

INSPECTION REPORT

VALLEY VIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL

Jarrow

LEA area: South Tyneside

Unique reference number: 108694

Head teacher: Mr P A Scott

Reporting inspector: Mrs Julia Bell
2456

Dates of inspection: 11th –14th June 2001

Inspection number: 213863

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: | Valley View Jarrow Tyne and Wear |
| Postcode: | NE22 5QT |
| Telephone number: | 0191 4898358 |
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| Appropriate authority: | The governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr W Blackbird |
| Date of previous inspection: | June 1999 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| OIN | Team members | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|-------|--------------|----------------------|--|--|
| 2456 | J Bell | Registered inspector | Science | What sort of school is it? |
| | | | Information and communication technology | How well are pupils taught? |
| | | | Physical education | How well is the school led and managed? |
| | | | The foundation stage | What should the school do to improve further? |
| | | | English as an additional language | |
| 11368 | K Lee | Lay inspector | | How well does the school care for its pupils? |
| | | | | How well does the school work in partnership with parents? |
| 30834 | A Lowson | Team inspector | English | How good are the curricular and other opportunities? |
| | | | Art and design | |
| 12632 | M McLean | Team inspector | Religious education | |
| | | | Design and technology | |
| | | | Music | |
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| | | | Geography | |
| | | | History | |
| | | | Special educational needs | |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Valley View is bigger than most primaries and admits pupils aged three to 11. It is located in a housing estate in the town of Jarrow, South Tyneside and serves families from the estate. Unemployment is high. Children enter nursery with a broad range of attainment but not all the children transfer to the school's reception class. The children's attainment on entry to main school is often well below the levels expected for their age. There are 257 pupils on roll, 152 boys and 143 girls. This includes 39 (full time equivalent) children who attend the nursery. 21 pupils joined the school during the year. The school has 80 pupils who are eligible for free school meals. This is well above the national average and similar to the last inspection. One pupil is from an ethnic minority background but is not at an early stage of learning English. There are 57 pupils on the register of special educational needs; this is above the national average. Of these, four have a statement of specific need; this matches national levels. The school is now part of a mini Education Action Zone aimed at raising standards.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Valley View Primary School is a good school that has made substantial improvement since the last inspection and no longer has serious weaknesses. The head teacher, deputy head teacher, key staff and governors provide very good leadership and management. Standards are steadily improving and by the age of 11, pupils' attainment, although below the levels expected for their age in English and mathematics, show substantial gains on last year. The standards in science are now in line with those expected of 11 year olds. The teaching is good and sometimes very good in over half the lessons. This ensures that many pupils achieve better than could be expected in relation to their previous attainment. Pupils have good attitudes to their learning and behave well. The school's good ethos encourages pupils' achievement and standards. Given the low attainment on entry, the high numbers of pupils with special educational needs and the improvement in standards, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The head teacher, deputy head teacher, key staff and governors provide very good leadership and management. The head teacher gives a very clear direction for improvement.
- All staff work well as a team and this ensures a good ethos in the school that encourages good relationships. As a result, pupils have good attitudes to their work and behave well.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs and so they make good progress.
- The provision for pupils' social and moral development is good.
- Teaching is good and sometimes very good in over half the lessons. This has a positive effect on pupils' progress and standards.

What could be improved

- The standards in English at both key stages.
- The standards in religious education.
- The provision in the foundation stage of learning to ensure that the current improvements in nursery are built on as children move through the reception classes.
- The day-to-day assessment of pupils' progress and the use of the information gained to plan work that builds more precisely on what they already know.
- The planning of the curriculum to give a greater emphasis to art and design, dance, drama and music.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress since the last inspection in 1999. Progress and attainment have steadily improved in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) by the end of Key Stage 1 when pupils reach the age of seven. This improvement is more rapid at Key Stage 2 where the effective teaching, particularly in Years 5 and 6 is enabling pupils to achieve well in these subjects by the age of 11. These improvements are due in part to the school's rigorous self-evaluation procedures and the introduction and implementation of the National Strategies for Numeracy and Literacy. The good leadership, improvement in staff confidence and the provision for information and communication technology are resulting in rapid gains in learning; the gap between the school's standards and those found nationally is closing rapidly. Assessment procedures have improved and the school uses well the information gained from tests to set 'group' and individual pupil targets for English and mathematics. However, the teachers do not yet use their evaluations of what pupils have learned in lessons to plan work that builds closely on previous learning. The school's 'assertive discipline' policy is implemented well by all staff and there has been substantial improvement in the behaviour and attitudes of the pupils. Staff changes have resulted in improvements in teaching in the nursery. However, the improvements are recent and the provision for children in the foundation stage of learning needs to be carefully monitored to ensure that this is built upon as children move through the nursery and reception classes. The commitment of all staff and governors ensures that the school is well placed to continue to improve.

STANDARDS

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

| Performance in: | compared with | | | | <i>Key</i> |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|--|
| | all schools | | | similar schools | |
| | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2000 | |
| English | E | C | E | D | well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E |
| mathematics | E | E | E | C | |
| science | E | E | E | D | |

In 2000, the school's performance was well below average in the national tests for 11 year olds in English, mathematics and science. When compared with schools with a similar number of free school meals, the school's results were below average in English and science and matched the levels attained in mathematics. The school's performance has been below the national upward trend in these subjects but is improving steadily and the results of the most recent tests show substantial improvement although there is no national data yet available with which to compare. Standards in current work in English and mathematics are below the levels expected for pupils aged 11 although they match those expected in science. This improvement reflects the substantial amount of good teaching in Years 5 and 6. Whilst standards in English are improving they could be higher, especially in speaking, listening and writing throughout the school and in handwriting, spelling and grammar in Key Stage 1. Standards in information and communication technology are improving well but are still below the levels expected at the end of Year 6. This is mainly due to gaps in pupils' skills due to earlier poor provision. Standards in religious education are below the expectations of the syllabus used in the local education authority. Pupils make sound progress in other subjects and standards are at the levels expected by the age of 11. However, too

little music was seen on which to judge standards.

On entry to the main school many children attain well below the levels expected for their age. Standards in the national tests for seven year olds show steady improvement over the past three years but were below average in the year 2000 national tests in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. The most recent tests show an improved picture. Inspection findings show that standards in reading match those expected at the age of seven but standards in writing are below expected levels. Work in mathematics and science is also below average for seven year olds. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress in relation to the targets set for them. No pupils are at an early stage of learning English and they make similar progress to their peers. The whole school targets for English and mathematics are challenging but the school is well placed to meet them. It has successfully surpassed the realistic targets set for this year.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school | Pupils have good attitudes to the school and their work. Most are polite, sensible and hard working. They enjoy school and so learn well. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Staff manage pupils well and so they behave well in lessons, at break times and when given the opportunity to work independently. |
| Personal development and relationships | Personal development and relationships are good; pupils are supportive of each other and work well together. |
| Attendance | Attendance is satisfactory. |

The staff implement well the school's behaviour policy and pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong. Pupils are considerate of others and most respond well to the trust and respect they are shown.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils: | aged up to 5 years | aged 5-7 years | aged 7-11 years |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Lessons seen overall | Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Good |

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

Teaching was at least satisfactory in most of the 65 lessons seen. Teaching was good in 43 per cent of lessons and very good in a further 11 per cent. Teaching was satisfactory in 38 per cent of lessons and unsatisfactory in 8 per cent of lessons where learning was not well managed and time was not used well. The best teaching was in the nursery and Years 3, 5 and 6. The effective teaching in the nursery reflects the recent appointment of a new teacher. These children are beginning to achieve well and make good progress within all the areas of learning but the change is too recent to have had an impact on standards. The examples of good and very good teaching in Key Stage 2 are having a positive impact on pupils' learning and helping to raise standards. Teaching is mainly sound in Key Stage 1 with good teaching in a few lessons. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is at least satisfactory and often good. The effective work of support staff enables these pupils to make good progress. Teaching in English and mathematics is at least satisfactory and sometimes good due to the successful implementation of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. The teaching of information and communication technology is mainly good and is enabling the pupils to make rapid progress and to improve standards.

The teaching of religious education is often unsatisfactory. Teachers' planning does not yet match the requirements of the syllabus and so activities are not matched well to pupils' previous learning; there is a lack of challenge, particularly for the more able.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Satisfactory. The school provides a broad and relevant curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils. However, the focus on English and mathematics has led to a narrowing of the curriculum in music, art, drama and dance. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Provision is good throughout the school. Teachers and support staff ensure that pupils make good progress against their individual targets. |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language | These pupils do not require extra help and their needs are met in class lessons. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | The provision for pupils' moral and social development is good. There is sound provision for their spiritual and cultural development. The school's provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is sound. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | The school is a very caring community and effectively supports its pupils. Procedures to promote good behaviour are excellent. |

Although the school teaches aspects of health and sex education, there is no programme for drugs awareness. Good use is made of visits out of school. The partnership with parents is good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|---|
| Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff | The head teacher, deputy head teacher and key staff provide very good leadership and management. The head teacher gives a clear educational direction for the school and this ensures its improvement. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | Governors make a good contribution to the effective running of the school and are committed to maintaining and raising standards further. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | The school has sound procedures for monitoring and evaluating its performance. This results in a clear identification of the school's strengths and areas for development. |
| The strategic use of resources | The school has sufficient suitably qualified staff to teach the curriculum; they are deployed well. Support staff make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Resources to support pupils' learning are satisfactory and used effectively. The school provides good value for money. |

The sound procedures for monitoring teaching and learning have been managed well by the head teacher

to improve teaching. The head teacher and governors keep a close eye on spending and work hard to follow the principles of best value to ensure that pupils have sufficient resources to help them learn. The accommodation is very well maintained; the caretaker is committed to the school and has decorated it in his own time to provide a very colourful and attractive environment for the pupils.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children are making good progress• The school expects children to work hard• The school helps children to become more mature and responsible• The way the school is led and managed | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The amount of homework• The information on their children's progress• The range of activities outside of lessons |

Inspectors agree with parents on most points. Parents are rightly pleased with the way the school encourages their children to work hard and is helping them to become mature and responsible. The school is very well led and managed. The inspection findings show there is a satisfactory range of activities outside of lessons. These are mainly linked to sport but older pupils have a computer club and there is a residential visit for Year 6 pupils. However, the range of activities is narrow since none are linked to music, drama or other creative areas. The amount of homework given is similar to most primary schools and supports pupils' learning satisfactorily. The information to parents is satisfactory, with regular parents' evenings where pupils' targets are shared. The annual written reports contain sufficient information on pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science but could be improved to provide more information on how well pupils are achieving in other subjects such as history and geography.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1 The school admits children from across the full range of attainment and previous experience. Children enter the nursery with a broad range of attainment but not all the children transfer to the school's reception class. The children's attainment on entry to main school is often well below the levels expected for their age, particularly in the development of language, literacy and communication skills. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. Teaching in the nursery has improved with the recent appointment of a new teacher and these children are beginning to achieve well and make good progress in their skills and understanding across all the areas of learning. The curriculum for these children now includes a good range of activities that promote their interest and achievement. Staff now work well together to support learning and attainment. There have also been improvements in teaching in the reception classes but changes in staff and the need for temporary staff have meant that progress is less rapid. By the time children are ready to start in Year 1, most attain below the standards expected for their age, particularly in language skills. However, their personal and social development is good and they are eager to learn.

2 The pupils make sound progress in their learning in the foundation stage, and in Key Stage 1. Progress is at least satisfactory and often good in Key Stage 2, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Standards of current work are below the level expected for seven and 11 year olds in English and mathematics. Standards in science are below the levels expected for seven year olds but are broadly average by the time pupils are 11. Standards in English, mathematics and science are now steadily improving but have been below the national trend over the past few years and have fluctuated depending on the numbers of pupils with special educational needs. In 2000, pupils' attainment in the National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds was well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. Results in English and science were below the average attained in similar schools. However, the results in mathematics matched those attained in these schools. The test results for 2001 show a substantial improvement in English, mathematics and science at the end of both key stages but there is no national data yet available with which to compare them.

3 There are few differences in the attainment of boys and girls in their work. However in the national tests at the end of Year 6 the performance of both boys and girls was similar in English but boys did less well in mathematics and were slightly lower than the girls in science. The school is monitoring this carefully.

4 The school analyses test results and other information gained from assessments and uses these findings to set challenging targets for groups and individuals in English and mathematics and to monitor pupils' progress against them. This is done well and, as a result, the school's realistic targets for this year have been overtaken. The steady improvement in standards over time means the school is well placed to meet its new targets.

