

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BILLINGHAY CofE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Billingham Lincoln

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120515

Headteacher: Mr N. Kent

Reporting inspector: Mr Chris Rhodes  
16408

Dates of inspection: 28 February – 2 March 2000

Inspection number: 215563

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
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Billingham Church of England Primary School Fen Road Billingham Lincoln
Postcode:	LN4 4HU
Telephone number:	01526 860786
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Wilson
Date of previous inspection:	January 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Chris Rhodes	Registered Inspector	Mathematics Information technology [IT] Physical education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught?
Ann Moss	Lay Inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Margaret Cooper	Team Inspector	Special educational needs English Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Patricia Williams	Team Inspector	Science Art Design and technology	How well is the school led and managed?
Mary Kelsey	Team Inspector	Under fives Equal opportunities Geography History	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is an average size voluntary controlled Church of England primary school for boys and girls aged 3-11 years near Sleaford in Lincolnshire. It has 208 pupils on roll, including the 22 children who attend the morning nursery. Taken together, pupils' current attainment on entry is typical of that found nationally. Thirty-one pupils have special educational needs, a below average figure. All of the pupils are white and none has English as an additional language.

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

Billingham Primary School provides a sound education. Pupils achieve average standards in mathematics and science at the end of both key stages. Standards in English are below average as many children's spoken vocabulary is less than that used by most pupils of this age. This affects the quality of their writing and attainment in most subjects. Pupils try hard in their lessons because the overall quality of teaching is good and they are set work at the correct level of difficulty. The headteacher, staff and governors work well together to provide a friendly and positive working atmosphere. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Children are given a good start in the nursery and reception classes
- Pupils learn effectively because the overall quality of teaching is good
- Pupils are happy, interested in their work and concentrate hard
- They behave very well in lessons and around the school.
- Relationships are very strong and are based on the respect pupils have for each other and their teachers, and staff have for their pupils
- The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Social development is particularly strong

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

- The role and responsibilities carried by senior staff are not set out clearly enough
- The headteacher's current teaching commitment does not give him enough time to carry out his management responsibilities. The school does not evaluate its performance effectively enough
- Standards in English are below average because many pupils have limited speaking skills
- Teachers do not use their knowledge of pupils' achievements consistently in lesson planning
- The school does not meet all of the requirements for teaching information technology [IT]

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

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

Overall improvement since the school was last inspected in 1997 is satisfactory. The quality of teaching has improved significantly. The curriculum is much stronger since the school introduced the new national strategies for literacy and numeracy, and revised the schemes of work in all subjects. All pupils, including the more able, are benefiting from the improved match of work to ability. Pupils' attitudes to school are now very good. The school has worked hard to extend opportunities for pupils to experience awe and wonder, but some concerns remain about the infrequency of planned opportunities for reflection and greater spiritual awareness in some lessons. There is still a lack of clarity about the management role carried by senior staff. Overall standards in IT and English are not as high as previously reported as the school lacks essential IT hardware and standards in English are adversely affected by pupils' low language skills. Lessons now begin and end on time.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	C	D	B	B
mathematics	C	D	C	C
science	D	D	A	A

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

The table shows that attainment in national tests in 1999 was above average in English, average in mathematics and well above average in science when compared to all and similar schools. Pupils' attainment over the past three years is close to the national trend and was higher in 1999 than in 1998, especially in science. The school has analysed past results and the current achievement of pupils in Year 6 carefully. Realistic but challenging targets have been set for the 2000 national tests. Current standards seen in pupils' books and in lessons during the inspection are in line with the national average for mathematics and science at the end of both key stages, but are below average in English. The lack of a strongly developed spoken vocabulary is affecting standards in English and other subjects at the end of both key stages as many pupils struggle to find the words they need to write or talk about their work. Standards in IT are in line with national expectations for communicating and handling information, but the school does not have the necessary equipment to teach the other aspects of the subject in sufficient depth. Overall standards in IT are, therefore, below the expected standard. Pupils are achieving at appropriate levels in all other subjects. The quality of work seen in physical education [PE] in Year 6 was above that found in many schools.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are confident, try hard and are very interested in all their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave consistently well in lessons, when moving round the school and in the playground.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils work well together in groups or with a partner. They respect each other's point of view and exercise self-discipline. Personal development is good. Relationships are very good.
Attendance	Satisfactory, and close to the national average.

The very good standard of behaviour and positive attitudes are particularly noticeable in all classes. The school does not have a scheme of work for personal, health and social education to ensure that the skills learned in the early years are developed systematically in older classes. The very good relationships, based on mutual respect, are a noticeable strength in the school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall standard of teaching is good. Eleven per cent of lessons were judged to be very good, a further forty-one per cent were good and forty-eight per cent were satisfactory. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. The difference between Key Stage 1 and 2 is the overall good quality of teaching in mathematics, history and physical education in Key Stage 2. The quality of teaching in English is sound overall and was good in nearly half the lessons seen. The quality of teaching in mathematics is good in both key stages. High quality learning occurs because the work is very carefully planned, basic skills are taught thoroughly, discipline is good and tasks are carefully matched to pupils' ability. Literacy and numeracy are taught soundly but many pupils have considerable difficulty in finding the words they need to explain their answers or to understand the questions. This limits the progress they make in many subjects, especially in writing, mathematics and science. Information technology is not taught effectively as the school does not have the necessary resources for the full delivery of the National Curriculum. The needs of higher attaining pupils, and of those with special educational needs, are met effectively through small group work and as individuals, because the work is set at the correct level. Pupils learn effectively in most subjects because they are well taught, concentrate hard and enjoy gaining new skills and knowledge. Learning is not effective if pupils have to sit inactive for too long, the teaching lacks pace or if they are unaware of the purpose of the lesson.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	There is a high quality curriculum for children under five. The overall curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced at both key stages, except in IT where it does not fully meet statutory requirements.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Sound provision results in pupils making satisfactory progress. Individual education plans vary in quality.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. The provision for pupils' social development is particularly strong and has resulted in a caring and happy community based on good relationships and mutual respect. Work remains to be done to ensure that more time for reflection is planned into lessons.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good procedures with high standards of pastoral care. The ways in which teachers assess and monitor pupils' progress are sound but are used inconsistently.

The school continues to have a satisfactory partnership with parents. Links with the reception class are particularly valued. The new national numeracy strategy has been introduced very effectively. Positive outcomes can be seen in teachers' planning and the greater depth of mathematical understanding, especially among older pupils. Limitations of space mean that only a very small group can be taught IT skills at any one time. The school takes good care of its pupils and places a considerable importance on ensuring their welfare.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and senior staff lead and manage soundly. They have created a friendly and positive working atmosphere in which teachers and governors work well together and show considerable commitment. However, the will to improve and succeed is hampered by the current management structures. The role of the two assistant headteachers is unclear. No one is directly responsible for Key Stage 1.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is very supportive, and fulfils its responsibilities effectively. Governors are aware of how well the school is doing through regular visits to classrooms.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory as the headteacher's current teaching and subject commitments severely limit his opportunities to monitor or evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in lessons. Most subject co-ordinators do not have planned opportunities to make themselves aware of standards.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used satisfactorily in most subjects. Classroom computers are not used fully and are incompatible with the workstations at which pupils learn their IT skills. The books for guided reading are of high quality.

The level of staffing, accommodation and resources is sound. The temporary building used by the reception class is used very creatively despite its size. There is no space big enough to set up an area where larger groups can be taught IT skills and the number of workstations is very limited. This affects standards. The overall standard of leadership and management is sound, but the role of senior staff is insufficiently planned and organised. The school applies the principles of best value appropriately.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like school</li> <li>• The school helps pupils to become mature and responsible</li> <li>• Children are expected to work hard</li> <li>• The teaching is good</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ways in which they are informed about their children's progress</li> </ul>

The inspectors agreed with parents' positive views of the school. Several parents would like to know more about how well their children are doing, by having a termly opportunity to look at books and talk to the teacher about how they can help at home. The inspection team agrees with parents. The school is planning to review the current arrangements.



## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The percentage of pupils who achieved the national standard in the 1999 tests for the end of Key Stage 1 was below average for reading and mathematics, and well below for writing. The drop in the results was expected, especially in reading, when compared to previous years as this particular age group has had overall low attainment since starting school. Teachers estimated that pupils' standards in speaking and listening were well below average. Pupils' lack of speaking skills has had a marked effect on overall standards throughout the school and was also noted at the time of the previous inspection.
2. The percentage of pupils reaching the national target of level 4 at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 was above average in English, close to the average for science, but was below average in mathematics. When the results were compared with those in all and similar schools, they were close to the average for mathematics, above for English and well above for science. Over the past three years attainment has been close to the national trend, although it has fluctuated in individual years according to the standards in particular year groups. The 1998 results in English and mathematics, for example, were lower than in 1997 and 1999, and the results in science were much better in 1999 than in previous years.
3. The school has analysed these and other test results very carefully, and teachers use the information when setting up work groups within their classes. A particular change has been introduced in Year 6 so that mathematics and English can be taught in three groups, each with a teacher or classroom assistant. This has been made possible through the allocation of extra funding but is also due to the headteacher's decision to teach the older children himself for two and a half days a week, some of the time on his own and at other times as part of the English/mathematics 'team.' There has been an overall positive impact on standards as pupils have more individual time with an adult, but it has severely limited the time the headteacher has for his other responsibilities. Additional literacy support is provided for lower attaining pupils throughout the school and helps them to make greater progress. Teachers' knowledge of their pupils' potential has been used effectively in setting appropriately challenging targets for the end of the school year.
4. Attainment by pupils under five is sound overall. Many children enter the nursery with limited communication skills, and are also below average in their mathematical understanding. At the start of this school year, the particular group of children in the reception class were slightly above average in language and literacy skills, but below average for mathematics. Children make generally good progress and most are on line to reach the nationally expected standard by the time they are five. Teaching is good overall, but especially good teaching in reception is further increasing children's progress and quality of learning, and standards are improving rapidly.
5. Pupils in the current Years 2 and 6, the ends of the two key stages, are achieving standards in their lessons and in their books that are broadly in line with the national expectations for mathematics and science, but are below in English. Standards in mathematics and science are similar to those noted in the previous inspection report, but are lower in English.

