

INSPECTION REPORT

BRIGHTON AVENUE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Gateshead

LEA area: Gateshead

Unique reference number: 108368

Headteacher: Mrs M. Pallent

Reporting inspector: Mrs M. R. Shepherd
11329

Dates of inspection: 25 – 28 June 2001

Inspection number: 213135

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Brighton Road Gateshead Tyne and Wear
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Cllr. F. Donovan
Date of previous inspection:	April 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Mr C. Herbert 9652	Lay inspector		How high are standards? How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr M. Mayhew 22197	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Special educational needs English as an additional language	
Mr A. Wilson 20846	Team inspector	English Geography History Equal opportunities	Assessment
Mrs S. Gatehouse 26945	Team inspector	Mathematics Art Music	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
Mr J. M. Egerton 8839	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Religious education	How good are curricular opportunities?
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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	14
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	20
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	21
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	24
THE NURTURE UNIT	25
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	27
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	31

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Brighton Avenue Primary School is a junior and infant school with a nursery offering 41 part-time places. It also includes a 12-place Nurture Unit for pupils with serious emotional and behavioural difficulties from within the school. There are 333 pupils on roll, including the nursery children, which is bigger than the national average. Fifty-four per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well above the national average. Thirty-six per cent of pupils are on the special educational needs register, which is above average, and 1.5 per cent of these pupils have full statements, which is broadly average. Ten per cent of pupils have English as an additional language. These include a high proportion of Kosovan refugees and some Indian and Pakistani pupils. Travellers' children use the school occasionally, but at the time of the inspection they had just left. There is a very high level of mobility of pupils throughout the school with only 50 per cent of pupils in Year 6 beginning their education in this school. This produces a lack of commitment to schooling from some parents who view their stay in the community as temporary. Attainment on entry to the nursery is very low.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school. Children enter the school with very low attainment. There is a high proportion of pupils with serious emotional and behavioural difficulties. There is a high level of mobility of pupils. The determination of the headteacher, deputy headteacher, governors and teachers to raise standards ensures that pupils make good progress through the school both in academic and personal development. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils make good progress through the school in English, mathematics, science and in their personal development.
- Provision for special educational needs is very good and pupils make good progress.
- The Nurture Unit is very effective and pupils make very good progress.
- Attitudes, personal development and relationships are very good; behaviour is good.
- Teaching is good with many very good features.
- Leadership and management of the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, key co-ordinators and the governors are very good.
- Provision for social, spiritual, moral and cultural development is very good.
- The nursery provision is very good.

What could be improved

- Standards by the age of 11 in English, mathematics and science.
- Attendance and punctuality.
- The consistency in the use of support assistants in whole-class sessions.
- The balance of time in lessons spent on each subject and on contrasting tasks.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in April 1999 and was put in serious weaknesses because of the leadership of the then headteacher. The current headteacher has been in post for a year. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection and there are no longer any serious weaknesses. The leadership and management of the current headteacher have excellent features. She has set up very effective systems throughout the school. There is now a very strong partnership between the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. Key co-ordinators are now able to carry out their roles very effectively. The governors now have far more information about the school and are therefore able to carry out their roles much more effectively. Due to the improvement in management the confidence and teamwork among all the staff has improved. This has improved the consistency of the teaching so that the quality is now good with many very good or excellent features. The outcome of the improved teaching is a better rate of progress made by all pupils through the school both in academic and personal development. This represents very good progress since the previous inspection.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11-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	D
Mathematics	E*	E	E*	E
Science	E	E	E*	E

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

Attainment of pupils aged 11 in the national tests in mathematics and science was in the lowest 5 per cent nationally. Attainment of pupils aged 7 in the 2000 national tests was well below average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools, attainment was below average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. The overall trend in attainment has been broadly average. The school sets challenging targets and strives to meet them.

The inspection judges standards of pupils aged 7 now as average in English, mathematics and science. This judgement differs from that shown by the test results because the rate of all pupils' progress has increased considerably since the headteacher has initiated new systems in teaching and assessment. Standards of pupils aged 11 are well below average in English and below average in mathematics and science.

Standards in information and communication technology for pupils aged 7 are above expectations. Standards in physical education for pupils aged 11 are above expectations. Standards in personal, social and health education are good throughout the school.

Attainment by the end of reception is at the expected level in personal, social and emotional development and creative development. Attainment is below expectations in all other areas of the curriculum and well below expectations in communication, language and literacy.

Pupils make good progress through the school. More-able pupils are challenged and reach their potential. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language make good progress. Pupils who have been at the school from the nursery make good progress through the school. The many new pupils that join the school are supported very well, settle quickly into school routines and make good progress. The new strategies to raise standards in English and mathematics achieved by the boys are having an effect and their rate of progress has increased. Pupils in the Nurture Unit make very good progress in standards of behaviour.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Attitudes towards school are very good. Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and try hard to do their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons is very good. It is very good around the school, at playtimes and lunchtimes. Pupils are very courteous to each other and to adults.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development and relationships are very good. Pupils respond very well to taking responsibility and are proud to represent their class on the school council.
Attendance	Attendance is well below average and punctuality is very poor despite the best efforts of the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall 89	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.

Just over one third of lessons inspected were very good and a similar proportion was good. A seventh of lessons were satisfactory. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. There is a small proportion of excellent teaching in Year 6 in mathematics and in music by the peripatetic teacher in Year 1. Teaching is very good in the nursery and the Nurture Unit.

Teaching of English and mathematics is very good. Teaching of basic skills is very good, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Planning in literacy and numeracy is consistently very good. Teachers have high expectations of academic and personal development. Teachers manage pupils very well. Teachers all promote homework enthusiastically and pupils take this work seriously. There is a very good level of support for pupils with special educational needs, pupils with English as an additional language and a high level of challenge for more-able pupils. Pupils acquire skills and knowledge at a good rate and try hard during lessons.

The management of support assistants is inconsistent in whole-class teaching; it is good in group sessions. Teachers do not provide enough variety of tasks in some lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	There is a strong focus on literacy and numeracy, which serves these pupils' needs very well. Personal, social and health education is excellent. Assemblies are used very effectively to enrich the curriculum. The use of the community to enrich the pupils' experiences is very good. Extra-curricular activities are varied and of high quality.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for these pupils is very good. There is a finely tuned balance between work provided in whole-class lessons and in withdrawal groups. Pupils are set clear targets and supported very well to reach them.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school values the culture of these pupils. They provide very effective opportunities to share their experiences, which raises these pupils' self esteem. This in turn gives pupils more confidence when tackling new learning and results in good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Every opportunity is grasped for developing pupils' social development and the provision is excellent. Spiritual development is planned carefully to allow very good quality reflection in assemblies and lessons. Pupils are provided with a clear moral code and are given a high level of support to carry it out. There is a very good range of activities to develop pupils' understanding of their own and other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are rigorous systems in place to monitor attendance and punctuality. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very effective and carried out consistently throughout the school. Assessment systems are very good and are used well. The learning mentor plays a valuable role in promoting good behaviour.
Partnership with parents	There is a core of dedicated parents who work very effectively in school across a range of different tasks. The school works very hard to extend the links with parents, particularly with the parents who move in

	and out of the community regularly.
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HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the headteacher and deputy headteacher have excellent features. They provide a very clear educational direction and have a great determination to raise standards in academic and personal standards. There is a high level of shared commitment to succeed among all staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors play a key role in shaping the direction of the school. They are committed to improving opportunities for each pupil. The chair and vice chair work closely with the school and have a very good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Monitoring systems are very good and ensure a high level of consistency. Very effective action is taken to carry out the school's priorities for development.
The strategic use of resources	The headteacher, deputy headteacher and key governors work skilfully to make good use of personnel and learning resources. Funding is considered very carefully and the school has successfully reduced its deficit. The school applies the principles of best value well.
Staffing, accommodation and learning resources	There is a good balance of expertise across teachers. All staff play a full part in the smooth running of the school. Accommodation is good and kept in very good order by the caretaker and cleaners. Learning resources are satisfactory overall. There is a good range of books for literacy. There is not enough practical apparatus for mathematics, artefacts for history or globes for geography.

The English, mathematics, special educational needs, information and communication technology, physical education, nursery and reception, personal social health and emotional, and Nurture Unit co-ordinators are all very effective.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Eleven per cent of parents returned the questionnaire. Twenty parents attended the parents' meeting.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has high expectations of its pupils. • Parents feel comfortable in approaching the school with questions or problems. • The school helps their children to become mature and responsible. • Teaching is good. • Their children make good progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside of lessons. • Standards of behaviour. • More effective links with parents. • Information about their children's progress.

The inspectors agree with the positive comments from parents. They disagree with the aspects some parents would like to see improved. They judge the range of activities outside of lessons to be very good and of a high quality. They judge the pupils' behaviour to be good, with very good behaviour in lessons. They judge the school to be working very hard to extend their links with parents and some of these links are of a high quality. They judge the information provided about pupils' progress to be good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter the school with very low attainment and poorly developed language skills. Many children also have low levels of personal, social and emotional development. Children make good progress in the nursery across all the aspects of the nursery curriculum and excellent progress in personal, social and emotional development due to the very good teaching. Systems established in the nursery are continued in reception. By the end of reception children are at the expected level in this area of learning. Good progress is made in all other aspects of the curriculum, but the low levels on entry result in attainment in communication, language and literacy being well below the expected level. Children enjoy listening to stories and are eager to talk about their responses, but their restricted language skills inhibit their ability to communicate these feelings. In all other areas of learning attainment is below the expected level. The exception is creative development where children reach all the aspects of the Early Learning Goals.¹ In physical development children reach the expected level when working with large apparatus, but are below expectations when handling small tools.
2. The table below shows attainment in English, mathematics and science.

	National tests 2000 Pupils aged 7	Inspection judgements Pupils aged 7	National tests 2000 Pupils aged 11	Inspection judgements Pupils aged 11
English	Reading Well below average Writing Well below average	Reading Average Writing Well below average	Well below average	Well below average
Mathematics	Below average	Average	Very low	Below average
Science	Teacher assessment Well below average	Average	Very low	Below average

3. Compared with similar schools, attainment of pupils aged 7 is below average in reading but above average in writing and mathematics. Attainment of pupils aged 11 compared with similar schools is below average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. Inspection judgements are different from those shown in the tests. This is because the very effective systems the headteacher has introduced throughout the school have had a stronger impact for this age group and the clear focus on literacy and numeracy has already had a very positive affect on learning. The trend in standards has risen in line with the national average over the past four years.

¹ Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of reception. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with the following six areas of learning: communication language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

4. The school suffers greatly from very high levels of mobility. Nearly 30 per cent of pupils taking the tests last year did not begin their education in this school. These pupils have not benefited from the school's curriculum. Conversely, over a quarter of the pupils left the school. The effort in educating these pupils is not credited to this school's standards. By the time pupils reach Year 6 these problems are compounded. In the current year group, half of the pupils did not begin their education in this school and several pupils joined during this school year. Of the pupils who have benefited from staying in the school throughout the primary phase, over 60 per cent have special educational needs. Despite these difficulties, the trend of improvement over time is broadly average. The new headteacher has set high priorities on literacy and numeracy and this clear focus is having a very positive affect on standards. The school now sets itself challenging targets and strives to meet them.
5. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 continue the good progress made in the nursery and reception. The National Literacy Strategy and the focus on reading are having a major effect in raising standards. This improvement is one of the key factors contributing to the improvement in standards since last year's national tests. Listening skills are at the expected level, but speaking skills are below expectations with pupils often speaking in short sentences or phrases. Pupils read confidently and have good skills in using non-fiction books. Pupils write sentences with correct punctuation and spell at the expected level because teachers work hard to develop these skills.
6. In mathematics, pupils aged 7 handle numbers at the expected level. They calculate answers at the expected speed during mental mathematics. There is less emphasis on other aspects of the mathematical curriculum and pupils' attainment is lower in these areas. In science, pupils have the expected level of scientific knowledge. There has been an increase in the practical activities in science, which has raised standards in investigative science to the expected level.
7. Good progress is made from Years 3 to 5. The nature of the current Year 6 means that progress compared with the average is slow. However, the progress made by each individual is good because the very good assessment systems are used well to support new pupils. The listening skills of pupils aged 11 are at the expected level because the personal and social programme of work provides a strong basis for new pupils to slot into. However, pupils are reluctant to speak in formal contexts and this aspect is below expectations. Considerable efforts have been made to raise standards in reading. The regular reading session each day is successful in increasing pupils' progress. However, these systems have not fully compensated the Year 6 pupils and attainment is well below average. Some pupils remain hesitant when reading, but all pupils handle non-fiction confidently. Clear targets are set in writing and this is raising standards. Year 6 pupils have interesting ideas and begin stories well, but they have difficulty in sustaining the structure of extended stories. Standards in handwriting are below average because it is not taught systematically.
8. Standards in mathematics for pupils aged 11 are rising, but pupils do not have sufficient confidence to reach the average level in handling number. Pupils' restricted literacy skills reduce their capacity to use technical vocabulary to express their understanding. In science there is a similar pattern. Pupils have some knowledge at the average level, particularly in aspects of health education, but overall their level of knowledge is below average.
9. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because the school arranges very good support to help them with their learning. The carefully planned work they do successfully challenges them to make good steps towards the targets defined in their individual education plans. Pupils with English as an additional language also make good

progress. Their particular needs are met carefully. Their cultural identity is celebrated in assemblies and in class. This makes them feel valued, which in turn gives them confidence to learn. The school works hard to challenge more-able pupils through higher level questioning in whole-class discussion and in more complex tasks in group work. This ensures that these pupils fulfil their potential.