5 Most pupils enter school with well below average speaking and listening skills. However, by the age of 11, standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory. Throughout the school most pupils listen well in lessons and are keen to contribute to discussions. In Year 6, the good teaching encourages pupils to express their thoughts and discuss their ideas, either in pairs or within small groups. Teachers use well the initial part of the Literacy Hour to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills but opportunities are missed throughout the school to further extend language skills within drama or role-play activities.

6 Teachers place a high priority on the teaching of reading and this ensures that standards match

those expected of seven and 11 year olds. Most pupils use a variety of strategies to tackle unfamiliar words. Many parents support their children's reading and this has a positive impact on standards. They make good use of the home/school reading diary to share information with the school. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have little knowledge of how the school library is organised and by the age of seven, few are able to choose non-fiction books independently or explain how the books are organised by colour or number. In Key Stage 2, pupils have secure library skills and can confidently choose and use books to find information to support their work in other subjects.

7 Standards in writing have continued to improve since the previous inspection and the wide gap in attainment between reading and writing has been significantly reduced by the age of seven, but the gap is still significant in the achievement of 11 year olds. However, the school's analysis of test results and other assessments has enabled it to highlight weaknesses in pupils' basic writing skills. The head teacher and the subject co-ordinator have also monitored teaching to identify what staff need to do to deal with these weaknesses. As a result, teachers plan lessons in more detail and use sound strategies to tackle weaknesses in handwriting, spelling and writing in various styles. However, higher attaining pupils are still not challenged well enough. Standards are beginning to show an improvement but the teaching of spelling, handwriting and grammar needs to be more rigorous at Key Stage 1. The teaching of basic skills in handwriting and spelling in Year 2 has been affected by the long-term absence of a member of staff, but this has now been resolved. From Year 3 onwards basic skills in writing are taught well and as a result, the progress made in handwriting, spelling and punctuation is good. Pupils write for a range of purposes and in a variety of styles, but this is still developing and opportunities to learn and use writing skills in other subjects are not consistently planned in all year groups. This is sometimes done well in history when, for example, Year 3 pupils write in the role of Vikings and in Year 5, pupils write with empathy about life in Victorian times.

8 Teaching has improved in mathematics since the previous inspection and pupils make sound and sometimes good progress. In Key Stage 1, progress in Year 2 is slower due to staff changes; these have affected the standards of these pupils. Standards throughout the school could be higher if teachers had higher expectations of more able pupils and provided greater challenge. Teachers do not yet use day-to-day assessment to plan the next lessons to build on previous learning. By the age of seven pupils have sound counting skills and add and subtract numbers up to 20, but only a few are secure in their understanding of place value to 100. They understand the mathematical terms associated with measurement and can read the hour and half hour on both digital and analogue clocks. By the age of 11, pupils mentally calculate balanced equations involving multiplication and division facts, know square numbers to 12, understand fractions and transfer these into percentages. Many recognise the properties of shapes and draw and measure angles accurately. Pupils interpret a range of diagrams and charts. They use their numeracy skills well in science to record their findings in tables and use information and communication technology confidently to handle data and create and interpret graphs.

9 Pupils in Year 6 broadly attain the levels expected for their age in all aspects of science. This has improved substantially since the last inspection. Standards are below the levels expected at the end of Year 2. By the age of seven, pupils describe similarities and differences between materials. They are developing a limited understanding of the need for a fair test but have too few opportunities to conduct investigations and make careful observations. For example, Year 1 pupils made a booklet about vegetables but were not encouraged to develop observation skills by using the real vegetables in the classroom. By the age of 11, pupils in Year 6 apply competently the principles of 'fair testing' to investigations, can make predictions, accurately time observations and evaluate their findings. They have a good awareness of life cycles, food chains and life processes, and can relate healthy eating and exercise to a healthy body. Most pupils see the implications of scientific concepts to solving real-life problems. They use their computing skills well to produce coloured charts and block graphs, or line graphs to record their findings.

10 Standards of attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) are below national

expectations for pupils at the age of seven and 11 but this is a significant improvement on previous inspection findings. These reflect the improved resources, including the learning resource base where a whole class can work on computers to learn and improve their skills. These are practised and enhanced back in the classroom since all classes now have compatible computers. The subject is well led and staff have received training and are more confident, so the gaps in pupils' earlier learning due to poor provision are rapidly being filled. By the age of 11 most pupils word-process competently, using a variety of layouts and can import images using 'clip-art'. They are gaining sound experience in the use of spreadsheets and have a secure understanding of using control and modelling programs. Although Year 5 pupils are beginning to use external sensing equipment in science the pupils in Year 6 have not yet had this opportunity. By the age of 11, pupils confidently use the Internet and CD-ROMs to support work across the curriculum; for example, in history and geography.

11 Standards of attainment in religious education are below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is because planning to support the teaching of the agreed syllabus does not build well enough on pupils' previous learning. There have been several changes of co-ordinator during this period and so insufficient guidance for teachers. As a result, by the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils do not have the breadth of knowledge and understanding expected in the three faiths taught.

12 Pupils consolidate their earlier work in most subjects as they move up through the school. Pupils make sound and sometimes good progress in their learning in art and design, geography, history, design and technology and physical education and attain the standards expected for their age. There is evidence of good work in art and design, and history and games. There was insufficient music seen to make judgements about pupils' attainment. The school has rightly focused on English, mathematics and science in order to raise standards but this has narrowed the curriculum for the creative areas such as music, dance, drama and role-play and this has an impact on standards.

13 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school. They are supported well in class and when withdrawn for group and individual activities with support staff. They are all working at levels that are well matched to their ability and their previous experience. Teachers set work, based carefully on the targets identified in the pupils' individual education plans. Staff assess pupils' work regularly and review their individual educational plans each term. Those pupils with English as an additional language do not require extra support; their needs are met in the class situation and they make sound progress over time.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14 Pupils' attitudes to their learning and their behaviour in school are both good. These aspects have improved greatly since the time of the previous inspection when they were judged to be a serious weakness of the school. This improvement is due to the effective implementation of the behaviour policy and the impact of the school's ethos in its daily life. These good attitudes and behaviour play a major part in the good progress made by pupils.

15 Pupils with special educational needs show a good, positive attitude to their work. The teacher for pupils with special educational needs and learning support staff are very effective in supporting pupils. Consequently these pupils concentrate well when taught in small groups and in whole class situations. Their behaviour is good and all staff praise and encourage their efforts so that pupils develop good self-esteem and confidence in their learning.

16 Most pupils work hard with good concentration and effort. For instance, in a history lesson, Year 3 pupils were very interested in the Vikings and keen to share their knowledge on what life was like in those times. Pupils listen carefully in class and try to do their best because class teachers use the same consistent strategies and procedures to encourage them to stay on task. For example, during nursery

'greeting time' the children sat on the carpet and listened well because all adults constantly reminded them to 'do the right thing'.

17 Pupils behave well in class, in assemblies and around the school. There have been no recent exclusions. Pupils line up in the playground and walk sensibly back to class, holding doors open for adults and each other. This improvement in behaviour was remarked on by Year 6 pupils who feel that there 'used to be a lot of fighting' but now 'school is much safer'. They know that any bullying will be dealt with swiftly and appropriately. Pupils respond well to the high expectations of class teachers and the new behaviour policy of rewards and consequences. Pupils have good relationships with each other and with all adults in school. They play amicably together in the playground and Year 6 pupils take good care of younger pupils during lunchtime and breaks. In lessons, pupils work well in groups, listen to each other and respect each other's ideas. For example, in a design and technology lesson, Year 5 pupils worked collaboratively and consulted each other when making 'flying bird' toys. This good behaviour and the good relationships have a marked effect on the attitudes of pupils who are happy, relaxed and confident in school.

18 Pupils' personal development is good. Opportunities for them to show independence and responsibility for their own learning in lessons are more limited but pupils of all ages are encouraged to take on a wide range of responsibilities in school. They do this willingly, from the youngest pupils acting as 'special helpers' for the day, to Year 6 pupils who are responsible for several routines such as registers and milk monitors and help effectively in the nursery and younger classes. The Special Pupils on Trust (SPOT) work sensibly when unsupervised in the computer suite before school and at lunchtime. Attendance rates are satisfactory with absences mainly for medical reasons. Most pupils are punctual and lessons start on time. Most parents are in agreement that their children like school with Year 6 pupils commenting that they will be sad to leave.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19 Teaching was at least satisfactory in most lessons and was good and sometimes very good in over half the lessons seen. There was unsatisfactory teaching in only a few lessons. In these lessons pupils were not always well managed, time was not used well or there were no opportunities in practical work for pupils to plan and choose tools or techniques, for example in design and technology. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and this has enabled pupils to make substantial gains in their learning. The weaknesses identified in the nursery have been resolved with the appointment of a new teacher. Teaching in the reception classes has improved but there is some unsatisfactory teaching due to the inexperience of temporary staff. This will be resolved with the appointment of a permanent teacher. The best teaching was in the nursery and in the Year 3, 5 and 6 classes. The good teaching in the nursery is ensuring that these children make a good start to their learning. Teaching was sound at Key Stage 1, with examples of good teaching in a few lessons. However, long-term absence in the Year 2 class has meant several changes of staff; this has caused some disruption to pupils' learning. The changes of teaching staff have slowed down pupils' progress in both Year 2 and in one of the reception classes.

20 The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Class teachers, the special needs teacher, the co-ordinator and support staff all work effectively together ensuring pupils take a full and active part in the curriculum. Additional specialist support is also available for some pupils. Teachers plan according to the pupils' statements and work towards the targets identified in their individual education plans. Teachers withdraw pupils in small groups for additional literacy support. Extra support is sometimes available in the classroom. All adults working with pupils with special educational needs focus well on pupils' learning. They encourage them to persevere and include them in whole class discussions. This effectively encourages these pupils and helps them develop confidence and make good progress in their learning. Comprehensive records are kept on each pupil's attainment and this

information is used well to inform systematic planning and teaching.

21 In the best lessons throughout the school, teachers question pupils well and this reinforces their understanding of what they are learning. In these lessons the questions are often matched to the different abilities in the class and enable all pupils to achieve and gain self-esteem. For example, in a well-taught science lesson with Year 6 the teacher used praise effectively to reinforce their use of terms such as ‘producer’, ‘consumer’ and ‘predator’ in work on food chains. Her very good rapport with the pupils was enhanced by shared humour. In most lessons teachers pace lessons well and this promotes pupils’ interest and behaviour. Most lessons are well planned and resourced and teachers often provide a good range of challenging and interesting activities. In these lessons they have high expectations of their pupils, encourage them to think critically about their work and provide opportunities for discussion. In the nursery and in some lessons throughout both key stages, teachers encourage pupils to take responsibility for their learning and to make choices of materials and to plan their own work.

22 Teachers manage pupils well and there are good relationships between staff and pupils; teachers value pupils’ responses and encourage them to have a go, even if they lack confidence. This works well with many pupils and they persevere and make an effort. Most teachers display their aims for the lessons so that pupils know what they will learn. In the most effective lessons the teachers talk about these aims with the pupils, and question pupils carefully to find out what they already know. This was evident in a well planned design and technology lessons with Year 5 pupils, where the teacher made very clear to pupils what they would learn in the lesson and how this related to previous work on making ‘flying bird’ toys or designing and making a ‘shaduf’ to raise and lower water. His very good subject knowledge ensured effective teaching of skills and enabled pupils to make good progress in their understanding of the design process and to appreciate the links to science and history. The teacher reinforced effectively the correct terms such ‘pivot’ and ‘counterbalance’. The well-timed interventions enabled all groups to make good use of their time.

23 Teachers’ subject expertise is sound and sometimes good in most subjects, although there are some areas such as religious education and music where it is not so strong. This can have a direct impact on learning since there is little development in these two subjects. Some newer members of staff are less well trained to teach skill development to pupils in some foundation subjects. Subject expertise in information and communication technology has improved since the last inspection due in part to a well-planned training programme. Teachers adapt the national guidance to ensure that statutory requirements are met. The teachers promote a wider range of learning opportunities, because they now have the confidence to do so. They actively plan opportunities for using information and communication technology across the curriculum and have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the subject to identify a range of opportunities for all pupils. Teaching is mainly satisfactory or better in all subjects and there are examples of good teaching in most areas of the curriculum. However, teaching is often unsatisfactory in religious education where teachers’ planning does not yet match the requirements of the agreed syllabus. This means activities are not matched well to pupils’ previous learning; there is a lack of challenge, particularly for the more able.