6. The below average attainment in English in Years 2 and 6 is linked directly to many pupils' relatively weak language skills on entry to the school. They make sound progress in both speaking and listening but still have standards below the national expectation by the end of each key stage. By the age of seven pupils listen attentively and convey simple meanings to others, but a large minority cannot explain their ideas in any detail, nor use the growing vocabulary expected for their age. By the age of 11 many pupils can develop their ideas thoughtfully and convey opinions clearly to others, but a large minority do not extend their ideas when talking to others, and their use of vocabulary lacks clarity. Standards in spoken language are limiting attainment in reading and writing, as well as achievement in other subjects.
7. Although most pupils achieve the levels expected for their ages in reading and writing, few achieve higher levels in their class work. At Key Stage 1 pupils write their ideas in a sequence of sentences and often use capital letters and full stops correctly. Most simple familiar words are spelt correctly and letters are clearly shaped and legible. There is no evidence of pupils extending their ideas in organised and imaginative writing, using words chosen for variety and interest. At Key Stage 2 pupils write in a range of forms including letter, story, play and poem. They are beginning to use grammatically complex sentences and sustain and develop their ideas in interesting ways. A small minority of Year 6 pupils produce writing that is interesting and imaginative, and use vocabulary with precision.
8. Current standards in mathematics at the end of both key stages are close to the national average. However, pupils in Year 2 have considerable difficulty in explaining mathematical facts and processes. Pupils know the basic skills of addition and subtraction, and work satisfactorily with numbers to 100. They know the names of common two-dimensional shapes, and how to use tallies and block graphs to collect information and bring it together to form conclusions. Their books show that they have acquired and practised new skills successfully since September. Pupils of average ability often have difficulty in remembering these skills in later lessons and require continual revision of basic facts. Pupils in the current Year 6 are benefiting from the small teaching groups and the rigour of the successful implementation of the new national strategy for numeracy. They have a sound understanding of number facts, working successfully with decimals, fractions and larger numbers. Difficulties with language continue to hold back pupils' progress in all classes.
9. Literacy skills are used effectively throughout the curriculum, especially in science and history. A good example was the writing done in the form of 'new' Greek myths by Year 5 pupils as part of their study of Ancient Greece. Pupils in both key stages have opportunities to use their numeracy skills effectively in other lessons, for example through accurate measurement in science and design and technology.
10. Standards in science are in line with national expectations at both key stages. Pupils in Key Stage 1 identify similarities and differences, classify according to characteristics and are able to list differences between living and non-living things. They observe very carefully and are able to record these observations in tables, graphs, drawings and writing. They make good progress in acquiring and applying their knowledge in problem solving situations. They identify sources of light and then link this to previous knowledge of nocturnal animals. They understand that sound can be produced in different ways and confidently predict what kind will travel furthest. Key Stage 2 pupils appreciate the need for a fair test and are able to identify the variables in experiments and agree procedures that will be consistent. The conduct of experiments is well planned and pupils record the stages and resulting information carefully. The interpretation and use of information to draw conclusions is less strongly developed. In some cases pupils do not identify a hypothesis clearly before starting their practical activity.

11. Pupils are reaching expected standards in communicating and handling information in their information technology [IT] lessons. However, the school does not possess much of the hardware and computer programs necessary to deliver the rest of the IT curriculum, and overall standards are below those expected at the end of both key stages. Pupil achievement is at least satisfactory in other subjects in both key stages, and is good in physical education by the end of Key Stage 2.
12. Pupils with special educational needs, including those who are the subjects of statements of special need, make satisfactory progress towards the targets on their individual education plans. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory across all subjects.

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

13. The very good standards of behaviour and positive attitudes to learning throughout the school have been maintained since the previous inspection. The children are responsive and interested, taking part in all the activities provided for them. They are keen and eager to learn, and work and play very well together as part of a group even when they are not being directly supervised. They share their knowledge and skills confidently with the class, and this has a positive effect on learning.
14. The children settle happily and enjoy school. They are confident and establish very good relationships with other children and adults. They are encouraged to think of other people and to be polite. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good, and they benefit from being encouraged to show initiative and to take responsibility. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Older children work effectively with younger ones, and have organised a sale for charity. The pupils' response to the values and standards set by the school is positive throughout the school. They develop good habits of working, settle down quickly to tasks and persevere with them throughout the lesson. They often demonstrate high levels of self-discipline.
15. Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is very good. They are well behaved at lunchtime and the school is an orderly and happy community. The children clearly understand what is expected and respect the rules and conventions that exist to safeguard them. The rewards and sanctions systems are well established and incidents of bullying are rare. The quality of interpersonal relationships is very good. Girls and boys mix well together, and teachers have a balanced approach even when boys outnumber girls. The children treat each other with courtesy and respect, willingly undertake routine tasks to keep classrooms tidy and organised, and to feed the animals.
16. Pupils are able to make good progress in their personal development. However, there is no formalised scheme of work for their personal, social and health education programme to ensure that they grow even more confidently in their awareness of themselves and others. Pupils' self-esteem is regarded as important, and has a positive effect on their learning. Their work is valued and this enhances their personal and social development.
17. The children's attendance levels are satisfactory, although they are slightly below the national average. The school is monitoring attendance figures efficiently and is aware that good attendance is necessary for continuity and access to the curriculum to be positive. Registration procedures are properly documented and effectively implemented, meeting statutory

requirements. Lessons now begin and end on time. There have been two fixed term exclusions in the past year.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The overall standard of teaching is good. Eleven per cent of the lessons seen during the inspection were judged as very good, a further forty-one per cent were good and forty-eight per cent were satisfactory. This is a considerable improvement since the previous inspection as the percentage of very good teaching has risen from two per cent to eleven per cent and there is now no unsatisfactory teaching. Sixteen per cent of the teaching was unsatisfactory at the time of the previous inspection.
19. The quality of teaching in the early years is good, and is especially strong in the reception class. Teachers plan carefully to ensure that all children work steadily towards the achievement of the desirable outcomes for their age. All staff set a very high example and place an appropriate emphasis on developing children's personal and social skills. They are aware of the overall lack of good speaking skills and take care to use and encourage children to use a wide vocabulary. Questions are asked skilfully and encourage children to think more deeply and lengthen their answers. Mathematics teaching in the reception class is a particular strength. The high quality of thought put into planning role-play in the nursery is not extended enough into other areas of children's creative development. Children do not have a wide enough range of stimuli or opportunities for painting and some colouring activities are too complex. These factors restrict children's opportunities for effective learning.
20. The overall quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is sound and in Key Stage 2 is good. The main difference between the two key stages is overall good quality of teaching in mathematics, history and physical education in Key Stage 2. Some lessons in Key Stage 1 lack pace. Literacy is taught soundly in all classes and pupils use their skills satisfactorily to read and write in all subjects. Although teachers are aware of pupils' difficulties with language, not enough care is always taken to ensure that they completely understand the worksheets or have enough opportunities to learn the necessary specialist vocabulary they need in order to talk purposefully in subjects like mathematics and science. Numeracy is generally well taught, and is used effectively in science, geography and design and technology lessons.
21. In the best lessons in both key stages teachers make good use of the new numeracy and literacy strategies as the basis for their planning. This is particularly noticeable in mathematics teaching in Key Stage 2 when each activity is planned as a series of connected tasks that move along quickly and keep pupils mentally alert. Group tasks all take their start point from the main teaching that precedes them, but are carefully focused at the correct level of difficulty for each ability set. In the best lessons in all subjects in both key stages, pupils are told how much time they have for the work and what they are expected to achieve. Very good teaching is also seen in Years 5 and 6 in particular when teachers use open questions skilfully and pupils are encouraged to deepen their learning and understanding by being asked to explain what they mean in detail. Teachers have good overall subject knowledge and teach basic skills effectively. Good examples were seen in gymnastics and IT lessons when the teachers' own confidence and encouragement helped pupils to push themselves harder and to make greater progress. Strong relationships are based on mutual respect.
22. Lessons are well planned in all subjects, but not all teachers tell the children at the start of the lesson what they will have learned by the end of the session. This makes it harder for pupils to know what the lesson is about or to understand when they have been successful, and for teachers to measure whether the pupils have grasped the essential points. In contrast, when the plenary sessions at the end of lessons are used effectively, the session draws to a well-organised conclusion, and pupils know what they have achieved and how their learning will be extended in the next session. In one example of very good teaching in Year 5, the teacher

realised that the pupils were going to reach the lesson objective faster than she had anticipated. She extended the material quickly and raised the level of challenge. The pupils responded very positively and the quality of their learning increased. Pupils in all classes are very well managed, especially in Key Stage 2, and materials are always thoroughly prepared and ready for use. Support staff are valued as members of the teaching 'team' and play a full and appropriate part in helping pupils to make progress in small groups or in a specialist area.

