to the sense of purpose and quality which the school environment exudes.

### **Resources**

69. Overall the school provides a good range of high quality resources to effectively support teaching and learning in most subjects. Following the recent amalgamation the school has received many resources from the closing school. A new storage area for resources is currently being built. Resources for music and physical education are particularly good, both in terms of range and amounts. The school has a good range of reading books and effectively supplements its stock of library books by borrowing from the local library service. This good provision enriches pupils' learning and has a positive effect on the progress they make.
70. There is a good range of new computers. Currently some areas of information and communication technology curriculum are not being taught due to the lack of some programs to use with the computers. There is a lack of wheeled toys, which are suitable for use by more than one child at the Foundation Stage. This inhibits opportunities for pupils to learn to co-operate and share outdoors. The senior manager is aware of this need and plans are in hand to buy these toys in the near future.
71. Resources are well organised for easy access for pupils in all classrooms.

### **Efficiency**

72. The school makes very good use of its strategic resources. It has established very clear educational priorities. This has improved since the last inspection. Through the school development plan resources are very carefully planned and targeted to support these aims. Management of finances and staff is well focused, with good use made of the advice of the local education authority finance officers. Decisions concerning the purchase of services are thought through carefully. Specific grants are used appropriately, with good educational benefits. The principles of best value are followed. Governors and school managers compare their options carefully before making decisions.
73. Day-to-day financial administration is effective. The recent auditor's report considered the standard to be satisfactory, and the points raised have all been addressed. The administration of the school fund is computerised and is properly audited. The school's main finances are checked monthly by a specialist from the local education authority who prepares a monitoring report, with comments for consideration by the headteacher and finance committee of the governing body. The school actively seeks to compare itself with others, and constantly wishes to be responsive to the views of parents. The governing body is involved in budget planning from an early stage. It receives good information which enables it to fulfil its responsibilities to monitor spending.

### **Equal Opportunities**

74. Pupils of all abilities including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, have access to the Primary National Curriculum and religious education. However, higher attaining pupils could be provided with more opportunities

within the curriculum, to extend their thinking and learning in order to reach their full potential.

### **Special Needs**

75. The leadership and management of special educational needs are good. There are three co-ordinators, each with clearly defined roles. One co-ordinator deals with referrals, one with policy guidelines and procedures and one with the organisation and deployment of additional support staff and co-ordination of their work. Good relationships exist between all special needs co-ordinators and the headteacher. Documentation is comprehensive and all members of the special needs team had input in the policy. The policy for able and gifted pupils is only now at the implementation stage, but recommendations for actions appear sound.
76. The school has made very good progress in the two years since the last inspection. The serious weaknesses in the school's leadership and management that were identified have been fully addressed. The appointment of the present headteacher and her successful efforts to involve all staff, governors and parents in school improvement has meant that there is now a clear focus in the work of the school.

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

To address the areas for development the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- Continue to improve standards in English, mathematics and science by:
  - in English, develop further the way speaking and listening skills are taught in all lessons, particularly in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 classes;
  - in mathematics, teach more investigation and problem solving work;
  - in science, continue to raise teachers' subject knowledge and confidence;
  - in all three subjects refine teachers' skills in identifying the National Curriculum levels that pupils are working at.

(paragraphs 46, 47, 95-108, 109-117, 118-124)
  
- Improve standards in information and communication technology by ensuring that all the Programmes of Study needed in Key Stage 2 are covered.

(paragraphs 148, 154)
  
- Improve standards in some non-core subjects by fully implementing the good quality policies and schemes of work which are already in place.

(paragraph 24)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	88
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	65

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	25	43	25	4	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	15	342
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	230

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	159

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	110

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	194
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	75

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.9
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.0
National comparative data	0.5

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



### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	21	22

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	16
	Girls	13	13	17
	Total	21	21	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	49 (75)	49 (75)	77 (84)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	12	14
	Girls	13	15	13
	Total	21	27	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	49 (75)	63 (86)	63 (89)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	14	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	9	10
	Girls	15	17	23
	Total	21	26	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	50 (47)	62 (33)	79 (61)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	8	8
	Girls	12	15	18
	Total	18	23	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	43 (25)	55 (31)	62 (31)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

## Exclusions in the last school year

### Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	0
Indian	3
Pakistani	22
Bangladeshi	47
Chinese	0
White	233
Any other minority ethnic group	6

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

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

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

### Teachers and classes

#### Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	18
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	26

#### Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	76

#### Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32

Number of pupils per FTE adult	8
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	565,396
Total expenditure	594,964
Expenditure per pupil	2,052
Balance brought forward from previous year	52,467
Balance carried forward to next year	22,899

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	364
Number of questionnaires returned	112

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	24	1	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	61	38	0	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	39	2	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	52	37	6	0	5
The teaching is good.	66	34	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	55	43	1	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	26	0	0	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	36	0	1	3
The school works closely with parents.	56	37	0	1	6
The school is well led and managed.	70	29	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	66	31	2	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	46	38	4	1	12

## **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**

77. Children enter the nursery at the age of three and most attend part-time. They spend a year in the nursery and then most move to the reception classes where they attend full-time. The curriculum for children in this Foundation Stage covers these classes and relates to the goals recommended for this age group.
78. When they enter the nursery many children have standards that are very low in comparison to those normally seen in children of this age. Many children have underdeveloped personal skills and lack confidence. Half of them do not speak English at home and these children come to nursery understanding very few words. Most children take some time at the beginning of the school year to develop the confidence to try out the activities that are provided and to look after their own personal needs.
79. By the end of the reception year most children meet the goals for early learning for personal, social and emotional development. This is very good progress and is a strength of the provision that the school makes for children. Children make very good progress in their speaking and listening skills and good progress in learning to read and write; however the majority do not meet the expected standards. This is because so many of them start from such a low base.
80. Personal and social development has a very high priority in both reception classes and is correctly recognised as underpinning all other areas of learning.
81. In the nursery many children take time to settle into routines and complete simple tasks. Children who speak and understand little English watch quietly as children bath dolls; they join in after some time, learning by watching and copying others. Children's self-esteem grows steadily for the many with limited communication skills. All children develop very good relationships with adults. As their independence grows, they collect their own aprons, put on their own coats and attend to their own personal needs. Children begin to make simple choices without support about where they will work and whether they will take their work home or keep it in school. A minority of more able children persist with their tasks when working even when there is little initial success.
82. Very good progress in the development of personal, social and emotional skills is maintained throughout the reception year. When getting ready for a physical education lesson children undress quickly and efficiently, putting their clothes in neat piles and tucking socks into shoes. Children follow rules well in discussion-time sessions when they must take turns to speak. They listen patiently to each other's sounds and join in at the correct time when playing musical instruments.
83. In the nursery class many children listen carefully to adults and respond correctly to simple routine instructions. They listen well at story times. Most children are learning to join in with repeated phrases in songs and rhymes when the teacher leads them. Some more able children can relate their experiences at home with pretending to feed a baby in nursery. However, many are at a very early stage in learning how to take on the character of another person, for example a nurse, and need considerable support from an adult to do this. In the reception class children have learned to play in small groups in the home corner and decide who will play a particular role. Children in this

class develop a story in which there are disobedient children and a very dominant mother. Use of language has progressed well from the use of single words in nursery to the use of phrases and simple sentences.