24 The teaching of literacy is satisfactory and is sometimes good at Key Stage 2. Reading is given a high priority and this results in sound standards by the end of Years 2 and 6. The teaching of writing is satisfactory but the school has rightly identified this area as a priority for improvement. A weakness is the planning of writing activities for the more able pupils and as a result, they are not always sufficiently challenged. There are still missed opportunities for developing writing skills in other subjects. In Key Stage 1, the basic skills of spelling, handwriting and grammar are not taught as consistently as they could be. For example, many pupils by the age of seven do not form letters correctly or position them on the line. This has not been rigorously addressed by teachers’ accurate or consistent marking of work. However, the teaching of basic skills in handwriting and spelling has been affected by the long-term absence of a member of staff. Although literacy is taught satisfactorily throughout the school, it is not yet

taught or used sufficiently in other subjects to support pupils' learning in areas such as history, geography and religious education.

25 Numeracy is taught well and teachers' effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is beginning to improve standards in mathematics throughout the school. Mathematics lessons are often well planned and pupils are very clear about what they should know by the end of the lesson. This improves learning because pupils concentrate well and become involved in their work. Teachers emphasise mathematical vocabulary but do not always encourage pupils to use it sufficiently to explain the methods that they use to calculate numbers and solve problems. This limits opportunities for pupils to learn from each other.

26 Teachers make clear links between subjects; for example, in a Year 6 information and communication technology lesson, pupils developed a design through translating and rotating a shape using a 'roamer' on screen. They accurately used mathematical language to describe how they had given instructions for the degree of turn. The finished patterns reinforced well their work in art and design. Teachers encourage pupils to use numeracy skills in design and technology where they make careful measurements. In science, they ensure that older pupils make good use of measuring skills and effectively teach them to record information in graphical form, sometimes using a data-handling program on the computer.

27 The procedures for the assessment of pupils' progress have improved since the last inspection. Teachers use assessment well to identify pupils with special educational needs. Teachers analyse tests results to identify where pupils need extra help. This sound practice helps them to group pupils and target extra support in areas such as reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2. Teachers increasingly use the results of the range of assessments to improve planning; their half-termly plans show differences in provision for the wide range of abilities in each year group but higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. This means that too few pupils attain the higher levels in national tests. The school recently introduced a system of target setting for groups and individual pupils and this is beginning to have a positive effect on their achievement, since the targets are regularly reviewed and discussed with pupils and their parents. Marking varies and in a few classes it tells pupils what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work. However, in some classes teachers often praise work too highly and careless mistakes are not always picked up to show pupils how to improve.

28 Throughout the school, teachers give homework that has a positive impact upon pupils' reading, spelling and learning of number facts. In Key Stage 2, pupils' skills in finding information supports topic work in areas such as history, science and geography.

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

29 The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school are satisfactory in the foundation stage (nursery and reception) and for five to 11 year olds in Key Stages 1 and 2. Although recent staff changes are improving the provision for children in the foundation stage of learning, this needs to be carefully monitored to improve standards as children move through the nursery and reception classes. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements for all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The curriculum is equally accessible to all pupils.

30 The curricular opportunities for pupils with special educational needs are good. All pupils on the special educational needs register have their areas of need identified and suitable activities are planned. These pupils receive effective support throughout the week. The special needs teacher and the co-ordinator give good, clear guidance to individual class teachers and support staff and they assist in the reviews of pupils' individual education plans. This ensures these pupils make good progress in relation to

the targets set for them.

31 Curricular provision has improved since the last inspection, when the school was not fully meeting the requirements to teach information technology (now ICT) or to teach the core subjects of English, mathematics and science in enough depth to widen pupils' intellectual development. This is no longer the case and the National Curriculum requirements in these subjects are now met. The school has rightly focused its attention on the curriculum in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT, but this has led to a narrowing of the curriculum in the areas of music, art and design, drama and dance. Whilst standards in these areas are satisfactory, the curriculum within school lacks the enrichment of these creative activities.

32 The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are being implemented successfully and so standards in these subjects are starting to improve. The planning of the curriculum in most subjects follows national guidance. Consequently, many subject policy documents and curriculum guidance documents are in the process of being updated and the school still has work to do in this area.

33 The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities over the course of the year. These include sports activities and an ICT club for junior pupils. However, the school does not provide any opportunities for pupils to engage in more creative activities, such as music, drama or dance.

34 The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' personal, social and health education, but as found in the previous inspection, this area of the curriculum still needs further development. There is no co-ordinator for personal, social and health education in school and consequently, there is no policy or planning for this aspect of the curriculum. The school uses visits and visitors to teach aspects of health and sex education, but as yet the school has no programme for drugs awareness.

35 The school has satisfactory links with the local secondary schools to prepare pupils for the next stage in their education. A recent improvement has been made in the links with other schools through the school's involvement in the Mini Education Action Zone. Consequently, liaison and partnership over the last few months has been extensive and useful, for example the school was able to share training in assertive discipline techniques with a partner primary school. Plans are now in place to improve the transition arrangements for Year 6 pupils to the local secondary schools.

36 The school is beginning to develop links with the community. The local Primrose Community Centre contributes toward physical development in the foundation stage as children sometimes go there to use soft play facilities. The Centre also provides bedding plants for the school garden. Older pupils sometimes use the sports' facilities at Monkton Stadium. The school uses the immediate environment well to support pupils' geographical skills and has the good support of local residents. Visits to places of cultural interest, such as Durham Cathedral and the Catherine Cookson Museum, broaden pupils' experiences within history and geography. Older pupils also have a residential field trip to the Lake District each year. Representatives within the health service, such as dental hygienists, visit classes in the school to enhance pupils' understanding within the programme for science.

37 The school makes good provision for pupils' moral and social development. This is an improvement since the last inspection, and underpins the progress the school has made in many areas. The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.

38 Spiritual development is promoted satisfactorily through assemblies. Pupils have opportunities to join in prayers, and are sometimes given opportunities for quiet reflection about themes, such as caring for others. Pupils have opportunities to reflect, and make their personal response, in writing and painting. For example, throughout the school, pupils have thought about the qualities of friendship and children in the nursery have painted pictures of friends. Older children have thoughtfully written about the qualities that

are important to them, and some have written 'recipes' for a good friend. Pupils gain awareness of some religious beliefs and lifestyles in religious education. Collective worship is planned well with themes linked to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, there is no common understanding of how to promote spiritual development within the whole curriculum.

39 Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good and these areas are promoted well. Pupils know, and understand, the school rules and why they are based on respect for people and property. Many pupils are involved in making their own class-based rules, and this helps them to understand the difference between right and wrong. The school's assertive discipline policy supports pupils' moral development very well. They know clearly what is acceptable behaviour and they understand the reasons for sanctions when they misbehave. Pupils earn 'teacher awards' for positive behaviour and good attitudes to school. During the school's weekly Celebration assembly it was evident that all the pupils are proud to receive these awards.

40 Pupils' social development is promoted well; teachers provide a good range of opportunities to enable them to take responsibility in their own classrooms. Year 6 pupils regularly visit the nursery and all the classes up to Year 2 during the afternoon sessions to support pupils in their work. At playtimes, older pupils care for younger pupils very well. During the inspection, they regularly played together. There is an annual residential visit, which develops pupils' self-confidence and they develop an understanding of the importance of trust and reliance on each other. A range of extra-curricular sports also assists pupils' social development well. They learn the importance of working together as a team. In lessons, teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to work co-operatively in small groups. This was particularly evident in a Year 5 design and technology lesson, where pupils worked in pairs respecting and valuing each other's contributions when constructing working models. However, opportunities for pupils to work independently and to take responsibility for their own learning are not so well developed.

41 Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Visits in the locality support pupils' understanding of their own cultural heritage well. For example, pupils visit Durham cathedral, local churches, Bede's World and a Roman fort. Visitors, including local clergy and representatives from local and national charities, support collective worship well. A few pupils receive tuition from the local education authority's music service, but there are no other music activities beyond the school day. Pupils learn about the work of artists from other cultures, such as Aztec and Aboriginal art, but there are few opportunities for them to learn about music from their own, or other, cultures. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the beliefs of different faiths is not so well developed, due in part to the gaps in the school's planning of the religious education curriculum. Awareness of the multi-ethnic and multicultural nature of society is not developed well.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42 This is a caring school that places a very strong emphasis on providing an orderly community to enable pupils to learn and make progress in both their academic and personal development.

43 There are excellent procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. These procedures, based on clear and consistent rewards and consequences, have been instrumental in achieving the huge improvement in behaviour since the previous inspection. All adults in school are part of the drive for good behaviour and work together towards this aim. They have high expectations that pupils will behave well in and out of the classroom. Pupils of all ages understand the reward system and know the consequences of poor behaviour. Parents are pleased with the way in which behaviour is managed and feel that the school has improved because of this.

44 Staff know their pupils and respond well to their needs. The many opportunities taken to acknowledge and reward pupils' efforts and behaviour promote their self-confidence and self-esteem and

encourage pupils to work hard and do their best. Pupils appreciate the system of rewards such as the 'Teachers' Award' for good work and effort. The assemblies for 'Work of the Week' are a celebration by the whole school for the achievement of the chosen pupils from each class. The school does not yet have a structured programme and policy for personal and social education, which would enable pupils' personal development to be monitored and assessed in a more formal way. Attendance is thoroughly monitored by the school secretary and any patterns of absence quickly identified. Good attendance is promoted well through the award of certificates for full attendance for each term.

45 The school has very good procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety. Child protection procedures are appropriate and effective. Very clear procedures are in place for regular routines that are followed consistently throughout the day. For example, pupils are taught safe movement around the school and a weekly 'Star Award' is given for the best class in each key stage.

46 The school has made good progress against the key issue in the last inspection, by analysing the results of the national tests for pupil aged seven and 11 to identify their strengths and weaknesses. Subject co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science collate the information gathered from this analysis, and their subject development plans reflect areas identified for improvement. For example, writing has been targeted as an area for improvement. The school also has in place sound procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in ICT. A range of formal assessment procedures, including optional standardised testing and teachers' assessments in reading, writing and mathematics are beginning to be used effectively to set 'group' targets and individual pupil targets for English, and recently mathematics. All teachers keep a class portfolio of assessments completed over the year for English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. This helps them to grade pupils' work.

47 Subjects other than English, mathematics, science and ICT are not formally assessed. Teachers do not use their evaluations of what pupils can, or cannot, do at the end of lessons well enough to plan future lessons. As a result, the same work is often given to all the pupils in a class. This provides little challenge, particularly for higher attaining pupils. Teachers do not plan lessons carefully enough to ensure that work builds closely on what pupils know, understand and can do.

48 The procedures for monitoring the progress of pupils with special educational needs are good. Pupils who have been identified as needing additional support have good individual education plans that include well-defined, measurable targets and strategies, with clear criteria for judging success. These are reviewed each term. These pupils receive good support, and this ensures they make good progress in their learning. The school liaises well with external agencies, including the speech therapy and psychology services regarding the assessment of pupils and the implementation of statements for pupils with special educational needs.

49 Marking of pupils' work varies from class to class. Some work is not marked at all. Marked work sometimes makes supportive comments, but seldom provides guidance for pupils to enable them to improve their work.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50 The school's partnership with parents is good and has improved since the previous inspection. This improvement is helping the school and parents to work together for the benefit of the pupils. Parents are pleased that the school is promoting closer links with them. They feel welcome in school and praise the opportunities to talk to staff if there is a problem. Most parents agree that the school expects their children to work hard and that they make good progress. Some parents are less happy about the level of homework set and the range of activities outside lessons. A few parents feel that they are not well informed of their children's progress.

51 The inspection team agrees that the school is working hard to include parents more in the life of the school. The level of homework and the number of activities outside lessons are satisfactory though the range is limited to computers and sport. The information on children's progress is adequate with regular parents' evenings where pupils' individual targets are shared with parents. The annual written reports contain sufficient information on pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science but little on how well pupils are achieving in other subjects such as history and geography.

52 The school is encouraging parents to be more involved in school and in their children's learning. For example, the school has recently sent parents a questionnaire inviting them to help in school with the aim to 'try to change the idea that parents must stay out of school'. Several parents have responded and help effectively alongside class teachers, for instance in the nursery and also working with Year 6 pupils making the wildlife garden. Other parents have offered to raise funds for the school by tackling a sponsored assault course; 50 parents are taking part. Regular letters and the home/school diaries keep parents well informed of what is happening in school, including details of the topics being studied each term. The school seeks parents' views on new initiatives such as the behaviour policy, holding a meeting for parents and producing a very useful leaflet to explain the procedures.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53 The school is very well led and managed by the head teacher, deputy head teacher, senior staff and governors. The head teacher provides very good leadership and has worked well to build an effective staff team. The high quality of teamwork is a key to the effectiveness of the school. For example, all staff share a commitment to improving pupils' work and behaviour. They work well together to raise pupils' self-esteem and set high expectations that have a positive impact on standards. The head teacher has a very clear view of the school's main strengths and weaknesses and works well with staff and governors to identify priorities for school development; these are mainly linked to improving the achievement of all pupils, whatever their ability. The school's well-defined aims are met effectively in its day-to-day life and work and focus on the development of pupils' intellectual and personal skills.

