

INSPECTION REPORT

STEAD LANE FIRST SCHOOL

Bedlington

LEA area: Northumberland

Unique reference number: 122181

Headteacher: Mrs P R Swinhoe

Reporting inspector: Mr C D Taylor
OFSTED No: 23004

Dates of inspection: 30 October - 2 November 2000

Inspection number: 224170

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Nursery, Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 9 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: The Oval
Bedlington
Northumberland

Postcode: NE22 5JS

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs A Storey

Date of previous inspection: 13 -17 January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Christopher Taylor (Ofsted No: 23004)	Registered inspector	The foundation stage	What sort of school is it?
		Mathematics	How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements
		Music	How well is the school led and managed?
		Physical education	What should the school do to improve further?
		English as an additional language	
Katharine Anderson (Ofsted No: 9572)	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Jim Hall (Ofsted No: 11611)	Team inspector	English	How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
		Information and communication technology	
		Art and design	
		Design and technology	
		Equal opportunities	
		Special educational needs	
Neville Pinkney (Ofsted No: 20380)	Team inspector	Science	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
		Geography	
		History	
		Religious education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Stead Lane First School caters for boys and girls aged 3 - 9. It has 155 full-time pupils and 51 children who attend the 26-place nursery on a part-time basis. Numbers have fallen slightly over the last three years. The majority of children join the nursery with levels of attainment well below the national average. Approximately a third of pupils - over twice the national average - are known to be eligible for free school meals. Twenty four pupils - broadly in line with the national average - have special educational needs. Four pupils - a higher proportion than the national average - have Statements of Special Educational Needs. The majority of pupils with special needs have moderate learning difficulties, speech and communication difficulties or emotional and behavioural difficulties. No pupils are from ethnic minorities and no pupils speak English as an additional language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Stead Lane First School is an effective school with a good ethos and a caring environment. Teaching and learning are good and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress during their time at the school. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and behaviour and relationships are good. Standards are below the national average in English and science but are close to national expectations in mathematics and most other subjects. The leadership and management of the headteacher and senior staff are good. As expenditure is close to the national average, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and their behaviour and relationships are good.
- Children in the nursery and reception classes make substantial gains in their skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Teaching is good. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. As a result, pupils learn effectively and make good progress as they move through the school.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they make good progress.
- Provision for pupils' welfare and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The school has effective links with parents.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are good and financial planning and the strategic use of resources are good.

What could be improved

- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise and improve their writing skills across different subjects of the curriculum.
- Teachers' expectations of higher-attaining pupils are not always high enough, especially in mathematics and science.
- Pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning at both key stages.
- There is no co-ordinated programme for pupils' personal, social and health education.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress overall in addressing the key issues highlighted in the previous report in January 1997. The school has made sound progress in raising standards in English, mathematics and science and has made good progress in establishing systems to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning. It has made reasonable progress in raising teachers' expectations of pupils' standards but expectations of higher-attaining pupils are still too low, especially in mathematics and science. It has strengthened the role of subject co-ordinators and has made very good progress in using assessment of pupils' work to match activities more closely to their needs. It has improved pupils' information and communication technology skills well and has made some progress in developing opportunities for pupils to use these skills across different subjects of the curriculum. In addition to addressing these key issues, the school has improved standards of teaching, pupils' attitudes to work, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the range of learning opportunities.

Leadership and management by the headteacher and key staff, assessment of pupils' standards and parental involvement have also improved.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
Reading	E	D	D	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Writing	D	E	D	C	
Mathematics	C	E	C	B	

In reading, the school's results in 2000 were below the national average for all schools in the country but close to the average for schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. Over the past four years, standards have risen faster than the national trend. Inspection findings indicate that standards of attainment in reading are below the national average in the current Year 2 and Year 4. In writing, the results of the tests in 2000 were below the average for all schools but close to the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Inspection findings confirm that standards in the current Year 2 and Year 4 are also below the national average. Standards in writing have improved in line with national trends over the past four years. In mathematics, standards in the 2000 tests were close to the national average but above the average in similar schools. Inspection findings indicate that standards in the current Year 2 and Year 4 are close to the national average. Standards have improved more rapidly than national trends over recent years. Teachers' assessments of pupils' standards in science in 2000 indicated that the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard was well below the national average but more than the average percentage achieved higher levels. Overall, standards were broadly in line with similar schools. Inspection findings indicate that standards in the current Year 2 and Year 4 are below the national average. Standards are in line with national expectations in all other subjects except where standards are below national expectations in history at Key Stage 1 and in geography at both key stages. Realistic targets have been set to improve standards in English and mathematics. To meet these targets, the school has focused on raising standards of pupils' mathematical skills, improving reading and writing in Years 1 and 2 and providing effective support for pupils with special needs and additional literacy support for pupils in Years 3 and 4. The school was successful in meeting its targets for seven-year-olds in the tests in 2000.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils have very good attitudes to work. Most pupils are enthusiastic and very keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in class and around school. They are polite and helpful and treat property with respect.
Personal development and relationships	Good overall. Pupils enjoy being independent but older pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to be responsible for their own learning. Relationships between pupils and staff, and between pupils, are very good.
Attendance	A little below the national average. Authorised absence is a little above average. Unauthorised absence is close to the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-9 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

Teaching was satisfactory or better in all the lessons observed. It was good in 53 per cent of lessons and very good in a further 13 per cent of lessons. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching was good throughout the school. The teaching of English and mathematics, including the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, is good at the foundation stage. Literacy teaching is satisfactory at both key stages, while numeracy teaching is good at both key stages. Particular strengths of teaching include good knowledge of the ways in which young children learn, very effective planning of lessons and very good management of pupils. As a result, pupils make good progress in acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. Teachers often start lessons by recalling what was learned in the previous lesson before introducing the objectives of the current lesson. This reinforces previous learning as well as making it clear to pupils what they should be learning. Good use of discussion sessions at the end of lessons also reinforces what pupils have learned and helps teachers to assess pupils' progress. Teachers' expectations of pupils' standards are generally satisfactory but teachers do not always provide higher-attaining pupils with sufficient challenge, especially in mathematics and science. The marking of pupils' work is sound and often includes advice on how standards can be improved. Teachers and support staff work effectively as a team. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education are met. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities to broaden pupils' interests. There is currently no co-ordinated programme for pupils' personal, social and health education, though this is a priority in the school's development plan.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils with special needs make good progress towards the targets in their Individual Education Plans.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There are no pupils with English as an additional language.
Provision for pupils' personal (including spiritual, moral, social and cultural) development	Good. Provision for pupils' personal development is good. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good, with clear teaching of right and wrong and self-discipline. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good, with effective use of visiting speakers, actors and musicians, and trips to churches and historical sites.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. Procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance and for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very effective. The school's links with parents are good and the quality of information provided for parents, including reports, is very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher and key staff provide good leadership and clear direction in the work of the school. The school's aims and values are clearly reflected in its work. Subject co-ordinators make a sound contribution to monitoring and raising standards in the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body is actively involved in the life of the school. It is effective in carrying out all its statutory duties.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school monitors and evaluates its performance well. It has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Educational priorities are supported well by the school's financial planning. All major spending decisions take into account the principles of best value. Staffing meets the needs of the curriculum well and support staff work effectively alongside teachers. Overall, the accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory but the room shared by two teachers in Years 2 and 3 is barely adequate and the children's and staff toilets are in need of refurbishment.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children enjoy going to school. • The school enables children to make good progress in their work. • The school achieves high standards of good behaviour. • The teaching is good. • Most parents are comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. • The school expects children to work hard and to achieve their best. • The school is well led and managed. • Most parents feel the school helps their children become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents feel their children do not get the right amount of work to do at home. • Some parents feel they are not kept well informed about how their children are getting on. • Some parents feel the school does not work closely enough with parents. • Some parents feel the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection findings support the parents' positive views. The amount of homework set is broadly in line with national recommendations. The school's links with parents are good and the quality of information provided is very good. Parents are given plenty of opportunities to discuss their children's progress with the teaching staff. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities to widen pupils' interests and to develop their social skills.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Children under the age of five join the Nursery before moving to the reception class. When they enter the Nursery, most have levels of attainment well below those expected for children of their age. Many have poor communication skills and find it difficult to talk in complete sentences, while pencil control and early writing skills are poor. Most children have little knowledge of numbers and their use in everyday situations. Some aspects of personal development are slightly better but many children find it difficult to persevere with chosen tasks. As a result of good teaching in the nursery and reception classes, they make good progress towards the early learning goals. By the end of the reception year, the attainment of most pupils is still below national expectations in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world. However, most pupils' personal, social and emotional development and physical development are close to what is expected at their age.
2. By the end of Key Stage 1, the overall attainment of pupils is still below national expectations in English and science but is close to national expectations in mathematics.
3. In English, the percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard in reading was close to the national average in the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 2000, but the number achieving higher levels was below the national average. Overall, standards in reading were below the national average. The overall standard in 2000 was similar to that in 1999, although the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level rose significantly. In writing, the percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard in 2000 was close to but slightly below the national average, and close to the average percentage achieved higher levels. Overall, standards in writing were just below the national average. In the 2000 tests, standards were higher than in 1999. Inspection findings indicate that standards in English in the current Year 2 are below the national average. In reading and in writing, standards are below the national average, while pupils also lack confidence in speaking.
4. In mathematics, the percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard in the 2000 tests at Key Stage 1 was close to the national average, but below the average percentage achieved higher levels. Overall, standards were close to the national average. In the 2000 tests, standards were better than those in 1999. Inspection findings confirm that attainment in mathematics is close to the national average, although higher-attaining pupils tend to underachieve. In science, the percentage of pupils reaching the nationally expected level in teachers' assessments in 2000 was well below the national average but the percentage achieving higher levels was above average. Inspection findings indicate that attainment in science is below the national average at the end of Key Stage 1. This broadly reflects the results of the 2000 tests.
5. The level of attainment pupils achieved at Key Stage 1 in the national tests in 2000 compared favourably with those in similar schools. In reading and in writing, the school's results were similar to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In mathematics, standards were above those in schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In science, the number of pupils achieving the nationally expected level was below the average for similar schools but the number achieving higher levels was well above the average.
6. In English, although pupils make sound progress, they have limited skills on which to build and standards are still below the national average at the end of Key Stage 1. Most pupils read very simple texts and often rely on the illustrations to work out new words. They have only a basic understanding of the plot and often have difficulty in reading independently. Although standards in writing are below the national average at Key Stage 1, pupils make sound progress overall. Pupils make good progress in developing fluent joined handwriting but have difficulty with spellings and sentence structure. Their progress is hampered by the poor standard of their spoken language. The majority of pupils find it difficult to speak in sentences of more than a few words or to put them into a longer sequence. Although teachers take every opportunity to encourage language development, pupils make insufficient progress in the development of their speaking and listening

skills. They listen attentively to their teacher but many find it difficult to express their ideas clearly and standards are below those expected nationally.