23. Teaching is less successful when pupils have to sit for too long listening to the teacher. This is particularly noticeable when the class registration leads into a 'listening and talking' session and children are inactive for an extended period and lose concentration. Information technology is not used sufficiently in most subjects. There are some notable exceptions, as in the word processing achieved by older pupils and the mouse skills used by Year 1 pupils in geography and English lessons.
24. The overall quality of learning is good. Pupils acquire new skills and knowledge effectively because they are taught well. They are encouraged to think creatively, as in mathematics lessons when they tried to solve difficult mental problems, and to put appropriate physical effort into their games and gymnastics lessons. Pupils' interest and concentration on their work is consistently good, and is particularly strong in early years and in Key Stage 2. Very good learning takes place when the level of stimulus is high, as was seen when pupils followed up their visit to Gainsborough Old Hall or talked about the Greek pottery they had studied in a history lesson. They learn effectively through correcting their own errors, but teachers do not write enough comments in pupils' books to show how the work can be improved. When pupils' IT skills are used in lessons, the work is often above average and increases the quality of the learning.
25. Teachers take appropriate account of special educational needs in their planning, and make effective use of classroom and special needs assistants. Sometimes the timing of withdrawal groups for work on an additional literacy programme is inappropriate. This results in pupils missing key parts of class lessons, including lesson introductions and shared text work, which are of potential value to those with literacy needs. The school is aware of the problems this creates and is seeking ways to resolve it.. Teachers integrate pupils with special educational needs effectively in their classes and in the everyday life of the school. As a result they work productively and make sound progress in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding.

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

26. The school provides a sound curriculum for its pupils, including those with special educational needs. Children in the nursery and reception classes are given a high quality and range of learning opportunities. These are planned thoroughly to help them progress in the areas of learning for children under five, with a strong emphasis on personal development, language and mathematics. The early years' curriculum builds on children's existing knowledge and skills and takes account of their developing intellectual, physical, emotional and social abilities. Opportunities are provided, for example, for purposeful play, talk, and practical activities.
27. The curriculum for pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2 is broad and balanced, and meets the needs of pupils of all abilities. It meets statutory requirements for the National Curriculum, with the exception of aspects of information technology where there is inadequate provision for the strands of the programmes of study relating to controlling, measuring, and simulations. There

has been significant improvement since the previous inspection in developing a long-term curriculum ‘map,’ as well as schemes of work for all subjects. National strategies for literacy and numeracy have been successfully implemented, and are ensuring these basic skills are taught effectively.

28. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with a balanced and relevant curriculum, and the school meets their requirements as set out in statements and individual education plans. Additional literacy support is provided for many pupils who experience difficulties with reading and writing and is promoting their progress. Personal, social and health education is taught throughout the school and includes sex education and attention to drug misuse. However, current planning is not ensuring that issues are addressed systematically and appropriately for pupils at different ages.
29. The curriculum is enriched by the residential visits available for Year 5 and 6 pupils, by regular field trips to support work in history and geography, and by the opportunities for pupils throughout the school to have swimming lessons each summer. The school provides a range of extra-curricular activities including rugby, netball, and art and drama clubs for pupils at Key Stage 2. There are no clubs for younger pupils and no extra-curricular music activities apart from the drama club. Key Stage 2 pupils are able to join a school choir and learn the recorder during curriculum time. There is no evidence of inequality of opportunity for any groups of pupils.
30. There are constructive relationships with partner institutions including playgroups, a teacher training college and the neighbouring secondary school that provides access to its physical education facilities for some pupils. Links with the community, including local farms, have also been established which contribute to pupils’ learning, and regular visitors include the vicar, police officer and fire fighters.
31. The school makes good provision for the personal development of its pupils. Provision for social development is very good. The caring community life of the school, in which the staff encourage pupils to take their full part, leads to the widening of pupils’ personal and social interests and experiences. Older pupils tutor younger pupils in computer skills and also assist with reading with the reception pupils. They accept each other readily and cooperate and collaborate in lessons with mutual benefit. They have responsible attitudes to work and to the school. The attitudes and behaviour of the staff towards each other and to pupils set an excellent example. Pupils are also aware of the wider community and raise funds successfully for charities such as Children in Need. This is a school that values people positively.
32. Pupils’ moral development is strongly promoted throughout the school. They understand what is expected of them and are taught principles that enable them to distinguish right from wrong. Pupils show respect for each other’s opinions in lessons, value each other’s work and look after school property. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory. The school encourages involvement in the local community and extends pupils’ awareness through visits to local museums and art gallery. A regular residential visit provides an opportunity to experience the life of a different community and locality. Through art and literature pupils have some experience of the richness and diversity of other cultures. Pupils correspond with, and have visited, a school with pupils of other faiths and cultural traditions.
33. The quality of spiritual development has improved and is now satisfactory. The school has worked hard since the last inspection to provide more opportunities that stimulate pupils’ imaginations and encourage reflective work in art and English. Poems on “Frost” and the charcoal portraits of friends show a growing sensitivity and awareness, whilst increased

hands-on practical activities evoke excitement and curiosity about the world in which they live. However, many opportunities remain in assemblies and lessons to challenge and extend intellectual curiosity, give time for reflection and to create a greater spiritual awareness within the whole school.

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

34. The school has good procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare. It has high standards of pastoral care. The monitoring and recording of pupils' academic and personal development is satisfactory overall, and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. Staff have high expectations for good behaviour, and very effective measures are in place for promoting discipline and eliminating oppressive behaviour. Teachers and support staff all make a very significant contribution to providing a caring atmosphere and a safe environment for learning for all pupils. They know the children well and there are good procedures in place for child protection. The personal, social and health education programme is being implemented, but this programme is not based on a scheme of work to ensure a consistent and planned approach.
35. The staff put strong emphasis on raising all pupils' self-esteem, particularly in the early years, and pupils are confident in their dealings with each other and with all members of staff. The school ensures that all pupils who wish to go are able to make a residential visit, and the opportunities provided by this visit play an important part in supporting the pupils' personal and social development. Staff receive appropriate training to enable them to keep up-to-date with aspects of care and welfare, and responsibility for health and safety is clearly defined.
36. Assessment for children under five is satisfactory. A baseline assessment is carried out shortly after the children enter the reception class. This helps the teacher set realistic objectives for teaching. The children are re-tested at the end of the year to help the school to monitor progress. The school has been using and analysing a baseline test for four years, and this has helped to monitor the different year groups and track their progress. In both the nursery and reception classes, all staff are involved in continually monitoring children's progress. This gives them a good understanding of the children's achievements in each area of learning. Some of their work is kept to demonstrate particular skills, but record keeping systems are not developed enough as they detail *what* children have done rather than *how well* they have done. The records lack diagnostic information that would indicate what the next learning steps should be. In reception, the teacher keeps an additional ongoing commentary of personal and social development which provides a useful record, but is not used yet to set individual targets.
37. Procedures for the assessment and recording of pupils' attainment are satisfactory overall. The school complies with statutory requirements for assessing pupils at the end of each key stage. Details of each pupil are transferred to the secondary school at the end of Key Stage 2. The optional national tests are now used in Years 3, 4 and 5 to assess pupils' performance in mathematics and English. The results of these tests are used to set school targets and provide extra support for pupils, with the aim of raising standards, as for example the booster classes in English and mathematics.
38. There is regular periodic testing of reading and some of the records identify strengths and weaknesses. However, teachers' own reading records are not related to skills and do not identify targets for improvement. The records vary in the quality of information from class to class. Since the last inspection, the school has devised sound policies for assessment, recording and



reporting. However the role of the assessment co-ordinator is not made clear and the policies are not monitored. There is no marking policy or guidance. Pupils' work is regularly marked in a positive way but is not sufficiently evaluative or informative, and rarely indicates what pupils need to do to improve their work. This concern was also noted in the last inspection report.

39. All teachers keep ongoing records of pupils' progress, but there is some variation between individual teachers. Procedures for recording pupils' progress are presently undergoing a period of change. Some of this is relates to the recent introduction of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. Other changes have been necessitated because new schemes of work have been introduced. Subject co-ordinators are moving towards a system of recording each child's progress against the expectations for each unit of work. The records for history and geography are now being trialled and are proving to be both useful and manageable.
40. The use of assessment to help teachers plan future work is unsatisfactory. Day to day judgements in many cases are not sufficiently well focussed to have an impact on daily planning or to match work suitably to the next stage in learning. A small number of examples were noted throughout the school where assessment helped teachers to target questions accurately to judge how well an individual pupil had learnt a particular concept, or whether learning objectives have been met. However, teachers do not use their understanding of what pupils can do and have learned consistently enough in daily lesson planning. The practice of evaluating short-term plans and annotating them to show where adjustments need to be made has not been established.
41. The school has appropriate procedures to identify special educational needs. It makes good use of external specialist agencies including an educational psychologist, social services and local education authority advice on speech and language difficulties. There has been a recent improvement in the quality of individual education plans, which are provided for all pupils on the Code of Practice special needs Register. However, these are still of variable quality, with many lacking specific and measurable targets, or a timescale over which planned targets should be reached. This lack of clarity means teachers cannot satisfactorily measure the progress made by pupils with special educational needs.