10. The school has worked hard to reverse the trend of girls attaining higher than boys. This is having an affect and boys' standards have risen. The use of non-fiction has had a particularly positive impact on boys' attainment in reading.
11. The following table shows standards in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

	By the age of 7 years	By the age of 11 years
Information and communication technology	Above the expected level	At the expected level
Religious education	At the expected level	At the expected level. Pupils' knowledge of other faiths is above expectations.
Art	At the expected level	At the expected level
Design and technology	Insufficient evidence to make a judgement	Insufficient evidence to make a judgement
Geography	At the expected level	At the expected level
History	At the expected level	At the expected level
Music	At the expected level	At the expected level
Physical education	At the expected level	Above the expected level

12. Standards in literacy and numeracy are at the expected level for pupils aged 7, except in speaking, which is below expectations. By the age of 11, standards are well below expectations in literacy and below expectations in numeracy. The school has some good systems in place to raise these standards and has clear plans to extend opportunities for improving the rate of progress.
13. Since the last inspection standards for pupils aged 7 have improved in English, mathematics and science. Standards in mathematics and physical education have improved for pupils aged 11, but standards in English have fallen due to the very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6 classes. Standards have risen considerably for pupils aged 7 in information and communication technology from below expectations to above; for pupils aged 11 standards have also improved in this subject.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. The attitudes of pupils towards school and to their learning are very good. The behaviour of pupils in lessons and around school is good and often very good. However, the number of current exclusions is high with four pupils between Years 3 and 6 having been excluded from afternoon lessons. The personal development of pupils is very good, as are the relationships throughout the school community. This very strong aspect of school

life has been improved since the last inspection and all these factors have a very positive impact on pupils' learning. The school environment can rightly be described as an oasis of calm for its children.

15. Parents who were spoken to in school during the inspection also have very positive views about behaviour in school and the attitudes that the school promotes. However, the views of those parents who responded to the questionnaire or who attended the meeting have more mixed views about their children's behaviour.
16. Children in the nursery and reception develop confidence because they are given individual attention and support to settle into school life. They play happily both in the outdoor and indoor spaces and try hard to carry out the tasks provided. For example, children listened carefully to the instructions of the teacher when making star sandwiches and did their best to spread the butter across the bread.
17. In the classroom, the attitude and behaviour of pupils was good or better in 90 per cent of lessons, very good or better in 48 per cent of lessons and excellent in 7 per cent of lessons. Similar standards of behaviour were observed in the playground, in the dining hall and around school. There was no indication of any unsociable behaviour whatsoever during the inspection. Pupils are courteous to each other and to the many adults around the school. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work and try hard to do their best because they value the praise from teachers. They maintain very good levels of concentration because teachers provide interesting tasks well matched to their needs.
18. There are high standards of personal development because the school has an excellent programme of work to develop these skills through the school. Pupils have a very good understanding of right and wrong and show respect for their school. There was no evidence of litter, graffiti or vandalism in or around school. In both assembly and in class, pupils are encouraged to reflect on their actions and the impact on others and they respond very well to these opportunities. For example, in a Year 6 personal, social and health education lesson, pupils participated enthusiastically in a discussion on the dangers of alcohol both to themselves and to others. Additionally, in the school and class assemblies, where the theme for the week was 'neighbours', pupils reflected on appalling experiences that many of their friends who had fled from Kosovo had seen. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to discuss their views in class. For example, in Year 2 in art they listened very well to each other as they considered the merits of either using landscape or portrait presentation for their drawings of parts of the human face.
19. Relationships between pupils and one another, and pupils and all adults, are very good. Pupils collaborate very well in all aspects of school life and enjoy working together with adults. For example, in a Years 3/4 literacy lesson pupils applauded their class teacher after he had read out a short story that he had written. Additionally, all pupils are consistently polite and well mannered towards their teachers and visitors. They are keen to talk to visitors in and around school and become excited when they have opportunities to share their skills in activities, such as reading to visitors. The very high quality of these relationships has a very positive impact on pupils' learning.
20. Pupils respond very well to the very good opportunities to take responsibility in school and this has a very positive impact on their personal development. In particular, those pupils elected to serve on the school council demonstrate maturity, confidence and a sense of responsibility. Not only are they able to talk about the projects that they are involved in, such as the Fun Run, but they are aware of how membership of the council has benefited them. For example, "it has made me more confident" and "it's made me happy to meet people". Pupils use the 'buddy system' very confidently to find someone to play with and pupils are keen to volunteer for this responsibility. Additionally, pupils

respond very positively to the many other opportunities, such as being head boy or girl in the various houses or working the music centre in assemblies. Pupils also make generous donations to a variety of charities such as Red Nose Day, where they raised over £100, or the Fun Run, which raised £500.

21. Attendance rates continue to be a problem and they have declined since the last inspection. They are now poor and well below national average. Analysis of the very thorough statistics that the school holds shows that pupils who have left the area but who are still held on roll account for a large proportion of the absence rate. The level of unauthorised absence is well above national average. However, there are many more pupils who do not attend on a regular basis.
22. The punctuality of many pupils is also poor and there is a hard core of family groups who are consistently late on a daily basis. On one day during the inspection 43 pupils, representing almost 13 per cent of the school roll, were late, and the tally of time lost amounted to almost 13 hours.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

23. Teaching is a strength of the school. It is good with many very good and excellent features. This is a significant improvement on the previous inspection where teaching was satisfactory. Teaching is very good in the nursery. Just over one third of lessons inspected were very good and a similar proportion was good. A seventh of lessons were satisfactory and no unsatisfactory lessons were seen. There is a small proportion of excellent teaching in Year 6 in mathematics and in music lessons taught by the peripatetic teacher in Year 1.
24. Throughout the school, teachers are very good at teaching basic skills, particularly in literacy and numeracy. This is begun early in the nursery where children are given every opportunity to develop simple skills. For example, children learn how to count to 10 because they are encouraged to count everything, from their star shaped sandwiches to the number of times they can kick a ball. Building on this very good start, pupils acquire new skills at a good rate because teachers use direct teaching to explain new ideas, provide well-structured tasks to practise them and build carefully on what pupils learned previously in order to provide continuity. For example, in numeracy in Year 5 the teacher refined pupils' accuracy in finding 25 per cent of numbers by explaining a simple way of calculating the answer and by moving at a faster pace than in the previous lesson. In literacy, pupils make considerable efforts to tackle unknown words because teachers have provided them with a range of strategies to carry this out.
25. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' academic and personal standards. They expect pupils to do their best and work hard to improve. They provide challenging tasks and often give slightly easier tasks for pupils with special educational needs and more difficult tasks for more-able pupils. This ensures that individuals reach their potential. For example, in information and communication technology in Year 2 there were four different versions of the same task. This gave some pupils the confidence to complete the task and other pupils a high target to reach.
26. Teachers manage pupils very well. They give clear guidance of their expectations and provide a very good range of opportunities for pupils to work together and co-operate. They expect pupils to work harmoniously together. For example, in Year 6 in physical education pupils were organised in small teams and given tasks that required co-operation to complete them successfully, like moving around the hall on two mats without touching the floor. Behaviour is managed very well, with incidences of unsatisfactory behaviour handled sensitively but firmly. Teachers use the school systems for working

with the school mentor very effectively. This provides pupils with an outlet to resolve their frustrations without disturbing the rest of the class.

27. Teachers have good subject knowledge in literacy and numeracy, which has a significant effect on these lessons. The nursery teacher has very good understanding of her age group and the nursery curriculum. The teachers of the reception and Year 1 classes have a good understanding of the needs of the curriculum for the two age groups and organise their week carefully to provide learning at the appropriate level. The information and communication technology and physical education co-ordinators have very good subject knowledge and use it well to support their colleagues.
28. Planning in literacy and numeracy and the nursery is very good. It is detailed and consistent across the school because it has been monitored thoroughly by the headteacher. This is a great improvement on the previous inspection where planning was identified as a weakness. Assessment is used well to inform future planning with teachers fine-tuning the next day's work in the light of the progress made during each lesson. Marking is good in literacy, but is not used well enough in mathematics to set future targets for individuals.
29. Teachers use questioning well to stimulate pupils' thinking and to extend their understanding. They balance questions well during whole-class sessions, targeting individuals and ensuring both girls and boys are challenged to respond. Teachers match their questioning well to pupils with special educational needs by breaking down the questions into simple sequences. They do the opposite for more-able pupils and challenge their thinking. For example, in Year 6 in information and communication technology, more-able pupils were expected to justify their evaluations of the different websites by providing a range of criteria for their comparisons, such as the use of colour, ease of access and interesting games.
30. Teachers provide a good combination of activities across lessons. For example, they use whole-class sessions, group or individual tasks and interesting ends to lessons where learning is shared and evaluated. However, in many cases, particularly in mathematics and science, lessons are too long, which reduces the effectiveness of the learning. This often reduces the pace of lessons towards the end of the group tasks. Teachers provide effective opportunities in all subjects to extend pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills. For example, a numeracy lesson in Year 5 was held in the computer suite and extended pupils' skills in cutting and pasting on computers well whilst learning about two axes of symmetry. However, in independent writing in science, pupils do not record their findings in their own words often enough.
31. Teachers use support assistants and other adults well during group tasks. The support assistants know the pupils well and give encouragement to individuals to complete their tasks. However, the use of support assistants in whole-class sessions is inconsistent. There are examples of assistants providing valuable support at this time, by supporting pupils with special educational needs, assessing progress or working in partnership with the teacher in posing questions. However, in other lessons the support assistants play a passive role and make little contribution to this part of the lesson.
32. Teachers refer very regularly to homework during lessons and they engender enthusiasm in pupils for carrying out the work. Tasks are planned carefully to extend and consolidate the learning in school. There are clear weekly timetables for different subjects and from the nursery children are expected to take work home. However, there are considerable differences between the home responses to this work and many pupils have difficulty in carrying out the work.

33. Most class teachers are skilled at teaching pupils with special educational needs. The experienced special educational needs support teachers use their expertise well to advise their class teacher colleagues. There is an effective balance between the time spent by pupils learning as part of a whole class and those times when they are withdrawn from their classes to work in small groups, or on a one-to-one basis. When preparing their lessons, all teachers take account of the needs of these pupils and use other trained support staff very well to work with them. Teachers plan activities and groupings of pupils that ensure they are taught about all aspects of the curriculum at a degree of difficulty appropriate to their levels of attainment. For example, during part of the literacy lessons, support assistants work with small groups that include pupils with special educational needs. Pupils often work on tasks similar to those undertaken by the rest of the class, but at an appropriate level of difficulty. At the end of the task, the group may report about its work to the rest of the class.
34. Teacher support pupils with English as an additional language well. They work in partnership with specialist teachers and support staff and check carefully that these pupils understand the task. Teachers have high expectations of their learning and give them every encouragement to participate in every aspect of the lesson. For example, in numeracy in Year 2, the pupil was constantly offering answers and in physical education, the problem solving exercises were equally accessible to all pupils no matter what their level of linguistic skills.

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

35. The quality and range of the curriculum is good. All statutory requirements are met. The school has worked hard to produce a well-balanced and relevant curriculum, which meets the needs of its pupils. Provision for personal, social and health education is excellent and the provision for those pupils with special educational needs is very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The curriculum is greatly enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities and by an unusually high number of good quality visits and visitors into the school. Since the time of the last inspection the school has continued to fine tune the curricular provision particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy and has made some marked improvements.
36. The curriculum for children in the nursery and reception is good and follows the stepping stones² that lead towards the Early Learning Goals and provides all children with a firm base for their future learning. The nursery and reception are working as a cohesive unit; this is a further improvement since the time of the last inspection. The curriculum is strongly weighted towards the teaching of English and mathematics. This is appropriate in order to meet the needs of the pupils. For example, in addition to the daily literacy hour pupils have a half-hour period of reading each afternoon in Key Stage 2. As a result of this emphasis on key skills, time for some other subjects, such as design and technology, art, geography and history, is limited and the school, being aware of this, is seeking ways to improve how these subjects are taught. Improving standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science will remain an essential priority for the school for some time and, until this is achieved, the school is aware that the balance of the curriculum may continue to suffer.
37. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are now implemented effectively in all classes and are having a very positive effect on raising standards. Where there are parallel and mixed-age classes, rigorous monitoring of the curriculum planning ensures that none of the pupils miss out on their entitlement. A good feature of the work throughout the school is the number of occasions that teachers make reference in other

² The stepping stones are the different stages in the government curriculum for children in the nursery and reception.

subject areas to links with work done in literacy and numeracy. Information and communication technology is combined very effectively with other areas of the curriculum to extend knowledge of the subjects while developing computer skills. For example, in the Year 2 classes pupils developed understanding about producing databases through work on mini-beasts in science. Teachers set targets for pupils. These are shared with parents and help ensure that teachers plan lessons that focus on what the pupils need to learn next.

38. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities. These are well attended by the pupils and make a wonderful contribution to both the curriculum and to the ethos of the school. One of the many strengths of this provision is the inclusion of parents in the activities. The carousel of activities held in the community room had a delightful mix of parents and teachers working alongside each other, providing a range of activities from collage and mask making to pool and sewing. While this was taking place rehearsals in the school hall were under way for the annual talent contest, again led by teachers and parents. Visits out of school and visitors into school are extensive and range from short trips to study the local church to visits to Norway to see their partner school. All these activities not only bring richness to the curriculum, but also have a great impact on the attitudes of the pupils towards their learning.
39. The school works hard to achieve its mission statement and is very successful in fully implementing all of its aims. These are present in every aspect of its work and enable it to provide very good equality of access and opportunity to every pupil.
40. A great strength of this school is the excellent way in which it promotes pupils' personal, social and health education. In every aspect of their life in school pupils learn how to become good citizens. Assemblies increase pupils' understanding of moral and social dilemmas. Teachers encourage healthy lifestyles and many visitors come into the school to support this, for example the dentist, nurse and advisers on drugs and healthy eating. The extremely good sex education policy involves pupils in very mature discussions on every aspect about growing older and the changes that occur.
41. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is one of the strengths of the school, and has improved since the previous inspection. The school plans excellent opportunities for social development and very good opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral and cultural understanding. Lessons are designed to develop this understanding.
42. Collective worship makes a very good contribution to spiritual development. There are good quality opportunities for prayer and quiet reflection at these times, whether the venue is the school hall, the community room or the classrooms. Teachers establish a positive ethos by good use of suitable music and lighted candles. In class, pupils sit in silence with the main class lights out so that they focus entirely on the lighted candle as they wait for a few moments for latecomers to arrive. Spiritual development is also encouraged through a range of stimulating visits. For example, pupils experienced feelings of awe and wonder when they stood beside the feet of the 'Angel of the North'. Visits to art galleries provide pupils with very good opportunities to reflect on human achievements.
43. Moral development is promoted strongly. Teachers and other staff set very good examples of care and respect for others. They listen carefully to pupils' contributions and value their views. They have established very good systems to provide pupils with opportunities to express their opinions. Pupils show that they have acquired values that reflect thought and responsibility for others in the community. Pupils show deep concern for the health of parents and others who smoke. Staff use a wide range of awards and

achievements are shared very positively in a weekly assembly. For example, pupils greatly value the 'Star pupil of the week' from each class, which is presented with a certificate. Pupils who speak English as an additional language all receive encouragement and praise from the headteacher as her special award of the week. These occasions provide clear messages to everyone about the values that the school stands for: good behaviour, thoughtfulness, effort and perseverance.