54 The school has made good progress since the last inspection in 1999. Progress and attainment have steadily improved in English, mathematics and information and communication technology by the end of both key stages. Teaching has improved and the effective teaching, particularly in Years 5 and 6 is enabling pupils to achieve well and to improve standards by the age of 11 in each of these subjects. The school's rigorous self-evaluation procedures and successful implementation of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have helped in the drive to raise standards. Staff increasingly use the analysis of assessment information to set challenging targets for pupils. The management role of subject co-ordinators has been strengthened and they give a good lead in developing their subjects. The issues linked to ICT have been effectively resolved through improvements in training and resources, and the good leadership of the co-ordinator. This has resulted in a great improvement in staff confidence and so pupils are making rapid gains in their learning; the gap between the school's standards and those found nationally is closing rapidly. Assessment procedures have improved; the school is using well the information gained from tests to set targets for groups and individual pupil in English and mathematics. However, the teachers do not use their day-to-day evaluations of what pupils have learned in lessons to ensure that the next work builds closely on what pupils already know. The school has successfully introduced an 'assertive discipline' policy; this is implemented well throughout the school and together with the high expectations of staff has led to a substantial improvement in the behaviour and attitudes of the pupils. The appointment of a new teacher has resulted in improvements in teaching in the nursery. This improvement is recent and the provision for children in the foundation stage of learning needs to be carefully monitored as children move through the nursery and reception classes. The commitment of all staff and governors ensure that the school is well placed to continue to improve.

55 The school is developing sound procedures for monitoring teaching and learning. These have enabled the school to identify strengths and weaknesses that have formed the basis for the school development plan. This provides a useful framework for managing the school's priorities for improvement. The head teacher effectively involves staff and governors in drawing up the plan and monitoring the progress made. The school sets challenging targets to improve standards in English and mathematics and it has exceeded the targets for this year.

56 The governors care about the school and work well together to support management. They are well informed and take a full part in decision-making. They meet statutory requirements and are beginning to take a more active role in the school in order to gain an overview of the curriculum. The links of individual governors to areas of the curriculum is developing their role in checking on the effectiveness of the work of the school. This could be developed further to include all subjects.

57 Financial planning is good and is linked closely to the educational priorities identified in the school development plan. Financial control and the day-to-day administration of the school are good and supported well by the school administrator. The head teacher and governors are keen to get the best value for the pupils in all resources and services and gather information before financial decisions are taken. They also compare the school's performance with other schools both nationally and locally. All

resources devolved to the school are used well to support teaching and learning. Given the attainment of many pupils on intake, the improving standards and good ethos for learning, the school provides good value for money.

58 There is a sufficient number of qualified teachers to teach the National Curriculum and religious education. The school has successfully achieved 'Investors in People' status and strategies within Performance Management are developing the role of the curriculum co-ordinator. Effective systems are in place to support newly qualified teachers with a teacher within the same key stage acting as mentor. Many teachers are very experienced and are effectively deployed. Teachers regularly undertake in-service training to keep abreast of new initiatives and willingly share their expertise with colleagues. However some newer members of staff are less well trained to teach skill development to pupils in some foundation subjects. The changes of supply teaching staff are slowing down pupils' progress in some classes for example in Year 2, where there has been long term absence of the class teacher, and also in one reception class.

59 The school is well served by hard working support staff in the foundation stage and throughout the school. They know what is expected of them and are effective in helping individuals and small groups of pupils to achieve their learning objectives.

60 The school's learning resources are sound. Resources for English are good and those for most other areas of the curriculum, including those for the foundation stage of learning, are satisfactory. Resources for teaching religious education are unsatisfactory. There are not enough Bibles in school and in some lessons this slows the pace of learning. The school library is well organised and the books are of good quality. There are sufficient non-fiction books to support learning in all subject areas. The school makes good use of the School Library Service and artefacts for the teaching of religious education are borrowed from the local education authority.

61 The building and grounds have enough space, which is used fully for the number of pupils in school. Classrooms and corridors contain many interesting and colourful displays of pupils' work, showing them that their work is valued. The school caretaker is committed to the school and takes an obvious pride in his work. Not only is the school clean and well-maintained but he has shown immense dedication and put a great deal of thought into the redecoration of the whole school into a bright and stimulating environment of which the whole school community can be proud. For instance, pupils receiving awards at the weekly Celebration assembly sit on chairs that have been beautifully painted with stars to acknowledge their achievement.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62 In order to continue to improve standards the head teacher, staff and governors should:

1. In English:

- provide more planned opportunities for pupils to develop speaking and listening skills through role-play, drama, discussion and debate;
- improve the teaching of spelling, grammar and handwriting at Key Stage 1;
- improve opportunities for pupils to use the library to develop study skills and to find information;
- provide more opportunities for pupils to write in all subjects;
(Paragraphs 5, 6, 7, 24, 71, 84, 85, 86, 87, 115)

2. Raise standards in religious education by:

- providing training for teachers to improve their subject knowledge and their understanding of the Agreed Syllabus;
- improving planning to ensure that activities are matched to the pupils' abilities and builds on their previous learning.
(Paragraphs 11, 23, 137, 140, 142)

3. Improve assessment procedures to ensure that work is more precisely planned to meet the needs of different groups within classes by:

- ensuring that teachers use the information from assessment to plan work that builds on what pupils already know;
- ensuring that the marking of pupils' work provides information on what they do well and guidance on how to improve their work.
(27, 47, 49, 54, 86, 95, 111, 112, 117, 121, 140, 142)

4. Build on the good practice now developing in the foundation stage (nursery and reception classes) to ensure that learning is planned and organised to take full account of new curriculum guidance and to provide continuity and increasing challenge as children move through this stage of learning.
(Paragraphs 1, 19, 29, 54, 65, 66, 67, 68, 71, 72, 74, 79)

5. Strengthen planning for the curriculum to give greater emphasis to the creative subjects such as art, dance, drama and music. (Paragraphs 12, 31, 33, 38, 85, 107, 109, 129, 131, 134)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 65 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 31 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0 | 11 | 43 | 38 | 8 | 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) | 39 | 218 |
| Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals | | 80 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | | 4 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 3 | 56 |

| English as an additional language | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 1 |

| Pupil mobility in the last school year | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 21 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 6 |

Attendance

| Authorised absence | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 5.8 |
| National comparative data | 5.2 |

| Unauthorised absence | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.0 |
| 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 | 10 | 9 | 19 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | * | * | * |
| | Girls | * | * | * |
| | Total | 15 | 15 | 16 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 79% (63%) | 79% (63%) | 84% (67%) |
| | National | 83% (82%) | 84% (83%) | 90% (87%) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | * | * | * |
| | Girls | * | * | * |
| | Total | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 79% (63%) | 84% (70%) | 89% (90%) |
| | National | 84% (82%) | 88% (86%) | 88% (87%) |

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

* where the number of boys or girls is 10 or less figures are omitted.

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 | 21 | 22 | 43 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 10 | 12 | 16 |
| | Girls | 15 | 15 | 17 |
| | Total | 25 | 27 | 33 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 58% (70%) | 63% (68%) | 77% (68%) |
| | National | 75% (70%) | 72% (69%) | 85% (78%) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 11 | 12 | 17 |
| | Girls | 17 | 18 | 17 |
| | Total | 28 | 30 | 34 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 65% (76%) | 70% (68%) | 79% (76%) |
| | 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 | 1 |
| Indian | 0 |
| Pakistani | 0 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 |
| White | 181 |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 0 |

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

| | |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 10 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 21.8 |
| Average class size | 24.2 |

Education support staff: YR – Y6

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 2.5 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 83 |

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

| | |
|--|----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 1 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 39 |

| | |
|---|----|
| Total number of education support staff | 2 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 66 |

| | |
|--------------------------------|------|
| Number of pupils per FTE adult | 13.0 |
|--------------------------------|------|

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Financial year | 2000 - 2001 |
| | £ |
| Total income | 526,061 |
| Total expenditure | 537,778 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,101 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 20,826 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 9,109 |

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 257 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 66 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 64 | 35 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 48 | 48 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 36 | 52 | 5 | 2 | 6 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 30 | 42 | 9 | 6 | 13 |
| The teaching is good. | 38 | 55 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 39 | 45 | 9 | 6 | 0 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 53 | 44 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 55 | 40 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 41 | 47 | 6 | 3 | 3 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 55 | 39 | 0 | 2 | 5 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 47 | 47 | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 11 | 43 | 16 | 7 | 23 |

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

63 The school's provision for children is satisfactory and is steadily improving. This is better than at the last inspection. A new teacher has been appointed in the nursery and has taken responsibility to co-ordinate the work of the foundation stage (nursery and reception classes). Staff are now working together to ensure a shared approach to planning and teaching the curriculum in these classes. The numbers on roll have remained similar and the 78 children attend the nursery part time. An increasing number of children transfer to the two reception classes. Each class currently has 18 children.

64 The school's assessment of the children on entry to the nursery represents the broad range of attainment, although more children than usual have well below average language, literacy and mathematical skills for their age. However, not all children transfer to the reception classes and more able children often move to other schools, although this number is decreasing due to the improved reputation of the school in the community. When children transfer to the reception classes, many have well below average attainment, particularly in language, literacy and communication skills. Children are often immature on entry to the nursery but the improved teaching and provision means that personal and social skills are often good by the time they transfer to the reception classes.

65 The programme in the nursery now provides a wide range of stimulating activities in all the areas of learning. These are well planned to enable the children to learn through first-hand experiences. The activities planned and presented in the reception classes build on these experiences and by the end of the summer term the work ensures that children have a sound foundation for work in Year 1. However, activities vary in their usefulness in the two reception classes. Where children have had the same teacher for the year they have had a broad experience but in the other reception class, several different teachers have taught the children and the provision for them has been less well managed. This will be resolved when a permanent teacher takes up post next term. However, the positive changes in provision are recent and will need to be carefully monitored to ensure that the children's experiences in the nursery are built upon and extended as they move through the foundation stage.

66 Teaching is now mainly good in the nursery and broadly satisfactory, and sometimes good, in the reception classes within all the areas of learning. The teaching in the nursery has improved with the recent appointment of a new teacher and these children are beginning to achieve well and make good progress in their skills and understanding across all the areas of learning. There have also been improvements in teaching in the reception classes but the need for temporary staff has meant that progress is less rapid. By the time children are ready to start in Year 1, most attain below the standards expected for their age, particularly in language skills. However, their personal and social development is good and they are eager to learn.

67 Staff now plan together, using the national guidance for children in the foundation stage. The nursery nurses are fully involved to ensure the best use of their good experience and expertise. The induction of children into the nursery and reception classes works well and includes visits before they start school. Staff have produced a useful written booklet to help parents to prepare their children for school. The new policy to support the provision for children in the foundation stage is useful and provides a clear direction with regard to the organisation and development of learning. The recent changes are positive but are too new to have had an impact on standards. There has been insufficient time for the co-ordinator to assess the strengths and areas to improve across the whole foundation stage. There is a need to work with all staff to ensure that there is a clear, shared understanding of planning and organising the learning experiences to ensure that the programme steadily builds on children's earlier learning as they move through the foundation stage. The current opportunities for children to take an active part in

planning, making choices of activities and sharing what they have achieved is mainly in the nursery. This way of working is effective but has not yet been sufficiently shared with the reception staff to see how it can be adapted to the needs of the older children and built on to promote independent learning throughout the school.

Personal, social and emotional development

68 The personal, social and emotional development of the children is good; they enjoy coming to school and are eager to learn. The programme planned for the children in the nursery now provides good opportunities for children to work independently on well planned practical experiences to support their learning. They increasingly make choices of which activities they will work at and move independently between activities. Many talk confidently with their group about what they have done by the end of the session. The children in the foundation stage are well settled into the routines of their classrooms and relate very well to the adults who teach them. Staff work well together and provide good role models for children. This reinforces the children's social skills. They are relaxed and happy, and are secure in their class bases. They develop confidence in a range of individual, small group and whole class activities. Most children play and work well together and are learning to co-operate and share. However, the many changes of teacher in one reception class means that not all the children are settled well. There was unsatisfactory teaching in a few lessons in this class and children were not well managed. They were not encouraged to listen and were therefore unclear about their tasks and so a few children in this class did not respond well in lessons or work well in group activities. The adults know the children and their families well and work hard to promote the children's self-esteem. The children increasingly take responsibility for getting out and returning equipment and do this well. Most children are managed well and so their behaviour is good. They are positive and friendly and staff give just the right amount of assistance to ensure that they gain independence but feel supported.