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

42. The school continues to have satisfactory links with parents, and parents feel generally well informed. However, about one in three who responded to the questionnaire did not feel that the school worked closely enough with them. Inspectors support the view expressed by many parents at the meeting that there are insufficient formal parent interviews when books can be seen and the individual progress of the children can be discussed. The quality of relationships between parents, staff and governors is good. Parents feel welcomed into the school where they make a valuable contribution to the pupils' learning by, for example, helping with reading, with swimming and on educational visits.
43. The parents take an interest in what the school has to offer and the Friends of Billingham C.E. Primary School demonstrate this through effective fundraising efforts. Parents speak highly of the systems of informal communication with the headteacher and staff, and the information about day-to-day matters and school events. The parents also appreciate the very informative school prospectus that contains detailed advice on, for example, attendance, the behaviour policy and what is expected of the children as regards homework. Links between parents and the reception class are particularly strong and the parents value the handwritten weekly newsletter they receive. Written reports to parents are satisfactory and contain information on the progress of their children. Staff are regarded as very approachable and seen to have a thorough knowledge of the children. Parents are also pleased with the way their children settle

happily and are eager to attend school. They appreciate the procedures for induction for the early years, and the processes for transfer to secondary school. There is close liaison with other schools in the area that provides curricular continuity and promotes easy transition from one stage of schooling to the next. The parents receive a satisfactory amount of information about the delivery of the curriculum and the teachers' termly objectives. The use of home-school agreements also contributes to pupils' learning at school and at home.

44. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept informed of their children's progress, and many provide support at home to help them reach the targets on their individual education plans. Parents of pupils who are the subjects of statements of special educational need are invited to the annual meetings at which progress and targets are reviewed. However, parents of pupils at the lower stages of the register are not involved enough in planning targets for their children.

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

45. The overall standard of leadership and management is sound. The headteacher and senior staff have created a positive and friendly working atmosphere in which teachers and governors work well together and show considerable commitment. However, the will to improve and succeed is hampered by management structures and practices that are insufficiently planned and organised.
46. The governing body works hard and gives sound support to the school and headteacher. Governors are interested and enthusiastic and are led by senior members who have an informed and realistic appreciation of the strategic issues that face the school. They are now provided with more detailed and specific information by the headteacher, are developing their monitoring role and are very aware of the need to increase their understanding and awareness of the school's performance. A curriculum group is being formed as part of this action. The governing body fulfils its legal requirements.
47. The headteacher and two assistant headteachers work well together as a senior management team but do not have a formalised purpose or well-defined roles. This finding is similar to that of the last inspection. Individual responsibilities and delegation are not clear and levels of decision-making have not really been identified. The result is less efficiency, and management which tends to react rather than initiate. The team does not identify sufficient time for members to work together or for individual members to fulfil tasks outside their teaching role. As a result, communication within the team and between the team and the staff can become confused and time and effort is wasted. No member of the team is designated to be specifically responsible for the oversight of Key Stage 1. This affects standards of teaching and learning, as there is no system to ensure the spread of good practice or monitor and evaluate standards across the age group.
48. The school has made considerable efforts since the last inspection to address the need for monitoring standards but it continues to be unsatisfactory. The headteacher has collected significant information about the performance of the school and has shared this with governors. The link between the information, the action which follows and the results that are achieved is less clear. Benefits are not sufficiently well identified and it is difficult to establish how the information is shared and the action to be taken agreed. The headteacher has begun a pattern of classroom observation but this is limited and lacks an agreed focus.
49. The headteacher has a realistic overview of the school, an appreciation of its strengths and difficulties and is clear about how he would like the school to develop. He has a heavy teaching

commitment: two and a half days. This seriously restricts his management role in areas such as monitoring, and in creating and operating procedures that would provide some formality and structure for many of the decisions taken. His time is, therefore, not used effectively enough in terms of the overall management of the school.

50. Co-ordinators have been appointed in all subjects. They have a real sense of responsibility for their subjects and have established key planning documents, reviewed resources and are confident about how they wish to develop their curriculum area. Although a brief job description exists, there has been no whole school discussion or agreement of the way in which they will monitor teaching or pupils' work. Funds were delegated this year but co-ordinators have no identified budgeting role or formal way to report the development and needs of their curriculum area.
51. The school has made progress since the last inspection but many of the inspection issues remain the same and still require attention. The quality of relationships and the commitment of the whole staff are strengths on which to build but do not remove the need for purpose and planning to be stated and formalised.
52. The school is well provided with suitably experienced teaching and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. There are sound arrangements for the induction of staff new to the school and for training new teachers. The school building is attractive and in good decorative order, although it provides only adequate space for the number of pupils and classes. The temporary building used by the reception class is used very creatively despite its size. There is no space in the school that is big enough to be set up as an area where larger groups can be taught IT skills and the number of workstations is very limited. Display areas in classrooms and shared areas are used well to celebrate and stimulate pupils' achievements. Learning resources are broadly satisfactory with some shortcomings in information technology. The school has a good range of musical instruments, as well as books of high quality for group reading in literacy lessons.
53. Educational priorities are supported through the school's financial planning, although decisions are too often made in reaction to current events. Specific grants are used effectively for their designated purposes, and sound use is made of new technology to support the work of the school. The principles of best value are satisfactorily applied in the school's management, procurement and use of services and resources. The school provides sound value for money.
54. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities for special educational needs. The school's arrangements are currently managed by the headteacher, and overseen by a member of the governing body. However, procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of the school's provision for special educational needs are unsatisfactory. A policy document is in place but has not been reviewed since 1995, and there are no agreed criteria for monitoring the policy's success.

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

### **Key issues for action**

The headteacher, staff and governing body should continue to work together in order to:

#### **1. Improve the quality of management by:**

- clarifying the role and responsibilities held by the assistant headteachers  
[Paragraph 47]
- clarifying the purpose of the senior management team  
[Paragraph 47]
- identifying the teachers responsible for co-ordinating work in each key stage and specifying how they will work together  
[Paragraph 47]
- extending the monitoring and evaluative role of subject co-ordinators to enable them to be more informed of standards of teaching and learning  
[Paragraph 48, 50]
- reducing the headteacher's teaching commitment to give him sufficient time to evaluate standards of teaching and pupil attainment in all classes  
[Paragraph 49]

#### **2. Raise standards further by:**

- extending the opportunities for developing pupils' speaking skills in all subjects and in all lessons in Key Stage 1 and 2  
[Paragraph 1, 6, 20, 68, 69, 76, 77, 81 & 86]
- using teachers' understanding of what pupils can do and have learned more consistently in daily lesson planning  
[Paragraph 40, 75, 81, 87]

#### **3. Continue to raise standards in information technology [IT] by:**

- improving the provision and location of hardware so that IT skills teaching can take place more effectively  
[Paragraph 11, 106]
- continuing the programme of IT training for all teaching and support staff  
[Paragraph 108]
- ensuring the delivery of all aspects of the National Curriculum for IT  
[Paragraph 105]
- including guidance on the application of IT skills in all subject schemes of work  
[Paragraph 108]
- achieving compatibility of classroom computers with those used for skills training  
[Paragraph 106]
- ensuring that IT skills are used regularly in lessons to raise standards in all subjects  
[Paragraph 73, 82]
- enabling the co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate standards of teaching and learning in order to spread good practice, be aware of standards and support colleagues less confident than themselves  
[Paragraph 108]

The following minor issues should be included in the governors' action plan

- There are not enough planned opportunities in lessons for pupils to reflect on what they are learning, or to experience a sense of awe and wonder  
[Paragraph 33]
- Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs vary in quality  
[Paragraph 41]



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	46
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	11	41	48	0	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	11	186
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	29

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	27

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	38
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	30

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.2
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	18	12	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	12	13
	Girls	11	11	12
	Total	24	23	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (92)	77 (92)	83 (81)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	13
	Girls	11	12	12
	Total	23	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (88)	80 (89)	83 (92)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

***Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2***

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	10	11	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	6	8
	Girls	9	8	10
	Total	17	14	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (57)	67 (57)	86 (65)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	7	9
	Girls	9	8	10
	Total	17	15	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (69)	71 (64)	90 (74)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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



### *Ethnic background of pupils*

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	208
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

### *Teachers and classes*

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.4
Average class size	26.9

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	168.25

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	20

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### *Financial information*

Financial year	1998/9
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	£
Total income	296050
Total expenditure	295788
Expenditure per pupil	1549
Balance brought forward from previous year	2476
Balance carried forward to next year	2681

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	208
Number of questionnaires returned	91

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	41	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	45	38	8	1	8
Behaviour in the school is good.	32	58	7	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	53	9	4	0
The teaching is good.	48	43	4	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	33	21	10	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	46	38	11	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	38	6	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	38	32	27	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	47	39	10	1	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	48	1	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	44	33	12	1	10

### **Other issues raised by parents**

Several parents at the meeting said that they would like to know more about how well their children are doing through a termly opportunity to look at books and talk to the teacher about how they can help at home. The school is planning to review the current arrangements.