7. Attainment is close to the national average in mathematics at Key Stage 1 and pupils make good progress in view of their low starting point. There is a good focus on developing basic numeracy skills and mental mathematics skills have improved markedly since the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. In science, pupils make good progress but most start off with a very limited knowledge of the world around them and are hampered by their limited writing skills. They classify household appliances into those that require mains power or batteries but some find it difficult to understand the difference between batteries and mains electricity. They carry out simple investigations but many find it difficult to construct a fair test. Overall, attainment in science is below the national average at the end of Key Stage 1.
8. At Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is close to national expectations and they make sound progress. There is satisfactory use of information and communication technology in some subjects of the curriculum such as mathematics. Pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with the standards expected in the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils' attainment is close to national expectations in art and design, design and technology, music and in physical education. It is below national expectations in geography and in history.
9. Inspection findings indicate that the attainment of pupils in Year 4 is below national expectations in English and science but is close to national expectations in mathematics. In English and science, pupils are on line to achieve below the national average at the end of Key Stage 2, while in mathematics they are on line to achieve standards close to the national average.
10. Pupils make sound progress in reading. While the majority of pupils in Year 4 read fairly accurately, few read with very much expression. Pupils make steady progress in listening and speaking. Most pupils listen carefully to their teachers but most have little confidence when speaking and do not explain their work clearly enough. Progress in writing is satisfactory but is hampered by pupils' poor spoken English. Punctuation and grammar are often inaccurate, and pupils do not use a wide enough range of interesting vocabulary. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their vocabulary and technique by writing in a variety of styles and for different purposes across all subjects of the curriculum.
11. In mathematics, attainment is close to the national average in the current Year 4. Pupils make good progress and standards have improved since the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. Pupils are becoming more confident with written methods of calculation and there has been a good effort to develop and use mental methods of calculation. In science, attainment is below the national average in Year 4. Pupils construct electrical circuits including switches and buzzers but they have a limited understanding of how circuits work. They understand the principle of fair testing and undertake their own investigations but do not record and explain their results clearly enough.
12. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is close to national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Attainment in religious education is in line with the standards expected in the Locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils achieve standards close to national expectations in art and design, design and technology, history, music and physical education, while standards are below national expectations in geography.
13. There are no significant variations in attainment by gender and there are no pupils with English as an additional language. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their Individual Education Plans. Many enter school with a poor standard of spoken English and limited vocabulary. They respond well to extra help from teachers and classroom assistants and benefit from work that is closely matched to their individual needs.
14. Pupils' literacy skills are below national expectations at both key stages but national test results have improved over the last four years. The Literacy Hour has been introduced effectively in all classes. The school has not yet planned sufficient additional opportunities for extended writing across the curriculum. The new knowledge and skills gained in the Literacy Hour are not used

sufficiently to improve pupils' writing, for example, in science, history and geography.

15. Standards in numeracy are close to the national average at both key stages and pupils' understanding and use of number has improved significantly since the last inspection at both key stages. The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced effectively in all classes. Pupils are carrying out mental calculations with increasing accuracy and showing confidence in manipulating numbers and using multiplication tables. There is an appropriate use of numeracy skills, for example, to draw bar charts in science and in information and communication technology. There is insufficient use of numeracy skills, however, in some other subjects, for instance in recording and presenting climatic statistics in geography.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

16. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good and this is evident in almost all lessons. Children in the nursery and reception classes are enthusiastic and well motivated. They are keen to learn and quickly settle down to work. Pupils at both key stages, including those with special educational needs, are very positive about school and they are eager and interested to learn. Younger pupils settle into lesson routines very well and quickly learn to work in groups and in pairs. They are ready to begin lessons without fuss and listen carefully and attentively to their teachers. Older pupils are, for the most part, sensible and positive in their attitudes to lessons. They settle quickly at the beginning of activities and sustain their concentration very well. Pupils with special educational needs respond positively to lessons and are accepted well by their peers, working and sharing together in the daily life of the school. During literacy and numeracy sessions, nearly all pupils work very well on their own or in small groups while the teacher is working with others. In addition to enjoying lessons, pupils are keen to join in a range of clubs, including sports, keep fit, music and computers.
17. Behaviour is good overall and this confirms parents' views. Children in the nursery and reception classes are well behaved and are patient when waiting to take their turn. Pupils at both key stages behave well in lessons, creating a good atmosphere for learning. Very occasionally there is some challenging behaviour, usually when pupils' interest is not fully focused and they become distracted. Such incidents are quickly dealt with by teachers, however, and the flow of lessons is rarely interrupted for very long. During the inspection, the behaviour of pupils at playtimes was good and there was no sign of any anti-social behaviour or bullying. Pupils behave well at lunchtimes and show good table manners, which contributes to a very ordered, civilised and sociable atmosphere. There were no incidents of pupils being excluded in the last academic year.
18. Relationships between adults and pupils are very good. Teachers and other adults in the foundation stage are very supportive and children quickly develop very good relationships with them. Children are given many opportunities to investigate and explore for themselves. At both key stages, very good relationships among pupils, including those with special educational needs, contribute to an inclusive, caring atmosphere. Pupils are well mannered with visitors, teachers and each other. In discussion, they listen carefully to adults and other pupils and wait their turn to respond. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Pupils show respect for school rules and enjoy being independent and taking responsibility, such as when organising the seating in the Early Years playground and helping in assemblies. Older pupils, however, do not take enough responsibility for their own learning and are not given enough opportunities to demonstrate personal initiative.
19. Attendance is a little below the national average but not significantly so. Authorised absence is a little above average but unauthorised absence is close to the national average. Most parents comply with the school's request to inform them if their child is absent. Punctuality is good, enabling a prompt start to the school day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. The standard of teaching is good throughout the school. As a result, pupils quickly gain new skills and knowledge and learn effectively. Teaching was satisfactory or better in all the lessons observed. In 53 per cent the teaching was good and in a further 13 per cent it was very good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. The standard of teaching has improved since the previous inspection.
21. Teaching is good at the foundation stage. Teachers have a good understanding of how young children learn and use this knowledge to good effect. They make effective use of songs, rhymes and visual aids and succeed in making learning fun. Activities change frequently so that children do not have time to get bored and this helps children to maintain good levels of concentration. Staff concentrate on developing children's language, reading and writing skills, and on introducing children to numbers in a wide range of everyday situations. As a result, children make good progress in developing their literacy and numeracy skills.
22. Teaching is good at both key stages. It is always at least satisfactory in English and science, and is good in mathematics at both key stages. Overall, the teaching seen was good in history, music, physical education and religious education, and satisfactory in geography. Insufficient lessons were observed in art and design, design and technology and information and communication technology to make an overall judgement. Teaching that is good or better (66 per cent of all lessons observed) is a major factor in ensuring that pupils make at least satisfactory or good progress.
23. Teachers' subject knowledge is good at both key stages and this enables pupils to acquire sound techniques and accurate information. The teaching of literacy is sound. Teachers keep their literacy lessons moving briskly so that pupils work at a good pace. They follow the structure of the National Literacy Strategy confidently and give a good emphasis to developing pupils' language and vocabulary. Opportunities for developing and consolidating writing skills, however, are not followed up sufficiently in subjects such as science, geography and history. The teaching of numeracy is good. It includes a wide variety of activities for pupils to practise and consolidate their learning and this helps to retain pupils' interest. Teachers use mental mathematics sessions well to build up pupils' recall and to develop analytical thinking and mathematical vocabulary. Numeracy skills are reinforced appropriately in other subjects such as science and information and communication technology, but could be used more in some other subjects, for example, for analysing and presenting climatic data in geography.
24. Teachers' planning is very effective at both key stages. In English and mathematics, teachers prepare lessons thoroughly and benefit from following the guidelines in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. In other subjects, both long-term and medium-term plans show a clear progression of skills and knowledge and this helps pupils to acquire skills in a logical order. Teachers' expectations of pupils' work are generally satisfactory but teachers do not always challenge higher-attaining pupils sufficiently. This was seen, for instance, in several numeracy lessons in which higher-attaining pupils quickly performed calculations in their heads and then waited for the other pupils to use investigative methods to catch up with them.
25. Teaching methods and organisational strategies used by teachers are good throughout the school. Most teachers refer back to the previous lesson to reinforce pupils' learning before moving on. In the best lessons, teachers go over the learning objectives at the start of the lesson and review what pupils have learned at the end. This helps pupils to understand what they should know by the end of the lesson. Teachers usually give helpful and clear instructions to pupils. They use questioning skills well but do not always encourage pupils sufficiently to improve their speaking skills by expanding on their answers. Teachers work with the whole class, small groups, pairs or individuals according to the needs of the topic or activity. In science and mathematics, there is a sound emphasis on developing investigative skills but there are insufficient opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to take initiative and be responsible for their own learning. Good use is made of visiting speakers, actors and musicians and of visits to the local church, shops, historical sites and country houses.

26. Very good relationships between teachers and pupils help to produce a pleasant, hard-working and creative atmosphere. In most lessons, enthusiastic teaching leads to a keen response and an eagerness to participate in learning. Good class management is reflected in pupils' good behaviour and very positive attitudes to work.
27. Most teachers use time well. In literacy and numeracy lessons, for instance, teachers time different activities well and lessons generally move at a brisk pace. As a result, pupils work productively and maintain a busy pace of learning. The use of classroom assistants is particularly good, and teachers and support staff work effectively as a team. Teachers make good use of a wide variety of teaching resources and this helps to maintain pupils' interest and effort. There are many attractive and interesting displays of pupils' work to stimulate pupils' thinking.
28. Teachers make regular assessments of pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics and use the results to guide their planning and teaching. In other subjects, informal assessments are used to check pupils' learning and to plan for the following lessons. The day-to-day use of homework to reinforce and extend what is learned in school is satisfactory. Most pupils take reading books home regularly and are set an appropriate amount of work to do at home. The marking of pupils' work is carried out regularly by teachers and comments are often added to help raise pupils' self-esteem. Teachers often include helpful comments which indicate how pupils can improve their work.
29. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. Teachers make good use of pupils' Individual Education Plans to match work to their needs. Individual Education Plans are reviewed regularly to ensure that pupils make good progress. Classroom assistants are deployed well to support pupils with special needs.

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

30. The curriculum in the foundation stage is well suited to the needs of young children and prepares them well to move towards the Early Learning Goals. There is a variety of interesting activities and a good mix of teacher-led sessions and opportunities for children to investigate and discover for themselves. There is a good emphasis on developing children's communication, numeracy and personal and social skills, but also plenty of opportunities for physical and creative development.
31. At both key stages, the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum. It meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. The school also meets statutory requirements for a daily act of corporate worship. The curriculum is effective in supporting the intellectual and physical development of pupils. The school does not yet have in place a programme for the development of pupils' personal, social, and health education and citizenship. There is a draft policy document and the development of the programme is included in the current year's school development programme.
32. The time allocated to the curriculum is above the recommended time at Key Stage 1 and broadly in line at Key Stage 2. There is an appropriate emphasis on English, mathematics and science. The time allocated for history and geography is below the national average but the school makes very good use of educational visits to supplement the classroom teaching and this has a very positive impact on pupils' learning and standards achieved. Since the last inspection, the school has improved its provision for pupils' learning in information and communication technology.
33. There are sound policy documents in place for all areas of the curriculum. New schemes of work have been produced which follow the guidelines of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and these are being implemented progressively throughout the school. There is good quality medium term planning in each subject area. There is an agreed policy for health and sex education and the scheme of work is delivered through teaching in science.
34. The school's provision for ensuring equality of access and opportunity for all its pupils is satisfactory. All pupils have equal access to all areas of the curriculum and all other activities provided by the school. Curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.