84. In literacy lessons in the reception class children listen attentively and look closely at the big book to pick out question marks. A small number of higher achieving children associate sounds with letters and read a range of commonly used words. Children with average attainment know where to start reading and distinguish confidently between words and pictures but do not apply their knowledge of some initial letter sounds to reading. They make simple predictions about what might happen next in a story and talk about pictures in very simple terms.
85. Most children learn to write their name in the reception class and make a reasonable copy of words. Some are beginning to use their knowledge of initial letters to write independently. Higher achieving children use their knowledge of letter sounds to write simple words.
86. Many children arrive at nursery having had very little experience of handling small objects. Children make very good progress in using a variety of tools such as scissors. They develop skills such as pouring and twisting and many use the correct grip when writing with a pencil. These skills take considerable time for children to develop and many children do not meet the standards expected in handwriting.
87. Children in the Foundation Stage make very good progress in developing their understanding of mathematics from a very low starting point. The majority achieve standards just below the expected level.
88. In mathematics in the nursery children begin to name common shapes and count to five when supported by the teacher. Some understand terms such as full and empty when working practically, but many do not use mathematical terms other than big or little due to limited spoken language skills. However they make good progress. In the reception class higher-achieving children order numbers to ten and count accurately to 30. They recognise five shapes and can explain in simple terms the difference between a square and a rectangle. Average children use their fingers to demonstrate numbers to ten and recognise some numerals. Lower-achieving children join in with number rhymes and can put the first few numbers in the correct order.
89. Children make very good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children in the nursery class can name some colours; they know that the water in the water tank is green but some lack the vocabulary to name the jug or watering cans. Some children successfully link a display of snowy pictures to having to wear warm clothes and boots when walking to school. Children use the computer, with adult support, and begin to control the 'mouse'. More able children correctly position shapes to copy a pattern. In the 'hospital corner' children explore a doctor's beeper and learn that it is a means of communication. In the reception class children make predictions about how butter changes when it is spread on hot toast. As they observe an adult making play dough they recognise that the mixture thickens and changes colour when heat is applied.
90. By the end of the Foundation Stage the majority of children move well in their physical education lessons and when arranging furniture in the playhouse. Children in the nursery climb up steps and walk across planks confidently. They pedal and steer tricycles confidently avoiding obstacles, and some experiment by coming down a

slope backwards! Reception children run backwards and manage to avoid others. They jump into a hoop and most demonstrate good balance when they hop.

91. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good. Some teaching in the nursery is outstanding. This excellence results from a very clear understanding of children's learning needs and high expectations of what they can achieve. Through imaginative provision of resources and use of well thought out teaching strategies areas of underdevelopment are addressed and children make rapid progress. Children make excellent progress in developing their independence because they are frequently asked to make choices. There are high expectations that children, even with a limited understanding of English, can become independent, and a variety of simple pictures in the toilet area demonstrate routines associated with meeting personal skills. Assessment is very accurately used and informs the teaching so that it is very clear what skills individual children need to practise. Every opportunity, for instance, to develop children's hand and eye co-ordination is used. Small funnels and bottles are provided for children to use in the sand and water. The special star stamp for good work was kept in a container that means the children have to use controlled movements to remove it and put it away. All the resources provided in the bright and lively nursery are of good quality. They are carefully displayed and well organised and the teacher and classroom assistant are very well aware of how this provision supports children's learning.
92. Sensitive and supportive relationships are maintained between children and adults in classes. These relationships are based on valuing individual children's contributions and giving praise and encouragement for real effort. The excellent role models that adults present have a very positive effect on the way children interact and develop their self-confidence. During 'circle time' in the reception class individual children look at themselves in a card containing a mirror. They have a special message which they are invited to take home as a memory of themselves as a very special and unique individual.
93. In the reception classes the teaching of literacy and numeracy is lively and imaginative. Consequently children listen attentively and practice skills such as letter and sound discrimination with enthusiasm. Teachers use a range of very effective strategies to capture children's interest and make reviewing what has been learned into an interesting and enjoyable experience. There is a good emphasis on developing reading and speaking and listening skills and developing handwriting in the reception class.
94. The Foundation Stage is very well led and managed. The senior manager has high expectations of what can be achieved and a clear insight into how improvements to teaching and learning are made. Members of this team have very good knowledge and understanding of the curriculum for young children. Excellent planning for learning ensures progression and continuity and aids the transition from nursery to reception for the children.

## **ENGLISH**

95. Standards have improved significantly since the last inspection with the percentage achieving the national average by the time they leave school rising from 24 per cent in 1998 to 50 per cent in 2000. A more modest increase of five per cent is predicted for the present Year 6. The percentage of special educational needs pupils within this year group is higher than normal within the school. Considering the very low attainment on entry to the school, pupils' achievements are at least satisfactory and

often good, particularly in reading. There is a significant proportion of pupils who have English as an additional language. These pupils are very well supported by teachers in lessons and experienced support staff. Good support is given to these pupils when they need to acquire more technical language, for example in science. The pupils with special educational needs are also given good support by teachers and support staff to enable good progress to be made towards the more specific targets they are set.