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

55. Provision for children under five is good. There is a very attractive purpose built nursery attended by 22 three and four year olds each morning. Children transfer full-time to the reception class in the September of the school year in which they become five. There is a very good induction programme that ensures that children settle well into both classes. Many children enter the nursery with limited speaking skills, and are also below average in their mathematical understanding. They make generally good progress and most will reach nationally expected standards by the time they are five. At the start of this school year, the particular group of children in the reception class were slightly above average in language and literacy skills, but below average for mathematics.
56. Children in the nursery respond well to adults and are generally relaxed in their company. Most are confident to choose an activity and about two thirds engage happily in co-operative play. The remainder tend to play happily on their own, ignoring others working in the area. Potentially confrontational situations between children are spotted and dealt with immediately. No aggressive behaviour was noted. The children work with concentration and persevere well, for instance when learning to walk on tiptoe in a gymnastics lesson. The role-play 'allotment' area has been well planned to help children develop their independence and co-operative skills. They have learnt to put all the equipment back carefully in the 'potting shed' at the end of sessions. Children develop good table manners and conversational skills in their snack time.
57. Children settle confidently into the more formal routines of the reception class and share equipment and activities readily with others. They co-operate well in role-play, for example as they work together to ensure the baby is safely in the car seat. Almost all children sit and listen attentively to whole class discussions. They have learnt not to interrupt each other, and demonstrate interest and enjoyment in everything they do, responding positively to the class teacher's encouragement. Learning is good in both classes because all staff act as good role models for the children, helping them to form positive relationships and to care about others.
58. Many children enter the nursery with limited language skills. Staff create frequent opportunities for children to talk with an adult while they work and play. They extend their understanding of language through the weekly introduction of specific sounds. These are developed through other activities, as seen in the modelling of the 's' sound for Sammy Snake in play-dough. The teaching of language and literacy skills in the nursery is sound overall. Teachers' encouragement of spoken language through careful questioning is particularly effective, but there are not enough centres of interest to excite and stimulate discussion. Early writing skills are encouraged through making marks, and most children hold pencils and crayons correctly. The children enjoy sharing books with their teacher and increase their understanding that print carries meaning.
59. In the reception class, the children can make up their own stories and take part confidently in role-play. The teaching of the early years literacy programme is predominantly good, and makes good use of 'Big Books' to extend the children's speaking and listening skills. The staff have created a stimulating learning environment. The children's early reading skills are developing well, and most are beginning to identify initial sounds in words. Many recognise familiar words in simple texts, and a few are confident early readers. They are encouraged by staff to predict

what happens next in the story and to discuss the characters. Many families support their children at home by hearing them read, which helps them to make better progress. Children's writing skills are also developing well, and most can write their own names using appropriate upper and lower case letters. They listen attentively to stories, rhymes and poems, and ask thoughtful questions, as was seen when they watched a doll being bathed. The majority of reception children are in line to meet the nationally recognised standards, and some will have exceeded them.

60. Nursery children develop mathematics through a variety of activities. They learn about numbers through games, stories and rhymes and practise counting up to five. For example they know that only four children at a time can play in the role-play 'allotment,' and understand how to check this by counting. They have regular access to sand and water trays and use these experiences help them to form the foundations of many mathematical concepts. Some children are beginning to have an understanding of "smallest" and "largest", and the current topic based on 'The Tale of the Turnip' helps them to develop their vocabulary related to size by considering new words such as "enormous." Mathematics teaching in the nursery is sound overall, but the opportunities for children to learn how to use their early knowledge are not as well developed as those for language and literacy.
61. Reception children have well taught formal mathematics lessons. They concentrate hard as they use a number ladder to find answers to practical problems, such as one more than six, or one less than ten. They are making good progress in understanding mathematical vocabulary required to describe shape, position, size and quantity. As they worked with their teacher to sequence numbers along a line, almost all demonstrated that they can recognise numbers to ten, and can count forwards and backwards at a good pace. They can compare, order, sequence and count using everyday objects, and the majority are familiar with large numbers in their everyday life. Most are on target to meet the national learning outcomes by the time they are five.
62. Children in the nursery are beginning to understand the world in which they live. They are encouraged to talk about the world around them, for example by discussing what the weather was like on the way to school and keeping a weather chart. Their early scientific learning is well catered for, as was seen when they explored what happens to soap suds when they are whisked. They experimented with different sized whisks and, to their great delight, created a tower of quivering soap bubbles. They enjoy using construction kits and are introduced to information technology by using the classroom computer.
63. Children build on these early skills effectively in the reception class. They continue to extend their scientific understanding, for example, as they explore a collection of battery operated toys and examine the switches. They learn how they grow and develop over time through their topic on babies. They have used their design skills to create a nursery for the baby, and think about bright colours for the furnishings. They are spellbound as a real baby comes into their classroom to visit them, and watch with awe and wonder when they observe a very skilled demonstration of bathing a baby, using one of the classroom dolls. They gained a great deal of knowledge about the need for care and nurture, and about events in the natural world. Most use computers confidently, selecting tools in a graphics program and using functions such as the delete key. Overall they make good progress because the teaching is good. Most children are in line to meet the nationally recognised learning outcomes by the time they are five.
64. Children in the nursery have regular opportunities to use a range of materials to cut and stick as they make pictures and collages. Sometimes children's creative work is held back as their need to express their own ideas and develop their imagination is overtaken by the teachers' support and help provided to achieve the finished outcome. This was evident in the display of children's

work as well as in the limited range of activities provided. The large pictures on display involve minimal creative input from the children, as all they had to do was to stick coloured pieces onto a prepared outline. The children do not have sufficient opportunities to paint and no paintings were on display. Some of the activities are too complex, and involve outlines to colour in with crayons. These are too detailed and the children tend to scribble over them. They have opportunities to sing and make music, and are learning to express and understand characters other than themselves through role-play. They enjoy dressing up and are imaginative in creating scenes of their own such as having a picnic. Whilst teaching is satisfactory overall, not enough of the good practice seen in planning role play is extended to other activities designed to promote children's creative ability, particularly in terms of their artistic development.

65. The children in reception are also creative in their role play as they play in the house and set up a nursery for the classroom dolls. They join enthusiastically to sing with the older children. They also have opportunities to make music using percussion instruments. The children moved confidently in their dance lesson, and interpreted the music and the story with good understanding. They mix their own colours as they paint, and demonstrated a sound awareness of colour and form in their work to produce a picture for a baby. They also have good opportunities to express themselves in a range of media such as printing, drawing and collage. Their creative work is well displayed and contributes to the stimulating and exciting learning environment that has been created in the classroom. Teaching is sound overall, and children are likely to meet the recognised outcomes for creative development by the time they are five.
66. The children make good overall progress in their physical development, and are well on target to achieving the desirable learning outcomes by the age of five. The quality of teaching in gymnastics is sound. There is a full outdoor curriculum and children have some time every day for vigorous play out in the fresh air. They are able to use a range of small and large equipment to jump, climb and balance with increasing control and co-ordination. They use the toys confidently and show a good awareness of space. They judge speed and distance accurately when manoeuvring their bicycles and scooters. Many of the classroom activities are appropriately designed to improve children's co-ordination and dexterity, for example, through using tools such as scissors, brushes, felt pens building kits and puzzles.

## ENGLISH

67. Analysis of the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests in 1999 shows that attainment at the age of 11 was above the national average, and was also above that achieved by similar schools. Standards vary from year to year but were higher in 1999 than for the previous three years. In contrast, analysis of the 1999 Key Stage 1 curriculum tests shows attainment at the age of seven to be below the national average in reading, and well below the national average in writing. Standards in both reading and writing were well below the average for similar schools, and consistent with standards in mathematics. Teachers' assessments also show standards in speaking and listening to be well below the national average. The 1999 results were lower than for the previous three years and linked to the characteristics of the year group in which attainment on entry to the school was low when compared to previous years.
68. The evidence from inspection is not entirely consistent with national test results and confirms significant variations in attainment between year groups. The attainment of pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 is low. This is linked directly to the relatively weak language skills of many pupils on entry to the school. They make sound progress in both speaking and listening but still achieve standards below the national expectation by the end of each key stage. By the age of seven pupils listen attentively, as shown by the appropriateness of their responses to questions. They convey simple meanings to others, but a large minority do not explain their ideas, nor use

the growing vocabulary expected for their age. By the age of 11 pupils listen effectively as seen, for example, when they listen to instructions and know exactly what is expected of them. Many pupils develop their ideas thoughtfully and convey opinions clearly to others as seen when they share their interpretations of poems with a group. However, a large minority of pupils do not extend their ideas when talking to others and their use of vocabulary lacks clarity.