Pupils are occasionally withdrawn from lessons for specific help and support, or are taught individually, in groups or as part of whole classes. The school ensures that pupils with special needs experience all subject areas and that the work is appropriate to their abilities. They are fully involved in the life of the school.

35. The school's provision for extra-curricular activities is good. There is an emphasis on sport, with professional support for coaching in football and cricket and volunteer parental coaching in netball. There is a well-supported fitness club with a qualified instructor and opportunities are available for pupils to extend their musical talents through instrumental tuition and involvement with the school choir. There is a well-organised and supported computer club and the school organises a homework club for Year 2 pupils prior to their national tests in English and mathematics.
36. The school makes very good use of visits to support and broaden pupils' learning. Visits to Wallington Hall, Cragside Hall, the Roman site of Segedunum in Wallsend, Druridge Bay and Longhorsley village are well used to develop topics in history, geography and art. Visits are also made to the local post office and a newspaper printing works. Good links have been established with St. John's Church over many years and pupils gain much from visits to the church as part of their lessons in religious education. The vicar also visits the school and leads school assemblies. The school welcomes other visitors who make a significant contribution to pupils' learning, for example, a couple who present aspects of life in Roman times, and theatre and dance companies. These visits and visitors are linked closely with the delivery of the curriculum and also help to promote pupils' personal, social and cultural development.
37. The school has many links with the local community. The school is a corporate member of the National Trust and visits local properties regularly. There are good links with the local middle schools to ensure that there is smooth continuity and progression in pupils' learning on transfer. The school has a good link with the local agricultural college at Kirkley Hall. The school buys plants from the college to sell on to parents and students from the college were involved in designing and planting out the school's Millennium Garden. The school organises raffles to raise funds for the school and to support charities such as the NSPCC and various international environmental projects. Local shops and businesses generously donate prizes and parents give good support in selling tickets in the community. The school organises a number of social events such as a bonfire party, sports competitions, a summer fayre and a twice-yearly book fair. A teacher and a learning support assistant took part in the London Marathon and the Great North Run to raise funds for the school.
38. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Daily acts of collective worship are well planned and have strong spiritual and moral messages. Pupils are given opportunities to reflect on the themes and are also involved in leading the daily prayers. Good use is made of music to create a suitable atmosphere for collective worship and pupils are enthusiastic in their singing of hymns and religious songs. In their religious education lessons, pupils learn about some of the world's main faiths and the elements of their faiths and festivals. They reflect on their own experiences and on other people's lives and beliefs. They write simple prayers on many varied issues.
39. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. The school has a framework of values to regulate personal behaviour and pupils respect this very well. Pupils appreciate the need for rules in school and society in general to provide ordered communities where the needs of others are fully respected. They know what is right and wrong and what are the consequences of bad behaviour. Pupils demonstrate their concern for the environment through their respect for the play areas and the school grounds. They actively support worldwide environmental projects in Belize, the Philippines and the Reef rainforest.
40. Provision for pupils' social development is good. Social skills such as sharing and participating in class activities are well promoted in the foundation stage and provide a good basis for social development as children progress through the school. Pupils play well together and there is an absence of aggressive behaviour in the play areas. Many pupils participate in the extra-curricular activities where team spirit and co-operative working feature prominently. Opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities in the school, however, are very limited.

41. The school provides good opportunities for cultural development. Pupils become aware of their rich local heritage through visits to the National Trust properties at Wallington Hall and Cragside Hall and to Roman sites such as Segedunum at Wallsend. Visits to the local church give pupils an understanding of the area's rich religious heritage. Pupils experience music from a wide range of composers and cultural traditions through their music lessons and in assemblies.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. The school has maintained the good level of support given to pupils' welfare, health and safety at the last inspection. It effectively creates a family atmosphere in which children feel secure and valued and where pupils can work and learn within a safe and orderly community. The level of support and guidance the school gives has a positive effect in raising pupils' achievements.
43. Children in the nursery and reception classes are supported well by the teachers and support staff. By supervising small groups of children, these adults are able to provide individual help and assistance. Pupils' individual needs are carefully assessed and monitored and as a result children feel secure and make good progress.
44. The school makes every effort to ensure that pupils are safe. Efficient security measures have been installed. The school and its governors have worked hard to secure funds to pay for the perimeter fence which is currently being erected. The governors, together with the headteacher and caretaker, play a valuable role in monitoring health and safety within the school. Fire extinguishers, electrical equipment and physical education equipment are checked annually. Fire drills are carried out regularly and satisfactory evacuation procedures are in place. The fire bell, however, can only be activated from the headteacher's office. Several members of staff have attended first aid training. Thorough systems are in place for recording and reporting accidents. Parents are informed immediately, if necessary, and always at the end of the day. The emergency contact scheme generally works well when children are ill. Child protection procedures have recently been updated following local authority guidelines. They have been discussed with all staff, who are aware of the relevant steps to follow should they have any concerns. The accommodation is suitable for disabled pupils and has wheelchair access but there are no disabled toilets. The beginning and end of the day, dinner times and play times are well supervised by lunchtime supervisors or teaching staff on a rota basis. Standards of caretaking are good. The school receives support from the school nurse.
45. Since the last inspection, the school has developed a comprehensive, whole-school assessment scheme to monitor pupils' attainment and progress. Pupils in the nursery and reception classes are given baseline assessments of their skills and knowledge. This is followed by assessments at regular intervals in each year. Pupils in Year 1 are tested to assess their reading skills. Teachers make assessments of pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science in Year 2 and pupils also take the national tests in English and mathematics in Year 2. Optional tests are taken in Year 3 to assist in identifying target groups to boost standards. Pupils in Year 4 take optional national tests to provide information on their attainment on transfer to a middle school. Pupils' attainment in other subjects is made informally by teachers using assessment procedures linked to their schemes of work.
46. The school makes good use of all its assessment data. Information from baseline assessments is used to identify individual children's needs in the nursery and reception classes. Older pupils are set individual targets each term. Parents and pupils are informed of the targets and are involved in their review at the end of each term. Class targets are set for reading and writing. Reading records are well maintained and a whole-school sample of work is reviewed in October to set the target for written work.
47. Teachers are available to meet parents at the end of each day when information or concerns can be shared. Parents feel that their children are well cared for. Staff know their pupils very well and are sensitive to their needs. As a result, informal monitoring of pupils' personal progress is continuously taking place. Pupils' personal and social development is regularly monitored and children keep their own Record of Achievement. Some responsibilities are given to pupils in school, for instance, helping with assemblies, taking registers to the school office and holding

doors open. However, there are insufficient opportunities to promote pupils' personal development. Opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning are limited and are inconsistent throughout the school. There is inadequate provision at the present time for pupils' personal, social and health education, although the school has plans in hand for further development. Aspects of healthy living are covered in science lessons and children are taught road safety. The Nursery has introduced 'fruit time' to encourage healthy eating habits. Support from outside agencies is limited since the school does not at present have a designated Educational Welfare Officer and the school nurse visits only occasionally.

48. The school cares for pupils with special needs well. Helpful Individual Education Plans are drawn up for pupils at the appropriate stage on the special needs register. These plans are used well by teachers in classrooms, and external agencies are used when necessary. Support assistants work closely with teachers and are effective in enhancing learning when working with small groups or individual pupils. Reviews of individual needs meet statutory requirements and parents are fully involved.
49. Arrangements for children joining the Nursery are thorough. Parents are offered a meeting at home or at school, although they generally opt for school. At this visit they are introduced to school routines and are given an introductory booklet. Children visit the Nursery during the summer term prior to entry and a staggered start operates at the beginning of the autumn term. Parents are encouraged to stay with their children initially and to leave them for increasing periods of time. Most children settle into school quickly and are happy to start learning straight away. Strong links have been established with the middle school so that pupils in Year 4 progress to their next stage of education smoothly. They visit the middle school in the June prior to transfer and are invited to attend events there. The Year 5 middle school teacher visits the school and there are many formal and informal opportunities for Year 4 and Year 5 staff to exchange information.
50. Procedures to promote good behaviour and attendance are very well established and very effective. The school rules are based on safety, respect and support and encourage pupils to think of others and to be polite and helpful. At the end of each week, children are given awards for good attitudes to work, behaviour, homework and friendship. They take pride in this praise and say "It feels good" to get an award. Pupils keep their classrooms and corridors tidy. All staff are constantly alert to any signs of poor behaviour, bullying or harassment. When instances do occur, they are handled immediately and effectively.
51. Registers are completed neatly and consistently at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. Late arrivals report to the office and lateness is duly recorded. Registers are monitored regularly and any emerging patterns of poor attendance or lateness are quickly identified and followed up. At the end of the year, 100% attendance certificates are awarded to pupils with no absences. The Education Welfare Service is no longer available for support, although the school nurse follows up any absences relating to illness.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

52. This school has maintained the good links that it had built up with parents at the last inspection. The majority of parents have very positive views about the school. The parental questionnaire, the parents' meeting and informal discussions with parents during the inspection all confirm a high degree of satisfaction. All parents agree that their children enjoy school. Most believe their children are making good progress and are comfortable approaching staff with any problems or concerns they may have. They feel that the school encourages their children to work hard and become mature and responsible. Inspectors endorse these positive views. However, a significant minority of parents expressed concerns about homework. The inspection team found that most teachers set an appropriate amount of homework, broadly equivalent to what is expected nationally. Pupils take reading books home and parents generally comply with the school's request to sign their children's reading diaries. A minority of parents felt that the school does not provide a good range of activities outside lessons. The inspectors do not support this view. A good range of activities includes football, netball, running, keep fit, computing, handicrafts and dance and there is a wide range of visits and visitors.