96. Realistically challenging targets for the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 have been set for pupils in the current Year 6, however only 55 per cent of these pupils are predicted to reach the required national standards in literacy. Pupils in the current Years 4 and 5 have the potential to reach much higher standards in 2002 and 2003, and projected targets reflect this. The school has identified weaknesses in the current Year 3 cohort of pupils and these pupils have been targeted for additional help through the Additional Literacy Strategy.
97. Challenging targets for the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 have been similarly set for pupils in the current Year 2 classes, however, only 57 per cent of these pupils are predicted to reach the required national standards in literacy. This is largely because of the high number of pupils who have been identified with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language among whom there are several new arrivals to the country. In 2002, the current Year 1 pupils have the potential to achieve much higher standards and their targets have been set much nearer to the required national standards in literacy. Overall the trend towards improving standards for the school has been upward over the years since the last inspection.
98. Throughout the school pupils achieve satisfactorily in speaking and listening but to continue to raise standards in English there needs to be more systematic planning of speaking and listening skills in all subjects of the curriculum. When pupils enter the school they lack confidence in speaking and their listening skills are poor. Effective teaching attempts to address some of these limitations. Teachers have to work hard in some classes to help focus and re-focus pupils' attention on what they are expected to do and learn, and to involve all pupils. Despite pupils' initial lack of confidence, pupils achieve satisfactorily and within the school's expectations, and by the age of eleven most pupils are able to contribute fully in class discussions, often using the rich technical vocabulary they have learned effectively in lessons. To build on this confidence, more opportunities throughout the school need to be created for pupils to speak in a range of different situations and for different audiences, and to extend their understanding of literary texts through drama and debate. Good opportunities for discussion, however, are created in geography using Chandra's day and in a paired activity to look for clues as to winter activities in a mountain environment. In the visit to the synagogue, pupils were inspired to use the ideas and vocabulary they had learned previously. Pupils, both girls and boys, are absorbing the rich, often technical, vocabulary modelled by their teachers and reproduce it in their written work.
99. Pupils' attainments in reading continue to be below the national expectations at age seven and at age eleven. On entry to the school pupils' skills are very limited and the school's achievements in reading are hard won. In Year 1, above average pupils read with expression; average pupils have a good knowledge of sight words and a good grasp of letter sounds and this helps them to tackle new words. The gap between able pupils and less able pupils widens in Year 2, with some pupils reading at a mature level with fluency and understanding, but with less able pupils struggling at a level needing much more support and encouragement. The picture however improves

as pupils move up the school as higher attaining pupils and average pupils become more enthusiastic and confident readers. These pupils can discuss authors with increasing maturity and are developing critical appreciation of a range of different genres. Pupils throughout the school are increasingly able to use their library skills to locate information in the text.

100. Achievement in writing shows a similar picture of slow progress through the early stages of writing. Year 1 pupils begin to form letters correctly. In Year 2 the range of writing widens and above average pupils are producing work using interesting vocabulary, for example 'chubby cheeks with dimples when he smiles' with letters that are correctly formed and consistent in size whilst the lower ability pupils can only build a sentence using words shown on cards. Some pupils have difficulty separating words, writing continuous strings of letters.
101. As pupils progress through the school they begin to show an increasing maturity in writing short narratives and factual accounts with a logical development. They use tenses, punctuation and spelling with increasing accuracy, and produce legible joined script. Pupils use different forms of writing appropriately, as for instance when writing up scientific experiments or when writing a letter of thanks to a farm. Individual pupil's targets are pasted in literacy books in some classes.
102. The school has placed emphasis this year on punctuation, spelling and handwriting. However, some lower-achieving pupils still experience difficulties with developing a fluent handwriting style often reverting to 'infant print' and common words are frequently miss-spelt. Handwriting and the presentation of written work are not consistent in quality throughout the school.
103. Teaching seen during the inspection was good across the school although there were variations in teachers' skills in managing pupils' behaviour. Nearly three-quarters of the teaching was good and only one unsatisfactory lesson was seen. Teachers across the school have a good understanding of how to teach reading and writing, and all teachers have received training in how to deliver the literacy hour effectively. Teachers make their teaching objectives clear and generally have a good knowledge of their subject.
104. Teachers use a rich and wide vocabulary to promote pupils' interest in words and successfully weave previous learning into new situations. With the older children they use the correct terminology, for example complex sentence, clause, excerpt, prefix, suffix and affix, and expect pupils to do the same. They draw pupils' attention to the origins of words and question and challenge pupils to think for themselves. This was exemplified in a discussion of an excerpt from Daphne du Maurier's 'Rebecca' where pupils had to look closely at words in the passage to justify their opinions about the atmosphere. Teachers use pupils' contributions well to make teaching points. Many teachers make the most of teaching time, for example pupils are able to recite a class poem in rhyming couplets while waiting for the register to arrive. Teachers use a variety of approaches to stimulate writing, using memorable phrases like 'composing in your heads' and 'build up a story from the bare bones'. Teachers are skilled at summing up the lesson using pupils' contributions to check on their understanding.
105. In some lessons the balance between the preparation for writing and the writing task leaves too little time for pupils to develop their own individual writing. The school is timetabling additional literacy times to address this problem. Very little extended writing in other subjects was observed during the inspection week. Many displays show a good range of pupils' writing. For example, work on Wordsworth's 'Upon



Westminster Bridge' produced some good examples of sonnets by pupils changing the time of day and adding their own words. Information and communication technology is used well in English for this purpose. Pupils in Year 2 display some good writing about friends, and Year 4 pupils produce interesting spiral poems using similes where the sun was 'like a frizzling globe swinging in the sky'. One able pupil in studying metaphors writes about a tomcat: 'Tomcat's fur is matted wire wool, ... and his battered tail, a rolled up sleeve'.

106. Pupils with special educational needs have detailed individual education action plans which are followed closely and this generally results in good, well-focused teaching. Pupils' achievements because of good teaching is good, although writing is still an arduous task for them.
107. The management of English is satisfactory. The literacy co-ordinator keeps the English policy under review and has good plans in place to develop English. Literacy targets are set for each year group each term. Staff development is planned. The co-ordinator has observed all teachers teaching the literacy hour and has monitored teachers' planning and sampled pupils' work. Individual pupil portfolios with three pieces of assessed work for each term, helps teachers to build up a profile of a child's progress through the school.
108. The use of the library for independent research skills by pupils is, however, still not fully developed. The co-ordinator for the library has audited the library books and noted gaps in provision. She has organised the joint resources for the amalgamated school making the library an attractive learning environment. Plans are in hand to timetable the use of classes and staff development in the use of the library. These plans will be affected when the extension to the school is complete. A classification system is to be used and a loan system implemented that will make the library a resource for effective learning, encourage wider reading and reading for pleasure. There is a delightful collection of books in the library that have been written and illustrated by pupils in the school, which children read and re-read with enjoyment.