69. Standards in spoken language are limiting attainment in reading and writing, as well as achievement in other subjects. Although most pupils achieve the levels expected for their ages in reading and writing, few achieve higher levels. By the age of seven most pupils read simple and familiar story books with sound levels of accuracy and fluency, using appropriate strategies to read unfamiliar words. They express simple opinions about major events and characters in stories. By the age of 11, pupils read a variety of texts with fluency and accuracy, including junior fiction, poetry and information books. They understand significant ideas and themes, and are beginning to use inference and deduction. Information retrieval skills are well established. Most pupils can use a library classification system, and know how to locate information from books and computers.
70. At Key Stage 1 pupils write their ideas in a sequence of sentences, as seen when they predict the ending of a story or describe a particular character. They use capital letters and full stops correctly. Many simple familiar words are spelt correctly and letters are clearly shaped and legible. Higher attaining pupils use a wider vocabulary and show some awareness of the intended reader. There is no evidence of pupils extending their ideas in organised and imaginative writing, using words chosen for variety and interest. At Key Stage 2 pupils write in a range of forms including letter, story, play and poem. They are beginning to use grammatically complex sentences and sustain and develop their ideas in interesting ways. A small minority of Year 6 pupils produce writing that is interesting and imaginative and use vocabulary with precision.
71. Standards, found to be average overall during the last inspection, are now lower, but this can be explained by the fluctuations in pupils' attainment on entry to the school from year to year. There has been significant improvement since that time in the management of the subject and the co-ordinator is now establishing appropriate procedures for monitoring standards and progress throughout the school. The National Literacy Strategy has been introduced effectively, as well as additional literacy support for many lower attaining pupils. There has been considerable recent improvement in book provision, and the range and quality of books for group reading are of very high quality.
72. The quality of teaching is sound at both key stages. All lessons were at least satisfactory and teaching was good in almost half the lessons seen. Teachers plan lessons carefully, take account of differing needs within the class, and manage pupils well. Introductory sessions to literacy lessons, as well as guided reading provision, are of consistently high quality. Pupils enjoy these activities and maintain their interest and concentration, enabling them to make good progress in their knowledge and skills of reading and writing. In a good Year 6 poetry lesson the teacher used open questions skilfully to challenge and extend pupils' thinking. As a result, the pupils developed their understanding of how poems can provide many layers of meaning significantly. The pupils were divided into two groups based on their attainment for this lesson, and the content, tasks and levels of demand were matched well to the needs of both groups. The teachers demonstrated very secure knowledge and understanding of the subject and achieved good progress for all the pupils.

73. Weaker features within lessons that were overall sound included a lack of pace and too much time allowed for some parts of the lessons. The time spent practising a skill, for example, is often longer than necessary, and pupils lose concentration. In some classes the variable quality of tasks provided for independent group activities did not challenge or interest pupils to a sufficient depth, or extend their learning to its full potential. Information technology is not used enough in English lessons, but an excellent example was seen when Year 1 pupils used their mouse skills accurately to drag and rearrange text in the correct order.
74. Learning in other subjects is often used effectively to promote skills in reading and writing, including work in science, history and information technology. A good example was the Year 5 pupils' own creation of Greek-style myths in connection with their work in history on Ancient Greece.
75. The co-ordinator has already identified the need to improve spoken language and is developing plans to raise standards. Some teachers carefully record what pupils know and can do in the different attainment targets, and use this information effectively to plan future learning. Procedures for monitoring achievement are not used consistently throughout the school. Where assessment is weaker, teachers have less accurate information on which to match work to differing needs.

## **MATHEMATICS**

76. The percentage of pupils who achieved the national standard in the 1999 national tests was below average for the end of Key Stage 1 and just below average for the end of Key Stage 2. The percentage of Year 2 pupils who reached the higher level 3 was well below average but the number of Year 6 pupils who reached level 5 was well above average. The 1999 Key Stage 1 results reflect the language difficulty that many younger pupils have with their spoken vocabulary. Their ability to explain mathematical concepts is limited. Overall attainment during the past four years has been below the national average in Key Stage 1 but was above in all years in Key Stage 2, except in 1998, when pupils had difficulties in English as well as mathematics. The school has analysed the results of these and other standardised tests very carefully, and has used them to set challenging but realistic targets for pupils in Year 6.
77. Current standards at the end of both key stages are close to the national average and show an improvement over 1999. However, pupils in Year 2 are continuing to have considerable difficulty in explaining the mathematical facts that they do understand. One pupil, for example, knew exactly what was meant by the word "pyramid" but lacked nearly all the vocabulary he needed to explain what a pyramid is mathematically. Pupils understand the basic skills of addition and subtraction, and work satisfactorily with numbers to 100. They know the names of common two-dimensional shapes, and how to use tallies and block graphs to collect information and bring it together to form conclusions. Their books show that they have acquired and practised new skills successfully since September. Pupils of average ability often have difficulty in remembering these skills in later lessons and require continual revision of basic facts. They clearly know how to subtract numbers to 20 but, for example, several started in the wrong place when asked during the inspection how to work out an example.
78. Pupils in the current Year 6 are benefiting from the small teaching groups and the rigour of the successful implementation of the new national strategy for numeracy. They have a sound understanding of number facts, working successfully with decimals, fractions and larger numbers. Difficulties with language continue to hold back pupils' progress, as in the lesson when they tried to describe solid shapes so that a partner could make a copy without seeing the original. Motivation to succeed is high and helps to raise standards. In the example just given,

pupils worked hard with their language, became far more accurate in their choice of vocabulary and the learning was much more successful. Higher attaining pupils enjoy the challenge of working with more difficult concepts as was seen when they constructed 3D shapes from 2D diagrams and tried to out-smart the teacher in a quick fire mental session requiring complex addition and subtraction of money. Pupils with special educational needs also have language difficulties but achieve satisfactory standards through effort and the careful guidance of support staff. Pupils in both key stages have some opportunities to use their skills in other areas of the curriculum, for example through accurate measurement in science and design and technology.

79. Standards of attainment are similar to those reported during the previous inspection. However, the successful introduction of the national numeracy strategy is already having a positive impact on standards. Lessons are very well planned and have a pace and rigour that encourages effective learning. Higher attaining pupils are set demanding tasks. This improvement has resulted from the use of well-differentiated group work that ensures that pupils are given work at the correct level of difficulty, and in the increased percentage of pupils reaching level 5. The problems pupils have in expressing themselves orally remain. The quality of teaching has improved, and teachers, especially with older pupils in Key Stage 2, have a higher expectation of what they can achieve. Group work has a sharper focus.
80. The overall quality of teaching is good in both key stages, has a direct and positive impact, and results in good learning. Particular strengths are the ways in which the teachers plan sharply focused and appropriate tasks for each ability group that arise out the main teaching point for the lesson. The overall high quality of lesson planning has ensured that there is pace and rigour in most learning. On the few occasions when the pace is not present and pupils spend too long sitting and listening, they become bored and lose attention. The standard of behaviour in all lessons is very good. Materials are always immediately available and pupils settle to their tasks without fuss. In the best lessons they are encouraged to be creative and mathematically imaginative in their thinking, as was seen in several lessons when pupils explored ways in which they could add numbers together in their heads through rounding up and down.
81. The best lessons start with the teacher telling the children exactly what they will be able to do at the end of the lesson that they could not do at the beginning. This makes learning far more effective. In Year 5 the learning objective was written on the board and served as a focus for the whole lesson. The clear identification of learning objectives enables teachers to assess far more accurately how well pupils have progressed and what should be covered in the next lesson. Planning is less effective in the few lessons when this essential assessment is omitted or too general. The best teaching also contains very good use of open questions so that pupils have to think hard for themselves and are encouraged to give reasons for their answers or ways of working. Teaching and learning are much less successful when work cards contain words that pupils cannot read and have to guess the meaning, incorrectly substituting for example 'square' for 'sequence.' Learning is also less effective when tasks are too open ended and pupils do not know how long they have to complete them or what standard they are expected to reach, or the plenary session is not used to draw together what has been learned or to reflect on what has been achieved.
82. Not enough use is made of information technology in mathematics lessons. Teachers have not had opportunities to teach the necessary skills, lack much of the equipment and software needed, and classroom computers are not compatible with those used in the IT teaching area. The headteacher is responsible for co-ordinating mathematics as well as his other duties. He is very interested in the subject, and has a clear vision of how the subject will develop. His own enthusiasm is partly responsible for the successful teaching seen during the inspection,



especially in Key Stage 2. The concerns in the previous report about an effective programme for the formal monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning remain as he does not look at pupils' books across the school on a regular basis or have time to follow through a formal evaluation of standards in lessons. The link governor for numeracy takes a considerable interest in the subject and is equally committed to improvement.

## SCIENCE

83. Attainment in science in the 1999 national tests was very close to the national average by the end of Key Stage 2 and was above average at level 5. The overall trend is broadly in line with the national average and well above average for similar schools. Standards seen in pupils' books and in lessons during the inspection are average at both key stages with slightly better attainment at Key Stage 1. This is a similar finding to that in the last report.
84. Pupils in Key Stage 1 identify similarities and differences, classify according to characteristics and are able to list differences between living and non-living things. They observe very carefully and are able to record these observations in tables, graphs, drawings and writing. Pupils noted the detailed physical differences in faces and measured the size of their hand spans. Pupils discuss these observations with confidence and begin to link ideas explaining why human babies need a type of protection that is different to that for a baby bird. They make good use of their knowledge, applying it in problem solving situations so that they are able to readily distinguish a circuit that will light a bulb from one that is faulty. They identify sources of light and then link this to previous knowledge of nocturnal animals. They understand that sound can be produced in different ways and confidently predict what kind of sound will travel furthest.
85. At Key Stage 2 pupils appreciate the need for a fair test and are able to identify the variables in experiments and agree procedures that will be consistent. Year 5 pupils were meticulous in placing dishes of liquid so that they would receive equal sunshine when testing evaporation. They recalled specific language such as vapour and evaporation and used knowledge of previous work to begin to suggest possible outcomes. When trying to define 'weight' Year 6 pupils used a force meter precisely to try to establish the relationship between weight and gravity. The conduct of the experiments is planned thoroughly and pupils record the stages and resulting information in detail. They are less confident when interpreting the information and drawing conclusions. In some cases pupils do not identify a hypothesis clearly before starting the practical activity to test it. Pupils acquire knowledge of materials identifying properties and matching these to use and are able to explain terms such the water cycle, soluble, insoluble and condensation.
86. Teaching is sound and occasionally good. Teachers build effectively on existing knowledge and use questions skilfully to check and extend pupils' understanding. They repeat the objective of the lesson so that pupils are clear about the purpose of the task they are completing, ensure that attention remains focused and that effective learning takes place. They select tasks that encourage discussion and pupil involvement. Lessons are well presented and encourage pupils to think carefully for themselves. There is a sense of excitement and fun in even the simplest practical activity and pupils enjoy experimenting. This has a very positive effect on the quality of their learning as they learn through their mistakes. Teachers support pupils effectively by providing different ways and levels of recording results but seldom identify the initial task at different levels so that higher attaining pupils are challenged appropriately. In some lessons good observation is not always preceded

by an initial hypothesis and insufficient emphasis is placed on stating why the outcome is as it is. Good graph work on physical change often lacks conclusions and attempted explanations. Overall, pupils' scientific vocabulary does not receive sufficient emphasis. These factors limit the progress made by pupils and the quality of their learning.