69 The children's personal, social and emotional development is enhanced through stories and discussion. In a lesson about 'making friends' the teacher's calm manner encouraged the children to talk about their feelings on starting in the reception class; one recalled 'I was frightened'. The teacher's effective reading of the story of 'The Rainbow Fish' elicited rapt attention and the children thought carefully before volunteering reasons why other fish did not initially like the rainbow fish. Some decided he was 'unkind', 'horrible' and 'nasty'. They understood that, when he gave away one of his scales he was 'happy' and were able to relate this to their own attitudes as the teacher asked how they would feel if they gave away all their toys except one. They decided they would be sad and could not yet relate to the idea of being happy by seeing others enjoy their toys. However, children do relate well to each other, take turns and share toys and equipment.

Communications, language and literacy

70 Children in the foundation stage receive a sound start in their education for language and literacy. The staff rightly set a high priority on the development of early speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. They plan together to provide opportunities for children to practise their speaking and listening skills within all activities. The children listen carefully but many use a limited range of vocabulary. However, staff reinforce and extend this through the effective use of shared books. For example, children in a reception class enjoyed sharing the story 'Wishy Washy Day' with their teacher and by the end of the session could identify rhyming words and knew terms such as 'author' and 'title'. A few children do not pronounce words correctly and say 'naminal not there' for 'the animal is not there'. In the nursery the effectiveness of the teaching encourages children to talk about their choices of activities and to use their 'work voices' in order not to disturb others as they 'caught' fish in their game. Adults persevere with questioning and provide good opportunities for discussion; they ensure that the questions are sufficiently open ended to extend the children's speaking skills and reinforce correct speech.

71 The children listen carefully to stories and know many action rhymes by heart. They learn to listen to each other and to adults in structured games and activities. Speaking and listening skills are reinforced well for all children in both the nursery and reception classes when adults are working with a specific group. Role-play provides some opportunities to promote the development of language and social skills and children use experiences from outside of school to act out different situations. The role-play areas enable children to act out a variety of stories and ideas linked to the world about them for example in the 'jungle' in the nursery. In the 'café' in a reception class the children answered telephones, used cooking utensils to prepare and 'cook' food and to practise 'writing' menus and orders. However, while free access to role-play offer some opportunities for the extension of children's language skills, planning for these activities does not always provide sufficient variety and interest to extend children's language to the fullest. The children have some useful resources such as clothes for dressing up or artefacts to promote acting out different experiences and these are used imaginatively.

72 Many children enter school with limited experience of books. Children in the nursery are beginning to recognise their own name card and those of other children because adults use these well in the planning sessions when children take turns to decide what activities they intend to work at. Children make good progress in learning their letter sounds and those in the reception class are beginning to use these to identify simple, commonly used words. Throughout the foundation stage, children enjoy a wide range of stories and rhymes with adults and visitors. Many use pictures to make sense of the stories when sharing a book with their teacher and know that they start reading at the top of the page. However, early reading skills are below the standards expected by the time they reach the end of the reception year. Early writing skills are developing satisfactorily through opportunities to practise their own 'writing' in the nursery, with opportunities to copy their own name. In the reception classes a few children copy the teacher's writing and others write sentences they have dictated to their teacher. Most children write using individual, recognisable letters and a few form letters with increasing pencil control. A few write simple words and sentences unaided and most can copy write simple sentences but letters are not always well formed. While there is sound teaching of letter formation, there are too few opportunities for children to explore a variety of writing tools and mark-making activities in their independent play activities. By the time they transfer to Year 1, most of the children are below the standards expected for their age in early writing and a few are well below expectations in early writing skills.

Mathematical development

73 Most children are working below and sometimes well below the expectations for their age in the mathematical area of learning by the time they transfer to Year 1. The changes in staff in the nursery and the improved organisation is beginning to ensure more rapid progress in the nursery and this has the potential to ensure improving standards over time. Teaching is mainly sound in the reception classes where work follows the framework of the numeracy hour used in the main school. It is now good and sometimes very good in the nursery and children are beginning to make good progress in their number work. The staff in the foundation stage now have a good opportunity to raise standards by consistently building on the good start that children now get in the nursery. Children learn to count and this is reinforced well in all activities, for example children count their milk bottles at 'snack' time. In the nursery the teacher used puppets of 'ladybirds' that she had hidden in her 'mystery' bag. Her great enthusiasm was shared with the children and they eagerly counted the 'ladybirds' as they came out of the bag. Most counted to 10 in correct order and 'when the caterpillar ate one' they knew that nine remained and counted them again correctly. The teacher effectively reinforced the language related to number and subtraction such as 'two take away one-that leaves one'. The children are beginning to relate objects to numbers and to understand simple addition and subtraction. They know the main colours and create repeating patterns of cubes and beads. They recognise simple shapes and name a circle and square.

74 The reception children have a sound knowledge of numbers to 20. They count forwards with

confidence and use a number line to help them count backwards from 20. Children are beginning to count in tens and about a half can reach a 100 with no mistakes. The teachers often use well the oral session in the numeracy hour each day to reinforce counting skills and this is successfully reinforcing the children's ordering of numbers. Most know that a number line begins with zero and recognise written numbers to 20. A few children recognise the symbols for 'plus', 'minus' and 'equals' and many are beginning to calculate simple addition sums such as $0 + 4 = 4$; $6 + 2 = 8$. More able children can write their own addition sums using the numbers above 10. All children know many number rhymes and songs and join in enthusiastically. They gain some knowledge of capacity through practical experiences but these opportunities need to be further developed in the reception classes to enable children to experiment for themselves. Children learn the properties of simple shapes through building models, making pictures with paper shapes and using jigsaws. In the reception classes they can name simple two-dimensional shapes such as square, triangle and circle.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

75 The children in the nursery reflect the broad range of attainment in their knowledge and understanding of the world about them. However, many of those who transfer to the reception classes have limited experience of their immediate area, although some have been on holidays to Spain but have never visited their local beach. The staff plan a good range of visits out of school to extend their learning and children learn well from the good range of activities that underpin future work in subjects such as science, history and geography. Children learn that some things change over time and work on display reinforces the ways in which they have changed since they were babies. They observe the weather and take it in turns to complete a weather chart. Children in the nursery know that some things change over time because they have grown sunflowers, observed their growth and sequenced photographs of the different stages, from seed to fully-grown flowers. Children in the reception classes have studied seaside holidays, past and present and know the differences in transport, clothes and some amusements but also identify the things that have not changed. In work linked to geography, children in the reception classes have a map linked to photographs and are beginning to understand that maps relate to real areas. They know parts of a flower, draw them carefully and copy the teachers' writing to label each part. Children in the nursery look at fruits and draw them. They are beginning to make careful observations and one girl said 'that is the stalk, it joins the pear to the pear tree'. Children learn about healthy foods and know which are best for them.

76 The children are developing sound computer skills and operate simple programs with of the mouse to practise counting and matching skills. They use the mouse and control cursors to move pictures on the screen. In the reception classes the children work well in the information and communication technology base to use the art program 'Primary Colours' to create imaginative pictures and patterns. They use play-dough to make 'snakes' and create environments such as 'Noah's Ark' using small toys and models. With the improvements in provision the children are making rapid gains but this is recent and it is likely that many children will still be below the levels expected by the time they move into Year 1. However, it is likely that, given current improvements in planning and teaching, they will continue to do well and achieve standards closer to those expected for their age in future work.

Creative development

77 Standards of attainment in creative development are broadly in line with those expected for children in the foundation stage. Children are enthusiastic and keen to take part and there are good opportunities for them to regularly choose art activities. They have experience of exploring colour and texture and use a range of materials to create pictures, collages, prints and patterns. Painting is available on a daily basis and children have regular free access to paint, paper and collage materials. In the nursery, they make good observational drawings of fruits and the teacher's skilful questioning ensures that the children look carefully at the colours of the fruits and try to match them with some success. In the

reception classes, children paint flowers to link to their topic on growing things and make careful observational drawings of fruit and vegetables. They have worked well to paint self-portraits and eagerly encourage visitors to guess the identity of each one. Children develop sound manipulative skills as they cut and stick to make collages, or to print patterns using sponges.

78 Children regularly experience musical activities; they memorise counting and action songs and learn to sing in tune. The staff demonstrate well the actions and movements and this encourages the children to join in. The children have opportunities to play percussion instruments as part of the activities in their class bases and know the names of most of the instruments they use. Many sing along with taped songs and rhymes in their listening areas.

Physical development

79 The nursery children develop confidence in the large space of the hall through opportunities for movement lessons with music played by a visiting pianist. They sing songs such as 'The Grand Old Duke of York' and march in time to the rhythm of the tune. Most children show sound control as they play with wheeled toys in the secure outdoor play area; they know safety rules and are aware of others as they steer accurately around marker cones. They throw beanbags to hit triangle or circle shapes and many show good aiming skills for their age. The children in the reception classes learn well in their physical education lessons. They worked hard to throw and catch a ball with two hands and successfully mastered throwing the ball but were less successful in catching it. The children run, skip and jump with agility and sound co-ordination. The teacher gives them responsibility for getting out and returning equipment and this enables them to make substantial progress in their personal and social skills. They use confidently the large space of the hall and field. Children are managed well in most lessons and so listen well to directions and respond quickly to signals to stop or change direction as they warm up at the start of the lesson. In only one reception class lesson, the inexperience of temporary staff resulted in a poorly planned lesson where time was not used well. The children became restless and did not listen or respond sensibly and so they made little gains in practising and learning new skills.

80 The children are developing sound hand/eye co-ordination and learn to handle tools and equipment safely. For example, they use their manipulative skills in practical situations to make models using construction kit or play dough. They show dexterity as they make pictures and collages.

ENGLISH

81 Standards in English have risen since the previous inspection in 1999. Standards in the 2000 tests were below the national average in reading and writing for seven year olds, but were well above average in reading and similar in writing when compared with those schools that have a similar intake of pupils. No pupils achieved the higher level in writing. In the 2000 tests for 11 year olds a significant number of pupils failed to reach the expected level and achieved standards that were well below the national average but matched the average attained in similar schools. This represented good achievement for this group of pupils, particularly in writing, from when they entered Key Stage 2 in Year 3. In 2000, a significant number of pupils who took the national tests had special educational needs and this depressed the standards achieved.

82 Over the last three years, at the age of seven girls have not performed as well as boys in the national tests in both reading and writing, which is against the national trend. These differences are less marked at the age of 11 with boys and girls achieving similar results. Inspection findings indicate that no significant differences in attainment were seen in the present Year 2 or Year 6 groups of pupils.

83 In 2001 national tests, the present group of pupils at age seven and 11 achieved standards broadly in line with national expectations in speaking and listening and reading, and standards that are

below the national expectation in writing. However, it is not possible at the moment to compare these results over time with either national averages or against schools. The school set itself challenging targets for improvement in English and it is likely that these targets have been exceeded and standards are rising. Those pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning over time because of clearly focused teaching and good support, both within the classrooms and within small groups withdrawn for guided activities. As found in the previous inspection, the school continues to make good progress in tackling the weakness of standards in English. This has been achieved through rigorous monitoring of both teaching and learning and the setting of challenging but achievable targets for both teachers and pupils. The quality of teaching English throughout the school is satisfactory, with examples of good teaching seen in both the infants and juniors during the inspection. Pupils enjoy their lessons and behaviour is good because teachers manage the pupils well, ensuring that learning takes place in an orderly environment.

84 Standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory. Throughout the school most pupils listen well in lessons and are keen to contribute to discussions. Many of the younger pupils are confident when giving answers to questions. Older pupils often give thoughtful answers to questions posed by the teacher, for example in a Year 4 class during a discussion about keeping birds in cages, pupils of average ability posed arguments for keeping birds in cages by arguing that, 'By separating birds from their predators, they live longer'. In Year 6, good teaching ensures that pupils are challenged to express their thoughts and discuss their ideas about writing stories, either in pairs or within small groups. Pupils are quiet in their answers to questions, but make relevant replies. Whilst teachers use the initial part of the Literacy Hour in English lessons effectively to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills, opportunities are missed throughout the school to further extend language skills within drama or role-play activities.