## **MATHEMATICS**

109. As in English, standards have improved significantly since the last inspection. The percentage of pupils achieving the expected level by the end of Key Stage 2 has risen in two years from seven per cent to 62 per cent. This is a quite remarkable improvement! Considering the attainment on entry to the school pupils are doing well. When comparisons are made with similar schools standards in the 2000 national tests, they are above them at Key Stage 2. Since 1996, standards overall have improved slightly at Key Stage 1. They have improved much more significantly at Key Stage 2. These improvements are due to three main factors. Firstly, the staff have worked well as a team, to develop the National Numeracy Strategy. This enables pupils to progress well from one lesson to the next. Secondly, most children are taught alongside other pupils of a roughly similar ability. At present, this is particularly helpful to those of average ability and below. Thirdly, the school analyses the annual test results very well to find where teaching needs to be targeted in order to raise standards.
110. Work seen during the inspection shows that children are making the most progress in mental calculation and in basic number work. However, they are given relatively few opportunities to use their knowledge and skills in practical situations or in trying to solve problems. Boys and girls perform equally well overall. With the good support provided by the school, children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress.

111. Children enter the school with low standards in mathematics. They make good progress through both key stages. Often it is the limited listening and speaking skills which inhibits their learning. By the age of seven, most children are familiar with odd and even numbers and work well on basic calculations with coins. When questioned, more able children show a good understanding of numbers up to 1,000 and are confident interpreting bar charts. They are often capable, though, of higher levels of work than that represented in their books and folders. By the age of eleven, pupils are familiar with numbers beyond 1,000. They use this knowledge when working in metric units such as kilograms. However, they have limited experiences of working on mathematical investigations or solving problems. Throughout the school, there is a strong emphasis on number work. Standards are rising in this area. Less progress is seen in the areas of shape, space and measures and in handling data, such as in graph work.
112. Teaching and learning throughout the school is good overall. Teaching seen during the week was better than that reflected in pupils' books. Here, the best learning is often seen in the work of the less able pupils. Challenges set for them are better targeted at their levels of ability. The top set in each year group encompasses a wide spread of ability. Nevertheless, all pupils are often given the same targets and usually undertake the same work.
113. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed in the numeracy lessons. A strength of teaching throughout the school is the way that pupils are made well aware of exactly what it is that they are learning. Lessons start with a clear explanation of what is to be taught. At the end of each session these goals are reviewed and discussed. Often children are even made aware of what is to be done in the following lesson. As a result, there is very good continuity. Support staff and other adult helpers are very well prepared and make a significant impact on pupils' learning. The efforts of all the staff create a positive learning environment in which interest and concentration levels are generally high. Children enjoy their numeracy lessons. The best teaching and learning was seen in Years 1 and 4. More demanding work is set and marking is used well to help pupils to learn from their mistakes. A feature is the pace from one activity to the next. Pupils' interest levels are maintained as they face a variety of experiences. Another feature of many lessons is the good level of stimulating resources in the subject. These enable teachers to give clear demonstrations and help pupils to learn efficiently. Children throughout the school react very positively to being given practical work to do. For example, in Class 2 pupils' levels of concentration remain high as they estimate the weight (in kilos) of different packages.
114. Features of aspects of a few less successful lessons include:
- some time wasted as children fail to respond quickly to the teachers' bidding;
  - some work being set that insufficiently reflects the ability levels within the class.
115. Teachers use informal observations well to assess pupils' understanding. During discussions at the beginning and end of each lesson, they use questions skilfully to gauge what the children do and do not understand. Teachers circulate groups to assess problems that pupils are encountering and to give help where it is required. Tests are given annually to enable comparisons to be made with pupils nationally. The results of these tests are very carefully analysed. For example, they are used to see how well children with special educational needs, or those with English as an additional language, are learning. They also identify which types of questions pose the most problems for the pupils in the school. This information is then systematically used to improve learning in these areas. However, teachers are not yet sufficiently skilled at assessing the National Curriculum levels which individual children are reaching. There is a portfolio of pupils' work that has examples of some of these

levels. However, it contains insufficient samples to enable accurate comparisons to be made across all areas of the subject.

116. At both key stages the pupils' ability to use information and communication technology to develop their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding is under-developed. Year 6 pupils have had very little experience of working on numeracy-based programs. Pupils do use their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding in other subjects. For example, in Year 1 as part of an investigation into 'Food', pupils produce and interpret graphs to show favourite cereals and ice cream flavours.
117. Leadership in the subject is good. Teachers have improved their skills through lessons being observed and analysed. There is a very good policy document. It has only recently been reviewed and, as yet, is far from being fully implemented. However, it provides clear guidance to the staff on how the good scheme of work is to be delivered. As yet, there is insufficient regular monitoring of the work of the pupils throughout the school.

## **SCIENCE**

118. The percentage of pupils reaching the nationally accepted level in the tests in 2000 was 79 per cent; this had risen from 17 per cent in 1998, a very good improvement! The 2000 figures showed that pupils are achieving results better than those in similar schools. Inspection findings indicate that standards in science are well below national averages at the end of Key Stage 1. In the teacher assessments for seven-year-olds in 2000, standards were very low in comparison with the national average. In comparison with similar schools, standards were slightly better but still well below the national average. However, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher than expected level when compared with similar schools was above the average.
119. Inspection findings indicate that standards in science are below national averages at the end of Key Stage 2. At the end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests for 2000, the standards achieved by eleven-year-olds at the school are below the national average when compared with all schools, but when compared with similar schools they are above the average. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher than the expected level is also above average when compared with similar schools. Overall standards in science in the previous inspection were judged to be satisfactory. When considering the changes, it is clear that standards have risen through the school. The statistics show that since 1997, when standards were extremely low and very low in comparison with national averages, standards have risen each year and this is a big improvement.
120. Pupils gain a sound understanding of life and living processes at Key Stage 1. Pupils in Year 1, for example, learn the difference between living and non-living things. They can name the basic parts of the human body. They can also link animals with the food they need to eat to survive. Pupils in Year 1 also show in the scrutiny of their work that they can separate materials into wood, metal, paper or plastic as well into their various properties. Year 2 pupils are beginning to develop their investigative skills in studying the forces needed to move objects. They successfully learn the parts of the human skeleton and importance of it in movement. Scrutiny of work indicates that these pupils have a sound understanding of the household appliances that use electricity. It also reveals that they are beginning to understand how an electrical circuit works using a cell and a bulb.

121. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make good progress in learning and understanding scientific concepts; building quickly on prior knowledge. Year 3 pupils effectively learn about the different uses of human teeth in their scientific investigations. A teacher supporting pupils with English as an additional language helps pupils with the necessary vocabulary and these pupils make good progress in the lesson. Year 4 pupils learn and understand which materials are good and which are poor conductors of heat. They then extend their work in science investigations, learning about thermal insulation. In one lesson, a supporting teacher's good knowledge and patience enables less able pupils to learn that a good conductor of heat is synonymous with a poor thermal insulator and vice-versa. Pupils in Year 5 make good progress in identifying the individual parts of a flower. Through the acquisition of this knowledge, pupils learn how plants are fertilised and seeds are formed. From the scrutiny of previous work, pupils in this year group have learned the functions of the human heart. In their investigations they have learned the effect of exercise on their pulse rates. Year 6 pupils extend their knowledge and understanding of physical processes when they learn about light sources and the way light travels and shadows are formed. In their scientific investigations they experiment with a light source and a solid object, to find out how the size of shadows can be changed. These experiments are carried out well and pupils fully understand the need for making only one variable, thus ensuring a fair test. One consistent feature of all scientific enquiry lessons throughout the school is the consideration teachers give to all health and safety issues. Pupils are able to carry out experiments after they have fully understood the teaching input on safety.
122. Pupils are able to develop their speaking and listening skills, in introductions to and during the plenary sessions following their work. The standard of handwriting in science books and in science writing guides does vary from year to year, but most of it is legible and well formed. Mathematical skills are developed in measuring, as seen in Year 2 and both block graphs and line graphs are used to record data; for example Year 5 pupils' work when measuring pulse rates.
123. The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in eight out of nine lessons seen. In two thirds of the lessons it is good or better. In two lessons teaching is very good. Good teaching is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and there is good coverage of scientific enquiry in all lessons. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when this area of science was not being taught enough. Teachers make good use of support teachers, classroom assistants and volunteer helpers to support all ability levels, including pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally secure. However, in less successful lessons, teachers' insecure knowledge leads to pupils being confused and misconceptions occur. Teachers make assessments of pupils' achievements regularly, and levels of attainment are recorded as summative judgements and passed on each year. Assessments are used in target setting and tracking pupils' progress.
124. The attitudes and behaviour of older pupils in science lessons is always good or better. They show a keen interest in their work and apply themselves well, especially in practical sessions that they enjoy. They work well individually and co-operate sensibly when working in small groups. The attitude of some younger pupils in science lessons is unsatisfactory. This is due to poor concentration spans and immature behaviour. As a result of this their learning is held back and therefore standards achieved are poor. There are good resources to support the teaching of the science curriculum, but there are insufficient information and communication

technology resources to assist in modelling, monitoring and recording the results of scientific investigations.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

125. Few lessons were observed during the inspection, however, the displays in classrooms and other areas of the school, show a range of activities and good standards. The quality of work shows standards generally meeting those expected at the end of both key stages. A strength of the subject is the way artwork is linked with nearly all other subjects of the curriculum.
126. Year 6 pupils have produced a range of work building on pictures they are given. For example they take part of a photograph of a section of a terraced row of houses and use pencils well to extend the drawing identifying details very well. In a similar way they have completed a portrait from part of a face, showing good consideration of symmetry, skin tone and the patterns of different hairstyles. They have worked in the style of different artists and, in a lesson looking at the way Pienkowski illustrated traditional tales, produce effective silhouettes with good details such as a witch's broomstick and the branches of a tree.
127. Year 2 pupils have linked some of their artwork to the topic of the Australian Olympic Games. They have used 'earth' colours of brown, orange and yellow well to produce patterns in the style of the Australian aboriginal people.
128. Other subject links include the patterns that Year 1 pupils have produced using mathematical shapes, such as squares, using a variety of materials. Year 3 pupils have been looking at the health hazards associated with dog dirt! They have made colourful pictures of a variety of dogs to illustrate their work. Year 4 pupils have linked their geographical study of parts of Newcastle city centre to produce good quality paintings and drawings of some buildings.
129. The quality of the small amount of art teaching seen was good. The subject manager sees her role largely as one which ensures that teachers have the materials they need although she has a good awareness of what pupils cover. She would like to extend the range of three-dimensional work produced, for example by working with clay.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

130. Due to arrangements of the timetable, it was possible to observe only a few lessons. These lessons, together with an analysis of pupils' work, teachers' plans, discussions with pupils and teachers and with the subject co-ordinator, show that pupils broadly achieve the expected standards at the end of both key stages. No judgement was made concerning standards at the previous inspection.
131. At Key Stage 1, pupils have a clear knowledge and understanding of the processes of researching, planning, designing and making. Pupils in Year 1, for example, visit a local leisure park to research climbing frames before they plan and design their own playground structures. They use appropriate resources such as straws and connectors to assemble their models, and pupils across the full range of ability levels achieve success. However, it is noticeable that pupils' cutting skills are

underdeveloped. Pupils evaluate their models for suitability of purpose and look for ways to strengthen them and make them more rigid and safe. One more able pupil, in comparing the shapes she formed, explained that triangular shapes are stronger than square ones in making playground structures. Pupils in Year 2 extend their knowledge making models with moveable parts. They make paper puppets with moveable joints using split-pins and design and make boxes with integral winding mechanisms. These pupils start new work on the investigation of vehicles, researching into the moveable parts such as wheels.