87. There has been an improvement in science teaching since the last inspection. There is now a good programme of investigations and pupils use mathematical and literacy skills to good effect. Worksheets are now used appropriately. The new scheme of work provides good guidance for teachers and gives a balanced coverage of all aspects of the subject and identifies the skills that should be taught. The newly appointed co-ordinator has provided a good foundation for the development of the subject and appreciates the need to formalise assessment procedures and link them more closely to lesson objectives. A structured planning sheet is also being considered to help teachers to use the scheme even more precisely. She does not have time to monitor the subject across either key stage.

## **ART**

88. There were few opportunities to observe the teaching of art during the inspection and so judgements are made on the basis of work observed, planning and discussions with pupils, teachers and the co-ordinator for the subject. At both key stages there is a range of carefully completed work that is well presented and shows a development of skill and the use of various media. Pupils achieve levels that are in line with that expected for their age and make satisfactory progress.
89. At Key Stage 1 pupils experiment with mixing paint and are beginning to appreciate the way in which the consistency of paint can be used to create effect and then learn techniques that use this knowledge. They work carefully and try hard to create a series of shades of a single colour. They draw large clearly defined pictures of favourite characters and are able to use pastel to create well-observed and vivid images of fruit.
90. Key Stage 2 work in history included a visit to an Elizabethan manor and provided a stimulating starting point for drawing and painting. Pupils paid close attention to the appearance of the house. The use of straws and wood gives a 3D effect that draws attention to the structure and makes a striking impression. The theme continued in portraits and designs, employing drawing and painting skills with purpose. Drawing skills are also used well to complement writing on space and to provide additional explanation of the Greek soldiers' weapons, attire and ships. Attention is paid to the work of great artists. Year 5 pupils look at the use of colour and brush strokes in the work of Van Gogh. Their subsequent paintings show real appreciation and understanding of the technique that they use to good effect.
91. The quality of teaching and learning was good in the few lessons observed. Teachers focused pupils' attention effectively and were confident in their subject knowledge. The lessons were well taught and increased pupils' understanding through effective questioning. Pupils responded well and listened carefully, trying hard to respond even when they found it difficult to articulate ideas and feelings and to use an appropriate vocabulary. The tasks were well chosen and pupils were keen to be involved.
92. The scheme of work in place provides for good coverage of all aspects of art, but there was little evidence of completed 3D work or the use of clay. Where the scheme is being followed it is providing varied and developing experience for the pupils. After one year the scheme has been monitored and the co-ordinator is already aware of the need to continue this and to adjust content where necessary to make the whole manageable. The subject is well managed,

resources are organised and presented on a database to support planning. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and supports staff through workshops. There are some good examples of pupils' awareness of artists and craftsmen but this aspect is insufficiently represented in the work of the school and pupils do not really have sufficient vocabulary and understanding to discuss painting and sculpture. There are few examples of multicultural art and only a limited use is made of sketchbooks.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

93. Although it was only possible to observe one lesson during the inspection, from the quantity and range of work completed and from discussion with teachers and pupils it is clear that the quality and extent of work has improved since the previous inspection and that pupils' achievement at both key stages is in line with that expected for pupils of their age.
94. Pupils of all ages plan their design tasks well and create good working drawings. These identify materials and working parts. In Key Stage 2 they also include some of the stages for making the design. The drawings are well labelled and make use of appropriate vocabulary. Year 5 and 6 pupils designing a toy with moving parts showed clearly in their plans how a cam would create the movement they required. Younger pupils also knew how they intended to create movement using levers and simple pneumatic pressure provided by a balloon and set this out clearly in their drawings. At the end of task pupils evaluate their solution and comment on its effectiveness. There were few examples of completed work as these had been taken home, but from those in school it is evident that pupils pay careful attention to the quality of finish and produce attractive design solutions.
95. Pupils are developing new skills. In Key Stage 1 they assess the quality and fitness for purpose of a number of puppets and are able to discuss how the head is attached, where they are stitched and how easy it is to make them move. Older pupils use a number of tools and are able to describe the way in which these are used safely. The activity encourages pupils to discuss their actions and plans and in Year 5 and 6 pupils sensibly and enthusiastically exchanged ideas and information about their work. At both key stages pupils are extending their knowledge of simple mechanisms and of materials and are beginning to understand why products are as they are. They are increasing their vocabulary confidently using terms such as linear and rotary motion with understanding. Pupils enjoy the work they are doing and speak enthusiastically about their plans and what they have made in the past. They are confident in seeking solutions and willing to listen to each other's comments.
96. The subject is supported effectively by a newly planned scheme of work that assists teachers and is being used well. It provides a balanced coverage of the aspects of design and technology. The resources have been reorganised and, although somewhat limited, are being used well. The co-ordinator is aware of the needs of the subject and has made a good start in managing this responsibility. Her development plans for assessment and recording, and for supporting teacher planning, are sensible and manageable. They will support the continuity of learning that is being established.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

97. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress in both key stages. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, their work is at a level expected for pupils of this age. They make good progress in fieldwork, particularly at Key Stage 2. During the inspection it was only possible to observe one lesson. Evidence for judgements was gathered from scrutiny of pupils' work, displays, photographs, teachers' planning and discussions with both staff and pupils.
98. In Key Stage 1, pupils can describe accurately their journey to school. They undertake an appropriate amount of fieldwork, as seen in their construction of pictorial maps to represent the route taken on their walk round their village. They know the main features of their local environment and use this to make comparisons between their own village of Billingham and the Island of Coll. They compare the types of transport, and jobs that people have and think about the advantages and disadvantages of having a home on an island. They identify geographical features such as rivers and hills, and use this knowledge to design their own islands. They used a computer graphics program effectively to set out their designs. In Key Stage 2, the pupils have been studying world climate and weather. Pupils in Year 6 can make sensible suggestions about climate and possible location using a set of photographs. They have a sound knowledge of river formation and can explain such features as source, mouth and meander. The strong emphasis on fieldwork, as part of the residential visit to Llanbedr, reinforced this knowledge with a practical river study and an investigation into the formation of sand dunes and causeways. This work has had a positive impact on the good progress made in studying landscapes.
99. The geography curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development, particularly from the study of other countries and cultures, and the residential visit. Since the last inspection, when one of the issues for geography was the lack of sufficient guidance for teaching skills, the school has adopted the new national scheme of work. The co-ordinator, who took on responsibility for the subject about a year ago, is trialling the use of the scheme this year. She has worked closely with the history co-ordinator to dovetail the two subjects to achieve better continuity and progression. The last report also stated that guidance on assessment was needed. New assessment procedures have been developed to fit in with the new scheme. The scrutiny of pupils' work also shows that the higher attaining pupils are challenged, and work is better matched to the different ability levels within each class. In the lesson that was observed in Year 1, the work was differentiated for three different ability levels. The co-ordinator has a clear vision about what needs to be done for the continued development of the subject but does not monitor the quality of teaching and learning.

## **HISTORY**

100. Pupils of all abilities make sound progress overall in history in both key stages. They make good progress, particularly in Key Stage 2, in work arising from visits to places of historical interest. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, their work is at a level expected for pupils of this age.
101. In Key Stage 1, pupils develop an awareness of time by comparing then and now. They can explain the difference between an old doll that was often breakable and new dolls that are made of plastic. They compare the experiences of their parents and grandparents with their own, and know for instance that some of the toys they enjoy playing with were not available in times gone by. They learn about the life and work of famous people in the past, such as Guy Fawkes. By studying the history of seaside holidays they are gaining an understanding that things change over time. In Key Stage 2, pupils in Years 3 and 4 know a lot of facts about life in Tudor times.

Year 4 pupils can explain how life was very different for rich and poor people. They draw on their experiences of a recent visit to Gainsborough Hall to give detailed descriptions of Tudor life. For example, they understand why three fires were needed in the kitchen and how a spit worked. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are developing a strong sense of chronology. They make appropriate use of dates and by Year 6 are very confident in using conventions such as BC and AD, century and decade. Their enquiry skills are developing well, and they are gaining confidence in using a range of sources such as photographs and artefacts in reconstructing historical events. They explain clearly how life was very different in Athens and Sparta during the Ancient Greek civilisation, and can give reasons for some of these differences.