85 Standards in reading are average and match what is expected for seven and 11 year olds. This represents satisfactory progress as pupils move through the school. The teaching of basic skills in reading is sound in both the infants and the juniors, with teachers using the shared reading part of the Literacy Hour to extend and develop the knowledge and understanding of how books are written, illustrated and organised. When reading independently, the majority of pupils are able to demonstrate a variety of strategies to tackle unfamiliar words. However, pupils from all year groups and all ability levels often lack fluency or expression when reading, which again reflects the lack of opportunities given for pupils to extend their speaking skills through drama and role-play activities. Parents are involved in developing reading for enjoyment by sharing a 'home-school' reading diary with the school. The majority of parents find that these diaries are a useful link with school and enable them to help their children with reading. Many pupils are members of a local library and attend regularly with parents or grandparents. The reading records kept by teachers lack consistency, some are just a record of books read, with little evaluation of what the pupil needs to do to make further progress. Other records, particularly for older pupils, are thorough, with the teacher using data from tests and other assessments to have a clear understanding of the reading ability of each pupil. Older pupils are also encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning, by using a 'reading log'. This is rigorously monitored, with the teacher making sure that evaluations of books read enable pupils to extend their reading experiences. Younger pupils have little knowledge of how the school library is organised; for example, higher attaining seven year olds are not able to choose non-fiction books independently or explain how the books are organised by colour or number. Older pupils have secure library skills and can confidently choose and use books to assist their research of work in other subjects, for example in the study of Vikings for the history topic in Year 3.

86 Standards in writing have continued to improve since the previous inspection in 1999, but standards are below the national expectation at age seven and 11 for many pupils. As found in the previous inspection, the wide gap in attainment in reading and writing has been significantly reduced in the infants, but the gap is still significant in the achievement of 11 year olds. However, the school has used information from national tests and school-based assessments to highlight weaknesses in the basic writing skills of pupils and the monitoring of teaching has identified where teaching needs to improve to deal with

these weaknesses. As a result of these initiatives, teachers' lesson planning is more detailed and the strategies they use in the literacy hour to tackle weaknesses in handwriting, spelling and writing in various styles, is beginning to show an improvement in the standards achieved by the pupils. A weakness in lesson planning is that there is little difference in the activities planned for the more able pupils, and as a result, they are not always sufficiently challenged in their writing. However, pupils make sound progress in their writing in the infants and consistently good progress in the upper juniors, particularly in Year 6 where standards improve rapidly. All teachers use ICT appropriately to support pupil's writing, and all pupils use word processing skills to present their work in a variety of ways.

87 Weaknesses in the ability of younger pupils to spell accurately are still marked and the quality of their handwriting lacks consistency. By Year 2, letters are often still incorrectly formed, or not positioned correctly on the line. This issue has not been rigorously addressed by accurate or consistent marking of work. The teaching of basic skills in handwriting and spelling has been affected by the long-term absence of a member of staff and the subsequent instability in the Year 2 class, but the school has recognised this and has appointed staff to resolve this problem. Older pupils from Year 3 onwards are taught well basic skills in writing and as a result they make good progress in handwriting, spelling and punctuation. All teachers provide pupils with the opportunity to write for a range of purposes and in a variety of styles, but this is still developing and the school's own monitoring systems have identified where this needs to be extended in all year groups. All teaching of writing is at least satisfactory throughout the school but, where teaching is good, pupils are beginning to write with some imagination and choose interesting words to express their thoughts and feelings. A good example of this was seen in Year 3 where a pupil set the scene for a story by writing, 'It was a dark, cold night and a boy lay in bed shivering from the coldness'. In Year 6, a more able pupil wrote about the feelings of a young girl during a bomb attack on Teesside during the war, 'I stood back and watched my mum. I loved her. I was frightened. I might lose her. I couldn't live if that happened'. This illustrates the good focus placed on writing by developing the use of adventurous words and phrases. All teachers give pupils individual targets for improving their writing and most of these are regularly updated and provide a useful tool for pupils to use.

88 The leadership and management of the subject are good. As found in the previous inspection the co-ordinator has carried out rigorous monitoring of teaching in the Literacy Hour and has given teachers subsequent pointers for development. This, alongside the analysis of national tests and school-based assessments, is providing the school with secure evidence of where strengths and weaknesses in the teaching and learning of English are. The school's continued priority for improving the quality of writing throughout the school is appropriate, as standards are still not high enough, but the strategies already in place are proving effective, with standards continuing to improve. The school is well placed to continue to improve at a good rate.

MATHEMATICS

89 Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 attain standards below those expected for their ages in mathematics. This is an improvement on the results from the 2000 tests where standards were well below the national average. In 2000 the Year 6 class contained several pupils with special educational needs and this depressed standards. In Key Stage 1 standards were well below average in the national tests. In Key Stage 2 standards were below average when compared with similar schools, although at the end of Key Stage 2 standards matched those attained in similar schools. The school's performance has improved in the most recent tests but there is no national comparative data yet available with which to compare. Inspection findings show that the improved teaching linked to the implementation of the National Numeracy strategy is helping to raise standards, particularly in Key Stage 2. Teaching has improved in mathematics since the previous inspection. There are no marked differences in the performance of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Teachers plan work for them, according to their individual plans and some have support during lessons. This helps them sustain concentration during lessons.

90 In Key Stage 1 progress in the Year 2 class is slower due to staff changes and this has affected the overall standards of these pupils. Standards throughout the school are not as high as they could be. This is partly due to the fact that teachers do not expect enough of higher attaining pupils, who generally under-achieve. By the age of seven pupils count together up to 100 in 5's. They add and subtract within 20, but only a few are secure in their understanding of place value to 100. They identify coins and count the value up to 20 pence. Higher attaining pupils can successfully record the coins needed to make amounts of money in excess of a pound. When using pictures of objects, pupils understand simple multiplication by 5 and 10 and work out simple division by sharing out the objects. They understand the mathematical language associated with measurement and can read the hour and half hour on both digital and analogue clocks. By the age of 11, pupils mentally calculate balanced equations involving multiplication and division facts. They know square numbers to 12. Higher attaining pupils understand place value to 10,000. Pupils understand fractions and transfer these into percentages. They learn to recognise the properties of shapes; they also draw them and measure angles accurately. Pupils interpret a range of diagrams and charts.

91 Although the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is mainly satisfactory and sometimes good, it could be better. In lessons seen in Years 1 and 2, teaching and learning ranges from unsatisfactory to satisfactory. In Years 3 to 6 the teaching varies from satisfactory to good. In the good lessons seen, the problems set for pupils have clear relevance to real life situations and are well linked to other subjects within the curriculum. In unsatisfactory lessons, the work is not sufficiently matched to pupils' ability and therefore some complete the task very quickly and others are unable to complete it.

92 In Year 1 focused teaching encourages pupils to develop mental strategies to help them to add up quickly, for example when adding 9, they are taught to add 10 and take one away. They learn to recognise the different values of coins. However in the lesson observed, the activities set did not take into account the different levels of ability within the class and most pupils needed support with their tasks. In Year 2, effective use is made of resources, but the directed teaching time is too long and does not allow any time for pupils to engage in activities themselves to secure their understanding.

93 By the time pupils reach Key Stage 2, their understanding of mathematics is wide ranging. Teachers have good assessment procedures in place and are well able to track the progress of individual pupils. However, teachers do not use day-to-day checks on what pupils have learned to plan for the full range of ability. This means that in all classes the higher attaining pupils are not challenged enough because they are presented with the same work as the rest of the class and this is often too easy for them. The work provided by teachers suits the middle range of ability and teachers, especially in Year 4, spend too much time supporting the less able and too little time with the rest of the class. In Year 3, the teaching makes good use of resources to inspire pupils and offers good support to all groups, but the activities provided for the pupils are sometimes too hard and so pupils are not sure about their work. In Years 5 and 6, where the teaching in lessons seen was good, there are clear links made to real life experiences and other subjects within the curriculum and so learning has a purpose for these pupils. For example, in Year 5, pupils are learning to represent and interpret line graphs using data collected from the computer. They use water temperatures collected during a science lesson and have to plot the decreases in hot water and the increases in the cold water, minute by minute, over a ten minute period, onto their own chart. Very clear focused teaching and good demonstrations results in most pupils being able to draw the graph and successfully answer questions by referring to the data.

94 In Year 6, the teacher's good subject knowledge is a main factor in the good progress pupils make in their problem solving skills. Pupils are allowed to experiment with numbers to find solutions. During whole class teaching most teachers try to make sure that all pupils have at least one turn to answer a question. In this way pupils' concentration is maintained and they remain enthusiastic. In lessons where they need to collaborate they do this well. All teachers manage pupils well and adhere to the school behaviour policy consequently behaviour is good.

95 Teachers throughout the school now make good use of the Numeracy Strategy. Pupils are familiar with the three-part lesson structure. Lessons are mainly well planned and the aims for what they will learn are made very clear to pupils. These are effective strategies in that pupils are very clear what they should know by the end of the lesson. It makes them concentrate better, become involved and work with a purpose in mind. A strong feature within the teaching of mathematics is the emphasis teachers give to appropriate mathematical vocabulary. However, teachers do not encourage pupils to use the correct mathematical terms sufficiently to explain the methods that they use to calculate numbers and solve problems. This prevents pupils learning from each other and good teaching points are sometimes missed. Pupils' work is generally well presented, but teachers' marking does not tell them enough about their work, how well they have achieved or how they can improve it.

96 A new co-ordinator was appointed after the last inspection and she has made significant improvements. She manages the subject well and has developed a two-year plan for mathematics. The co-ordinator has introduced well the Numeracy Strategy to colleagues and gives support and advice as required. She monitors books, lesson plans and lessons within classrooms and, in this way, is able to evaluate effectively the quality of teaching and learning within mathematics. She keeps examples of good planning to support staff and has recently developed a portfolio of pupils' work to support the raising of standards. The co-ordinator keeps abreast of new initiatives in mathematics by attending training courses, and delivers training in school to teachers. The governor linked to numeracy supports her well. The numeracy training has brought a greater consistency to the quality of teaching. Teachers work well as a team, particularly across the parallel classes in Year 5. All teachers work hard and share a commitment to the raising of standards.

SCIENCE

97 Inspection findings show that standards in science are at levels expected for many pupils by the time they reach the end of Year 6 at the age of 11. This is a big improvement on the results in last year's national tests for 11 year olds when standards were well below average. The improvements are linked in part to stability of staffing, good teaching in Years 5 and 6 that enables these pupils to make good progress, the adoption of national guidance that supports science teaching, and the varying numbers of pupils with special educational needs each year. At the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in current work is below the levels expected for their age with a few pupils who achieve more highly. This is similar to the teachers' assessments of pupils at the end of Year 2 last year and reflects the fact that the pupils' learning has been disrupted in this class. There have been many staff changes in Year 2; this has slowed progress. Standards at the end of Year 6 have improved since the last inspection but are now lower at the end of Year 2.

98 Progress is good for many pupils who have special educational needs. The teacher and classroom support staff ensure that these pupils are supported well and are able to work at their own level, often using simpler methods to record their findings. For some higher attaining pupils in both key stages, but particularly at Key Stage 1, work is not always sufficiently challenging to enable them to make the best possible gains in learning. This reflects insufficient use of the day-to-day assessments of what pupils have learned to match the next work more closely to their needs. For example, pupils are often given simple drawing and colouring tasks that they find too easy and complete quickly and carelessly. This results in few gains in their scientific knowledge and understanding.

99 Teaching is mainly satisfactory in Key Stage 1 but progress is slowed by too few opportunities for pupils to learn through a good range of practical activities. For example, pupils in Year 1 have learned about the ways plants provide us with food. They had made and eaten fruit salad and then made a booklet of drawings of different vegetables with a caption copied from the board to say why they liked a particular vegetable. Although the teacher had a good display of real vegetables in the classroom, she did not encourage pupils to handle them, make careful observations and to draw and write about what they

saw. As a result most pupils hurriedly drew small pictures and wrote simple statements such as 'I like carrots because they are nice'. The activity lacked challenge for most pupils in the class and opportunities were lost to reinforce their investigative skills. There was only a limited amount of work done in Year 2 because of frequent changes of teacher. By the age of seven pupils describe similarities and differences between materials. They know that materials are worn and used for different purposes. They are beginning to gain a superficial understanding of the need for a fair test through learning about different forces. They have a sound recall of how electricity is used in the home and can make and record simple circuits. They show a sound understanding of which foods are best for health.