132. At Key Stage 2, Year 3 pupils develop their food technology skills by designing and making sandwiches. They learn the importance of hygiene in this work. Pupils carry out research into the types of foods that help to keep us fit and healthy, and the ones we should only eat in small quantities. These pupils also develop their planning, designing, making and evaluating skills when they make picture frames. The resultant frames are colourful and additional materials such as sequins and wool enhance the quality of them. Pupils' cutting skills are noted to be below expectation for pupils of this age group.
133. The work produced by Year 4 pupils is above expectation. In their making of purses, they show evidence of careful research into different types before planning and drawing out detailed designs before making them. There is evidence of better fine motor skills in this work, with accurate stitching and gluing with a variety of well-chosen fasteners being selected. The finished purses are of a high standard and suitable for purpose. Year 5 pupils design and make houses in the style of Tudor homes they study in their history studies. These finished buildings form a good display that is evident in their open area. Little information on the work undertaken by Year 6 pupils was obtained during the inspection. Teachers are to concentrate on developing and extending pupils' information and communication technology skills in topics later in the academic year. However, discussion with a small group of pupils in Year 6 shows that at this stage they have not had enough experience of working with tools, equipment, materials and components, particularly electrical and mechanical ones, to make quality products.
134. Teaching in the small number of lessons seen is never less than satisfactory and was very good in one lesson. This leads to good attitudes and behaviour from pupils. They generally show good levels of concentration and apply themselves well. Strengths in teaching include good planning and preparation, good subject knowledge and the good use of questioning and challenges set for pupils. In Year 1 lessons, teachers challenge pupils' thinking throughout lessons as they construct model climbing frames. This helps pupils to evaluate their work as they go through the different stages of construction. In some instances as a result of rethinking, pupils re-formulate plans and their final models are good.
135. The co-ordinator is experienced and is monitoring teachers' planning. She recognises that the detailed and informative scheme of work should be fully implemented to allow pupils to develop a full range of skills, especially at the end of Key Stage 2.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

136. Geography was not being taught in all classes during the inspection because of the overall planning of the school's curriculum. The lessons seen, together with a scrutiny of work previously completed and discussion with pupils, provided sufficient information to make judgements on standards, teaching and learning.

137. Standards of attainment in geography are below expectations in Key Stage 1 but the attainments of the oldest pupils in Key Stage 2 are broadly in line with expectations. However, from the knowledge pupils have when they enter school they are generally achieving well.
138. In Year 1 some good work previously completed in geography is on display involving the children receiving postcards from Barnaby Bear as he journeys to different places of the British Isles. The teacher makes these different places come alive for the children when Barnaby Bear is photographed visiting different people in different environments. Pupils are encouraged to problem solve by finding out what Barnaby Bear needs on holiday in a hot country and a cold country, and are able to complete simple sentences about him. Year 2 pupils complete work on direction, and in information and communication technology use the Roamer and successfully name and label different features of a landscape, for example hills, mountain, island, beach, sea, forest and river. Links are made with traditional stories such as Little Red Riding Hood and pupils have to follow and map a simple route to her grandmother's house, reinforcing prepositions such as over, round, through and along. Pupils know a little about maps, atlases and globes and colour in outline maps of land and sea in the world and Great Britain. The Year 6 pupils have printed out pages from the Internet for Year 2 pupils about different environments and climates. In discussion Year 2 pupils knew very little about the school locality or of the changes in their own immediate locality although they spoke very knowledgeably about the shops in the Metro Centre.
139. Pupils build on work on mapping and the weather that starts in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Eleven-year-olds learn about mountain environments and use the computer to create a multimedia presentation using geographical information about mountains, how people live there and the tourist industry in particular. Pupils are able to name Ben Nevis and know it is in Scotland, that Mont Blanc is in France and Mount Everest is in Nepal. They can locate the mountains on a world map; they talk about the weather and the climate and distinguish between them. Year 6 pupils are also able to talk about different environments and about their involvement in a local study of Grainger Town last year. They express interest in a map of the future redevelopment of the West Side area of Newcastle. In Year 4 pupils learn about Chembakolli, a village in Southern India. They can point out similarities and differences between their own day and a day in the life of Chanda, an inhabitant of this village.
140. Older pupils make good progress in their learning including those with special educational needs. They enjoy geography, work hard and are particularly interested when they make educational visits. An over reliance on worksheets and colouring in maps by younger pupils limits their opportunity to write for themselves and restricts the chance for higher attaining pupils to learn in more challenging ways.
141. Pupils' work in geography is often used to build up exciting displays. The preparation for this work is often not reflected in their geography books and folders. A partial picture of pupils' progress emerges, making it difficult to track individual pupils' development through geography. Teachers' marking does not always help pupils to improve their work nor does it give them targets to aim for.
142. The role of the co-ordinator has been developed by increased emphasis on monitoring teachers' planning and display. She has a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. Plans are in place for improvements, such as the building up of resources as each module in geography is completed, the building up of a school portfolio for geography with levelled, annotated work and

working together with colleagues to build assessment tasks into planning. Geography has not had a high profile in recent years as core subjects have taken priority.

## **HISTORY**

143. Judgements about history are based upon a scrutiny of the policy and scheme of work. Pupils' books were examined from Years 3, 4 and 5. Samples of Year 6 work were seen from the present and the last school year. Three Year 6 pupils were interviewed and one lesson in Year 1 was observed. On the basis of this range of evidence, standards seen at seven and eleven are below those seen in most schools. Pupils make satisfactory progress with their knowledge and understanding of historical facts. However, Key Stage 2 pupils make unsatisfactory progress with the acquisition of skills and key ideas.
144. Children in Year 1 have an awareness of 'old' and 'new' from comparing toys from the past with their modern equivalents. Learning is made exciting by the quality of the exhibits (teddies, dolls, train sets and tills). The work is made even more relevant by linking history with work done in the literacy lessons. Skills of historical investigation, established in the infant classes, are insufficiently exploited in the older junior classes.
145. By Year 3, good links are made with art, as children make accurate sketches of workers and tradesmen seen in a Roman town. They make comparisons with things that are the same today as then (such as sandals). In Year 4, the best junior work is seen. Ancient Egypt comes to life in the pupils' folders, through maps, drawings and investigations. Wonderfully gory illustrations accompany descriptions of the mummification process! Good deductions about life in those times are made from pictures and artefacts. However, older pupils have too little experience of using books or reference materials for research. They have not used computers on simulations or investigations in the subject. Instead, there is an over-emphasis on word-searches, copying worksheets and colouring in drawings. Historical skills are not sufficiently extended. The best work seen is when children are challenged to use their own ideas. For example, they write letters describing their experiences as evacuees, or produce moving accounts of the lonely existence of Ann Frank. First hand experiences, such as describing buildings in the locality, also give the work a relevance and depth that it lacks too often.
146. The recently reviewed policy for history is good. The scheme of work is in place. However, the history co-ordinator is not yet scrutinising pupils' work in their books. In many classes, similar work is set for pupils of all abilities. At present, the stated aims and objectives of the policy are not being fully implemented.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

147. This is a developing subject in school. The recently completed computer suite has enough computers for whole classes to be taught together. The machines are not yet linked together to enable pupils to use information from their friends but this networking is due to take place in the near future.
148. Programs to allow pupils to cover all the areas of the subject for older pupils, in Key Stage 2, are not yet available and so standards do not reach the expectations of the National Curriculum by the end of the key stage. For example, pupils do not have much experience at the required level of controlling events remotely or on screen, such as using the computer to control electronic models such as a set of traffic lights.