44. The very good relationships and the strong spirit of teamwork between members of the school community set the tone for pupils' social development. Teachers provide excellent opportunities in lessons for pupils to work together in pairs, groups and teams. They encourage pupils to listen to each other with courtesy and to show respect for the views of others. There is a very good range of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, which they thoroughly enjoy. Pupils regard these duties very seriously and show commitment to their role. The school operates a number of popular clubs ranging from Breakfast Club to the Community Club, when the variety of activities encourages interaction and collaboration, for instance, in playing board games. The school's unique 'Brighton Buddies' scheme successfully promotes care and consideration for others by providing opportunities for older pupils to play with younger ones at playtimes. These systems and attitudes foster pupils' sense of citizenship. There are strong links with the community and pupils take part in fund-raising events for charity.
45. Provision for cultural development is very good. Links are being forged with schools in South Africa and Norway. Pupils are surprised at the similarity in language between Norwegian and English, for example *katte* for cat, *kniv* for knife. Very good use is made of the locality and the school invites visitors to school with special contributions to make, such as the author and illustrator Frank Rogers. Pupils' own cultural traditions are promoted effectively through visits to local places of interest. Teachers organise high quality visits. For example, the local television station televised pupils' dance about the 'Angel of the North' sculpture. Teachers provide very good opportunities to study the work of local artists as well as those from other countries and times, such as Picasso or unknown Chinese potters. Work alongside artists greatly enhances pupils' understanding of artistic processes. Teachers provide strong links from art to literature. For example, pupils read the story of *Dionysus* as depicted in a painting seen in an art gallery. These experiences clearly make a deep impression upon pupils. In their own Big Book Guide to the Gallery, they write, "When we're grown up, will we remember the time when Dionysus and his tiger came to life in the art gallery?" Their experience of musical traditions is enriched by regular visits from the teachers of the peripatetic service, whose last workshop was titled 'Music from around the World'. Work in history and geography also contributes well to pupils' cultural development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

46. The school takes good care of its pupils. This level of care is enhanced by the very good knowledge that staff have of their pupils and the very high quality of relationships that exist throughout the school community.
47. The school follows local education guidelines for child protection and health and safety. Comprehensive and effective procedures are in place and this results in a safe and secure environment for the pupils. Appropriate arrangements also exist for first aid and the recording of accidents in school. The supervision of pupils at dinnertime and in the playground is very effective and midday assistants play an important part in the school family. The governing body undertakes regular risk assessments around the school. It now appreciates and understands the need to augment these with more regular and formal health and safety inspections and fire drills.

48. The school is skilled at identifying pupils with special educational needs and in putting in place closely monitored programmes to support their learning. The pupils' very good individual education plans spell out what action needs to be taken to ensure that their learning moves forward in clearly defined steps. Class teachers and special educational needs teachers refer regularly to these plans when they prepare work for the pupils, with the result that the support is appropriate to their needs. Staff regularly review and update the plans with parents and set new, achievable and timed, targets.
49. The procedures for promoting and monitoring behaviour are very good. The school has high expectations for the behaviour of its pupils. These are based on simple but effective rules such as 'We expect our children to be helpful, to walk around school and show good manners'. This has a positive impact in that pupils have a very good idea of right and wrong and respond well.
50. The school works very hard, in close liaison with the support services, to promote, encourage and monitor attendance and punctuality. The statistics, which clearly identify trends and problem families, are very thorough. However, not all parents and carers see the need to respond in an appropriate way.
51. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good. The school knows its pupils, and their backgrounds, very well and is able to provide this support for activities both in and out of school.
52. In the last inspection, the school's assessment procedures were judged to be adequate. Since then, the assessment co-ordinator has succeeded in bringing about considerable improvement. Very good systems are now in place throughout the school for assessing each pupil's achievement in English and mathematics. Arrangements are not as good in science because teachers rely principally on the results of national tests. However, the school has clear plans to begin using the pre- and post-unit tests for science. Similarly, assessment procedures are not in place for other subjects. However, during the past year the school has been evaluating new systems, which are planned to be fully in place next year. The information and communication technology assessment systems are good quality, but have only recently been introduced. In English and mathematics, teachers use a range of optional as well as statutory tests to measure and analyse pupils' attainment and progress. They have also sought the guidance of local educational advisors to improve their accuracy in moderating standards of reading, writing and mathematics against nationally agreed standards. All teachers keep meticulous records of the regular assessments they carry out. They analyse these carefully and produce grids, which clearly identify the levels that individual pupils have achieved as well as the areas where there are weaknesses.
53. Teachers make good use of assessment information to inform their planning and this reflects good improvement since the last inspection. On two occasions each term, teachers set clear targets for improvement in mathematics and English, which they share with both pupils and parents. These are attached to the front of exercise books. Most pupils are acutely aware of what their personal targets are and this builds positive attitudes to learning. They also provide useful guidance for support staff when working with individuals or groups and have made a positive contribution to the recent improvement in standards. In most subjects, teachers use a colour coding system at the end of each topic to assess how successfully pupils have achieved and this is also effective. Teachers' marking of work is often good, but varies from subject to subject. In the majority of subjects, teachers mark work regularly and often add encouraging comments. However, they sometimes miss opportunities to point out good features or weaknesses in pupils' work and identify what could be improved. This is particularly the case in mathematics, where immediate improvements from pieces of work are not

identified regularly to allow pupils to make small steps towards their overall target. In English books, teachers throughout the school very effectively use a system that clearly identifies pupils' strengths and targets for improvement. This strategy has not been extended across other subjects.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

54. Overall, the partnership that the school has developed with its parents is good. The impact of that partnership is very good. This aspect of school life has improved since the last inspection. Comments made by parents who were interviewed in school were always very positive and their views over-ride the responses of the small number of parents who attended the meeting and who responded to the questionnaire, and who identified concerns about the range of activities outside of lessons, standards of behaviour, information about their children's progress and the links with parents. The judgements of the inspection do not confirm these concerns.
55. A number of parents, grandparents and carers help out in school on a regular basis and more assist on visits into the community. Some provide specialist help with information and communication technology, sorting library books, helping with the breakfast club or organising the fruit bar as part of the healthy eating campaign. Additionally, a group of mothers come into school one afternoon a week to help with the production of resources. All this help is greatly valued by the school and it makes a very good impact on pupils' learning. There is little formal support for the Friends Association but a small, hard working and committed group of parents and friends sells school uniforms and raises money through events such as the 'sponsored silence' which one parent undertook. Attendance at the weekly family assemblies is good. There are frequently up to 20 parents and other family members present.
56. The information produced by the school for its parents is good. The regular newsletters are informative. Additionally, parents are told what topics their children will be studying each half term in curriculum letters. The quality of annual reports on pupils' progress is satisfactory. The school is in the process of improving these for this year in order to give more prominence to attendance and punctuality records.
57. Despite a lack of involvement by some parents, the school makes good efforts to work closely with the parents of pupils with special educational needs when reviewing their children's progress, and agreeing strategies for reaching new learning targets.
58. The support provided by parents and carers to home reading and homework is unsatisfactory overall, although there are some parents who hear their children read on a regular basis. These parents also make useful comments in the home reading record book. When this support is given it makes an effective contribution to their children's learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

59. The leadership and management of the headteacher and deputy headteacher have excellent features. They work very effectively together in setting a very clear educational direction for the work of the school. This is based on a shared and far-sighted vision of the role of the school both for every individual pupil and for the school as a core of the community. Together, they have extended the shared commitment for improvement to all staff and ensure a high capacity to succeed. For example, there is now a good rate of progress through the school for pupils despite the great difficulties caused by many pupils leaving or entering the school midway through their primary education.
60. The headteacher has a great determination to raise academic and personal standards. Through her hard work and understanding of key educational systems and developments, she has turned around the serious weakness in the leadership of the headteacher from the previous inspection to a major strength of the school. She implements changes sensitively and establishes well-organised systems across the school to provide a high level of consistency throughout the school. This has ensured that the individual strengths of the teachers are now co-ordinated and has resulted in a considerable improvement in standards, particularly for pupils aged 7 years. The headteacher has introduced new planning systems and monitors them very carefully, celebrating the good features and identifying areas for improvement. She has a very good understanding of needs of the school. She knows individual pupils well. They appreciate her praise when celebrating achievements and respect her authority when handling disciplinary issues. For example, in the celebration assembly, all pupils maintained a high level of concentration when finding out about other pupils' successes because the headteacher placed great value on each detail of every individual's work.
61. The deputy headteacher plays a valuable role within the school. She provided a crucial link between the previous and current headteachers. She works very hard to ensure her areas of responsibility are fulfilled to a high standard. She is a very effective leader of the Nurture Unit and has set up high quality assessment systems throughout the school. Key co-ordinators are very effective in carrying out their responsibilities. The English, mathematics, special educational needs, information and communication technology, personal social health and emotional, nursery and reception and physical education co-ordinators all work hard to provide guidance and support in their subject areas and play a crucial role in raising standards.
62. The governors play a very effective role in shaping the direction of the school. They have worked very hard since the first inspection to redeem the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection. For example, they set targets for the previous headteacher and appointed the current, very effective, headteacher. The chair and vice chair of governors have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school because they meet regularly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher to discuss key developments within the school. All governors appreciate the considerable improvements in the amount of information they receive which allows them to carry out their monitoring role well. They take their responsibilities very seriously and consider changes to the school very carefully. Governors are regular visitors to the school and carry out a range of tasks that support the quality of the school's work. For example, a governor runs the breakfast club each morning. Governors are linked with the subject co-ordinators and are developing their understanding of the work of the school in particular subjects. For example, the vice chair works regularly in the computer suite and helps individual pupils during lessons.
63. The headteacher sets very clear priorities for improvement. She ensures a high capacity for success through identifying key targets for improvement. For example, since she took

up her post she has identified a focus on literacy, numeracy and behaviour management. This has allowed teachers to concentrate their efforts in raising standards in these areas through concerted attention to the school's provision. School improvement planning is now thorough, which is a great improvement on the previous inspection. The current plan is based on a thorough audit of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is presented clearly. It provides a firm platform for future school improvement plans. Governors are involved in the planning process and co-ordinators' individual action plans will be included in the next planning cycle.

64. Monitoring of teaching is very good. The headteacher is particularly good in providing detailed analyses of lessons, identifying strengths and clearly written points for development. Planning is monitored thoroughly with regular written comments on both termly and weekly plans. Very careful scrutiny of pupils' work is carried out in literacy and numeracy to identify inconsistencies in teachers' systems. The school plans to extend this scrutiny to science in order to further raise standards.
65. The school benefits well from a range of experienced and more recently qualified staff. Strengths exist in the teaching of English, mathematics and special educational needs. This enables the curriculum to be taught effectively. The teaching support staff are also well matched to the needs of their classes, particularly those support assistants who work with pupils with special educational needs. There are good procedures in place for staff development with performance targets set clearly for each teacher. There are very good arrangements for the induction of new teachers. A newly qualified teacher described the support that she is being given by her teaching mentor and the rest of the staff-room team as 'brilliant'.
66. All members of the staff, whether they are teaching or non-teaching, are seen as members of the school team and are given opportunities to play a full and effective role in school life. The learning mentor makes a major contribution with the monitoring and follows up behavioural problems very effectively. He spends much of his time in one-to-one counselling sessions with pupils and works very sensitively in different contexts across the whole school day. For example, he monitors pupils' behaviour first thing in the morning and ensures that pupils receive support to allow them to begin the day positively.
67. The adequacy of accommodation is good overall and very good for children in the Foundation Stage. The community room is spacious and is used very effectively by the school for a wide range of activities. The school grounds are spacious and the inclusion of an all weather surface increases the opportunities for physical education. The school provides a very warm and welcoming atmosphere for pupils, staff and visitors and it is very well cared for and maintained by the hardworking caretaker and cleaners. Every opportunity is taken to provide high quality displays to celebrate pupils' achievement. For example, there are several key notice boards with the best work produced during the week in literacy, art and information and communication technology. Resources in school are satisfactory overall. The range of books for literacy is good. However, deficiencies exist in mathematics, where there is not enough practical equipment, in history, where there are not enough artefacts, and in geography, where there are not enough globes.
68. The financial management of the school is now good and it has improved since the last inspection. Governors have a far better understanding of financial matters and are keen to make further improvements by producing their own development plan. They have a good understanding of the best value principles and they are applied appropriately in self-evaluation and when making any major decisions. The financial planning completed by the senior management team and governors provides good support for the priorities that are identified in the school development plan. All specific grants are used effectively for

the benefit of the school and the school has addressed all the recommendations that were made in a recent financial audit carried out by the local education authority. Financial control is good.

69. Attainment on entry to the school is very low. There is a very high rate of mobility of pupils leaving and entering the school through their schooling. Despite these difficulties pupils make consistently good progress through the school. Attitudes, personal development and relationships are very good and behaviour is good. The leadership and management have some excellent features. Teaching has many very good features. The Nurture Unit is high quality. The cost per pupil is high. Taking all this into account the school gives very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

70. In order to further improve the school's provision the governors, headteacher and staff should:-

- (1) raise standards from Year 3 to Year 6 in English by:-
- increasing the emphasis on the quality of handwriting throughout the school;
 - planning lessons specifically designed to improve speaking skills and taking opportunities to develop clearer speech as they arise in the school day;
 - creating further opportunities for extended writing skills across the curriculum;

Paragraphs 2, 5, 7, 93 - 103

- (2) raise standards from Year 3 to Year 6 in mathematics by:-
- improving the balance of activities across mathematics lessons;
 - increasing the amount of resources for practical activities;
 - paying more attention to pupils' presentation of work;
 - improving the consistency of marking;

Paragraphs 2, 7, 107 - 108, 110, 113 - 114, 116

- (3) raise standards from Year 3 to Year 6 in science by:-
- establishing a regular system of monitoring and evaluating the quality and quantity of pupils' work;
 - reviewing the effectiveness of the length of lessons;
 - ensuring that all pupils, as they move through the school, have increasing opportunities to write independently about their own scientific ideas;
 - applying regularly a more thorough approach to assessing pupils' learning;
 - using the results of assessment to plan work in lessons that consistently matches pupils' individual levels of attainment;

Paragraphs 2, 7, 121 - 123, 126, 128, 130 - 131, 133

- (4) improve rates of attendance and punctuality by:-
- consolidating the high quality monitoring and identification of trends in attendance;
 - extending procedures for encouraging parents to value the importance of good attendance and punctuality;
 - considering new initiatives.