100 Progress is good in Year 3, where pupils are taught well. Pupils have learned about keeping their teeth healthy and know that some foods are good for teeth and others such as sugar are not. During the inspection the teacher planned and resourced a visit from a dental hygienist. The teacher's good questioning and use of specialist vocabulary ensured that by the end of the lesson pupils knew the names for particular teeth and understood terms such as 'dentine' 'plaque' and 'nerves'. They could identify what affects change in living things, for example, decay. Pupils in this class achieve well and attain good standards because of the teacher's high expectations and consistently good teaching. Year 4 pupils can make an electrical circuit that includes a switch. In a lesson they quickly produced their circuits following the teacher's diagram. They followed this with work to find which materials conduct electricity and which do not. The teacher gave too many answers to the pupils and did not enable them to make their own predictions. Year 5 pupils have a sound grasp of condensation and evaporation and were able to predict what they would see when ice cubes were placed on cling film over a bowl of hot water. They understood the ice created a cold surface and so steam collects and condenses on the sides of the bowls. Pupils in this year group are beginning to use sensing equipment on computers to monitor temperature changes in experiments.

101 By the age of 11, pupils in Year 6 can competently apply the principles of 'fair testing' to investigations. Their written work shows they can make predictions, accurately time observations and evaluate their findings. Most pupils were able to see the implications of their information for solving real-life problems linked to environmental issues such as spraying mosquito areas with insecticides. Following their investigations, pupils used their computing skills well to produce coloured 'pie' charts and block graphs, or line graphs to record their findings. Pupils have a sound awareness of life cycles and food chains and know and use terms such as 'producer', 'consumer' and 'predator'. Other pupils in the class worked well with parent helpers to create a wildlife garden and worked sensibly together to solve problems associated with the siting and making of a pond. The teacher's relationships with pupils are very good and she effectively reflects their growing maturity in her dealings with them.

102 Pupils enjoy their science lessons and most behave in a responsible way when listening to explanations by the teacher and when working with apparatus in small groups. In many lessons they respond well to each other and use classroom equipment and materials carefully. They work well in pairs and small groups when they have opportunities to conduct investigations. This works well for pupils with special educational needs, who work well in mixed ability groups and are well supported by their classmates. Behaviour is good in most lessons because teachers manage their classes well.

103 The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and is often good in Key Stage 2. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. This represents a continuing improvement in teaching since the last inspection. In many lessons, teachers make clear what pupils are expected to learn and how to proceed. Most teachers have sound subject knowledge and use it well to plan interesting activities in each topic. Teachers use information and communication technology well to extend and enhance pupils' learning.

104 The co-ordinator leads the subject well and has worked hard to support colleagues in raising standards. She has clear ideas of strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning. For example she is eager to organise training for staff to enable them to further develop pupils' investigative skills. Her

Careful analysis of recent national tests has enabled her to effectively identify where the curriculum needs to be strengthened to further improve standards. The school makes good use of the school grounds and visits to West Boldon Environmental Centre. Older pupils benefit from a residential field trip each year.

ART AND DESIGN

105 Standards in art and design are typical of those expected for seven and 11 year olds. Pupils make sound progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding of art and design as they move through the school. Standards are not as high as those found in the previous inspection because the school has focused on raising the achievement of pupils in English and mathematics and in this they have been successful. However, this has resulted in a narrowing of the curriculum for art and design, with too few opportunities for pupils to experiment and develop their skills within a sufficiently wide range of activities. Pupils enjoy their art and design activities and the majority of pupils behave well and are attentive in lessons. Teachers ensure that the work of all pupils is displayed well and this not only has the result of making the school look bright and attractive, but also reinforces the self-esteem of pupils by recognising and respecting the work they produce.

106 The quality of teaching is satisfactory, with good teaching seen in the lower juniors. In one lesson, pupils developed and extended their skills in using paint effectively to create a colour wash as a background to a more detailed, observational painting of flowers. Pupils achieved well and made good progress in their skills during this lesson because the teacher used resources effectively and taught the basic skills of painting well. Monet's technique of painting sunflowers was contrasted with the work of Van Gogh and as a result, pupils' knowledge and understanding of the work of famous artists was reinforced. The teacher's good subject knowledge was evident in how effectively she taught colour-mixing skills, with clear instructions given in how to use thicker paint to create texture. In the upper juniors, pupils are given the experience of working with a variety of tools and materials to produce a three-dimensional model of a papier-mâché insect. They are taught basic skills well and encouraged to be adventurous in their use of materials when making models, but the quality of the pupils' design skills in their sketchbooks is weak and they do not refer to them when later evaluating their work. As a result, an opportunity is lost for pupils to improve their work by reflecting on how to explore and further develop their ideas.

107 As a result of the lack of emphasis given to art and design in the curriculum, younger pupils in Key Stage 1 have some underdeveloped skills in mixing paint. An example of this was seen in one lesson when a group of seven pupils could not say what colours they would mix to make purple or orange. They could not explain how they would lighten or darken a colour to give tints or tones of the same colour. The teacher did not use resources well in this lesson to extend and develop the pupils' skills in painting techniques. The paint was ready-mixed on the table before the pupils started work and pupils were not given the opportunity to use a variety of brushes to create the effect they wanted. As a result, the work did little to further the development of their skills. Throughout the school, sketchbooks are not used well enough to enable pupils to explore and develop ideas and techniques, or to evaluate their designs. Pupils' skills in three-dimensional work are limited by the lack of opportunities to use clay. This is a similar picture to that found in the previous inspection. The use of textiles in art and design is not as well represented as the work in painting and drawing.

108 The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership in the subject. She has a clear action plan for further development of the subject and has the skills and expertise to make an impact on the work in art and design across the school but presently does not have the opportunity to undertake specialist teaching or give demonstration lessons to her colleagues. Some monitoring of teaching has begun, as has a sampling of pupils' work from each year group. Resources for the subject are satisfactory.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

109 Standards in design and technology are satisfactory and broadly match what is expected for seven and 11 year olds by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Although there are very few displays around the school that show pupils' skills or illustrate the breadth of their knowledge, teachers' planning is supported well by local education authority guidance. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by adults and, sometimes, they are supported well by their classmates in small group tasks.

110 Teaching was mainly good in all but one of the lessons seen. Where teaching was unsatisfactory there were no opportunities for pupils to plan, choose tools or techniques to make a pre-prepared alarm system. The majority of teachers have a secure knowledge of design and technology and their lessons are planned well to identify what pupils are expected to learn. These aims for the lesson are shared with pupils, and this impacts well on their learning because they know what they are expected to do. Teachers pay attention to safety and hygiene. For example, when pupils in Year 1 were making a fruit salad, and when some pupils in Year 5 were using files to shape wood. In Year 1, pupils were taught to modify their designs of fruit salad, by adding strawberries to make it more colourful. In lessons in Years 5 and 6, pupils were challenged well. For example, in Year 5, when pupils completed constructing working models they were expected to modify their designs to make the models more cost effective. In Year 6, pupils were expected to choose either a pneumatic or hydraulic system to plan a design to move a chosen object.

111 Pupils use sketchbooks to plan their designs. This work is often poorly marked, with no comments as to how pupils might improve. Therefore, designs are seldom modified or improved. Pupils work with a sufficiently wide range of materials, but there tends to be a focus on drawing initial designs and concentrating on the practical aspects of building models rather than carefully evaluating the finished articles and altering or modifying the design.

112 The school has adequate resources to teach all aspects of design and technology, including food. Tools are stored safely, and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Little monitoring is taking place to ensure that work carefully builds on pupils' previous learning. There are no agreed methods of assessing pupils' attainment. As a result, teachers have insufficient knowledge of what pupils can, or cannot, do. Links with information and communication technology are only just starting.

GEOGRAPHY

113 Progress in geography is satisfactory and standards have remained the same in both key stages since the last inspection. By the ages of seven and 11, pupils reach standards that match the levels expected for their age. The weakness identified in pupils' lack of in-depth knowledge of places has been resolved through planned studies to support learning.

114 By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have a good knowledge of local places and particularly of the area immediately around the school. This is due to effective teaching, which places good emphasis on first-hand experiences. For example, teachers take pupils on visits within the locality to secure their understanding of how land is used and towns develop. Well-focused teaching in Year 1 helps pupils to locate places on large-scale maps of the immediate area. They can locate where the school is and trace their way to and from home. Through carefully structured discussions the teacher encourages pupils to become aware of safety issues on the roads around the school so that they know why there are humps on the road and the importance of the crossing patrol person. They learn to identify road signs, which indicate that a school is nearby.

115 The steady rate of learning is carried forward into Key Stage 2, although the quality of teaching varies from good to satisfactory. In Year 3 pupils learn to explain and write directions from one part of the school to another. The good teaching encourages them to explain their ideas, consider the local

environment and identify ways in which people are harming it. The good use of pictures and focused discussion in Year 5 makes sure that pupils have a good understanding of water supply and irrigation methods used in countries throughout the world. Teachers encourage pupils to discuss and record their ideas in pairs, so that each pupil has the opportunity to participate. In Year 6, pupils study mountains and rivers throughout the world. They know about natural disasters concerning water and identify the main rivers in the United Kingdom. There is some fieldwork undertaken in Key Stage 2, through visits to Thurston Outdoor Educational Centre where pupils further extend their knowledge of landscapes and different environments. The standard of written work is variable throughout the school; while some is well presented with careful diagrams, other work is careless and unfinished. However, in general, there is an over reliance on worksheets, some of which are incomplete and therefore have little value in enabling the teacher to know what pupils have learned.

116 Work is carefully planned, but resources are only just adequate. There has been limited in-service training available as the emphasis has been on other subjects in the past two years and the expertise of some staff is limited. This sometimes hinders deep study of some of the aspects of the subject although teachers willingly share their knowledge and plan together effectively.

117 The subject co-ordinator is beginning to develop the subject through a development plan. She has recently devised long term plans in light of the new curriculum initiatives, but has not yet monitored medium term planning to ensure that teaching is progressive, challenging and consistent. She has begun to gather a portfolio of work from each year group to support teachers with standards and has had some time allocated to monitor teaching. This is limited and has not given her the opportunity to identify points for development within her subject. There are no assessment systems in place for geography, nor do all teachers use what they know about their pupils to provide challenge for those that are more able. For example, more able pupils do not extend their learning through opportunities to respond independently to more challenging questions or investigations.

HISTORY

118 Since the previous inspection standards have remained the same in history and pupils at the end of both key stages, at ages seven and 11, reach levels that match the expectations for their age. Teaching has improved since the last inspection and is at least satisfactory and sometimes good or very good.

119 In Key Stage 1, pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding about how we used to live in the past. They can describe how houses looked in the 1920's and examine and compare old and new artefacts related to home life through well-planned role-play. They act out washing clothes, using a washboard and because the teacher has good subject knowledge, pupils learn to make clear comparisons with laundry items used in their own homes today. Discussions with pupils in Year 2 show their enthusiasm for history. They clearly understand some of the differences between life styles at the time of the fire of London and the early part of the twentieth century. Teachers plan visits to the Catherine Cookson Museum and these occasions impact well on pupils' learning. Pupils know that information about history can be obtained through the diaries of Samuel Pepys, for example, and through paintings and pictures.

120 Teaching in Year 3 is very good and enables these pupils to make very good progress in history. The lesson seen was well planned and related clearly to previous learning and so pupils enthusiastically discussed many different aspects of Viking lifestyles. Good links were made with literacy and pupils learned to write as Vikings did. Activities are well matched to pupils' different abilities and the computer was used well for research. Historical understanding is further deepened in Years 3 and 4 through supportive visits to Arbeia Roman Fort and Durham Cathedral. In Year 4 pupils learned about the Elizabethan era and, through good story telling by the teacher, they showed a clear understanding of

events and people of this time. However, activities focused too much on comprehension skills and did not offer enough opportunity for enquiry and historical research. Teachers in Year 5 organise well-researched walks to encourage pupils to become aware of the Victorian buildings within the immediate locality. In class, the teacher offered pupils the chance to work in pairs to discuss their ideas about how the use of the buildings has changed. This was an effective way of ensuring that all pupils took part in the discussion. In Year 6 the good teaching focused on changes in England since 1948. The teaching made good links with literacy to encourage pupils to read extracts from writings of that era. The teacher made effective use of photographs and cartoons, to encourage continued interest and provided a range of activities well matched to pupils' ability. Pupils interacted well with appropriate questions and worked collaboratively and sensibly, discussing their ideas with their partner. While the teaching motivated the pupils, resources were only just adequate and there were too few artefacts available for them handle and examine.