102. Pupils in Year 2 were enthusiastic when they explained how they had set up their own museum of old toys. They had taken on the role of museum curators in explaining the exhibits to the younger children, and this had clearly given them an insight into the purpose of museums. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils take a pride in producing hand made history notebooks, and have very positive attitudes to their work in this subject. Pupils throughout the school express their pleasure in taking part in a range of educational visits to places of historical interest. They take great pride in the quality of work on display.
103. Teaching and learning is good overall, and is particularly good in Key Stage 2. In all lessons, class management was good, and pupils were given opportunities to contribute. Teachers' enthusiasm for the subject is transmitted to the pupils and this has a positive impact on pupils' progress. The last report criticised the use of uninteresting worksheets that limited progress. These have been eliminated. Since the last report, work is also better matched to the different levels of ability within classes. The pace of lessons has also improved. There are now good opportunities to use original source materials. Pupils often study photographs, pictures, artefacts, buildings and documents, including pages from the old school log book. This is having a positive effect on developing their historical skills. For example, children in Year 1 examined pictures and old photographs of the local area, to help them understand how seaside holidays have changed over the last hundred years. Pupils in Year 4 were eager to participate in a discussion of how a Tudor banquet was prepared. Through their role-play experiences at Gainsborough Hall they understood what it felt like to work in the big kitchen or the dairy. The visit had really made history come alive for the children. Year 6 pupils drew on their experiences from their visit to the Victorian schoolroom at the Museum of Lincolnshire Life to explain the many differences between Victorian schools and schools today. There are some good examples of strong links with literacy that is helping to promote good progress. Teachers are addressing the weaknesses in children's vocabulary by providing sets of key words associated with the topic.
104. The history curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, particularly through the study of famous people such as Doctor Barnado, the religious ideas of past societies and the many visits to places of historical interest, such as Harlech Castle. The co-ordinator has held the responsibility for about a year. She has acted on the last report to introduce a scheme of work and this is being trialled this year. The policy has been reviewed and updated and the assessment procedures changed to fit in with the new scheme of work. In addition to the many improvements since the last report noted above, the new scheme also addresses the need to give more time to the key elements in the National Curriculum programmes of study. In particular, this had been related to a weakness in understanding the different ways in which history is represented and interpreted. Some very good work in Year 5 was noted in the pupils' newspaper accounts of different versions of the Battle of Marathon. The co-ordinator has a clear vision of what needs to be done for the continued development of the subject.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY [IT]**

105. The current provision for IT does not meet the full requirements of the National Curriculum because the school does not have the necessary hardware and software to deliver the full curriculum relating to control, measurement and the use of simulations. It lacks essential equipment, not only in terms of compatible computers and workstations, but associated equipment such as a digital camera and the software needed to run many applications. Overall standards of attainment are therefore below national expectation. However, pupils are reaching expected standards in communicating and handling information by the end of both key stages. Younger pupils understand how to use a mouse correctly, compose text on the screen, and know how to save their work for future use. They respond very positively to opportunities to use computers. Many individual older pupils are very skilled in applying their IT knowledge. They use the Internet confidently and understand that they live in a technological world. Two pupils explained, for example, why bar codes on shop products carried different information to that found on library cards, and a Year 5 pupil demonstrated the full potential of a word processing package, changing the size, colour and appearance of text, setting out the page correctly, and explaining the detailed use of the various screen options. All Year 6 have produced colourful covers for their work folders using clip art and the more able can set up templates for writing a letter.
106. The opportunities for pupils to learn and use IT effectively are very limited, and have a decided impact on their potential to make progress. The four new computers had to be located in a corridor, and there is only sufficient space for a small group to be taught at any one time. Classroom computers are of a different type. Although they are used effectively when possible, as in the lesson when Year 1 children used a geography program to drag map symbols onto an imaginary map of an island, computers are unused in all classrooms for most of the day.
107. The occasions when it was possible to see IT taught as a subject during the inspection were limited. Lessons were of good quality and are encouraging as they indicate the school's capacity to raise standards when facilities have been improved and pupils' clear capacity for effective learning. In one example, a classroom assistant followed up a literacy lesson in Year 1 that had required pupils to put sentences in the correct order. She showed the children how to highlight and drag sentences on screen so that they could carry out the same task using a computer. As teaching time is limited, the co-ordinator uses part of her lunch-hour to train Year 6 pupils in IT skills that they in turn will teach younger pupils. Her materials were extremely well prepared, instruction was clear, giving the 'trainers' confidence, and included an appropriate emphasis on ensuring that the 'learners' did all the work when the older pupils taught their lesson. On both occasions the learning was very effective. The very good collaboration between the Year 6 'instructors' and their Year 3 'students' was an excellent example of the strength of relationships found in the school.
108. Standards are lower than those reported at the time of the previous inspection. This reflects the speed at which equipment and expectations have changed over the past three years. There is a keen and experienced co-ordinator for each key stage. They are very aware of current standards and difficulties both in teaching the skills and knowledge required to deliver the full National Curriculum, and in being able to support colleagues with the training and equipment needed to make IT an integral part of the learning in every subject. They have a very clear vision of what needs to be achieved, and are determined to use any opportunity to raise the standards of provision and pupil attainment. They do not currently have any allocated time to monitor standards or support colleagues during lessons.

## MUSIC

109. Only one music lesson was observed during the period of the inspection and, as a result, no overall judgement has been made on pupils' achievement or on the quality of teaching. Teaching was satisfactory in the lesson when the combined classes from reception to Year 3 sang familiar songs that were carefully chosen to match the pupils' interests and stages of learning. The pupils sang with satisfactory clarity and pitch for their ages, and a few pupils used untuned percussion instruments appropriately to accompany the singing. Pupils across the age range demonstrated very positive attitudes, showing real enthusiasm for singing the songs and joining in the actions. Even though sitting closely together in a large group, they took considerable care not to poke anyone else whilst performing the actions, and returned to sitting quietly and attentively at the end of each song with remarkable speed. Although the lesson was limited in the extent to which progress in pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills was planned and promoted, it provided a valuable communal experience and clearly promoted pupils' enjoyment of singing and taking part in a shared musical activity. Pupils at both key stages were also observed singing the hymn *Peace, Perfect Peace* with sensitivity during a school hymn practice.
110. The curriculum is enriched by the opportunity for pupils at Key Stage 2 to learn to play the recorder. Although there are no extra-curricular clubs, pupils at Key Stage 2 are also able to join a choir that is held weekly and performs at Church services, musical assemblies and concerts. Pupils benefit from visiting the neighbouring secondary school for a school band concert, and Year 1 pupils have been able to work with professional musicians at a samba rhythm workshop. Pupils are also able to take part in regular class and school presentations. Overall management of the subject is sound. Although there has been no formal monitoring of teaching, the co-ordinator has identified appropriate priorities for improvement and is planning development. Good use is made of her own expertise to teach pupils from other classes. The school is well provided with a range of musical instruments of good quality. These, and the new scheme of work, are an improvement since the previous inspection.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

111. It was only possible to see three lessons during the inspection. However it is clear from these, and from discussions with staff, that pupils achieve skill levels that are broadly typical for their age at the end of Key Stage 1 but are higher by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 2 are developing their skills of ball control, and are keen to improve through practice. Many can sustain energetic activity for long periods of time. By the time pupils reach Year 6 they have learned to move confidently and can call on a range of known skills to link, extend and transfer units of performance such as a jump or twist, into a longer activity sequence. They appraise their own achievement in order to improve, and take pride in working as part of a team towards a common goal. They enjoy all types of physical activity and many take part in competitive games. Pupils of all ages take full advantage of the school's proximity to the community swimming pool, and many can swim the required 25 metres at an early age. This is especially important, and highly valued by parents, as there are many deep dykes and watercourses in the area.
112. Pupils' positive approach to all aspects of PE is a noticeable strength and strengthens the quality of learning. They are disciplined, as was seen in the careful, safe and sensible way in which heavy apparatus is moved safely into position for gymnastics, and respond to the good teaching with very good behaviour and uniformly positive attitudes. They understand why

health and safety are so important, as was seen when Year 3 explained why earrings should be removed. Pupils approach their own work seriously, striving to improve their own performance. Pupils in Year 2 ignored the cold and strong winds in giving their best in an outside ball skills lesson.

113. The overall quality of teaching is good. In the best lessons, planning is thorough and ensures that pupils warm up and cool down at the beginning and end of each session. Lessons are based on a secure understanding of the subject, an enthusiasm that is picked up by the children and a high expectation that pupils will try their hardest in all they do. A very good example was seen in a Year 6 gymnastics lesson when individual pupils' levels of concentration, skills of evaluating their own performance, and willingness to keep working at a movement sequence resulted in high standards. The teacher's skilful mix of instruction and praise resulted in effective learning and good progress. Good use is made of pupils as examples of good practice. Instructions are clear, and lessons have pace and a good variety of activity to keep interest levels high. Teachers and pupils are properly changed, and good use is made of support staff so that different groups can receive focused help.
114. There is a good overall curriculum plan covering all aspects of the subject. The school values equal opportunities for boys and girls, and places in training and teams are open to both. The two co-ordinators are keen to see the subject develop and recognise the importance of physical development within the wider curriculum. Neither monitors the standards of teaching and learning in other classes, and is not able to make a judgement about the quality of provision or the standards pupils reach. Extra-curricular games are well organised. Accommodation in the hall is constricted, especially for older pupils, as the room also has to be used for storage and is a thoroughfare to Key Stage 1 classes.