Paragraphs 21 - 22, 50

The school has already identified these improvement issues.

In addition to the improvement issues the governors should also include the following weakness in their action plan:-

- analyse the timing of lessons and assemblies within the school day in order to balance the range of activities and maximise learning potential;

Paragraphs 30, 119, 131

- improve the consistency of the support of support assistants in whole-class sessions.

Paragraphs 31, 113

INSPECTION OF THE NURTURE UNIT

71. The Nurture Group is a strength of the school and contributes to the very good provision for pupils with special educational needs at the school. It caters for up to 12 pupils from Years 3 to 6 who are finding it difficult to conform to the expectations of school for a variety of reasons. Many of the pupils have not yet achieved the developmental level of other pupils of the same age and some of them, at times, present behaviour that is difficult to manage. Pupils can attend for 2 or 3 sessions a week or every morning and they are expected to return to their classes after 3 or 4 terms, although some do remain for longer. There are a number of Nurture Groups in the local education authority (LEA) and training is provided for staff to ensure that the rationale behind the provision is fully understood.
72. The provision is for girls and boys. At the time of the inspection, all the pupils were boys. The pupils attend the Nurture Group for their literacy and numeracy hour work and most of them then return to their own classes for afternoon lessons. They make very good progress overall. The progress made in English and mathematics is good. The progress they make in developing their social and behavioural skills is very good. They become more emotionally secure and learn to deal with their own frustrations. This means that they are more ready to learn. They take care with their work and presentation and are proud of their own achievements. They sustain their progress when they return to lessons in the afternoon and are able to be fully included in lessons with their peers. This demonstrates a very good improvement. For some pupils it means they do not have to be excluded.
73. Teaching and learning within the Nurture Group are consistently very good. All lessons are taught with an emphasis on the personal, social and emotional needs of the pupils. The importance of body language, including eye contact, is shared with the pupils and they learn to monitor the messages that they are giving to others. For example, when they say, "Would you like a drink?" at snack time they notice whether eye contact is made and gently remind each other if it is forgotten. A calm atmosphere is created in the classroom. The pupils develop strong attachments to the staff, which enables them to trust that the adults will help them to manage their emotions and behaviour. The pupils' behaviour is managed in a positive way. For example, they are given the opportunity to have a quiet talk with a member of staff if they are unhappy about anything or if they are finding it hard to settle to work. They are given rewards frequently during lessons and they value these greatly. The pupils are grouped carefully so that work is matched closely to their level and also to allow them the opportunity to learn how to work with different pupils.
74. When the pupils return to their classes in the afternoons, teaching and learning varies from very good to satisfactory. Where teaching provides a very good environment for Nurture Group pupils, there is a calm atmosphere in the class and pupils know clearly what they should be doing at each stage of the lesson. Opportunities are given for the Nurture Group pupil to work with other pupils and there are clear boundaries, with warnings given about expected behaviour and consequences of the pupil's choice of action. In some lessons, Nurture Group pupils' needs are not fully met because they are not given enough support.
75. The curriculum is good overall. The literacy and numeracy work from the pupils' classes, from Year 3 to Year 6, is carefully adapted and matched to the ability levels of the pupils. Tasks are selected to be motivating for the pupils, such as writing numbers from 100 and thinking up multiplication questions, making a Snakes and Ladders game, and writing a

poem within the shape of an animal. The teachers ensure that snack and break times are structured to help the pupils to gain social skills and to experience a family atmosphere where they can learn consideration of others and an appreciation of being accepted as part of a caring group. This provides excellent opportunities for the pupils' social and moral development.

76. Assessment is very good. A profile of each pupil's difficulties and needs is gained by using a published scheme, which includes looking at each pupil's self-image and attitudes of how much they feel they are able to influence their experiences. The unit invites parents to make contact with the Nurture Group staff before and after school on any day. Several parents use this time for informal contact with the school. The Nurture Group pupils are encouraged to do their homework and parents will frequently discuss this with the staff.
77. The leadership and management are very good. There is a clear idea of the philosophy behind Nurture Groups and all staff have training by the originator of Nurture Groups. There is a continual evaluation by the school as to the best way to organise the provision. The issues of giving the pupils additional opportunities in order to maximise the possibility of successful inclusion in the future are thought through carefully and continually reviewed. For example, a decision has been made to include break times with the Nurture Group pupils together and away from the pupils' own classes. The data obtained by assessment is analysed and used to inform decisions about the provision and individual pupils. All systems are very well organised and provide detailed information, including precisely targeted teaching. The policy document is clear. However, it does not provide detailed information on the planning of the pupils' return to their own classes.
78. The unit is well staffed. The deputy headteacher is the teacher in charge and there is a part-time teacher and a classroom assistant. They work very closely together. In the afternoons, the deputy headteacher is available to support any pupils having difficulty in classes. This has enabled pupils who were previously running out of the grounds, to stay in school. The accommodation is very good. There is a comfortable area for 'Circle Time', tables for a working area and a kitchen where the pupils cook and have their snacks.
79. The school has a clear understanding that the Nurture Group is part of their strategy to reduce exclusions. The presence of the Nurture Group extends the school's ethos of caring and nurturing to those pupils who have great emotional difficulties and who are difficult to manage. However, this could be extended further, for example, by more monitoring of the Nurture Group pupils' ability to cope within their own classes and extending the use of the excellent teaching of appropriate body language and eye contact to other pupils and teachers.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	90
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	44

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2	41	41	16	0	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)	21	312
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	167

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	7	121

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	11

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	95
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	87

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.5
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.0
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	14	22	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	8	9	13
	Girls	14	17	20
	Total	22	26	33
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	61 (64)	72 (75)	92 (71)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	8	11	10
	Girls	15	18	16
	Total	23	29	26
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	64 (71)	81 (71)	72 (84)
	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	32	25	57

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	17	16	20
	Girls	14	8	12
	Total	31	24	32
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	54 (53)	42 (53)	56 (60)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	11	18	15
	Girls	10	13	13
	Total	21	31	28
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	37 (42)	54 (36)	49 (49)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	245
Any other minority ethnic group	28

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.3
Average class size	21

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	225

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	16
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	9	0
Other minority ethnic groups	1	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
	£
Total income	787,694
Total expenditure	794,060
Expenditure per pupil	2,350
Balance brought forward from previous year	-6,366
Balance carried forward to next year	-1,768

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 11%

Number of questionnaires sent out	333
Number of questionnaires returned	36

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	28	16	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	42	44	3	3	8
Behaviour in the school is good.	25	36	17	11	11
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	42	14	5	0
The teaching is good.	44	44	3	3	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	31	20	9	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	56	36	3	5	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	44	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	29	42	14	14	1
The school is well led and managed.	36	36	14	8	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	31	61	3	5	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	25	8	14	28

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

80. The quality of education provided for children in the nursery and reception is a strength of the school. Children enter the nursery with very low levels of attainment and although they do not reach the majority of the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year they do make good progress.
81. The majority of children enter the nursery after their third birthday and transfer into the two reception/Year 1 classes in the September following their fourth birthday. Careful assessments made of the new entrants, soon after they start school, confirm that they have very poorly developed language skills and that their personal, social and emotional development presents many problems. In the nursery, there are already children on the special educational needs register by the end of the first term.
82. The quality of teaching observed was never less than satisfactory and on a number of occasions the teaching was very good. In the nursery, the teaching is very good. Throughout the nursery and reception, relationships with the children are excellent. Teachers value the children and use praise and encouragement to raise their self-esteem and confidence. This in turn makes the children want to try hard to please their teachers and to produce work of which they can be proud. Even in the most difficult circumstances when dealing with children with behavioural problems, staff remain calm, supportive and very caring, offering an affectionate cuddle rather than a reprimand. Teachers and support staff work closely together as a strong team promoting a lively learning environment and a wide and varied curriculum. Planning is very good throughout the Foundation Stage. Assessments are regular and rigorous and plot the progress of each child. Observations of children, made during the morning and afternoon by the nursery teacher and the nursery nurse, are discussed in detail. These important assessments at the end of each session are then very effectively used to inform the planning of future activities. Particular care is taken to include all of the children in every aspect of learning. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils who have English as a second language are very effectively supported. They have full access to the curriculum and make good progress in their learning. Improvements since the last inspection have taken place across the curriculum and in the teaching of pupils with special educational needs.

Personal, social and emotional development

83. There is a very strong emphasis placed on the personal, social and emotional development of the children. This results in the children making excellent progress in this aspect of learning. As a result, by the time children leave the reception classes they have achieved the required goals. This includes children with special educational needs. This is an area of strength. Staff establish a calm supportive atmosphere where even the most troubled children feel cared for and secure. In the nursery, children confidently come in at the start of each session. On the activities board they find their own name and then place it on the activity they would like to begin with. This is an important step towards becoming independent and making their own choices. By the time they are in the reception classes they confidently go into their group activities with the minimum amount of fuss and organise themselves into the tasks they have been given. In these activities they appreciate the needs of others, share resources and wait for their turn. Almost all co-operate happily with each other. For example, the whole of the nursery class work effectively together to control the parachute in physical education. They respond to well-established class rules, taking responsibility for tidying away, and they

handle equipment with care. Most children relate happily to each other and show genuine pleasure at the successes of others.

Communication, language and literacy

84. The curriculum for the development of children's language and literacy skills is good. The consistently good quality teaching ensures that children make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills and develop a real enjoyment of books and stories. The majority of children who enter the nursery have very low levels of language and find it difficult to make themselves understood. The nursery staff work hard to develop and increase children's early literacy skills. They promote these skills by taking every opportunity to engage the children in conversation. For example, when children used pasta and glue to create a collage picture the nursery nurse talked with them about shapes, colours and the texture of the materials they were using. This soon gives children the confidence to begin conversations and the boy, curious about a tie asked, "What is it?" and after a brief explanation he asked the sensible question "What is it for?" For children who entered school at the beginning of the year with little language this is good progress and indicates the consistent hard work the staff put in to this area of learning. At the beginning of the morning the nursery children enjoy a shared story told by the teacher. They thoroughly enjoy the experience and are happy to answer simple questions about the story. In spite of the very good teaching and curriculum many children still experience difficulty in speaking confidently to each other and to adults. Well-structured activities enable children to learn how to hold pencils and pens correctly, but the development of their early writing skills is slow.
85. Children continue to make good progress in the reception classes. The reception class teachers use the literacy strategy very effectively to increase the children's enjoyment of books as well as their listening, speaking and reading skills. Books are promoted very effectively in lessons, but there are some missed opportunities for children to use books independently around the classroom. The children make good progress in learning letter sounds, but still have difficulty in using these skills to build words. Teachers provide careful and effective support for children with special educational needs. These children make good progress in their learning and are fully included in all the language activities. Although most children enjoy talking about what is happening in the books they share with the teacher, they do not speak naturally in sentences and many have immature speech patterns. Through well-structured activities children continue to make progress in developing their writing skills. Many, however, still have problems in forming letters correctly. Most children are unlikely to reach all the expected levels by the time they reach the end of the reception year, with attainment well below the expected level. However, the majority do acquire satisfactory listening skills.

Mathematical development

86. The teaching of children's mathematical development is very good. Although the children's standards are very low when they first come to school, they make good progress in developing their number skills. All staff in the nursery and reception classes promote these skills very well through a very carefully planned programme of work. This includes the use of construction activities, many high quality games and a very strong emphasis on number throughout the displays in the classrooms. There is good support for children with special educational needs and this enables them to work alongside their classmates and make good progress in their learning.
87. All children make good progress in their ability to count, sequence and recognise pattern. In the nursery, a sequencing activity in the outdoor play area shows that the majority of the children are beginning to develop an understanding of this aspect of mathematics. In

reception, the more-able children count, order and recognise numbers up to 10. In one class, the teacher had jumbled up all the numbers on the classroom number lines and the task one little girl had to do was to make sure that they were all in the correct order. She showed her knowledge of numbers up to 10 by quickly carrying out this task correctly and without any assistance. A strong feature of the work in these classes is the way in which all staff seize every opportunity to introduce numbers or mathematical language into activities. The children making pasta patterns were also being skilfully taught about different shapes by the nursery nurse. Children in the reception classes have a well-structured session of number work each day. This includes elements from the National Numeracy Strategy and provides the children with appropriate experiences in preparation for the next stages in their learning. Children enjoy their mathematical activities. Reception children, engaged in a range of activities teaching them directional language, thought that it was great fun to have the letter L put on your left hand and R on the right hand. Although the progress they make is good, the children's poor use of spoken language inhibits much of the work in mathematics, particularly when responding to questions. It is for this reason that the greater majority of children have considerable ground to make up and their attainment is below the expected level by the time they enter Year 1.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

88. The teaching and curriculum for children's knowledge and understanding of the world are very good. Although many children enter the nursery with very limited understanding of their world, they make good progress and achieve some of the Early Learning Goals. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Children achieve particularly well in their areas of investigation and in finding out about the place in which they live and the natural environment that surrounds them. Very good use is made of visits and visitors to widen the children's often very narrow experiences. In the nursery they carry out exciting visits. For example, their journey to the airport included a visit to the local station and a ride on the Metro. In the reception classes, the children visit local churches such as St Chad's Church and learn about its interesting features. Very good use is made of the local grounds where children often go to observe the plants and flowers that are growing. During this work they look at shape, colour, size and texture and make very good map pictures about where they have found particular things. This good work introduces them to early investigative skills and begins the process of using maps and mapping skills. The planting of their own seeds and then observing how they grow and what they need to grow helps them not only to understand about life but also how we need to care for things. Children learn how to use the computer keyboard and control the mouse and their attainment in this area is at the expected level. However, overall, children's limited language skills restrict the work in this area of learning and attainment is below the expected level.

Physical development

89. Teaching of physical development is good. The nursery has access to an outdoor area. This is used very well to help children to develop their control and co-ordination skills. They enjoy riding the range of wheeled toys, climbing on the frame and playing with balls, and are becoming increasingly skilful in using the space sensibly. All children in the nursery and reception have access to the school hall where they learn to catch and throw and gain greater control over their body movements. In these aspects of their development the children's attainment is at the expected level. However, in spite of the very good provision for children to develop control over small tools such as pencils, their progress in this area is slower. Children have many opportunities to use pencils, crayons, paintbrushes, scissors and glue from the beginning of their time in the nursery and are showing increasing control in using them appropriately. By the end of reception, however, they still find it difficult to form simple letter shapes and to remember how to

hold the chalk. Most children are unlikely to reach the expected level by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their physical development and are fully included in all the aspects.