The standards the pupils' achieve in the areas of work they do cover such as word processing and combining text and pictures is generally to the expected level.

149. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 have generally reached standards that meet what is expected of them. This is because the range of skills they are expected to acquire is smaller but also because they have benefited from being able to use the computer suite.
150. Pupils in Year 6 use the work they have done in geography in studying mountains as they produce a computer generated presentation combining pictures, text and sound. Most pupils open the program independently and 'click' on various parts of the screen to make things happen. They use a database to choose appropriate photographs of the mountain they are studying. They place the picture in the area of the screen they want it to be and then type in a description of the mountain. All pupils confidently use the program to change the colour and size of the print. Many improve the quality of the page by filling in areas with appropriate patterns, such as one giving the impression of a rocky surface.
151. Younger pupils in Key Stage 2 are working at a level closer to what is expected. This is because they have benefited from the teaching they have received in the last two years. Little computer work was being done at the time of the last inspection so pupils of all ages started from similar levels. Pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 are able to enhance the words they type by changing the size, colour and style of the letters. They are also combining pictures and words in their work. For example they have produced pictures of tigers with a description: 'The tiger is a black and orange striped cat ...'. They choose whether to produce an image based on a photograph of a tiger or a 'cartoon style' cat.
152. Pupils in Year 2 clearly enjoy a lesson in which they are given the opportunity to make a battery-operated toy move in a way they have 'programmed in'. They know they have to clear the instructions given last time before they enter their own. They are developing the skills that need them to give the toy, firstly a direction, then a number for the distance travelled. Many now understand that when they program the toy to turn the number '90' means that it turns a right angle.
153. Both pupils and teachers are appreciating the opportunities offered by the new computers and the teaching room. Teachers are willingly taking up training opportunities to increase their skills and confidence. Three teachers in one assembly were given certificates to recognise the standards they had achieved! The teaching seen during the inspection was good, teachers are using the suite well. Pupils work sensibly in pairs when using the computer suite and consolidate newly learned work. They show determination and persistence in their attempts to overcome the difficulties they meet.
154. The subject leader has a good understanding of the standards which pupils achieve, she recognises the gaps in provision for the older pupils and had already planned to buy computer programs and equipment which will fill these gaps.

## **MUSIC**

155. Attainment at the end of both key stages is below the expected level. Satisfactory progress is made in both key stages in singing and developing a sense of rhythm, however there are few opportunities for pupils to make progress in appraising and responding to music in Key Stage 2.

156. In Year 6 pupils sing tunefully in unison and speak with enthusiasm about singing in concerts for special occasions. They develop good rhythmic skills when working with a visiting musician. They do not remember using simple notation to plan or remember melodies or rhythm patterns. They have very little understanding of musical vocabulary, being unsure of the work of a composer and only able to name one or two orchestral instruments. They have had limited opportunities to respond to music from different times and cultures.
157. In Year 5 pupils of average and above average ability write a new verse to a known song and fit the new words to the original rhythm pattern. They recognise repeated patterns and include these in their composition. Lower achieving pupils who have limited literacy skills find this task very difficult and experience little success. In Year 4 pupils improve their work on repeating patterns through planning and discussion.
158. Pupils in Key Stage 1 sing with enthusiasm and join in with a range of body movements and sounds to accompany their songs. By the end of the key stage they repeat short rhythmic patterns accurately. Some high-achieving pupils maintain a regular beat against the rhythm pattern. Average and above average pupils can suggest the instrument they would choose to represent an elephant in a story and demonstrate and explain how they would play it. These pupils do meet the expected levels by the end of Key Stage 1, however there are many pupils in school who are below average in ability and these pupils lack the confidence to explore and organise sounds.
159. Most pupils enjoy their music lessons. They join in enthusiastically with hymns during collective worship. In lessons throughout the school they are eager to improve their performance. In Key Stage 1 pupils were quite disappointed when a rather short lesson finished. In Year 6 pupils are extremely attentive and motivated when working with a professional musician.
160. The subject manager usually teaches singing throughout the school but during the inspection she was teaching the class of an absent colleague. Despite these unusual circumstances the quality of lessons inspected was satisfactory in both key stages.
161. The only teaching observed in Year 6 was done by a professional musician who provides tuition in drumming for a number of schools in the area. In this lesson very good subject knowledge led to good progress for the pupils. They refined and developed their rhythmic skills by using body movements and used a large array of very good quality drums. Pupils practised and improved the beginning of a piece that they are planning to perform. In most lessons throughout the school there is effective management of pupils and high expectations of what they can achieve, particularly in singing and accompanying songs with percussion instruments.
162. In one lesson in Key Stage 2 the teacher did not give lower achieving pupils enough support in developing a rhythm pattern so that they could successfully complete the set task. Some sessions are very short and there is insufficient time for pupils to practice and refine their skills.
163. In a Year 1 lesson the teacher made good use of her own voice to encourage and enthuse the pupils. In most lessons at this key stage the teaching is successful in encouraging pupils to practise and improve their singing. Pupils use musical

instruments to accompany songs, however there were few opportunities for pupils to explore different ways of playing or choosing instruments to fit a particular mood.

164. The curriculum for music at Key Stage 2 does not give pupils enough opportunities to listen and appraise music. Some listening and appraising is done in lessons when pupils respond to each other's work, however the work of composers and music from a range of cultures or different times is not a regular feature of pupils' learning.
165. The subject manager is aware of these shortcomings in the curriculum and is planning to review the current schemes of work in the near future.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