53. Parental involvement is a strength of the school and parents' contributions have a very positive impact on pupils' learning. Parents are encouraged to come into school and share their expertise. The 'Stepping Ahead' course was a very effective initiative which gave a number of parents the confidence to become more involved. The 'Helpers in School' course is currently attended by twelve parents who are learning the skills of effective classroom support. Parents provide valuable assistance with extra-curricular activities. A parent governor helps with the after-school netball club, while another parent runs the popular 'Fit Kids' club. Two fathers organise football activities even though their children are no longer at the school. Parents provide good support for school visits and at coffee afternoons. They make costumes for school drama productions and help with make up. Although there is no parents' association at present, parents are actively involved in running and supporting fund-raising events such as a fireworks display and a Summer Fayre.
54. Through the school prospectus, regular newsletters, class letters and meetings, parents receive very good information about the work and routines of the school. Notices for parents are displayed at the entrances to the school. In the parental questionnaire, a significant minority of parents felt that they were not kept well informed about how their children are getting on. The inspection team does not support this view. Reports to parents are informative and comply with statutory requirements. Information on pupils' mathematics and English targets are sent home regularly and parents are invited to come to school to discuss how they can help pupils to achieve these targets. In addition, termly parents' meetings are held to discuss children's progress. In the spring term, a meeting is held for parents of children who will be taking the national tests. Pupils taking the tests are also invited to attend a homework club. Parents have access to staff at the end of each day when informal transfer of information regularly takes place. Parents know that they can make an appointment if a longer discussion is required. Attendance at parents' evenings is good and parents who are unable to attend are contacted if staff feel it would be helpful. Attendance at the target-setting and information evenings is improving but very few parents attend the governors' annual meeting for parents.
55. Parents make a good contribution to pupils' learning at home. Most parents have signed the home/school agreement and this indicates their willingness to be involved. Most parents help their children with homework. The target-setting evenings, the school prospectus, nursery booklet and reception booklet all give valuable advice to parents on how they can help their children.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. The management and efficiency of the school have improved since the previous inspection. The headteacher and key staff provide good leadership of the school. They have clear aims and appropriate plans for the future. As a result, the school is moving forward with clear educational direction. During her ten years in post, the headteacher has established good relationships with parents and has gained the respect of her pupils. She is strongly committed to raising standards in the school and has established a good ethos to support the effective learning of all pupils. The headteacher works closely with the deputy head and other senior teachers, who play an important role in supporting pupils and other staff.
57. The headteacher and other key staff monitor teaching and pupils' work effectively. The headteacher acts as co-ordinator for music, design and technology and religious education and looks at teachers' medium-term planning in these subjects. The literacy and numeracy co-ordinators monitor teachers' planning in these areas and feed back any points requiring action to individual teachers. The headteacher systematically visits classrooms to observe teachers at work. During the last year she has observed teaching in the reception class and in Years 1 and 2. She has also observed literacy and numeracy lessons in all classes. She feeds back her observations to individual teachers, making suggestions for future development. These visits form part of the appraisal system to identify teachers' professional development needs. Appropriate plans are in place to introduce performance management. The headteacher monitors pupils' standards informally when teaching in classes and checks the standard of pupils' work on display. Pupils regularly bring examples of good work to show the headteacher and awards for good work are made during assemblies on Fridays. In literacy, the co-ordinator analyses a

sample of pupils' work in the autumn, sets targets for pupils and re-samples the work in the spring. The headteacher and senior staff analyse National Curriculum assessments, optional tests and other assessments, and have identified and taken action to address weaker areas such as mathematical vocabulary and pupils' ability to interpret data.

58. The aims and values of the school are clearly reflected in its work. The school provides a safe and stimulating environment where children respect others. The school provides a balanced curriculum through which children are encouraged to gain their full potential and it urges all pupils to develop good standards of self-discipline. It has a clear commitment to providing high quality teaching and has a very good capacity to improve pupils' standards. Realistic targets have been set to improve standards in English and mathematics in the National Curriculum tests in 2001. To meet these targets, the school has focused on raising standards of pupils' mathematical skills, improving reading and writing in Years 1 and 2, and providing effective support for pupils with special needs and additional literacy support for pupils in Years 3 and 4.
59. Responsibility for subject areas is delegated to subject co-ordinators, who play an important role in promoting high standards. Co-ordinators manage spending on resources and feed back information to other staff after attending training courses. The literacy and numeracy co-ordinators have already observed teaching in all classes and have monitored new developments closely. Time has been allocated during the current year for co-ordinators in other subjects to monitor the standard of pupils' work and to observe their colleagues at work in order to develop their teaching. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection. There is no Early Years co-ordinator but the nursery and reception class teachers work together closely to plan programmes of teaching and learning which span the whole of the foundation stage. All staff have job descriptions which specify their roles clearly.
60. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides good leadership in the identification of pupils with special needs. Appropriate records are kept and the recommendations of the Code of Practice are fully met. Regular meetings are held by the co-ordinator, teachers and support staff to check pupils' progress towards the targets in their Individual Education Plans and statements. Support provided by visiting professionals is well managed by the school.
61. The governors provide good support for the headteacher and are much more actively involved in the management of the school than at the previous inspection. They fulfil all their statutory responsibilities effectively. Members of the curriculum committee visit school each term to observe lessons, look at pupils' work and to talk to teachers and pupils. This enables them to keep abreast of new developments and to monitor teaching and learning effectively. The full governing body meets termly and committees meet regularly to deal with staffing, finances, health and safety, and premises. Governors are kept well informed by regular presentations from the headteacher and other staff. They play an important role in discussing management and budget issues and have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
62. The school is effective in supporting educational priorities through its financial planning. The School Development Plan identifies appropriate targets. The cost implications of each initiative, and the personnel involved, are clearly identified and there are specific success criteria by which the impact of these developments are evaluated. The finance committee monitors the school budget on a monthly basis and satisfactory financial controls are in place. Day-to-day administration is efficient but the school clerk has not yet been trained by the local authority to use information and communication technology effectively for raising invoices and paying accounts.
63. The school makes good use of funding that is allocated to specific areas such as professional development, the Additional Literacy Strategy and special educational needs. The governing body has shown its commitment to pupils' safety by securing additional funds to fence off the whole of the school grounds. The large carry-over projected for the end of the current financial year is earmarked for new developments in the Nursery and the maintenance of staffing levels. The principles of best value are applied to all major spending decisions to ensure that the school provides good value for money.

64. The school has sufficient appropriately qualified and experienced teaching staff, who meet the demands of the curriculum well. The nursery and reception classes both have effective trained classroom assistants and there are three other teaching assistants, who are well deployed across the other classes. Staff development is planned according to the needs of the school and last year included, for example, courses on literacy, numeracy, assessment and management issues. There are good arrangements for the induction of newly qualified teachers and the school offers good potential for initial teacher training.
65. The school has sufficient accommodation to carry out the requirements of the National Curriculum. A large assembly hall, suitable for use as a gymnasium and dining room, enhances the quality of provision. The school is attractively decorated and well maintained by the caretaker and cleaning staff but both the children's and the staff toilets are in need of refurbishment. Classrooms are of a good size but the room shared by two teachers in Years 2 and 3 is barely adequate for this purpose. Attractive displays of pupils' work on the walls and corridors create a stimulating environment. The playground areas are well landscaped and have some imaginative provision for children's play. There is an attractive wildlife area, a full-sized netball court and a large playing field that is suitable for team games. Accommodation for children in the foundation stage is good. There is an attractive outdoor play area for children in the Nursery that includes a covered area suitable for wet playtimes.
66. Resources are satisfactory overall and they are easily accessible. Resources for the foundation stage, mathematics, religious education and music are good, while resources are satisfactory in all other subjects. The quality and range of books in the school library is satisfactory but there is limited provision for children to use the library for individual reading or research. Provision of computers is good but there is a need for more software to enable pupils to use information and communication technology to assist their learning in other subjects such as music.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

67. In order to raise standards and improve the quality of education provided, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:
- raise standards in English by providing more opportunities for pupils to develop and practise their writing skills in other subjects of the curriculum; (*paragraphs 23, 89, 105, 119, 124, 153*)
 - improve the standards of higher-attaining pupils, especially in mathematics and science, by raising teachers' expectations and providing more challenging work; (*paragraphs 24, 97, 105, 107*)
 - raise standards by providing pupils with more opportunities to be responsible for their own learning; (*paragraphs 25, 47, 98, 105*)
 - develop and implement a co-ordinated programme for pupils' personal, social and health education in line with proposals in the School Development Plan. (*paragraph 31*)
68. In addition to the key issues above, the school should consider including the following minor issue in its action plan:
- The school should develop the use of information and communication technology further to assist pupils' learning in other subjects of the curriculum such as science, geography and music. (*paragraphs 107, 123, 127, 134, 142*)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

45

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

36

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	13	53	33	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	25.5	155
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	52

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	21

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.4
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	2000	20	14	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	17	18
	Girls	13	13	15
	Total	29	30	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (78)	86 (75)	91 (81)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	19	16
	Girls	13	14	12
	Total	28	33	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (78)	95 (81)	80 (81)
	National	83 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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	155
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.1
Average class size	31.0

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	77

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	28

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	308,174
Total expenditure	307,899
Expenditure per pupil	1,673
Balance brought forward from previous year	16,015
Balance carried forward to next year	16,290

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 16%

Number of questionnaires sent out	154
Number of questionnaires returned	24

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	37	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	63	29	8	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	38	4	0	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	25	21	0	8
The teaching is good.	46	50	4	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	29	25	4	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	21	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	37	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	54	29	17	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	50	42	4	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	42	4	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	46	25	12	4	13

Other issues raised by parents

No other issue was raised by more than one parent.

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

69. The high quality of provision for children aged three to five has been maintained since the previous inspection. Teaching is good and a variety of interesting activities are well planned. Consequently, pupils enjoy their time in the nursery and reception classes and learning is fun. Assessment is used effectively to track the progress of individuals. As a result, children are enthusiastic, highly motivated and make good progress.
70. Children start in the Nursery soon after their third birthday and join the reception class during the first half of the autumn term of the academic year in which they become five. During the inspection, there were 51 children attending part-time in the 26-place Nursery, and 28 children attending full-time in the reception class. The staffing ratio for both groups of children is at least as good as the recommended 1 to 13.
71. Children's attainment is assessed on entry to the Nursery and staff keep detailed records of children's progress. Baseline assessments of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are undertaken in the reception class. Evidence from these assessments indicates that most children's skills and knowledge are well below average when they enter the Nursery. They make good progress but still have much to learn compared with most children of a similar age when they join the reception class. Many have poor communication skills and find it difficult to speak in complete sentences, while pencil control and early writing skills are poor. Mathematical skills in particular are poorly developed, with little knowledge of numbers and their use in everyday situations. Some aspects of personal development are slightly better but many children find difficulty in choosing tasks and persevering with them, and few ask questions about their surroundings.

Teaching

72. Teaching is good in all six areas of learning in both the nursery and reception classes. This leads to children making good progress. Planning for lessons is good, with clear objectives and a logical progression towards all the Early Learning Goals. Staff give high priority to the development of language, literacy, mathematical and personal and social skills. Children are encouraged to look closely at the illustrations in storybooks and to link these with the accompanying text. They sing songs and play games designed to reinforce their knowledge and understanding of letters and their sounds. Staff recognise the paucity of children's spoken language and encourage them to talk purposefully. They record what children say about their pictures to make the link with writing clear. Role-play in the 'kitchen' in the Nursery provides many good opportunities for children to communicate as they 'cook meals' and 'wash up'. During mathematics lessons, staff change activities frequently so that no child has time to be bored. In a number session in Reception, for example, children identified numbers on a dice, recognised the use of numbers on a calendar, a price tag and a weighing scales, sorted number cards into the correct order and were still keen for more activities. Homework is used satisfactorily to reinforce learning in the reception class. Children were encouraged, for example, to bring something from home with a number on it to a mathematics lesson.
73. Teachers and classroom assistants work closely together and parents and other helpers are well deployed. By supervising small groups, these adults are able to provide individual attention for children. This is one reason why progress is good. Staff record how children respond to teaching on a regular basis. This means they have good information on which to plan new work. Staff have identified a number of children with special educational needs who have made little progress. These children receive special attention in order to help them develop simple language and numeracy skills. Children's behaviour is very well managed and standards of behaviour are high. The atmosphere in both classrooms is calm and orderly. This creates an environment where children are keen to learn.