Creative development

90. The provision for creative development is good. The teaching of basic techniques throughout the nursery and reception is very effective and this enables the children to learn well. In the nursery children mix, use and apply paint with confidence. They use different types of pasta to create a collage picture and use different shapes of paper to make their own dinosaurs. The children’s work shows an increasing awareness of shape, pattern and colour as they progress through these classes. All the children thoroughly enjoy singing; they can sing simple songs from memory and show a good sense of rhythm. They love songs with actions in them and carry out these with great enthusiasm. The majority of the children achieve the expected level by the time they leave the reception class, including those pupils with special educational needs.
91. The quality of leadership in the Foundation Stage is exemplary. Many children who enter the nursery have gone through serious traumas in their lives, but are fortunate in finding themselves in a supportive and caring environment. Many are reassured by the staff, who care so much for them, and by the programme of emotional and physical support that has been skilfully put in place. Children who attend this school and come in via the nursery and reception classes are indeed fortunate.
92. **Areas to develop**
- Increase the opportunities for children to use books independently around the classroom.

ENGLISH

93. Standards are judged in different ways. The tables show the main judgements for the school.

At age 11	National Tests 2000 National comparison	Inspection judgement	Comments
Level 4, the expected level	Well below average	Well below average	The current Year 6 pupils achieve slightly lower standards at Levels 4 and 5 due to disrupted learning and high mobility. An improving picture, however, from Year 3 to 5, where progress is good.
Level 5, above the expected level	Well below average	Well below average	

At age 7	National Tests 2000 National comparison	Inspection judgement	Comments
Reading			
Level 2, the expected level	Well below average	In line	The school has successfully concentrated its efforts on improving reading at both levels over the past year.
Level 3, above the expected level	Well below average	In line	
Writing			
Level 2, the expected level	Well below average	In line	Increased, clearly focused support and target setting is improving attainment at Level 2 and above and raising overall standards.
Level 3, above the expected level	Above average	In line	
Speaking and listening	2000 Teacher assessment		
Level 2, the expected level	Well below average	At the expected level in listening but	Pupils listen well and their progress is better in listening than in speaking.
Level 3, above the expected level	Below average	Below expectations in speaking	The school places too little emphasis on the quality of speaking.

94. Compared with similar schools, attainment in the 2000 national tests was below average in reading, and above average in writing for pupils aged 7 years. In the same comparison, attainment for pupils aged 11 was below average.
95. There has been significant improvement in overall standards in English by the age of 7 since the last inspection, when attainment was well below average. Standards are also rising from Years 3 to 5 and all pupils make good progress from Year 1 up to Year 5. This provides a good basis for improving standards in the future by the end of Year 6. This improvement has arisen because the quality of teaching is now consistently good in these year groups and teachers make good use of assessment to provide extra support where it is most needed in order to raise standards. Similarly, the school provides clearly focused support for pupils with special educational needs and they also make good progress. Pupils for whom English is an additional language also make good progress because teachers and support staff meet their needs effectively. Progress in Year 6 is slower and is satisfactory overall, with slightly fewer pupils than last year likely to achieve the expected Level 4 or 5. This is despite the consistently very good quality of teaching in Year 6. Both teachers work extremely hard to raise standards and have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitude to their work. There are a number of factors that contribute to the slower rate of progress in Year 6 compared with the rest of the school. First, the quality of teaching in one of the Year 6 classes was unsatisfactory for the first part of the current year and this had a negative effect on achievement. Second, there was considerable disruption to staffing when these pupils were in Year 5 and they were taught by a succession of supply teachers, which also hindered progress. Third, because of the high rate of family mobility in the area, only 26 out of the 47 pupils currently in Year 6 have attended the school continually since they were 7 years old.

Finally, 16 of the 26 who remain are on the school's register for special educational needs. The school has produced reliable data to indicate that the majority of those who have attended the school continually since Year 2 have made good progress in relation to their prior attainment.

96. The school has successfully concentrated its efforts on raising standards through the National Literacy Strategy. This is clearly reflected in the improved rate of achievement in Years 1 to 5 and the significantly higher standards from last year's national tests, which pupils achieve by the age of 7 years. The subject co-ordinator has put very effective assessment systems in place. Teachers throughout the school keep meticulous records of individual and group assessments in reading, writing and speaking and listening. Using these assessments, they set clear targets for improvement in reading and writing and use these to inform medium and short term planning. Furthermore, they work closely with support staff to organise sharply focused work for targeted groups. This has enabled them to improve standards by the end of Year 2. Higher numbers of pupils than last year now achieve the expected Level 2 and the higher Level 3 in reading and there is improved attainment overall in writing. Similarly, very effective support from Years 3 to 6, in the form of small group work and booster classes, has increased the rate of progress. The assessment of speaking and listening is not used as successfully to inform planning. Teachers throughout the school have high expectations of pupils' capacity to listen, but do not plan activities which are specifically designed to promote better speaking. Also, they do not consistently take opportunities to encourage clear and complete answers to questions, either in English lessons or at other times during the school day.
97. By the ages of 7 and 11, pupils' capacity for listening attentively and accurately is as expected for their age. When pupils first enter the school many do not speak clearly and have an extremely limited range of vocabulary, far lower than is expected of pupils of their age. They have difficulty in understanding, lack the confidence to express their ideas and are hesitant to respond to teachers' questions. The class teachers carefully use question and answer techniques to involve all members of the class in discussion, particularly at the beginning and end of lessons. By the end of Year 2, many pupils demonstrate the ability to listen attentively, to contribute to class discussion, ask questions of their own and respond to their teachers' questions with reasonable confidence. For example, in a literacy lesson in Year 2 on the use of the index in non-fiction books, a more-able pupil clearly explained, "The index is easy to use because the words are in alphabetical order". A pupil with special educational needs made a good attempt at a definition, suggesting, "Some words have got the same starting letter". The majority of pupils at this stage rely on simpler key phrases such as, "Look at the first letter" and a significant minority, although confident enough to speak, limit suggestions or replies to one or two words.
98. From Years 3 to 6 there is a similar pattern of better achievement in listening than in speaking. Pupils become used to listening to and answering questions, both in English lessons and in other subjects. However, teachers less frequently encourage members of the class to formulate questions of their own or to engage in structured debate. Even when this does happen, many pupils are reluctant to speak at length. For example, in Year 6 the teacher worked hard to draw out opinions from the class about an imaginary proposal to build a bypass to the A1 motorway through the school. Many of the class gave short replies in low voices and a minority were unwilling to join in. Nevertheless, teachers throughout the school regularly encourage pupils to talk about their work and this has a positive effect on the development of speaking skills. For example, a Year 4 pupil talked clearly about a non-fiction book he was reading. His description of the book as "a book about the characteristics of legendary creatures such as troll slayers" reflected standards above expectations for his age.
99. The school has successfully devoted considerable time and effort to raising standards in reading. They have worked particularly hard in raising boys' attainment and have been

very successful in raising their interest in non-fiction books. Teachers encourage their classes to take reading books home regularly and work hard to ensure that parents and carers become involved in hearing their children read. Home reading record books show that many pupils have completed between 20 and 50 books during this academic year. A small minority do not develop such good reading habits and teachers have to constantly remind them to take home or bring back books they have been given. In order to ensure that all pupils have regular opportunities to read independently or with an adult, each class has a half hour reading session at the beginning of every afternoon. This is having a positive effect on pupils' attitudes to books and on raising standards. Teachers and support staff also provide effective guidance in small groups during literacy lessons. Consequently, younger pupils quickly recognise letter sounds and individual words. They hold their books correctly, and use pictures and their knowledge of sounds to assist them in reading new words. In the shared reading session of lessons, pupils read with increasing confidence and expression. More skilful readers are beginning to express preferences in their reading. A positive feature of pupils' attitudes to reading throughout the school is that the majority are confident about reading non-fiction. In fact, many prefer reading non-fiction and sometimes successfully tackle more difficult words when they are reading for information. A Year 2 pupil with English as an additional language, for instance, explained, "I like reading science books. We've been doing filtration in class and I can find out more about it at home". The majority remember the name of one author or more and the titles of books they have written. Most pupils read independently at this stage, but a few still rely on adult help and prefer to read stories they are very familiar with. When reading non-fiction books, most know how to find information quickly using the contents and index pages.

100. From Years 3 to 6, pupils read regularly in school and at home. They are less dependent on adults and increasingly correct their own mistakes when they come across new words. Many read for information and choose non-fiction books for home reading. They have developed positive habits and are keen readers, widening their tastes to include authors such as Roald Dahl and Jacqueline Wilson. A minority still struggle and rely on adult support because they still have difficulty with some of the irregular letter blends such as the 'wr' in 'write', and this makes fluent reading difficult for them. In Years 5 and 6, most pupils enjoy reading for pleasure and discuss favourite books and authors. More accomplished readers explain their preference for different styles of books. A Year 6 pupil, for example, enjoyed Dick King-Smith and RL Stein, but equally liked reading biographies, such as his current book on the life of Alan Shearer. Teachers encourage comparison by asking pupils to write reviews on books they have read. The majority are confident in the use of computers to find information. Those pupils who find reading more difficult are hesitant, but are able to use contents pages, indexes and glossaries. Library skills are secure and many pupils are familiar with classification systems because they visit the school library regularly. The co-ordinator has ensured that there is a good, easily accessible supply of fiction and non-fiction books in the library and corridor areas. Reading skills such as skimming and scanning do not reach the expected standard by the age of 11 because of the slower progress of Year 6 pupils over time.
101. In the Years 1 and 2 classes, teachers promote accurate writing by paying careful attention to the spelling of common words and letter blends, with positive results. By the end of Year 2, many pupils write sentences with capital letters and full stops with most words spelt correctly. They gain confidence and skill because teachers challenge them to write in a variety of different ways. They achieve this by exposing their classes to a variety of forms of writing and expect pupils to use the correct terminology to describe what they are doing. For example, by the end of Year 2 most pupils are familiar with alliterative writing and create their own versions, such as, "Ticklish tidy tall Timmy talks terribly". Teachers also encourage pupils to develop ideas into a sequence of sentences in the form of prose or creative writing and for different audiences. A pupil of average

ability wrote clear instructions on how to make a star from iced lolly sticks, beginning, "First glue three of your sticks together to make a triangle". Pupils of below average ability at this stage have difficulty in keeping their writing securely on the line and sometimes need to copy the sentences that adults have written for them.

102. In Year 3, pupils begin to join sentences using connectives to make them longer and more interesting. They place sentences and events in their correct sequence and plan stories of their own. As they move through the school, they become increasingly aware of their own learning and the progress they are making. This is because teachers in all classes regularly set clear targets for improvement. They attach these to the front of all exercise books and nearly all pupils are aware of what they need to do to improve. They respond very positively to this strategy and the majority develop good attitudes to their work. In pupils' writing in Year 5, sentences are more complex and stories and prose are more carefully organised. More-able pupils are developing a clear appreciation of the creative nature of poetry as demonstrated in this short piece about eagles, based on a reading of *The Whale* by Kit Wright:

"Wondrous eagle, flying through the clouds
Hunting for your prey.
I saw you
Seeking".

Similarly, teachers in Year 6 encourage their classes to incorporate emotion and tension into their work and more-able pupils sometimes achieve standards above expectations for their age, as in, " Suddenly a hand shot down and grabbed her by the collar. She was dragged to her feet and a nasty, horrid face pressed close to hers". Many Year 6 pupils begin stories well, but find it more difficult to sustain ideas and correctness in punctuation, grammar and spelling at greater length. A small minority find it difficult to write independently and rely on adult help to build a cohesive sequence of sentences.

103. Standards of handwriting are satisfactory, but are variable throughout the school. Teachers have quite justifiably placed emphasis on the content of pupils' writing in recent years in order to raise standards of attainment in the national tests. This has led to a lack of consistency in the school's approach to teaching handwriting skills. There are no samples of pupils' work to clarify for teachers the standards they should expect their classes to achieve from year to year. Consequently, pupils try hard to write neatly when required to and some produce good standards. However, teachers do not develop the style and consistency of handwriting in a structured way as pupils move through the school. Consequently, by the time they are aged 11 many are unsure about how to join letters correctly and a minority still print much of their work.
104. The quality of teaching is very good overall and is never less than satisfactory. This is because of the commitment of all teaching and support assistants to raising standards and to the co-ordinator's very good leadership. All teachers know their pupils' individual strengths and weaknesses very well. This is because they have clear strategies for assessing their progress and setting achievable goals for improvement. A further strength of this strategy is that teachers share these targets with pupils and with their parents. Teacher's daily marking is also of very good quality. The co-ordinator has introduced a new system for marking written work. This informs pupils clearly about what they have done well and what could be improved and is a simple but very effective strategy. Consequently, most pupils feel very confident about tackling their daily work. Relationships between adults and pupils are very good and sometimes excellent. There was a good example of this in a Year 2 literacy lesson. The class teacher very sensitively handled a pupil's embarrassment at being unable to answer his question by inviting her to "phone a friend" and ask for help.

105. Teachers promote the development of writing skills through teaching in other subjects. For example, Year 2 classes write at length in religious education about stories such as *The Feeding of the Five Thousand*. In personal, health and social education lessons, Year 6 classes write letters to celebrities warning them of the dangers of smoking. However, the current organisation of the timetable does not provide enough time to develop this practice further. Teachers make good use of computers to develop writing skills by providing opportunities for their classes to edit, improve and print their work. There has been good improvement in the curriculum for English since the last inspection.

106. **Areas for development**

- Place increased emphasis on improving the quality of handwriting throughout the school.
- Plan lessons specifically designed to improve speaking skills and take opportunities to develop clearer speech as they arise in the school day.
- Create further opportunities for developing extended writing skills through teaching in subjects across the curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

107. The tables show the national test results for 2000 and the main judgements by inspectors of the standards the pupils achieve.