166. During the inspection five lessons were seen, three in Key Stage 2, and two in Key Stage 1. All except one of the lessons was based on teaching games skills. Judgements are based on these lessons and discussions with the subject manager. Standards of attainment at the end of both key stages meet national expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school.
167. In Year 6 pupils practise and improve their performance to a level that is in line with national expectations. By the end of the lesson most pupils demonstrate good control and fluency in bouncing balls using either hand. In swimming, nearly all pupils reach the standard expected by the end of Key Stage 2. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have developed their co-ordination so that they show some control over hitting a soft ball with a bat. They co-operate well in pairs helping each other to get in and out of hoops. In dance lessons in Year 1 pupils watch demonstrations and copy and explore simple movements, they practise and refine movements and strike a dramatic pose to begin their dance.
168. As they move through Key Stage 2 most pupils develop their games skills becoming more accurate and confident. They increase their understanding of the need to practice in order to improve performance. In Year 3 most pupils make progress in their lessons practising and refining their ability to catch and exploring different ways to throw balls. However more able pupils demonstrate good co-ordination as they throw and catch balls, and lessons are not always sufficiently challenging for them. In Year 5 some pupils dribble footballs accurately around cones and successfully shoot at a goal.
169. Pupils respond positively to their lessons. Older pupils work well in groups and more able pupils demonstrate initiative in organising spacing of the players so that the task is more efficiently completed. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language show determination and concentration in lessons. In Key Stage 2 pupils sustain their concentration and persevere when given challenging tasks by the teacher.
170. In both key stages the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge and in good lessons teachers observe pupils closely, enabling them to offer effective guidance in improving their performance. In all lessons pupils are managed skilfully. Praise is used to good effect in nearly all lessons. This was apparent in a lesson where a pupil in Year 2 was withdrawn for a few minutes due to poor behaviour. Shortly after he rejoined the class he was chosen to demonstrate his stick and ball skills to the rest of the class. Teachers give good support to those who are new to the school, many of whom speak and understand little English. They are well aware of safety issues, ensuring pupils are correctly

dressed for physical exercise and encouraging pupils to identify potential risks themselves and avoid them. In all lessons pupils are prepared well for exercise and teaching helps them recognise the changes in their bodies that occur.

171. Overall the physical education curriculum is appropriately balanced and covers games, swimming, gymnastics, athletics and dance. The school organises extra-curricular clubs for football and swimming. These are particularly effective in supporting the development of skills in these areas. The large gymnasium is well used and has a positive effect on learning.
172. The subject management is good with a clear focus on improving standards. There is a good policy in place, which emphasises the importance of developing high self-esteem and co-operation. In all lessons the development of these qualities through the teaching is clearly demonstrated. The school uses an appropriate scheme, which ensures that there is continuity and progression in learning skills.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

173. Very few lessons were seen during the inspection. Consequently there is insufficient evidence for judgements to be made about pupils' progress and attitudes or the quality of teaching at Key Stage 1. Only one short session was inspected in a Year 2 class. Three lessons were inspected in Key Stage 2.
174. Since the previous inspection a new scheme of work and policy is leading to improved standards. Standards of spoken and written work are good in Year 4 where pupils are relating their own experiences to features of religious belief. There has not been time for the full impact of these improvements to show in pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2.
175. Discussions were held with Year 2 pupils, and books were scrutinised in order to make a judgement on pupils' attainment. Although pupils are not reaching the standards expected they are achieving well from their starting levels. Many pupils in Year 2 are on the register of special needs, and others are learning English as an additional language. In addition these two classes have received many of the refugee pupils that have started to attend the school over the past six months. These pupils speak and understand very little English.
176. A small minority of high attaining pupils in Year 2 can retell the story of the Good Samaritan in detail and recognise that the story contains an important message. Average pupils make up simple rules, and relate them successfully to their own experiences and can suggest reasons why these should be followed. They can identify details in pictures showing rules that are being broken. They have some knowledge of Islam, recognising that Muhammad was a good man and a Muslim. They write in short sentences explaining why Mary and Joseph had to flee from Bethlehem after Jesus was born and what they might do to be a good neighbour. The high attaining and average pupils represent half of this year group and meet the expected levels of attainment.
177. At the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils have a limited knowledge of Christianity and Islam. They remember the stories and some of the beliefs and practices related to Islam. Islam is the faith that they have most recently studied and they know that the five pillars of Islam are rules by which Muslims try to live. They use correct terms such as zakat and pilgrimage. Most pupils do not remember more than a few simple facts about Christianity. They know that Jesus died on a cross but do not remember

that this occurred on Good Friday. They are unaware that the Ten Commandments are rules and cannot name the two parts of the Bible. The higher attaining pupils knew that people could choose whether or not to believe in God.

178. There are many below average attaining pupils in this year group. These pupils know that they have studied Islam and can tell the story of Muhammad fleeing from Mecca. However they have understood very little about the practices associated with the faiths they have recently studied and think that skin colour is how you could tell whether someone is a Christian or a Muslim.
179. In the lessons observed pupils' response was varied. In Year 4 on a visit to a synagogue pupils responded very positively to the teaching. They sat quietly and thought about the atmosphere of the synagogue. Pupils were eager to ask questions of the Rabbi and the teacher about the various artefacts that they were shown and settled quickly to making sketches of some aspect of the building. In lessons in Years 5 and 6 pupils listened quietly to stories or explanations by the teacher. However in these lessons very few pupils raise their hands to answer questions.
180. Teaching of the highest quality is informed by very good subject knowledge, the use of interesting artefacts and very good pupil management. Pupils made excellent progress during their visit to a synagogue. They consolidated and developed their understanding of the practices and rituals associated with Judaism. In preceding lessons pupils had been well prepared for the visit. Consequently pupils were very interested in what they saw, recognising many of the artefacts such as the menorah and scrolls. The example set by the teacher and other adults enabled the pupils to experience the reverence with which religious believers treat the synagogue and Jewish artefacts. The teaching involves pupils in a variety of activities that are carefully timed and planned to sustain the pupils' interest and provoke many questions.
181. When teaching is satisfactory work from previous lessons is reviewed and links are made with what is to be learned. Good use is made of pictures and the special knowledge of a pupil from a Christian family. Teachers refer to their own religious beliefs and practices to illustrate how signs and symbols are used in the communion service. Appropriate support is given to a significant minority of pupils who have weak literacy skills and cannot complete the written questions that are used to consolidate the learning in the first part of the lesson. When teaching is unsatisfactory the pace of the lesson is slow. The content of the lesson is not presented in an interesting or lively manner, and consequently the pupils lose interest. When the pupils are asked to complete comprehension questions many are very slow to begin their task and time is wasted. Furthermore there are many pupils who find it difficult to derive information from the textbook due to their limited literacy skills, and this hampers their ability to consolidate their learning.
182. The school has in place a very good policy and scheme of work and the subject manager has begun to monitor progress by sampling work in books. Assessment targets have very recently been introduced for all year groups. Training in the subject is planned for all teachers in the near future. This is a good programme of action which clearly focuses on raising standards in the subject.