Personal, social and emotional development

74. Children settle into the nursery and reception classes well. The majority of pupils are already familiar with school and classroom routines by the middle of the autumn term. Children respond positively to adults whom they know but many find it difficult to talk at any length with a visitor. They are enthusiastic learners. In the Nursery, they are keen to discuss the colours of the new dressing-up clothes and listen patiently to each other's contributions. Children in the reception class are keen to talk about the 'big book' they are reading with their teacher. They know they have to put their hand up to answer questions and they quickly learn to take turns. They know how to dress and undress themselves for physical education, though some need a little help to fasten their buttons. Most children will achieve the level of personal, social and emotional development expected by the end of the reception year.

Communication, language and literacy

75. In the Nursery, there are many children who speak very little and reply to most questions with one or two word answers. When asked to describe his painting, for example, one boy could only reply 'Mummy', 'Daddy'. Many lack suitable vocabulary or the ability to speak clearly. Another boy, for example, could not name a 'spade', while a girl could not pronounce the word 'tractor' correctly. As a result, it is common for children to understand much more than they can express. Children make good progress in developing their communication skills and older children are beginning to talk with more confidence, although often in very brief phrases. Many children still have a limited vocabulary, however, and only a minority will achieve the expected level by the end of the reception year.
76. Children enjoy looking at books. They listen carefully when their teacher reads a story and respond well to questions about characters in the story. In the reception class, children begin to learn the sounds and names of letters and associate the letters successfully with the initial sound of common objects. A few higher-attaining children recognise common letter patterns and begin to read some simple words. Not many children, however, will learn all the words on the reception age word list by the end of the school year.
77. Children are given many opportunities to develop their writing skills. Most pupils in the reception class successfully overwrite some simple letters but few can copy letters accurately freehand in the cursive script used by the school. Only a few higher-attaining pupils can write their own name. Some lower-attaining pupils have very poor pencil control and find it difficult to trace over letters accurately. Overall, levels of attainment in speaking, reading and writing are likely to be below those expected for their age at the end of their time in Reception.

Mathematical development

78. On entry to the Nursery, children know much less about numbers than most children of their age. Many children are unable to distinguish between letters and numerals and have little knowledge of simple mathematical vocabulary. In the Nursery, children play with a variety of jigsaws and puzzles to encourage recognition of similar shapes and similar colours. They match the size and colour of teddy bears and are encouraged to count the teddies with their teacher. They count cotton reels as they thread them onto a string but few can count accurately beyond one or two on their own. A few higher-attaining children can already count to ten and are taught to recognise the numbers one to five in a small group. In the reception class, a few children can already count to 20 but few recognise simple patterns or relationships in number. Children use number jigsaws, role-play in the 'shop' and counting exercises on the computer to improve their number recognition. They sing a range of songs and number rhymes and most can count and recite numbers from one to ten confidently. By the end of the year, however, only a minority of children will have mastered the skills and knowledge expected for their age and attainment overall will still be below average.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

79. On entry to the Nursery, few children know very much about the world around them. Children in

the Nursery spent a happy session with a classroom assistant finding out what ingredients they needed to bake and decorate 'biscuit faces'. Children playing in the 'kitchen' successfully 'used' household objects such as a kettle and a vacuum cleaner for their intended purpose. Children discussed the sort of people who would wear the new dressing-up clothes and identified the different colours. In the reception class, children discuss birthdays and growing up and put pictures of a baby, a toddler, a dad and a granddad into the correct order. They name a range of fruits and vegetables and attempt to draw them. They make a collage of a person and name the main parts of the body correctly. Children are beginning to use new technology effectively. In the Nursery, they are given assistance to use the computer mouse to name pictures or to identify the animal sounds but some find it difficult to handle a full-sized mouse and to click onto the pictures. Older children in Reception use early computer skills to count the number of flowers or to move squares and circles across the computer screen to 'draw' a house, a yacht or a van. The limited range and quality of children's spoken language, however, does not help most of them to explore the world around them and by the end of the reception year, most children's knowledge and understanding of the world will still be below what is expected.

Physical development

80. When children enter the Nursery, most have little experience of working with small tools such as pencils and scissors. Many good opportunities are provided for children to handle tools and construction equipment, to play in the water and sand trays and to thread beads and cotton reels. These activities help children to improve their manual dexterity. In the playground they ride bikes and scooters with care and know how to avoid colliding with other children. This helps them to gain more accurate control of their arms and legs. In the reception class, children learn to change their clothes quickly and are eager for the physical education lesson to begin. They jump up and down on the spot, walk and jump around the hall and return to the same spot. They try hard to avoid collisions and behaviour is very good. Children are confident to use the full space in the hall and show good awareness of others as they run about. Most pupils can walk up an inclined bench and can jump safely from apparatus, landing firmly on both feet. Most can walk confidently along the whole length of a bench. Although some children have less control than expected of fine tools such as pencils, in other aspects of physical development most children's work will be of a similar standard to that of the majority of children by the end of the reception year.

Creative development

81. Many children enter the nursery with little experience of drawing, cutting or sticking. They quickly learn from the many opportunities that they are given to draw, cut, paint and stick things together. In the Nursery, children select a variety of blue materials appropriately to make a collage, decide on the design and stick the materials in place. Most children, however, have difficulty in describing the 'shiny' or 'dull' materials they have chosen. Children paint pictures of their families but it is often difficult to identify separate people or to recognise human characteristics such as heads and arms. Children create tree bark rubbings, make acceptable hand, fruit and vegetable prints and attempt simple paper plate 'pictures' of their faces. In the reception class, children look at themselves in the mirror and paint what they see. Some children produce reasonable portraits with suitably proportioned features such as eyes, nose and mouth, but many are not yet able to draw or paint in such detail. Children in both classes enjoy singing simple songs and rhymes at an acceptable standard and follow the actions with enthusiasm. Overall, pupils' creative development will still be below the standard expected by the end of the reception year.
82. Good provision is made for children to transfer from the Nursery to the reception class. There is a staggered start so that children are introduced a few at a time and parents have the option of keeping their child in the Nursery until just before the transfer date. Parents are always welcome to discuss their children's progress and a number of parents regularly help in the classroom. Parents are appreciative of the help and guidance they receive in supporting their children's early reading, writing and mathematical skills.
83. Accommodation for children in the foundation stage is good. The nursery classroom has a good range of different activity areas and children know where to find the materials and resources they need. The Nursery has its own attractive outdoor play area, part of which is under cover for use during wet weather. The reception class also has good accommodation with a number of activity

areas for reading, listening to taped stories, building construction toys, drawing, painting and role-play. Both classrooms are well resourced and attractive wall displays help to create a stimulating environment.

ENGLISH

84. Results of the national tests in 2000 show that pupils achieved standards which were below the national average in reading and writing for seven-year-olds but comparable with those in similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard in reading was close to the national average but the percentage achieving higher levels was below average. In writing, the percentage achieving the nationally expected standard was close to, but slightly below the national average and close to the average percentage achieved higher levels. Test results have risen over the previous four years in line with national trends and the school exceeded its targets in 2000 in both reading and writing.
85. Inspection findings indicate that standards among seven-year-old pupils have improved in English since the previous inspection but are still below the standards expected nationally. Nine-year-old pupils are on line to achieve standards below those expected nationally at the end of Key Stage 2. This is similar to standards reported at the previous inspection.

Speaking and listening

86. Pupils in Year 1 listened carefully and responded positively to the teacher when reading from a 'big book'. They understood the story, joined in enthusiastically when appropriate and shared their enjoyment of the story. Many pupils, however, have difficulty in responding verbally and their speaking skills are weak. This weakness in speaking was also evident in Year 2 where the answers that pupils gave were sometimes not very well structured or directly relevant to the question. There is a lack of confidence among pupils in Year 2: for example, when they were reluctant or embarrassed to present their ideas to the rest of the class in a drama lesson. This lack of confidence was also evident in Year 3, where pupils were reluctant to read out the stories that they had written about a jewellery box in a creative writing lesson. Similarly, in Year 4, pupils demonstrated by their written responses that they listened carefully and understood the main points in a creative writing lesson but they lacked variety in their vocabulary when responding verbally.

Reading

87. The attainment of seven-year-old pupils in reading is below the standards expected nationally, and nine-year-old pupils are on line to achieve less than the nationally expected standards when they are eleven. Only a small number of pupils in Year 2 talk about the plot of a book and offer reasons for events. One pupil, for example, when talking about an orphaned elephant, suggested that it "probably couldn't keep up with the herd in the wild and became lost". Most pupils in this year group, however, read very simple texts and talk only in basic terms about the plot of books such as "The Three Pigs" and misread words such as "shop". They have little understanding of how to locate information in books and lack confidence when attempting to read independently. Some pupils rely heavily on pictures for understanding in very simple books and often misread words such as "my" and "was". By the time they are nine years old, most pupils read accurately but with little expression. They say which books they prefer and talk briefly about the plot of a book they are reading but not in great depth and only a few refer to the kind of characters involved. Whilst they understand the terms "contents" and "index", only a minority of pupils are confident about how to use them to find information.

Writing

88. Pupils who are seven years old attain less than the nationally expected standards in writing and pupils in Year 4 are on line to achieve less than the nationally expected standards when they are eleven. Pupils make good progress in their handwriting as they move through the school and they learn the basics of joining letters from an early age so that by the time they are nine years old

most pupils write consistently and legibly. Their restricted use of vocabulary, poor spelling and limited understanding of sentence structure, however, is a weakness in every year group. Pupils in Year 2 have difficulty in spelling words correctly: for example, 'jacket' is spelt 'jackit'. Key words such as 'some' are often spelt incorrectly, even by higher-attaining pupils. Most pupils attempt to develop a story but sentences are usually restricted to four or five simple words. Most pupils in Year 3 write at some length on a theme on the imaginary contents and history of a jewellery box. They understand that the reader can be interested by how the story develops and how words are used but lack the variety of vocabulary necessary. Pupils in Year 4 wrote a substantial amount in the time available in a lesson where they were creating a story on a theme of "The Window Cleaner". They wrote clearly and legibly but a significant proportion of pupils misspelt words such as 'should', 'getting' and 'search'. Pupils' vocabulary is simple and few attempt to use words for variety or interest. Only a few pupils use extended sequences of sentences which are grammatically correct and contain accurate punctuation.

89. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good teaching. Planning for lessons is thorough and teachers make sound use of their knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy. There are insufficient opportunities, however, for pupils to use and reinforce their writing skills in other subjects such as geography, history and religious education. Good teaching is typified by good knowledge of the subject and very clear explanations of what pupils should be doing. This gives pupils confidence to join in discussions and enables them to sustain their concentration well. Homework supports and extends pupils' learning in lessons and is generally relevant both to the needs of pupils and to the focus of the current work. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Whilst the development of their handwriting is good, pupils make slower progress in extending their vocabulary and use of language, in both writing and speaking. The provision made for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils with special needs are supported well in the classroom and the work they do is both appropriate and relevant.
90. Pupils' attitudes to their learning are good. They take part enthusiastically in lessons and maintain their concentration and effort well through their tasks. Behaviour is generally good. Particularly noticeable is the way in which lessons begin promptly, with pupils sitting quietly, without fuss and eager to begin.
91. The subject is managed well and the subject policy and schemes of work are sound. The co-ordinator has taken advantage of opportunities to observe and evaluate the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy in classrooms and efficient strategies for assessment are providing information to identify strengths and weaknesses in the subject. Resources are generally sound and the stock of 'big books' used in literacy lessons is updated annually.