AT AGE 11	Tests 2000 National comparison	Inspection judgement	Comments
Level 4, the expected level	Well below national average	Below the national average	The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has raised standards. The high number of pupils with special educational needs and the high level of mobility of pupils adversely affects attainment by the end of Year 6. More-able pupils are challenged to reach their potential.
Level 5, above the expected level	Well below the national average	Below the national average	

AT AGE 7	Tests 2000 National comparison	Inspection judgement	Comments
Level 2, the expected level	Well below the national average	Average	Consistently good progress in Years 1 and 2 ensure that all pupils reach their potential.
Level 3, above the expected level	Well below the national average	Average	

108. Standards in mathematics have improved considerably since the time of the last inspection. The inspection judges standards as higher than last year's national tests. This is due to the considerable impact of the new headteacher in initiating very well focused targets and assessment in mathematics, which focuses teaching more directly on each pupil's learning needs. In Years 1 and 2, standards have risen significantly so that pupils at the age of 7 are now reaching average standards in numeracy. Standards between Years 3 and 5 are also rising, although by the age of 11 pupils' attainment is still below average in numeracy. Compared with similar schools the 2000 national tests showed attainment as above average for pupils aged 7 and well below average for pupils aged 11 years.

109. The school has successfully targeted number work and has achieved higher standards in this aspect of the mathematics curriculum. In the drive to raise standards in number, other parts of the curriculum have received less regular attention. These include practical investigations in shape, space and measures, and data handling. The school is fully aware that the balance of the curriculum needs to be reviewed so that these more practical activities can take their place alongside their focus on number.
110. On entry to Year 1 pupils' attainment in mathematical development is below the expected level for their age. During Years 1 and 2 they make good progress in their learning, especially in number, so that by the time they are 7 standards are in line with the national average. Between Years 3 and 6 a high proportion of pupils are new to the school. A large number of these pupils have special educational needs and some have English as an additional language. In one class, for example, 50 per cent of pupils had special educational needs that slowed the rate of learning in the mathematics lesson. Nevertheless, standards between Years 3 and 6 are rising due to the high quality of teaching in these classes and the provision for special educational needs that the school makes.
111. By the age of 7, pupils use numbers confidently in addition, subtraction and multiplication calculations. Working in their heads they calculate sequences by adding nines up to 100, and combining numbers and operations. Teachers provide activities that focus pupils' attention onto precise learning targets and help them to memorise number operations. This work links very well with their mental warm-up activities and with previous experience in shape as they recall the properties of rectangles. The youngest pupils in Key Stage 1 count confidently in twos forwards and backwards, but not all are fully familiar with the number pairs that make 10, such as 6 and 4. In conversation, some pupils explain patterns confidently; for example, when counting in nines one pupil with English as an additional language explained his results as "the numbers are twisting around" in the tens and units columns. Standards in areas of the mathematics curriculum other than number, for example in the properties of shapes, are at a lower level.
112. By the age of 11 pupils count forwards and backwards across 100 in patterns of 5 or 10, for instance counting 95, 100, 105 and vice versa. They calculate sequences correctly involving decimals, for example adding or subtracting in steps of 2.5. They are beginning to recognise all the pairs of multiples that can be derived from a range of numbers. For example, they successfully identify that 24 has multiples of 2, 3, 4, 6, 8 and 12. This is because their mental recall of some multiplication tables is still not sufficiently secure to enable agile and accurate calculation. They enjoy using whiteboards to record their individual answers at speed, such as finding all four factors of 36, or three factors of 42. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 investigate pairs of fractions that are equivalent to each other using quarters and eighths. They count along a number line in tenths and are beginning to develop an understanding of hundredths. They translate percentages as fractions and calculate 25 per cent of 36 accurately by using division. Throughout the school pupils lack the confidence and the literacy skills to explain their calculations fluently and clearly, although in conversation they use correct mathematical vocabulary such as 'multiple', 'fraction' and 'line of symmetry'.
113. The quality of teaching in mathematics in both key stages is very good. Some teaching has excellent features and includes a brisk pace, a strong sense of purpose, high expectations and very skilful behaviour management. Teachers' planning is very good and they have very secure knowledge of their subject and of the National Numeracy Strategy. To enliven their lessons, teachers use resources such as number lines and whiteboards efficiently. These resources help focus pupils' attention whilst also supporting pupils' learning appropriately. For example, the number lines help pupils to

master the skills of reading scales accurately. Teachers aim their questions carefully and sensitively so that pupils achieve success in whole-class sessions. For example, a pupil with special educational needs gave the correct answers because the teacher took care to vary her questioning to meet his particular needs. Teachers conduct their lessons enthusiastically at a crisp pace and successfully convey their own enjoyment of mathematics to their pupils. Their explanations are crystal clear as they introduce the next step in a unit of study, for instance moving on to reading scales involving hundredths from those involving tenths. They encourage their pupils to work systematically. Teachers have high expectations, but support their pupils with encouragement. They use praise very well to show their appreciation of pupils' efforts. Teachers manage their support staff very well during group work, although this is not carried out consistently at the beginning and end of lessons when opportunities are sometimes lost to use support assistants' skills fully.

114. Teachers apply the three-part lesson structure of the National Numeracy Strategy effectively and this is having a positive impact on standards. They use a range of teaching methods and organise individual, paired, group and team work to add variety to their lessons. The initial warm-up quick-fire sessions of mathematics lessons are well prepared and conducted in a lively style. There is an astringent pace and teachers organise different activities such as 'Bingo!' to engage pupils' interest. For example, a teacher divided her class into two teams and organised an exciting competition to halve numbers ranging from 10 to 200. On occasion in whole-class situations, teachers do not organise activities to ensure that every pupil is fully participating, resulting in some pupils sitting passively as others respond. The school is aware of this and is taking steps to provide activities with suitable resources so that every pupil will have the chance to offer an answer.
115. In the main part of the mathematics lesson, teachers spell out the lesson objectives so that pupils have a clear idea of what lies ahead. Teachers use correct mathematical terms and expect pupils to do the same. For example, a teacher allowed pupils plenty of time to enunciate correctly 'tenths' and 'hundredths'. During this part of the lesson, teachers deploy their assistants very well, and all use their time efficiently to monitor pupils' work and to encourage or praise as they move around the classroom. At the end of lessons teachers allow enough time to draw their classes together to celebrate what has been successfully achieved. It is also a time when some teachers and their support staff conduct assessments so that the next lessons can take pupils' learning forward. They draw attention to good work using pupils' results positively and forecast what they will be doing in the next mathematics lesson. This very good practice provides pupils with a sense of continuity and purpose, whilst providing a strong sense of achievement.
116. Teachers mark work regularly, but the quality of marking is inconsistent across the school. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have not acquired systematic work habits in recording their mathematics investigations. For example, they do not regularly complete corrections, and they omit dates and titles on their work. A number of activities have been recorded on worksheets that make tracking progression difficult because the sheets are frequently not dated. There are very good whole-school assessment systems in place recording pupils' achievements. Teachers use these well and individual targets are shared regularly with parents. Teachers use opportunities effectively across the curriculum to extend the skill of numeracy.
117. Pupils have very positive attitudes to mathematics. Mathematics lessons are happy times of the day with a calm, relaxed but purposeful atmosphere. The majority of pupils behave very well, persevere and concentrate hard. They show respect and courtesy towards teachers, other adults and each other, listening carefully and handling resources such as books and whiteboards properly. They enjoy their lessons and are enthusiastic because

their teachers present their lessons in a lively and dynamic style. They are eager to respond to questioning and willingly explain their thinking when given the opportunity and the time, although a few find this more challenging than others in large group situations. Most talk confidently about their work on a one-to-one basis and enjoy showing what they can do. Pupils persevere and concentrate well, working in near silence to complete their tasks.

118. Resources for mathematics are suitable to support the National Numeracy Strategy, but there are not enough to enable parallel classes to work efficiently on the same topic. This is particularly so for practical activities such as measuring length, time and weight or for tasks involving money, clocks and fraction boards.
119. The school has justifiably devoted a generous daily allocation of time for mathematics. This has proved successful in raising standards, especially in number. Now the school is very well poised to address the balance within lessons by providing pupils with a wide range of practical mathematical activities based on shape, space and measures, and data handling.
120. **Areas for improvement**
- Review the balance of activities across mathematics lessons.
 - Increase the amount of resources for practical activities.
 - Raise standards in the presentation of work.
 - Improve the consistency of marking.

SCIENCE

121. Standards are judged in different ways. The tables below show the main judgements about science for the school.

At age 7	Teacher assessment 2000 national comparison	Inspection judgement	Comments
Percentage at Level 2, the expected level	Well below average	In line with national expectations	Most pupils make good progress and standards are higher than they were at the previous inspection.
Percentage at Level 3, above the expected level	Well below average	Below average	

At age 11	National tests 2000 national comparison	Inspection judgement	Comments
Percentage at Level 4, the expected level	Very low	Below average	There is better understanding of science now because pupils have more opportunities to undertake scientific investigations than they used to.
Percentage at Level 5, above the expected level	Well below average	Below average	

122. In comparison with similar schools nationally, the attainment of pupils aged 7 was below average. For pupils aged 11, attainment was well below average when compared with similar schools. However, a large proportion of pupils who took the tests in 2000 were not at the school when they were 7, and this has a significant negative effect on overall standards at age 11 years. This is because there is a high rate of pupil mobility in the school. Both girls and boys scored below the national average in 2000, although boys did better than girls by the equivalent of one term. Nevertheless, while results at age 11 were well below the national average for the past four years, there was a slight upward trend in results, in line with the national trend.
123. The inspection judges that pupils make good progress in learning as they move through the school. The difference between the inspection judgement and the teacher assessment last year for 7-year-olds is due to the sharper focus on the practical aspects of science this year, which is reinforcing learning more effectively. Science has also been given a large amount of time for lessons each week. The older pupils do not have the necessary skills to express their knowledge and understanding in writing to reach the national average.
124. In Year 1, teachers make good use of pupils' developing literacy skills to help them express, orally and in writing, what they find out when they group materials according to observed characteristics. They continue the work of the reception class and provide a good range of practical activities and discussion. For instance, pupils talk and write about themselves, about what they like to eat, what they can do, and name parts of their own bodies. Pupils match words in their writing books to different parts of human or animal bodies, such as the tail, whiskers and paws of a cat. They learn about the properties of a range of materials and write simply about some physical concepts, such as sound and light. They write "we need light to make things shiny", and begin to express orally and in simple writing the differences between living things and things that are never alive. Teachers appreciate the need for pupils to use scientific investigations to help them learn and plan interesting experiments, for example to find out which materials are waterproof.
125. When they are in Year 2, pupils learn that electricity has the power to perform different functions, but only when it runs in an enclosed circuit, such as to light a bulb. They measure the time that ice takes to melt under different conditions of ambient temperature. This kind of activity supports well the development of mathematics skills because pupils have to read thermometer scales and take note of time readings. By the age of 7, and despite some lack of completing good quality written work, most pupils acquire enough knowledge and understanding of scientific facts to a standard sufficient to meet national expectations. There is no doubt that the recently improved emphasis given to practical activities has raised standards. This is because pupils learn from the observations they make, they discuss what they see, and then think about and analyse what they learn.

126. From 7 to 11, most pupils continue to make good progress. However, many pupils leave and others join the school during this age range. Of the latter, many have low skills in science. Consequently, the school has little time to bring all pupils up to a standard that matches national expectations.
127. Teachers give pupils good access to a wide range of science activities that build on previous work. As noted in the work given to younger pupils, the increasing use of scientific investigations to promote learning is having the desired effect. Evidence from looking at samples of work in Years 3 and 4 proves this. For example, evidence from an investigation into what happens when materials melt successfully built on pupils' knowledge about temperature differences, and promoted their understanding about physical changes. From this work, pupils know that some things, such as sugar, change irreversibly when heated, and that others revert to their original form when they cool down. More detailed investigations firmly establish with most pupils the scientific process of investigations. For example, pupils make predictions about what is likely to happen, they learn about 'constants' and 'variables' in their experiments, and draw sensible conclusions. Most average and higher ability pupils in Years 3/4 write independently and at length about what they learn and they express their own ideas.
128. By the time they are 11, most pupils know the names of many of the bones of the human body and have some idea of the purpose of the skeleton, for example that it gives support and allows movement. They know that the heart pumps blood to the lungs to exchange carbon dioxide for oxygen, but are not clear about the different functions of arteries and veins. Pupils have a good understanding of health education, which is combined well in the science work. Some pupils have good knowledge about forces, such as magnetism and friction. They use a good range of scientific words when they list the properties of materials, for instance saying that they are 'flexible', 'transparent' or 'translucent'. They know that there are different groups of animals, but most find difficulty in naming the groups correctly, or describing their common features. Pupils try to present their written work neatly and thoughtfully, with some success, but too often the writing is copied from a text available to the whole class. This does little to promote pupils' learning at a level of difficulty appropriate to their needs.
129. The quality of teaching in lessons is good overall. Thirty-seven per cent of lessons seen in the inspection were satisfactory, 38 per cent were good, and 25 per cent were very good. Characteristics common to all lessons are the teachers' effective skills in managing the pupils and the good relationships they have with their pupils. In the good and very good lessons, the teachers have high expectations that pupils will behave well, work hard and learn at a good rate because the work is challenging. In these lessons, the teacher reminds pupils through good use of questioning about previous learning. This happened in a very good lesson in Year 5 about flower structure and in a good lesson in Years 3/4 about filtering. In these lessons, the teachers drew out pupils' knowledge about the names of the male and female parts of flowers, such as the anther and the stigma, or asked them to talk about the process of filtering to separate a solvent from its solute. This approach helped to confirm the learning of the more-able pupils and extended that of others. The very good lessons comprised activities that required pupils to observe, to carefully use a range of equipment and to work co-operatively. The pupils fulfilled these requirements because the teachers ensured that all pupils listened to their clear instructions. As a result, the pupils wasted no time and settled quickly to their tasks.
130. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure, so that they give accurate information to their pupils. For example, in the lesson about flowers, the initial discussion was interesting because the teachers' explanations were detailed. In the satisfactory lessons, explanations are not so clear, with the result that some pupils are confused about what

they have to do, their willingness to take part declines, and a few pupils wander aimlessly for part of the lesson.