121 The subject co-ordinator has a useful development plan for the subject and has recently devised a long-term outline plan that takes account of recent new national guidance. She has not yet had the opportunity to monitor teachers' planning or pupils' work to gain a clear picture of the impact of the new guidance on standards. She has begun to gather a portfolio of work from each year group to support teachers' assessment of standards. Although she has had some time allocated to monitor teaching, this is limited and has not given her the opportunity to identify where the curriculum in history can be further developed. There are no assessment systems yet in place for history and some teachers do not use what pupils have already learned to match the next work more closely to their abilities, particularly the more able.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

122 The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved since the last inspection and statutory requirements are now met. The school has established a Learning Resource Centre with enough computers for whole class teaching. The school also has computers in each class base. Teachers have taken part in effective training and have been well supported by the subject co-ordinator. As a result they are more competent in teaching computing skills and have a greater understanding of using information and communication technology across the school curriculum. They are more confident when exploring information and communication technology with pupils and this has a direct impact upon learning. Teachers now organise their work more effectively and provide good opportunities for all pupils to have regular access to ICT. Pupils respond very positively to this and work sensibly in pairs on the classroom based equipment. Critical to this is the early introduction to basic skills, giving all pupils opportunities to practice and improve these. Pupils make good progress over time and standards are improving rapidly but are still below the levels expected by the age of 11. This is due to poor provision earlier in their school career when there were insufficient computers and suitable programs available. This situation has now been resolved and further improvements are likely through the school's involvement in a mini Education Action Zone.

123 The sound teaching in Year 1 means that pupils are learning to work with new PC's and software. They work well in the Learning Resource Centre to update their 'All About Me' files. They need support to get started but then can open the program, find their file and type in text and are beginning to understand how to insert pictures into their text. All know how to print their work. Teachers use information and communication technology to support learning in science and a group of Year 1 pupils worked with a classroom support assistant to build and label a diagram showing parts of a flower. They successfully used the mouse to control cursors and to locate icons that enabled them to drag and position correctly the stem, roots and leaves. With help they could find petals and leaves and rotate them through $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ turns to position them correctly. The pupils now in Year 2 did not have such good access to these resources, when younger. Despite this, they are close to attaining the national standard for seven years old pupils in most areas of the information and communication technology curriculum. By the age of seven, pupils have basic keyboard skills, knowing the function of different keys, such as 'shift' and 'spacebar'. They use these to good effect when writing sentences and short stories. Most pupils control the 'mouse' correctly and this enables them to 'click & drag' when using such programs as 'Colour Magic'.

124 Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2. However, the older pupils have not had sufficient opportunities in previous years to acquire a wide range of skills to match the demands of the curriculum. The result of this is that standards amongst the oldest pupils are below expectations for their age. Although standards are below the expected levels at the end of Year 6, this is a significant improvement on the findings of the previous inspection.

125 The effective teaching in Year 3 enables them to make good gains in their learning. In a good lesson they learned to prepare and send an e-mail message. The teacher had resourced the lesson well with a large-scale print out of an e-mail page to enable pupils to plan and prepare their message before working on the computers. This linked well to their literacy work on methods of communication. She ensured that pupils gained an understanding of the real life application of information and communication technology by organising an e-mail link with a school in Scotland. The pupils typed their letters correctly and talk confidently about their views on the advantages of e-mail when you want to communicate quickly with someone. Year 5 pupils are making good progress and made good links with their work in literacy as they used the keyboard confidently to type their descriptions of a pirate. They wrote directly on screen and demonstrated well that they know how to edit text. These pupils also learn to use a spreadsheet and have a good awareness of the usefulness of the program through the teacher's very effective demonstration of how to command it to produce graphs from data. The very good balance between the

direct teaching of a new concept and opportunities for pupils to practise their skills enabled them to make very good progress within the lesson and by the end of the lesson they could input data and update their graphs. Terms such as 'formulae' were taught well and pupils were clearly aware of how they could apply their skills to work in mathematics. In Year 5 pupils are beginning to use sensing equipment to monitor experiments in science. However, the equipment is new and Year 6 pupils did not have access to this area of the information and communication technology curriculum when they were in Year 5 so there are gaps in their experience.

126 These gaps are closing rapidly, and in a very good lesson Year 6 pupils used a control program 'Roamer' to create a pattern on screen by using a repeat command that would draw a shape, such as a square, and rotate it through small distances to complete a 360 degree turn. The teacher effectively used pupils' previous learning in mathematics and reinforced their understanding of the use of brackets within a command. She provided a good level of challenge to the more able pupils by requiring them to write instructions for a different shape such as a triangle or hexagon. The teacher organised the lesson well to enable confident pupils to work with and support a less confident partner. Pupils were very eager to learn and some returned in their lunch hour to do more work. Pupils have had some experience of modelling programs but have not used the external sensing equipment. However, they are now broadening their experience and their competence in using PC's for research is improving rapidly. They use the Internet and CD-ROM to support work across the curriculum; for example, in history and English. For example, Year 3 pupils used an encyclopaedia program to find information on the Vikings and older pupils find and print out copies of pictures from Tudor times.

127 Teachers promote a wider range of learning opportunities, because they have the confidence to do so. They actively plan opportunities for using information and communication technology across the curriculum. They have sufficient knowledge and understanding of information and communication technology to identify a range of opportunities for all pupils. Good use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils with special educational needs and the learning support assistants play a vital role here. The improving opportunities provided help to promote an independent and mature approach from many pupils. They can be trusted to work sensibly together and develop independent learning skills. They are keen to learn and often support one another effectively.

128 The co-ordinator leads the subject well and has identified priorities to further develop the subject. He supports colleagues effectively. The school has achieved considerable improvements since the previous inspection and standards are rising. All pupils enjoy a wider range of experiences than two years ago and as a result they are making good progress and standards are rising rapidly. Older pupils have a computer club and are encouraged to use the Learning Resource Centre in their break-times. This impacts well on their personal development as well as developing their confident use of ICT.

MUSIC

129 There was insufficient evidence to judge standards or teaching in music by the end of Year 6. Standards are satisfactory, and broadly match what is expected for seven year olds by the end of Year 2. Pupils sing in assemblies with attention to pitch and rhythm. Younger pupils sing enthusiastically, but older pupils appear to rely on the accompanying singing on the taped recording. There are no extra-curricular activities. A few older pupils receive violin tuition from the local education authority's music service. There are no opportunities for pupils to listen to a range of music as an introduction to assemblies, and there are few opportunities for pupils to perform in front of the whole school. The school has rightly focused on raising standards in English and mathematics but as a result the curriculum for music has not been developed. Although statutory requirements are met, opportunities to develop pupils' creative opportunities have not been developed sufficiently. Teachers have not planned opportunities to reinforce speaking and word and letter sounds using musical rhythms in literacy activities with younger pupils.

130 In Years 1 and 2, music is taught using the School's Radio service programme. This supports those teachers who lack confidence teaching the subject. In a lesson in Year 2, pupils were managed well, although the teacher had to use a range of strategies to settle a few boisterous boys. Pupils learn to interpret the music, following the teacher's example. They sing tunefully, and maintain the rhythm when clapping. Pupils used actions to represent the mood of the music, such as swaying to the song 'We are sailing'. In a lesson in Year 3, teaching was good. The lesson moved at a brisk pace, and the teacher consistently challenged pupils well to practise combining singing and playing instruments. This ensured they made good progress in awareness of how different elements of music are combined.

131 The pace of development has been slow since the last inspection, which identified that there was too much emphasis on performing rather than composing. This imbalance remains a weakness. There is no evidence, apart from a display in one classroom, of pupils recording their own compositions.

132 A pianist, from the local education authority, supports singing with younger pupils in the school. This contributes well to their steady progress. Younger pupils perform at a Mothers' Day concert, and the whole school performs at the school's Christmas concert. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 sing carols at a local hospice at Christmas time.

133 Two teachers have recently volunteered to manage the subject. They lack subject expertise, but have already produced an appropriate action plan and have audited the music resources. However, there is no monitoring of standards. Links with information and communication technology are just starting.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

134 During the inspection it was only possible to observe games skills. Discussions with the co-ordinator, other staff and pupils, plus the examination of documents and teachers' records demonstrate that the physical education curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the areas of physical education are taught according to the season. However, there are few opportunities to link dance and movement with other areas of the curriculum, such as music and drama. From this it is evident that by the ages of seven and 11 pupils attain standards that match the levels expected for their age. These are similar to those identified in the last inspection. The school provides extra-curricular football and netball clubs and opportunities for rugby coaching. These clubs are well attended and older pupils have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit where they enjoy outdoor activities. Key Stage 2 pupils learn to swim at the local pool. The tuition is provided by a swimming trainer from a professional club and is of high quality so most pupils develop a good style in different strokes. By the time pupils transfer to secondary education most can swim a recognised stroke for 25 metres and many swim well beyond these National Curriculum requirements.

135 It was not possible to observe lessons at Key Stage 1 but it is evident from records that they develop sound skills across the programme for physical education. These skills are built on throughout Key Stage 2 and pupils attain satisfactory standards for their age. They throw and catch well and many apply the skills learned in after school clubs, and through their membership of local teams, to improve their performance in lessons. They demonstrate good hand/eye co-ordination as they field a ball in rounders and many hit the ball strongly and accurately when batting. Pupils understand the need to warm up muscles and move quickly into well-taught routines. Staff plan brisk warm-up sessions and ensure that safety points are well made. The pupils made very clear that they enjoy physical education.

136 The teachers have sound subject expertise and training through the 'Top Sport' initiative, which has also provided extra resources for games, has enhanced this. Lessons are planned carefully and take account of the published guidance adopted by the school. As a result teaching is at least satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the subject. He works with colleagues and outside

agencies to develop the range of activities available. Resources are satisfactory although there is only a limited range of music for dance.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

137 Standards in religious education have dropped since the last inspection and are below the expectations of the agreed syllabus. This is because planning to support teaching the agreed syllabus does not build well enough on pupils' previous learning. Also, there have been several changes of co-ordinator during this period and so there has been insufficient support and guidance to staff. As a result, by the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils do not have the breadth of knowledge and understanding expected in the three faiths taught.

138 In Years 1 and 2, pupils know that Jesus was born at Christmas, and died at Easter. They hear stories from the Bible about the lives of Jesus and Moses. Pupils learn about caring for the natural world, but this teaching makes little reference to Christian or Jewish beliefs about responsibility for the environment.

139 In Key Stage 2, pupils only learn about Judaism in Year 4, and about Islam in Year 6. This means that by the end of Year 6, many pupils have forgotten what they learnt about Judaism and there is insufficient time for them to make appropriate gains in knowledge and understanding about Islam. Pupils know that the Bible consists of two books, the Old and New Testament, but they do not have the skills to find Chapters and specific verse references. In one lesson in Year 5, pupils asked what 'the numbers down the side meant' when reading an extract from the book of Matthew. Pupils understanding of religious language is poor. For example, in Year 4 pupils could not explain what a 'saint' is. Pupils in Year 6 could not explain their understanding of the term 'Holy Spirit'. Very few pupils in Year 6 have an understanding that Christianity, Judaism and Islam are world-wide faiths.

140 In the lessons seen teaching was satisfactory. This is because teachers manage pupils very well. This is an improvement on the last inspection, when a small number of lessons were unsatisfactory due to the poor management of pupils' behaviour. Learning objectives for lessons are shared with pupils, and this makes a positive impact on their learning because they know what they are expected to learn. For example, in a lesson in Year 4, pupils understood that Bede was an important figure in Christianity, and they knew that he is buried in Durham cathedral. In Year 5, pupils know that Christians believe that they should live their lives by Jesus' example. In Year 6, pupils make simple comparisons between Lent and Ramadan. However, the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory overall. In the course of the year, lessons do not provide activities, which are matched well to pupils' previous learning. This results in a lack of challenge, particularly for higher attaining pupils. Marking is superficial, and some work is not marked at all. Too often too much time is spent on carefully colouring in worksheets. Written work sometimes consists of the same words from pupils of differing abilities. Teachers do not have a reliable system for assessing pupils' learning or standards. These factors also contribute to the low standards by the end of Years 2 and 6.

141 Pupils are generally attentive in lessons, and they behave well. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils in Year 4, annually visit Durham Cathedral. The school received a letter from the Cathedral staff after last year's visit, complimenting the school on the pupils' good behaviour.

142 The pace of development since the last inspection has been too slow. Planning to teach the agreed syllabus provides insufficient support for teachers. There are no reliable assessment procedures in place. Resources are inadequate, although the locality is used well to support the subject. During the inspection there were no displays of pupils' work in classrooms or around the school. Monitoring of teachers' planning, teaching and learning is not yet in place. These factors contribute to standards being lower than they should be throughout the school.