MATHEMATICS

92. In the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 2000, the proportion of pupils achieving the nationally expected level was close to the national average but the proportion achieving higher levels was below the national average. Overall, standards were close to the national average. Standards were much higher than those in 1999 and the percentage of pupils achieving both the expected level and higher levels rose markedly. This represents a considerable improvement over the previous four years when pupils' attainment had generally been well below the national average. In comparison with similar schools, standards in 2000 were above average.
93. At Key Stage 2, nine-year-old pupils are on line to achieve nationally expected standards at the end of the key stage. This is an improvement in standards since the previous inspection when pupils were on line to achieve below the national average at the end of Key Stage 2.
94. Inspection evidence confirms that standards in the current Year 2 and in the current Year 4 are close to the national average. The school has begun to use information gained from pupil assessments to target areas for individual improvement and this, together with increased rigour resulting from successful use of the teaching techniques in the National Numeracy Strategy, is having a positive impact on pupils' attainment. Pupils exceeded the school's targets in 2000. At both key stages there is no significant variation in the standards achieved by boys and girls.

95. During the inspection, it was clear that changes made to teaching and the curriculum are having a beneficial effect on standards. Frequent practice during mental mathematics sessions at Key Stage 1, for example, ensures that pupils in Year 2 can count sets of objects to 20 accurately. Most pupils quickly recall subtraction facts within ten and can use a number line successfully to subtract numbers up to 20. Most pupils understand the meaning of the symbols for multiplication and division and can readily identify numbers 'more than' and 'less than' five.
96. As a result of daily mental mathematics sessions, most pupils in Year 4 can count forwards in tens to 140 and backwards to -100. They can round numbers up or down to the nearest ten and have a secure understanding of place value to a thousand. There is a sound emphasis on practical mathematics at Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 3, for example, use frequency tables successfully to draw bar charts and pictograms, while pupils in Year 4 draw triangles by using co-ordinates effectively to plot the three corners.
97. Standards have improved since the last inspection. The school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy successfully and teachers have improved their planning for lessons. Assessments are used effectively to set individual targets for pupils and to organise teaching effectively by ability in Year 3. As a result, activities are more closely matched to the needs of individual pupils, especially those of average and below average attainment. Additional work is usually provided for higher-attaining pupils who complete exercises more quickly but this work is often of a similar standard rather than more difficult work. Most teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations of higher-attaining pupils and the work set is frequently not challenging enough. This was seen, for example, when higher-attaining Year 1 and Year 2 pupils abandoned the practical exercises they had been set and quickly worked out the correct answers in their heads. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has improved the school's coverage of the National Curriculum. By analysing information from test results, teachers have identified areas of weakness in pupils' achievement, for example, in their mathematical vocabulary and their ability to interpret data. The school has focused successfully on these areas to improve standards. Together with good leadership and management of the subject, these developments are having a positive impact on standards.
98. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. Teachers have a good understanding of the subject. Lessons have clear learning objectives and many teachers share the objective of the lesson with pupils at the start of the lesson. This helps pupils to focus on what they are to learn and increases their level of concentration. Brisk introductory mental mathematics sessions are used effectively to motivate pupils and to reinforce and develop new concepts. Teachers explain new ideas clearly so that pupils' learning is improved. They target questions well to help pupils build on their prior understanding and deepen their thinking. There is a sound emphasis on practical and investigative methods in class but there was little evidence during the inspection week of pupils being given opportunities to develop their own initiative or being given responsibility for their own independent investigations. The management of pupils' behaviour is good and teachers generally expect and gain good behaviour from their pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are given appropriate assistance and make good progress towards the targets in their Individual Education Plans. Support staff are well briefed on the learning objectives and how they can support pupils' learning. They work closely with small groups of pupils and have a beneficial impact on pupils' progress, especially those with special educational needs. Teachers set homework regularly and use it to consolidate work begun in lessons.
99. Pupils attitudes towards mathematics are good and most pupils have good levels of concentration. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers during mental mathematics sessions and are very keen to hold up the number cards showing their answers. Pupils are well behaved and co-operate well when working in pairs or in small groups. Relationships between pupils and teachers are good and this ensures that pupils work hard and do their best.
100. Co-ordination of the subject is good. Areas for improvement such as pupils' mental strategies have been clearly identified and targeted. All the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. Careful analysis of test results has helped bring about improvements in planning and teaching. An effective programme for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in all classes is having a beneficial effect on raising standards. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress

are good and individual targets to improve standards are regularly set and updated. Numeracy is taught effectively across the school. It is promoted in different subjects such as history, where pupils study timelines to understand the concept of the past, and in science and information and communication technology, where they record their findings by plotting graphs and bar charts. Sound use is made of information and communication technology for pupils to learn and practise mathematical skills such as data-handling. Resources are good and are used well to assist pupils' learning.

SCIENCE

101. The percentage of pupils reaching the nationally expected level at the end of Key Stage 1, according to teachers' assessments in 2000, was well below the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching higher than the expected level, however, was above the national average. The number of pupils achieving the nationally expected level was below the average for similar schools but the number achieving higher levels was well above the average. Higher attaining pupils do particularly well in investigative and practical work. Results in 2000 were similar to those in 1999. Since the last inspection, standards of attainment have risen significantly.
102. Inspection findings confirm that attainment is below the national average at the end of Key Stage 1. At the end of Year 4, standards are still below the expected level. However, pupils make good progress and most pupils are on line to reach the expected standard by the age of eleven.
103. Bearing in mind their low starting point, pupils achieve well at Key Stage 1 and higher-attaining pupils make particularly good progress. There is a sound emphasis on practical and investigative work. Pupils learn to plan and carry out simple experiments, such as comparing how far toy cars travel after moving down a slope. They reinforce their numeracy skills by presenting their results as bar charts. Higher-attaining pupils make good progress in this area of work but many pupils do not fully understand how to construct a fair test. Poor knowledge of the world around them hinders many pupils' attainment. Most pupils, for example, can distinguish between household electrical appliances that require mains power and those which are battery operated but some do not understand the difference between batteries and mains electricity. Much of the work in science is linked closely with work in other areas. Work on the five senses, for example, was effectively linked with art and history through a visit to Wallington Hall. Pupils used their sense of touch to examine the bark of different trees and collected autumn leaves and seeds to produce an attractive collage display. The limited writing skills of average and lower-attaining pupils is another key factor in limiting their progress through the key stage.
104. Pupils' learning in Key Stage 2 is good. Good use is made of the school grounds and visits in the local area to increase pupils' skills and knowledge. Pupils visit the school's wildlife area, for example, to discover and identify a range of mini-beasts and to recognise different habitats. They enjoy studying rocks and fossils and benefit greatly from the very good range of specimens provided for the topic. Pupils enjoy investigative work but many find it difficult to draw general conclusions from their results. They successfully construct electrical circuits including switches and buzzers, for example, but have only a limited understanding of how circuits work. Pupils are beginning to understand the principles of fair testing. Pupils in Year 4, for example, devised a fair test to compare the water-retaining properties of different soil samples. However, pupils do not always record their results systematically or present them in a variety of graphical forms. Higher-attaining pupils use their literacy skills well to link predictions to their background knowledge and to discuss their results. Lower-attaining pupils, however, find it more difficult to make logical predictions or to explain their findings.
105. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons well. They identify clear learning objectives and organise materials and equipment well. Pupils are generally suitably challenged, although higher-attaining pupils are not offered sufficient opportunities to extend their knowledge and understanding. For example, in a Year 4 lesson on electricity, many pupils found it difficult to develop their knowledge of electrical circuits to construct a simple switch. Higher-attaining pupils who did succeed could have effectively reinforced their understanding and contributed to the class's overall learning if they had been

encouraged to develop their ideas further. While there is a sound emphasis on practical and investigative work, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to develop their own initiative or to be responsible for their own work. Teachers pose clear questions and use them well to assess pupils' progress in lessons. Teachers are imaginative in their use of teaching strategies. A toy gorilla, for example, proved a valuable stimulus to aid pupils' understanding of the characteristics of living things. In a lesson on healthy living, teachers used the topicality of the Olympic Games to compare the diet of Olympic athletes with ordinary people. Teachers generally use discussion sessions at the end of lessons well to assess pupils' knowledge and progress, although occasionally timing is not well planned and the final session is curtailed. Teachers manage pupils well and good use is made of support staff, whose role is clearly identified. Although an attempt is made to develop pupils' vocabulary by identifying key words for each topic, these words are not reinforced adequately through written work or by opportunities for pupils to discuss their work. Written work is marked regularly and supportive comments are given but spelling mistakes are not corrected consistently. Lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress through the key stage as a result of the good support they receive from teachers and classroom assistants.

106. Pupils display very good attitudes to their work at both key stages. The vast majority of pupils come to lessons eager to learn and prepared to work. They listen attentively and participate well in question and answer sessions, even though they are not confident in expressing themselves clearly and in using correct terminology. They respect equipment, settle quickly on the set tasks and maintain a good work rate. Relationships between pupils and teachers are very good and pupils support each other well during group activities.
107. Curriculum planning is detailed and covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum. There is a good balance between different aspects of science planned in each year. Opportunities for utilising and practising pupils' information and communication technology skills are identified in a few topics but these skills are not systematically used or developed. The co-ordinator leads the subject effectively, giving support and guidance to other teachers as required. Good curriculum links are established with the local middle school to ensure a smooth transition for pupils at Key Stage 2. There is regular monitoring and evaluation of pupils' work and teachers' planning and some teaching has been observed. A thorough and systematic programme of assessment of pupils' work is in place. Full records are maintained of pupils' attainment and progress and good use is made of the data to set targets for pupils' achievement. Since the last inspection, levels of attainment have improved but they still remain below national expectations. The quality of teaching has improved as a result of teachers planning tasks which match pupils' needs more closely, although higher-attaining pupils are still not challenged sufficiently at Key Stage 2.

ART AND DESIGN

108. Due to timetable arrangements, only two lessons were observed. Inspection evidence, which includes an analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and staff, indicates that standards of attainment achieved by pupils at seven years of age are in line with standards expected nationally. Nine-year-old pupils are on line to achieve the nationally expected standard when they are eleven. This is similar to standards observed at the previous inspection.
109. At Key Stage 1, pupils develop their skills in using paint when, for example, painting a self-portrait. They mix paint to make skin tones and understand the need to add only a small quantity of colour to the amount of white. They discuss and suggest materials that could be used to represent hair. Some pupils demonstrate good brush technique when painting carefully within a shape drawn in pencil. Pupils develop a wider variety of techniques, such as marbling, wax resist and collage, for example, when working together on a large scale picture of the "Fire of London". They make sound progress in developing their observation skills when they use a frame to view part of the classroom and then draw what they see.
110. At Key Stage 2, good use is made of a digital camera to develop skills in composition. Pupils take photographs and are able to evaluate their composition almost immediately when they print the results from the computer. Pupils in Year 3 develop this skill further in a project about relationships, by taking and printing photographs of friends together. Pupils investigate the use of

a wide variety of materials and processes. In a lesson on the work of Paul Klee, for example, pupils in Year 4 used small polystyrene tiles to print a series of images in various colours. Pupils made a collage of square, rectangular and circle shapes. Good use of techniques was evident in this work but pupils were less certain about how their own work related to that of Klee. Overall, sound progress is made by pupils, including those with special educational needs.