131. Teachers' planning for lessons is usually good because they think through exactly what they want the pupils to learn and arrange appropriate tasks for them to do. Just occasionally, as in the effective but otherwise satisfactory lessons, the teacher specifies only what children are to experience in lessons. This means that it is difficult to assess the rate of pupils' learning, or to evaluate the effectiveness of the lesson. Even in those lessons characterised by good and very good teaching, some lessons last for too long, the interest shown by many of the pupils wanes, and some pupils find it difficult to concentrate and they begin to misbehave.
132. There are good attempts made to ensure that pupils with special educational needs receive the right amount of adult support, notably from support assistants or learning support teachers. This is effective and, as a result, these pupils make good progress in line with other pupils.
133. Most teachers expect pupils to produce high quality work in lessons and to complete their work. However, some teachers do not carry these expectations through to the marking they do of pupils' work. They mark most work and often make suggestions about how pupils can improve, including the finishing off of work by extending writing to complete the required tasks. However, some teachers do not see their remarks through to the end, with the result that much work goes unfinished and learning is not as good as it should be.
134. Recently the school's emphasis in development has concentrated on raising standards in literacy and numeracy, and science has not been a priority. Nevertheless, the co-ordinator for the subject has a clear idea of what needs to be done to improve standards of attainment. For example, increasing the number of lessons when pupils do investigations is already having a positive effect on standards, particularly since these are the lessons that most pupils enjoy and learn from most. Apart from statutory assessments at the ages of 7 and 11, there is little formal assessment undertaken. This position is currently under review, as detailed in the school development plan. She gives good advice to her colleagues, who work well together to ensure that pupils in each year group, but in different classes, experience similar learning activities. She monitors teachers' long and medium term planning, but has few opportunities to monitor lessons in classrooms other than her own. Consequently, she is not able to share with colleagues the most effective practice in the school.
135. **Areas for development**
 - Establish a regular system of monitoring and evaluating the quality and quantity of pupils' work.
 - Review the effectiveness of the length of lessons.
 - Ensure that all pupils, as they move through the school, have increasing opportunities to write independently about their own scientific ideas.
 - Apply regularly a more thorough approach to assessing pupils' learning.
 - Use the results of assessment to plan work in lessons that consistently matches pupils' individual levels of attainment.

ART AND DESIGN

136. Standards achieved by pupils aged 7 and 11 are at the expected level for pupils of their age. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make good progress in lessons because they work hard and persevere with their tasks. They reach satisfactory standards in drawing and weaving, and good standards in modelling with clay and other self-hardening modelling materials. Pupils' work includes two-dimensional and three-dimensional items, work on glass, some printing, sketches in pencil and pastel, charcoal and chalk, and paintings.
137. In Years 1 and 2 pupils use a range of media including paint, crayon, felt-tipped pens and pencil. At the age of 7, they are beginning to use pencils in different ways as they sketch one feature taken from digital photographs of themselves, for example an eye, ear or mouth. They compare their work before and after they have studied the feature in depth, to ascertain how much their attempts have been improved following close observation. Younger pupils are learning to weave in a range of different activities. For example, they practise wrapping twigs with lengths of wool and textured ribbons or weave paper strips in and out of a paper grid in a contrasting colour. Preparing for later activities in bubble painting, a group of pupils enjoyed experiencing bubbles in a large paddling pool, observing how they expand and burst as they move around in the water. Pupils' illustrations in their books show attention to detail, such as whiskers and eyelashes, although proportions in their drawings are weak and there is little evidence of shading and texture.
138. Teachers ensure that between Years 3 and 6 pupils' experiences in art broadens. For example, they take pupils in Year 6 to a local art gallery. Pupils chose a photograph of one of their favourite exhibits and then focused on one area of the item to sketch in detail. This required very close observation in order to reproduce the chosen area faithfully. Pupils are beginning to develop their sketching skills with confidence, for example, by using their pencils lightly using both the tip and the side of the lead. They are beginning to reproduce texture and shading in their work. Younger pupils are using clay and other modelling materials to good effect to produce items either from their imagination or from past experience. For example, they have made dishes and pots that they are now painting and decorating with wool or shells. Some have begun work on making their own interpretation of an 'Angel of the North' in clay following a visit to the local sculpture. A small group has begun work on the construction of a totem pole using chicken wire and strips impregnated with a self-hardening modelling material.
139. Pupils enjoy art and work hard in lessons with deep concentration, almost in silence as they become engrossed in their tasks. They are eager to contribute to discussions and are interested in the views and memories of others. For example, they share their feelings willingly with others about the atmosphere inside a gallery and how it affected them. They agree that they felt 'calm, quiet and relaxed' as they walked around looking at the exhibits. Behaviour is very good in art lessons even when they become animated, for instance, when using the paddling pool to explore bubbles. Pupils work very well together, sharing resources sensibly and with care. They are generous in their appraisal of each other's work and show understanding when efforts are not as good as they had hoped. They are willing to have another go, show respect and courtesy for adults, and persevere well.
140. Teaching is good. Teachers use recommended guidelines to plan an interesting range of activities to stimulate interest and support concentration and effort. They lead discussions well, using good questioning skills and specific vocabulary to enrich pupils' knowledge and understanding. For instance, in discussing a recent visit pupils used words such as 'gallery', 'sculpture', 'portrait' and 'exhibition' confidently. Teachers

manage time and adult support in art lessons efficiently. They allow pupils time to practise their drawing skills and show appreciation of individual efforts. Although they provide sympathetic and timely encouragement, teachers do not always help pupils to identify the strengths and weaknesses in their efforts, and hold back from demonstrating techniques such as shading with the side of the lead. However, pupils weaving with paper strips or a selection of wools and threads received good support when they had finished their task as they were helped to fasten off the ends securely. Pupils learnt the meaning of words such as 'unravel' and 'tangled' from first-hand experience during these activities. Teachers organise art lessons so that pupils can express their own feelings to produce independent and individual work. For example, when working in clay pupils decided what to make, drew up a plan and proceeded to model the clay accordingly. The pupils between Year 3 and Year 6 have sketchbooks, but there is little evidence of systematic teaching of skills over time in these or in other samples of pupils' work. The rich range of community links established across the school is used very effectively to extend pupils' artistic appreciation. Work with visiting artists is particularly good.

141. **Areas for development**

- Extend the use of sketchbooks for developing skills.
- Increase the number of demonstrations by teachers of different techniques.
- Increase pupils' skills of evaluating their own work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

142. There is not enough evidence to make judgements about standards in design and technology by the ages of 7 and 11 years. Only one design and technology lesson was seen during the inspection. This was for children in the reception class, and included a number of pupils who are in Year 1. These pupils have not achieved the Early Learning Goals normally reached by children by the time they finish the reception year. The other evidence gained from a scrutiny of pupils' work on display around the school, from photographs of previous work and from talking to staff confirms that pupils, as they move up the school, meet the full range of required experiences.
143. By the time they are 7, pupils plan and make models that represent real machines. They make interesting fire engines out of cardboard boxes, attach wooden wheels and paint their models. Using real examples, they investigate different kinds of packaging and then make their own for specific purposes. In doing so, they use their developing mathematical skills to produce accurately formed boxes. For example, pupils in Year 2 draw 'nets' for cubes on squared paper and then use these as templates to make boxes, which they decorate attractively. As part of a class topic about moving pictures, other Year 2 pupils plan together, individually and in small groups ingenious faces with moving parts. Their plans include drawings of how the finished articles are to look, as well as showing the technical arrangements. Pupils evaluate their plans to ensure that the 'face' will work and make adjustments to their designs to make them better. The variation in the finished, working articles shows the degree of individual thought that has taken place. For example, some faces have eyebrows that move up and down, and mouths that turn around. Others have hair that can 'stand on end'.
144. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 design special chairs with a range of functions. For example, they look at wheelchairs and dentists' chairs to see how they are specially adapted to their special purposes. Information and communication technology is used very well in the designing process in these classes with the use of both graphics software and labelling techniques.

145. There is good use made of design and technology to enhance pupils' learning in other subjects, particularly science. For instance, when studying forces, pupils in Year 5 design trainer shoes that have the best grip. This activity comes about from a study of friction. They make a sole design, using strips of card, and then test their designs to see whether they slip down a slope. Pupils in the same year group make battery-powered model cars. They measure, cut and stick together cm-squared wood to form rectangular chassis. They add wheels on spindles and then find the best way to attach an electric motor. Finished models show a good degree of stability and are attractively finished. Current work in Year 6 includes designing and fitting burglar alarm systems to models of the school building. The pupils know that designing and fitting a parallel electrical circuit is essential to the success of the project and most work together well to try to make their systems successful.
146. Little teaching was seen in the inspection, but evidence suggests that teachers are sufficiently knowledgeable about the subject to ensure that pupils make at least sound progress. The subject co-ordinator has begun to analyse the curriculum in order to plan how best to incorporate design and technology activities into specific lessons, and into some other subject lessons. Evidence suggests that this process is already having a positive effect.
147. **Areas for development**
- Extend design and technology activities to make links with other subjects as identified by the co-ordinator.

GEOGRAPHY

148. Only one lesson was inspected. Judgements are based on that observation, as well as on scrutiny of work in books or on display and on discussions with teachers and pupils. On the basis of the evidence gathered, standards are similar to those expected nationally by the age of 7 and by the age of 11 years. The school has maintained the standards in the last inspection.
149. In recent years, the school has placed justifiable emphasis on improving standards in English and mathematics. In order to ensure that the geography curriculum is maintained, the co-ordinator has worked hard to link planning for the subject with the priorities for development in English. As a result, teachers have increasingly used teaching in geography as a means of developing literacy skills. This strategy has been partially successful. From Year 1 onwards, pupils talk confidently about their immediate environment. By the age of 11, they explain clearly where Tyneside is in relation to other parts of Britain and to other parts of the world. Consequently, teachers now place less emphasis on the development of geographical skills, such as map reading. The school has not detected the effects of this change of focus because there is no system in place for assessing how well pupils are acquiring the skills as well as the knowledge required to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. Additionally, there are too few resources, such as globes and aerial maps, to effectively promote the development of these technical skills. The progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language, is therefore satisfactory overall.
150. In Years 1 and 2, teachers organise a good range of opportunities for pupils to familiarise themselves with the local environment and locations further afield. They achieve this through visits to places such as the Metro Centre and the local park and take their classes on a journey by train to the airport. They enable pupils to compare their own lifestyle with a completely different one by studying an imaginary Scottish island location based on the *Katie Morag* stories. A minority of more-able pupils discuss what people on

the island would do for a living and the majority suggest basic differences between life on a Scottish island and life on Tyneside. Most recognise that people living on a small island depend more on boats than on cars. By the age of 7, the majority of pupils are aware that they live on an island, which forms a small part of a larger world. Teachers develop this understanding by arranging for them to interview members of staff about where they would like to go for their holidays and by following the travels of *Barnaby Bear* around the world. These activities make a good contribution to the development of literacy skills. However, teachers' reliance on this approach misses opportunities to develop other important skills, such as the drawing of accurate plans and the identification of key features on a map.

151. A similar pattern emerges from Years 3 to 6. In order to ensure a broad curriculum, teachers build imaginative links in their planning between geography and history. In the Years 3/4 classes, for example, they enable pupils to discuss and write about early settlers in Britain and go on to suggest suitable conditions for a present day settlement. In Years 5 and 6, teachers plan further opportunities to develop literacy and independent research skills through teaching in the subject. In the Year 6 lesson seen, for example, the teacher had high expectations of her pupils' attitude and response to the subject and challenged her class to produce a brochure to attract tourists to a mountain range in a particular part of the world. She provided suitable resources from which to obtain information and insisted that pupils used the correct language when describing features, such as altitude and climate. She co-operated well with a colleague on the support staff to enable a pupil with special educational needs to gather information about the Snowdonia range using the Internet. All pupils made at least satisfactory progress in acquiring geographical knowledge. However, a scrutiny of their previous work indicates that by the end of Year 6, their technical skills, such as the accurate use of Ordnance Survey maps, are not sufficiently developed.
152. The co-ordinator has been comparing two schemes of work over the past year. Her improvement plan sets out clear intentions to merge the two to create a definitive scheme for the school. She has also begun compiling an inventory of appropriate resources.
153. **Areas for development**
- Continue to maintain the good curriculum links that are already in place, but ensure that all aspects of the subject are taught in sufficient depth.
 - Introduce a system of assessment to ensure that teaching covers all aspects of the curriculum.
 - Implement a suitable scheme, ensuring that there are enough resources to meet the demands of the curriculum.

HISTORY

154. Standards achieved by the age of 7 and by the age of 11 are the same as those expected nationally. The school has maintained the standards reported in the last inspection. Teachers plan an adequate range of interesting topics. They enhance teaching by organising class visits to places of interest, such as the Saxon museum in Jarrow, and these make a very positive contribution to teaching and learning. There is a small supply of artefacts and printed resources at teachers' disposal, but these are insufficient to meet the demands of the curriculum. This makes it difficult for teachers to incorporate the use of primary and secondary sources of evidence in their planning of lessons. Consequently, pupils make at least satisfactory and sometimes good progress in absorbing and retaining historical facts, but inconsistent progress in terms of the gathering and recording of information. The progress of pupils overall, including those

with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language, is satisfactory.

155. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop a sense of chronology by looking back at their own lives and talking about the changes that have taken place. Teachers then provide opportunities for them to examine events much further back in time. Consequently, they gain insight into the work of famous people from the Victorian era whose lives have had an impact on their own. For example, they appreciate that conditions in hospitals in the time of Florence Nightingale were different from today and that she was an important influence on the way present day nursing has developed. The majority of pupils have a reasonable grasp of how the lives of people in England have changed over time and refer to the Victorian era as the “the olden days”, when people “went swimming at the seaside in their best clothes”. A minority have a clearer perception of historical facts. One pupil, for example, explained, “The Victorians lived about a hundred years ago. They got changed in bathing machines”.
156. In Years 3 to 6, the teachers plan a satisfactory range of activities to help pupils acquire skills and knowledge. They make good use of the introductory and plenary sessions in lessons to stimulate interest and to enable pupils to share what they have learned with their classmates. This is a strength of the teaching and makes a positive contribution to the development of speaking and listening skills. Relationships are very good and pupils are eager to contribute. Pupils in the Years 3/4 classes talk knowledgeably about what life would have been like for a Roman soldier, based on their recent visit to the Segedunum fort at Wall’s End. The experience had made a very positive impact on a Year 4 pupil for whom English is an additional language, who gave a clear and animated account of how Roman baths were operated. By the time they are in Year 6, most pupils use a time line accurately to show significant dates during the reign of the Tudors.
157. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall throughout the school. It is noticeably better in lessons where teachers have worked hard to organise their own array of stimulating resources for pupils to explore, discuss and write about. In a good Year 5 lesson, for example, the teacher had prepared samples of the amounts of food families could expect to buy under strict rationing during World War Two. The whole class was fascinated by the evidence and this clearly enhanced their appreciation and knowledge of the conditions which prevailed at the time. The teacher had also organised a very good display of artefacts and photographs, which formed the basis for earlier investigation and extended writing. This also produced a very positive response. One pupil writing about the devastating impact of the *blitzkrieg* painted a moving picture of life in wartime Britain, beginning, “It wasn’t my fault I worked in a part of London where they made ammunition”. Teachers’ use of the introductory sections of lessons is consistently good. They test pupils’ knowledge of facts and arouse their interest in the next session of the topic. However, the strategies for developing independent research and recording skills are less successful. This is because the school does not provide sufficient good quality resources. Teachers nearly always provide opportunities for pupils to write about what they have learned. However, the quality of this writing could be better. This is because written work results from a limited use of resources and relies too heavily on whole-class discussions with the teacher. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to draw upon stimulating evidence to inform writing and this has a negative impact on the quality and depth of their recording of information.
158. The subject co-ordinator recognises the need to develop a supply of resources. He also recognises that there is no system in place for assessing whether pupils are developing the skills for gathering and recording historical information. He has identified both of these issues in the most recent action plan for the subject.