111. Due to the small number of lessons observed, it is not possible to make an overall judgement on teaching. In the two lessons seen, however, good planning and effective deployment of resources enabled pupils to make the maximum use of the time available to produce a reasonable amount of work. Pupils with special educational needs were supported well and the staff who work with them helped to ensure that they were fully involved in their tasks. Well-organised classrooms ensure that pupils are engrossed in their work and sustain their concentration throughout lessons. An industrious working atmosphere is evident, with pupils busily involved in a variety of activities.
112. The co-ordinator provides sound leadership of the subject. Teachers' planning is sound and resources are adequate. The current policy was drawn up with the help of the local authority advisor and has been updated recently in line with national guidelines. Older pupils benefit from visiting a local country house for an arts day. They receive expert tuition on a variety of techniques such as silk painting and produce some good quality work based around the gardens. Provision for pupils to work with three-dimensional materials during lessons in school, however, is underdeveloped.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

113. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection. Observations are based on those lessons, together with an analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussion with pupils and staff. Inspection evidence indicates that standards of attainment achieved by seven-year-olds are in line with standards expected nationally. Nine-year-old pupils are on line to achieve nationally expected standards when they are eleven. Standards are similar to those seen at the previous inspection.
114. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn different techniques to incorporate moving parts in models. Pupils in Year 1, for example, learn how a moving picture of a dinosaur operates with a push and pull mechanism. Pupils develop simple cutting and joining techniques. Most pupils, with help, use scissors effectively to cut a groove in a sheet of card. They draw around a template and cut out a shape without assistance. Pupils make good progress in handling simple tools and a lot is achieved in the time available. Pupils make sound use of information and communication technology to assist with their design projects. Pupils in Year 2, for instance, use a computer program to design patterns for 'Joseph's Technicolor Dreamcoat' and have a clear idea of the sequence of operations needed to achieve the finished article.
115. Older pupils in Years 3 and 4 extend their skills in designing animated models by constructing a 'robot' with one or two moving parts using a balloon to provide air pressure. Their design skills improve further when they make a money container to a given set of criteria, testing fabrics and decorating the finished article. Sound progress is made by pupils at Key Stage 2, including pupils with special educational needs.
116. As only two lessons were observed, it is not possible to make an overall judgement on teaching. In the lessons seen, teachers' good understanding of the design process contributed much to pupils' learning. Teachers gave good demonstrations, provided clearly stated targets and produced careful planning for lessons. This helped to ensure high levels of pupil interest and involvement. Generally, pupils understand what they are doing and have a clear idea of how to achieve their desired end result. They are enthusiastic in their approach to work, are focused well on the job in hand and work at a very good pace.
117. The subject is managed soundly by the co-ordinator. The subject policy has been adapted recently and the scheme of work is now based on national guidelines. Good assessment recording sheets have been adapted for the school's use and these are beginning to identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses. A substantial amount of money has been spent recently on acquiring additional resources to ensure the effective implementation of these schemes.

GEOGRAPHY

118. Pupils' attainment in geography is below the expected standards for their age at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. However, pupils at Key Stage 2 are making good progress and are on line to reach the expected standards by the age of eleven. Standards are not as high as at the previous inspection when they were close to national expectations.
119. Pupils at Key Stage 1 develop a sound awareness of their locality through drawing simple sketch maps and plotting their routes to and from home. They use their own holiday experiences to plot longer journeys and identify key features along the route, such as castles, woods and bridges. Written work is very limited, however, and reflects the poor literacy skills of the majority of pupils at this age.
120. At Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress in developing geographical skills but the quality of most pupils' written work remains below the level expected for their age. Pupils use atlases well and identify features such as seas, rivers, mountain ranges and countries. Pupils' map reading skills develop quite well and pupils have a sound knowledge of conventional symbols. Pupils benefit from visiting contrasting communities at the seaside and in farming areas. They use their map skills effectively on such visits to identify places such as the church, the post office or schools and they make sensible comparisons with their own local area. Pupils particularly enjoy learning about life in other countries, such as the Indian village community studied by pupils in Year 3. Pupils are beginning to use Internet sites to extract climatic and other data about different countries but the recording and presenting of such data in clear visual form is not well developed.
121. Only a small number of lessons were observed but the quality of teaching seen was satisfactory. Teachers generally plan lessons well and set appropriate tasks for the majority of pupils. However, the needs of lower-attaining pupils need to be more carefully addressed by planning shorter pieces of work with more variety. Teachers use discussion sessions well at the start of lessons to generate initial interest. Reading a story about 'Katy Morag and the Two Grannies', for example, raised many questions and points of interest about life on a small island. Much of the work is done in conjunction with other subjects such as history. Pupils used their map skills, for example, to identify place-names ending in 'ing', 'ton' and 'ham' indicating settlements founded by Anglo-Saxon invaders. Teachers are imaginative in their planning. The staging of the Olympic Games in Sydney, for instance, was used effectively to compare climates in Britain and Australia and to advise potential visitors what clothing and sun-protection creams would be desirable. Teachers make good use of resources when studying other countries but not enough emphasis is put on developing skills of recording and presenting comparative data such as climates and crops on graphs and charts. Very good use is made of visits to broaden pupils' experiences of different settlements such as seaside towns and rural communities.
122. Pupils display a positive attitude to their lessons and behaviour is good. They are interested in the topics, are very attentive listeners and generally respond well to teachers' questions. Lower-attaining pupils, however, do not always maintain their concentration when tasks are too long or lack sufficient variety. Higher-attaining pupils are keen to demonstrate their knowledge and observational skills. A pupil in Year 2, for example, displayed good map reading skills when locating sketches from the story of 'Katy Morag and the Two Grannies' on a pictorial map. Generally, however, pupils often lack confidence in developing their answers beyond a short response.
123. Two co-ordinators manage both geography and history and there is much common planning of topics and the co-ordinated use of visits to encourage learning in both subjects. Teachers' planning and the standard of pupils' work is monitored regularly but there has not yet been any systematic observation and evaluation of teaching in the subject. Teachers' planning ensures full coverage of the National Curriculum and a balance of topics in each year. A new scheme of work has recently been adopted and is being introduced throughout the school. The use of information and communication technology is increasing but needs to be developed further and to be identified more clearly in the scheme of work. A new assessment scheme is also currently being

introduced. This gives a clearer picture of pupils' progress and will be of value in establishing appropriate targets for pupils' learning.

HISTORY

124. Standards achieved by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are below the nationally expected level and written work is particularly weak. At Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 4 are achieving levels more typical of their age. Their knowledge and understanding of the historical periods covered are generally sound but their limited literacy skills result in very little written work being produced. Pupils in Year 4 are broadly on line to reach the standards expected by the end of Key Stage 2. Standards are similar to those observed at the previous inspection.
125. Pupils at Key Stage 1 develop a basic sense of chronology through the study of toys and household artefacts from former times and compare them with modern equivalents. They recognise how the materials used to construct objects can give clues to their age. They learn about some major historical events, such as the Fire of London, and are able to sequence events in the story. However, their poor literacy skills result in very limited written work being produced during lessons.
126. At Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress and both the quality and quantity of written work increases in comparison with Key Stage 1. Pupils identify well with the periods being studied. They compare fabrics and fashions used in Victorian times, for example, with modern clothing and link the variations in style to different living conditions. Pupils make good links with local history. They have particularly good knowledge, for instance, of the Celts and Romans and link their work well to local Roman sites. Individual research, however, is hindered by many pupils' limited ability to write up their findings coherently and at length. Higher-attaining pupils, for example, write good accounts of Boudicca's rebellion, demonstrating good recall of the key events in the story; but most pupils do not find extended writing an easy task and often limit themselves to writing just a few phrases.
127. Due to timetable constraints, it was only possible to observe a small number of lessons. The quality of teaching was good overall in these lessons. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons well. They use quality resources to stimulate pupils' learning and to retain their interest. Stories are told well and very good use is made of visits and visitors to enable pupils to identify with the past. A visit to the Roman site of Segedunum at Wallsend by pupils in Year 4, for example, and the use of the resources obtained there were very good stimuli to pupils when learning about the Roman army. Roman habits and customs were then brought to life by a married couple from a local re-enactment organisation, who demonstrated a Roman legionary's equipment and female fashion. Pupils at Key Stage 1 benefited from a visit to Wallington Hall and learned much from its fine collection of Victorian toys. Good use is made of artefacts brought into school. Pupils in Year 3, for instance, learned how to develop their historical detective work through trying to identify the age and use of a range of 'mystery' objects. Pupils are beginning to access Internet sites to seek additional information on their topics but there is currently insufficient use of information and communication technology to help pupils' individual research.
128. Pupils are very interested in history. They listen attentively and participate well in discussions, although their confidence in developing answers is rather limited. They respond particularly well to visits and visitors and gain much from these occasions to develop their learning. Pupils settle quickly on the set tasks and generally maintain good concentration.
129. There are two co-ordinators for history and geography and each member of staff takes responsibility for both subjects in one of the key stages. They liaise well together and planning of topics is sound with a good balance in each year. A new scheme of work is currently being introduced together with an associated schedule for assessing pupils' knowledge and skills. The imaginative use of planned visits and visitors makes a major contribution to pupils' learning. The co-ordinators monitor teachers' planning regularly and check the standard of pupils' work but there has been no formal observation and evaluation of classroom teaching.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

130. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection. Inspection evidence based on these lessons, an analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and staff indicates that standards of attainment achieved by seven-year-olds are in line with the standards expected nationally. Nine-year-old pupils are on line to achieve the nationally expected standards when they are eleven.
131. Pupils at Key Stage 1 become familiar with a variety of uses of information and communication technology (ICT). They use the keyboard efficiently to produce, for example, a series of simple sentences about themselves and are then able to print them out. With adult help, they use a digital camera successfully to take photographs of each other when studying portraits in art and design and then print out the results. Work in numeracy is reinforced when pupils enter the numbers of pupils with different coloured eyes into a simple database. Pupils successfully print out a chart from this information, which helps them to practise counting and data analysis. By the time pupils are seven, most can enter and retrieve work on a computer with some help and some pupils do this without support. Most pupils can collect information from their classmates about topics such as favourite television programmes and can enter the data into a simple database. They sort this information and print out a bar chart from their results.
132. Older pupils in Key Stage 2, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in manipulating and presenting information on the computer screen. Most pupils understand simple text editing. In Year 3, for example, they use 'delete', 'capital' and 'back' and 'forward' functions confidently and reinforce their language skills by editing descriptive writing to make the vocabulary more interesting. By the time they are nine, most pupils are becoming aware of how to present information in different forms for an intended audience. By studying newspapers, they identify the importance of bold and capital letters, as well as learning that larger fonts are important for catching people's attention. Most pupils are confident in manipulating text on the screen for this purpose. Pupils talk about using a variety of simulation, control and interrogation activities, describing their use and enjoyment of ICT activities confidently.
133. Last year, pupils in Year 4, with adult help, set up a school web site and this is currently being developed by this year's pupils. Pupils' work is supported well by activities at the computer club where they are introduced to using information on the Internet. Pupils who attend the club learn how to download pictures of the Roman army for their work in history and increase their understanding of web site addresses and passwords.
134. As only two lessons were seen, it is not possible to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. In the lessons seen, however, teachers' planning was good, with objectives clearly stated and resources well prepared. Good subject knowledge ensured that the teacher gave confident demonstrations, which helped pupils to learn more effectively. Resources are well deployed. By gathering a number of computers together in the same classroom, pupils can work in twos or threes, and their learning is reinforced well by the immediacy of the link between the teaching activity and 'hands on' experience. Since the previous inspection, teachers have successfully provided more opportunities for pupils to develop their ICT skills in some other subjects, notably in English and mathematics. Opportunities for research are provided through the use of CD-ROMs and the Internet, for example, in history, but there is insufficient use of ICT in other subjects such as science, geography and music. Pupils are enthusiastic in their approach to the subject and there was an industrious working atmosphere evident in the lessons seen.
135. Management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has worked hard to develop ICT throughout the school and is aware of its strengths and weaknesses. She is conscious of what is needed to develop the subject in the future and is actively pursuing these aims. The subject policy and teachers' planning are good and schemes of work are based on national guidelines. Resources for teaching ICT are satisfactory.

MUSIC

136. Standards are close to national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and pupils in Year 4 are

on line to meet the expected standards at the end of Key Stage 2. This is similar to standards observed at the previous inspection.

137. At Key Stage 1, pupils count the number of beats successfully in simple rhythmic patterns and identify high and low notes accurately. They sing tunefully and keep good time. They take turns to accompany a simple song accurately using chime bars but find it difficult to keep in time with the singers. At Key Stage 2, pupils develop their musical appreciation by listening carefully to different styles of music. They use their knowledge of different instruments to select an appropriate percussion instrument to represent a chosen animal and then successfully perform their own composition for the class to identify the animal. By Year 4, pupils can read and perform simple rhythmic patterns written in standard musical notation.
138. Pupils are able to appreciate a good range of music when entering and leaving school assemblies but opportunities to discuss the composer, the instruments or the mood conveyed by the music are not always taken. Pupils sing a variety of modern worship songs enthusiastically during assemblies and hymn practices but opportunities to improve the diction or variation in dynamics are not always followed up. Songs are sung tunefully but pupils are not always sure of the words, which are not on display. Young instrumentalists are encouraged to play the keyboard or guitar during assemblies and this promotes an interest in music and helps to develop their performance skills.
139. Teaching is good at Key Stage 2. While teaching in the one lesson seen at Key Stage 1 was good, insufficient teaching was observed to make an overall judgement for the key stage. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are generally sound, though some individual teachers' musical expertise is good. Teachers plan their work carefully and individual lessons usually have precise learning objectives that are shared with pupils. This helps pupils to be clear about what they should be learning. Teachers have high expectations and give clear explanations and instructions. When learning new songs, however, pupils are not always provided with the words and this hinders their rate of learning. Teachers use a range of interesting teaching methods. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, for example, enjoyed playing chime bars positioned on a flight of steps to illustrate the ascending pitch of the notes. Teachers make good use of rhythm games and a wide variety of percussion instruments. This helps to maintain pupils' interest and concentration. Pupils are well managed and good use is made of frequent questions to evaluate pupils' work and to check their learning.
140. Most pupils enjoy their music lessons and enjoy listening to music and singing in assemblies. The majority of pupils have good attitudes to music. They are well motivated and most join in sensibly. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers, are keen to answer questions and behave well when singing, playing instruments or listening to music.
141. The headteacher and deputy headteacher act as music co-ordinators and provide sound leadership of the subject. Good use is made of the deputy headteacher's expertise to accompany singing on the piano during assemblies and to lead hymn practices. The school also benefits from the regular visits of a music specialist who teaches classes during ten weeks of the year and runs training courses for teachers. The co-ordinators do not monitor teachers' planning but they observe pupils' performances in assemblies and concerts and time has been set aside for observing and evaluating teaching in all classes this year. The policy document gives helpful guidance and a new scheme of work, based on national guidance, ensures that pupils develop musical skills in a logical progression. Teachers check pupils' musical skills informally and record them in a standard manner.
142. The school has a sound selection of recorded music, a number of xylophones and keyboards, and a good range of percussion instruments that are easily accessible on a trolley. Good use is made of a range of recorded music in assemblies but little use is made of information technology during lessons to assist musical composition or appreciation. Approximately ten per cent of pupils receive violin, guitar or keyboard lessons from visiting teachers. Pupils perform at a variety of school concerts and take part in assemblies, dance projects and nativity plays. Pupils attend concerts at the local middle school and the local high school orchestra and the peripatetic music teachers' orchestra both come into school occasionally to perform concerts and to talk about their instruments.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

143. Standards are close to national expectations at the end Key Stage 1 and pupils in Year 4 are on line to meet the expected standards at the end of Key Stage 2. This is similar to standards observed at the previous inspection.
144. At Key Stage 1, pupils skip and walk safely around the hall bearing in mind their own and other pupils' safety. They create interesting shapes with their bodies to represent different animals and co-ordinate their movements well as they travel in time to music. Pupils in Year 2, for example, successfully used their hands and feet to imagine that they were pushing their way through the dense undergrowth of a tropical rain forest and climbing over fallen trees.
145. At Key Stage 2, pupils understand the effect of exercise on their bodies and are aware of the need to warm up before strenuous activities and to cool down afterwards. Pupils develop sound travelling skills in gymnastics. They learn the skills required for a variety of games, including football, netball, kwik cricket and short tennis. Pupils in Year 3, for example, moved effectively around the hall following a variety of patterns and quickly mastered throwing and catching skills. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 attend a local swimming pool to develop their skills. Nearly all pupils swim 25 metres confidently by the end of Year 4.
146. The quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 2. Teaching in the one lesson seen at Key Stage 1 was satisfactory but insufficient teaching was observed to make an overall judgement. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject and are confident in their presentation. Lessons are planned carefully with clear objectives and a logical development of skills. Teachers dress appropriately and have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attainment. The pace of lessons is brisk and good use is made of appropriate resources, including a series of dance lessons recorded from the radio. In the best lessons, instructions are communicated to pupils very clearly, teachers demonstrate swimming strokes very effectively and very good use is made of praise and encouragement. This helps pupils to know exactly what they should be doing to improve their standards. Where teaching is satisfactory but could be improved further, expressive arm and body movements could be demonstrated to pupils during dance lessons and more use could be made of pupils' expertise to demonstrate good practice.
147. As a result of enthusiastic teaching, pupils' attitudes to physical education are good at both key stages. Pupils behave very well and concentrate hard on the tasks set. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers. They follow instructions well and obey the safety rules. Pupils work sensibly in pairs and co-operate well, for example, when passing a ball. Particularly good levels of effort and concentration were seen when pupils in Years 3 and 4 worked hard to improve their swimming skills.
148. The subject is promoted well by the co-ordinator, who monitors teachers' planning and has been allocated time to monitor teaching later this year. There is good liaison with the middle school and the subject policies and schemes of work are carefully co-ordinated to ensure that pupils cover all the requirements of the National Curriculum by the end of Key Stage 2. Swimming activities, for instance, take place during Years 3 and 4, while athletics activities take place at the middle school. Good use is made of informal assessment of pupils' skills. Resources are satisfactory and are easily accessible. The hall is suitable for gymnastics and dance, and the school has a full-size netball court and a playing field for team games.
149. Physical education makes a good contribution to extra-curricular activities. One teacher organises a running club. A keep fit session after school attracts over 40 boys and girls, while both girls and boys attend the football and netball clubs. These after-school activities are run by well-qualified parents and other helpers, who also support the football team when it plays in a Sunday league. Professional players visit the school to provide coaching skills in football and cricket. The good range of sporting activities provided by the school helps to develop the confidence, ability and self-esteem of pupils at all levels of attainment.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

150. Standards in religious education are broadly in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils in Year 4 are on line to reach the expected standard by the end of Key Stage 2. The school has maintained its sound standards since the last inspection.
151. Pupils at Key Stage 1 have a basic understanding of the key principles of Christianity and a sound knowledge of its major festivals. Links with the local church are good. Year 1 pupils, for example, visit the church to act out a baptism service. They learn much about the church as a place of worship and about the nature of baptism and its role in family life. There is a good emphasis on the comparison of different religions. Pupils are introduced to stories of the creation, for example, from Christian, Hindu and native American traditions. They recognise similarities in the stories and reflect on the wonder of creation. As pupils begin to prepare for Christmas, they consider the nature and purpose of giving to others. With guidance from their teachers, they draw on their own experiences to recognise that the value of giving is often greater than the gift itself.
152. Pupils at Key Stage 2 have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Bible as a holy book, and of its basic structure. They are able to recall some key Bible stories, such as the story of Abraham, Sarah and Isaac, and understand how faith features in these stories. Pupils recognise many important symbols of the Christian faith after a visit to the local church. They know the difference between a cross and a crucifix, are familiar with features such as the font, the pulpit and the altar, and they recognise church artefacts such as the communion vessels and the special vestments worn by the clergy. They understand the principles of right and wrong and appreciate the need for rules in school and society. Pupils gain a basic knowledge of Islam and Judaism and compare some of their major celebrations with the main Christian festivals.
153. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers usually take care when planning their lessons to ensure clear objectives and to maintain high levels of pupil involvement. They tell stories well and use questions effectively to guide pupils to reflect on their own experiences. Occasionally, the pace of a lesson is not sufficient to maintain the interest of all pupils and the quality of learning declines. This results from poor planning of time and momentary loss of focus in the lesson. Teachers develop clear moral messages well. Through the story of the great flood, for example, pupils developed an appreciation of God's promise to Noah and of the need to care for our environment. They then worked on an acrostic poem based on the word 'promises', writing out their promises to themselves and for each other. Pupils' written work is limited by their weak literacy skills. Lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs receive appropriate support and encouragement from their teachers and exercises such as 'word searches' and looking for the names of books in the Bible prove effective stimulation. Higher-attaining pupils are encouraged to write creatively, for example, in re-telling their favourite part of the story of Abraham, but overall, there are insufficient opportunities for most pupils to write at length.
154. Pupils generally respond well to lessons, although a small group of boys at Key Stage 2 require regular attention from the teacher to maintain their concentration. Pupils enjoy listening to stories and are keen to express their views. They show respect for religious artefacts and for other people's views. Most are keen to work and maintain good concentration on the set tasks.
155. The subject is well led and curriculum planning is good. The scheme of work closely matches the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus, and the themes of assemblies are well linked to the teaching programme. There is a strong emphasis on Christianity but pupils also develop a sound understanding of Islam and Judaism and gain respect for the beliefs of other faiths. The school has a good range of resources and artefacts to supplement teaching and the good link with the local church, developed over many years, makes a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. Religious education makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development.