159. **Areas for further development**

- Develop a good, easily accessible range of artefacts and resources to support teaching.
- Provide more clearly defined tasks to develop research and recording skills.
- Develop a system for assessing how well pupils are acquiring knowledge and skills.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

160. Standards have improved for pupils aged 11 since the last inspection with attainment now at the expected level. There has been considerable improvement for pupils aged 7 with attainment moving from below expectations to above expectations. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language make good progress because they are supported well by teachers and additional adults. The improvements are due to the very good leadership of the co-ordinator working in conjunction with the headteacher. The re-siting of the computer suite has also contributed to the rise in standards because the new room is well suited to teaching a class of pupils and teachers have gained in confidence in teaching the subject on a whole-class basis.
161. Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2, with some excellent features in the Year 2 teacher's work. These features include providing different tasks to match the needs of the different pupils. For example, in a lesson developing skills of branching databases using closed questions there were four carefully graded tasks, with pupils with special educational needs given four animals and four questions and the more-able pupils having 12 animals and finding their own questions. This teacher has very good subject knowledge. Teachers set a good pace to lessons and balance the practical tasks effectively with teaching new skills to the whole class. They plan carefully to build on previous learning and give good opportunities for pupils to consolidate their skills. Pupils build on the skills developed in the reception class and regular practice ensures a high level of confidence by the age of 7 years. By this age they use graphics software with ease. They use the full range of features and consider carefully the combination of colours and effects that will enhance the final picture. Pupils handle word-processing skills well and produce first and second drafts confidently. For example, a pupil wrote, "I remember when I went on the roller coaster at Butlins". Pupils use control confidently, producing simple regular shapes on the screen from a sequence of instructions. For example, a pupil produced a square and an irregular triangle, identifying any errors and predicting the direction and length of each line correctly.
162. Teaching is good from Years 3 to 6. Teachers provide interesting tasks that pupils enjoy carrying out. For example, in Year 5 pupils thoroughly enjoyed selecting different electrical appliances, choosing an appropriate switch to turn them on, completing a circuit to make them work and then placing them in a bedroom. By the age of 11, pupils work confidently across the information and communication technology curriculum. They use word-processing effectively to capture their linguistic thinking. For example, a pupil wrote, "A long time ago, when the world was new, there was no pain and no sorrow". Pupils combine text with graphics imaginatively, downloading images from the Internet and explaining the process correctly. Teachers plan the development of skills carefully by using computers as a tool for recording information from other areas of the curriculum. For example, in Year 5 pupils used spreadsheets and databases to record their experiments with different absorbency of water by different rocks. From Year 3 pupils develop skills of communicating via e-mails. They send jokes to each other together with personal messages. Computers are used well to support design and technology. Pupils produce sketches using a graphics package and then attach labels. For example, in Year 4 on a design for a chair a pupil added, "Rockers – if you have a baby you can rock it to sleep". In Year 5, teachers use the computer suite well for numeracy lessons. For example, pupils developed a good understanding of two axes of symmetry through time spent on computers producing reversible images in a graphics program. Teaching has very good features in Year 6 where there are high expectations for the development of

analytical skills. Pupils carry out high-level tasks, such as evaluating different websites in order to compare the characteristics of each one. Whole-class sessions are used very effectively in Year 6 to extend pupils' thinking and to share learning from the lesson.

163. Teachers organise pupils well in the computer suite. They ensure a very good level of personal development. Pupils expect to take turns on the keyboard and they support each other well in solving problems. They are quick to congratulate each other when they have completed a task and are eager to share their work with each other. The weekly certificates organised by the co-ordinator throughout the school for celebrating achievement in this subject are valued by individuals and increase pupils' motivation to work hard. Teachers organise computers carefully in classrooms to supplement the work in the computer suite. For example, in Year 5 in a numeracy lesson, some pupils extended their computer skills by using a program based on symmetry while other pupils recorded their work on paper.
164. The co-ordinator has recently introduced some good quality assessment systems, but they have not been in use long enough to provide fine-tuning to teachers' planning. The introduction of a new scheme of work has ensured systematic development of skills through the school. The co-ordinator has worked hard to develop teachers' subject knowledge. He has provided a stimulating display of pupils' work around the computer suite and works well with the governor responsible for this subject.
165. **Areas for development**
- Use the assessment systems to refine planning.
 - Extend the collection of pupils' work from each year group to a whole-school portfolio.
 - Extend the pupils' knowledge of their own learning and involvement in their own assessment.

MUSIC

166. At 7 and at 11 pupils reach the standards expected for their age. They enjoy their music-making in lessons and in after-school activities. The teaching provided by the visiting specialist teacher in Years 1 and 2 is a strength of the school. In these action-packed lessons, pupils experience a very wide range of interesting activities. In Years 3 to 6, pupils develop their skills in composition using a range of appropriate instruments or 'body percussion'.
167. Younger pupils sing with evident pleasure in their music lessons with good control of pitch, rhythm and dynamics. They respond to the elements of music, such as timbre and rhythm, and develop an understanding of the qualities of sounds. They are beginning to recognise the different sounds that percussion instruments make and enjoy games, such as identifying instruments from their sound when played out of sight behind a screen. They correctly reproduce simple rhythm patterns sometimes on the 'right' instrument. Listening skills are enhanced because they distinguish between the jingles on a tambourine and those on a stick of bells. They name many of the instruments correctly, such as maracas, cymbal and castanets, and are gaining a knowledge and understanding about other instruments from other parts of the world, such as the rainstick. They enjoy echoing the teacher in a fast-paced and exciting clapping game demonstrating increasing skills in accuracy. When singing they respond to the mood of the song and sing quietly or loudly without losing clarity or pitch.
168. In Years 3 to 6 pupils use their skills to investigate rhythm and pulse, and to compose sound pictures about a storm. Younger pupils link playground chants and raps with clapping and skipping games, matching the rhythm of the words with the regular pulse

established when skipping, whether fast or slow. In Year 5, pupils follow pictorial scores so that their storm has a beginning, a middle and an end. They decide that the wind symbol shows that their sounds should get louder and then quieter. In Year 6, pupils develop this further, working in groups and using suitable instruments and their voices to compose a piece of music entitled 'Stormy Weather'. They follow symbols on a graphic score and impose a structure on their work based on counting time. They perform their compositions to each other and are at the early stages of appraising, evaluating and modifying their work. Pupils know the correct names for a wide range of percussion instruments and play them correctly.

169. Teaching in music is good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers research their lesson content carefully and conduct their lessons confidently. They generate a strong sense of purpose and organise lessons efficiently. Their management of pupils and resources is very good. In Years 1 and 2 the specialist teaching is very good, and in Year 1 it is excellent. The teacher has excellent knowledge of music and uses this to extremely good effect. He introduces the elements of music, such as pitch, rhythm, duration, volume and timbre, in interesting ways. He generates a sense of fun and enjoyment in his lessons, using a wide range of songs to promote motivation and stimulate interest. Activities and songs come thick and fast. He structures lessons very effectively; for example, providing listening opportunities and playing, moving or singing activities so that pupils' concentration never wavers.
170. Attitudes in music lessons are very good. In Years 1 and 2 pupils' behaviour is excellent in the lessons taken by the specialist teacher because they are kept 'on their toes', are keen and eager to learn. They handle instruments with care and co-operate well with one another. They show respect and courtesy for each other and for the adults in the lesson. They are prepared to persevere and try very hard to succeed in their tasks.
171. Links with literacy are strong, with many opportunities taken to extend these skills. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to develop socially and culturally through their commitment to local events and festivals.
172. The school provides some listening opportunities regularly. Suitable music is used to create a calm and relaxed ethos as pupils gather together for assemblies. However, opportunities are lost to enrich their knowledge and understanding on these occasions. There are good quality opportunities in after-school clubs for developing music.
173. **Area for development**
- Provide more information about music when it is used for developing listening skills.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

174. Standards achieved by pupils aged 7 are in line with national expectations. Standards achieved by pupils aged 11 are above national expectations, which is an improvement on the previous inspection. The school works hard to provide a varied curriculum for all pupils, which ensures that pupils with special educational needs, pupils with English as an additional language and more-able pupils make good progress. The co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge and provides very good support for teachers. For example, she has produced a high quality display in the hall covering all the different dimensions of physical education. It celebrates pupils' achievement very effectively through photographs of them working and includes examples of the many different certificates that can be won.

175. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 with some good features in Year 2. These features include very effective use of praise to celebrate achievement and effort; skilled intervention in team games to support individuals in keeping up with the rest of the class; and good quality demonstrations giving pupils a clear understanding of the movements to be carried out. Pupils develop throwing and catching skills effectively. By the time they are 7 their skills at teamwork are higher than expected for their age. This is due to the high value placed on developing personal skills throughout the school and the many opportunities for pupils to learn to work together. Skills in gymnastics develop steadily in Years 1 and 2. Pupils consolidate these skills well in other lessons because they are used as warm-up activities. For example, in the Years 1/2 class, pupils stretched their bodies in a range of different directions before they began consolidating skills of throwing and catching.
176. Teaching is good from Years 3 to 6 with some very good features in Year 6. The very good features include very high expectations of all pupils and lessons moving at a very fast pace. Pupils make very good progress in swimming because there is a carefully planned programme of work each year. Pupils have little experience of swimming in Year 3 and take longer than usual to develop confidence in the water. However, by the time they complete their swimming sessions in Year 6, standards are above expectations with many pupils achieving much longer distances than expected for their age. Standards are above national expectations in outdoor and adventurous activities. Pupils receive very good opportunities to develop problem solving and team building skills because teachers plan innovative and challenging tasks. For example, pupils had to find a way of moving across an imaginary bog by using tin cans and string or move between a series of poles blindfolded with the help of their team. Pupils rise to these challenges very well and show considerable skills of determination and perseverance in completing the task. Pupils from the Nurture Unit respond very well to this work and join in the team activities as an equal member. Numeracy is developed well in this subject in athletics because pupils record distances, times and heights achieved and compare them with previous performances.
177. Pupils enjoy physical education because teachers approach this subject with enthusiasm. They behave well, changing sensibly and moving about the building in a very orderly way. They respond quickly to instructions and do their best to carry out the tasks. Girls and boys work comfortably with each other and generally organise themselves in mixed teams. Occasionally they work in single gender teams.
178. Pupils benefit from a very good range of extra-curricular activities where they extend their expertise across different aspects of dance, games and athletics. There is high quality teaching in dance and pupils work extremely well together to perform complicated sequences of movements and engender a strong spiritual dimension to their work. Games and athletics skills are also developed well through after-school clubs. For example, pupils develop a good level of skills in playing badminton and covering the range of athletics skills. Matches and competitions against other schools and in the Gateshead International Stadium extends pupils' social skills extremely well.
179. **Areas for development**
- Ensure that teams contain a mixture of girls and boys.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

180. Standards achieved by pupils when they are 7 and 11 are in line with those expected for pupils of a similar age in all aspects of the subject. The pupils' knowledge of other faiths

and religions is above that normally expected and other strengths in standards are to be found in pupils' spiritual awareness and their understanding of the importance of their actions and how these can affect others. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

181. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a sound knowledge of Christianity and the way Christians live. They have a secure knowledge of the major Christian festivals and recognise the importance of Christmas and Easter to Christians. They know stories about Jesus are written in the Bible and have a good understanding about stories in the Old Testament. They are confident exploring feelings and talking about how they feel when certain things happen, for example, they complete the following sentence sensitively "When I am upset I feel...". After taking a class assembly Year 1 pupils reflect with care on the subject of peace and what it means both to themselves and to other people. Much of the teaching is done through high quality discussion. Many of the children have no recollection of having been to a church so the visit to St Chad's and talking with the vicar is an important part of their learning. Pupils develop good knowledge about the different celebrations other faiths hold and the times of year when these occur.
182. Building on the earlier work that has been done, pupils in Years 3 to 6 greatly extend their knowledge of other world faiths. An in-depth study of Hinduism by the older pupils looks at various aspects of the religion, such as marriage, and how it compares with Christian traditions. Their knowledge about the Bible as a library of books is good and they engage in a fascinating piece of work about 'How Jesus looked'. The focus of this work is how do we know how Jesus actually looked and pupils use different sources of evidence to identify his characteristics. They quickly become engrossed in this and are delighted at the number of characteristics they can identify. As part of their work the pupils look at family values and at what it means to be a Christian; this provides good opportunities to reflect on their own beliefs. Pupils' work in religious education extends far beyond the subject and has roots in personal, social and health education, in cross-curricular themes and in the work the school does to raise funds to pay for an African teacher and flowers for the Old People's home. Themes in assemblies contribute well to the religious education curriculum.
183. Teaching and learning were at least satisfactory and at times good in the lessons seen. Planning is thorough and teachers think of interesting ways to introduce new topics to the pupils. Teachers lead discussion well, which extends pupils' listening skills, but there are some missed opportunities to extend literacy through extended writing. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language receive good support, make good progress and are fully included in all aspects of the subject. The subject is lead well and the co-ordinator is determined to see this important aspect of he life of the school flourish and continue to develop.
184. **Areas for development**
 - Increase the use of extended writing to record pupils' understanding.