

INSPECTION REPORT

STANHOPE JUNIOR MIXED AND INFANTS SCHOOL

South Shields

LEA area: South Tyneside

Unique reference number: 108676

Headteacher: Mr D Parnaby

Reporting inspector: Mr R A Robinson
(OFSTED No: 21024)

Dates of inspection: 4 - 7 December 2000

Inspection number: 224175

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
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Gresford Street South Shields Tyne and Wear
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Councillor J Temple
Date of previous inspection:	8 June 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Robert Robinson (OFSTED No: 21024)	Registered inspector	Mathematics	What sort of school is it?
		Religious education	How high are standards? a) The schools results and achievements
Dave Hiron (OFSTED No: 19698)	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Lynn Alvy (OFSTED No: 25376)	Team inspector	Physical education	How well are pupils or students taught?
		Foundation stage	
Margaret Handsley (OFSTED No: 19117)	Team inspector	English	How well is the school led and managed?
		Music	
		Equal opportunities	
		English as an additional language	
Debbie Kerr (OFSTED No: 19916)	Team inspector	Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils or students?
		Art	
		Design and technology	
Andrew Margerison (OFSTED No: 21666)	Team inspector	Geography	How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
		History	
		Information communication and technology	
		Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a large primary school for boys and girls aged 3-11 years that serves mainly the local neighbourhood close to the centre of South Shields. The area has many social problems. There are 316 pupils (163 boys and 153 girls) who attend full time; 45 of these pupils are taught in the reception class. In the nursery there are 18 boys and 14 girls who attend either in a morning or afternoon each day; their attainment on entry to the school is well below average for three-year-olds. There is a small proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and nine pupils are learning English as an additional language. Seventy-three pupils (21 per cent) are on the register of special educational needs which is broadly average. A small number of pupils have statements of special educational needs. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is about 37 per cent which is above the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school which serves the local community well. Pupils' achievements are good in relation to their prior attainment. Pupils reach the national average in English and mathematics by the age of eleven because the quality of teaching is good and pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour are positive. The leadership of the headteacher is very good indeed and he is supported well by staff and governors. The school's aims and values are met very well. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards of pupils' attainment by the age of eleven in the national tests in 2000 are well above the national average of pupils in similar schools in English, mathematics and science and pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.
- Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning are good.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Pupils' personal development is encouraged successfully.
- The leadership and management of the senior staff and the governing body are effective.

What could be improved

- Standards of pupils' writing are not high enough.
- Unsatisfactory accommodation and resources in the nursery and reception classes (the foundation stage) restrict children's learning.
- Statutory workplace risk assessment is not carried out.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

At the time of the last inspection, in June 1998, the school was judged to have serious weaknesses in the attainment and progress of pupils in English and science; this is no longer the case. Pupils' achievements from entering the school at the age of three to leaving at the age of eleven are good. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning, as well as the quality of teaching and leadership and management of the school remain good. The provision for pupils' personal development and relationships were at the time of the last inspection good but are now of an even higher standard. The school has made good progress and has addressed the areas for improvement successfully as shown below:

- Standards have risen significantly in English, information and communication technology and science.
- Curriculum planning and the assessment of pupils' progress have improved and are now of a good standard.

The strengths in teaching and the leadership of the headteacher and senior staff place the school in a good position to continue to improve standards.

STANDARDS

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

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

- The results of the national tests in 2000 show a positive improvement in English and science compared to the time of the last inspection.
- In this year's Year 6 standards are average in English and in mathematics, though standards in science are now above average because of the high quality of teaching in Year 6, improvements to the curriculum and good leadership of the subject. Pupils' reading by the age of eleven is above average but pupils' writing and the presentation of their work are below average. Pupils reach the standards expected nationally in all other subjects except art and design and music in which no judgements could be made.
- By the end of the reception year children are below the expected standards in all areas of learning; however, their achievements based on their attainment on entry to the nursery are good.
- In this year's Year 2 standards are below the national average in speaking and listening, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils with special educational needs and pupils learning English as an additional language make very good progress.
- The achievement of pupils is good and there are now no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls.

The good quality of teaching and the effective assessment procedures place the school in a favourable position to achieve its demanding targets for eleven-year-olds in 2001.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good; pupils have a positive attitude to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good; pupils' behaviour is good and assists their learning.
Personal development and relationships	Very good; relationships are of a high standard and pupils develop their personal skills very well.
Attendance	Satisfactory; unauthorised absences are below average though overall attendance rates are about average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 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.

The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. It is good or better in 68 per cent of lessons observed and very good or better in 16 per cent. In 32 per cent of lessons the quality of teaching is satisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is effective. Pupils learning English as an additional language make good progress overall and quicker progress when working with a specialist teacher of English as an additional language.

Overall, the teaching of English and mathematics is good. Higher quality teaching and learning occurs when teachers have a very well developed understanding of teaching basic literacy and numeracy skills and have high expectations of pupils to achieve well irrespective of pupils' prior levels of attainment. Teachers maintain pupils' interest through very well prepared lessons building on what pupils already know. Very effective management of pupils and high expectations of behaviour and response ensure pupils work productively and are actively involved in lessons.

Minor weaknesses in otherwise satisfactory lessons are apparent when the marking of pupils' work does not follow the school's policy and occasionally when teachers pay insufficient attention to improving pupils' handwriting. Too few opportunities are planned for the development of literacy and numeracy skills. The use of information and communication technology to assist learning in other subjects is limited.

The needs of pupils are met well throughout the school and, as a result, pupils achieve well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a good range of learning opportunities for its pupils. However, children in the nursery and reception classes do not have enough opportunities for creative and physical development in an outdoor environment. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been implemented well. There is good provision for extra-curricular activities, especially for older pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is well organised and effective.
Provision for pupils learning English as an additional language	Good; they are taught well in lessons and receive a very high standard of support from specialist teachers.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. There is clear teaching of right and wrong and many opportunities are provided for pupils to exercise responsibility and to learn to respect the feelings and beliefs of others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides good support for its pupils in all aspects of their academic welfare. However, the school has not ensured that statutory workplace risk assessments have been carried out.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	The school provides a satisfactory environment in which parents can easily and quickly obtain information about their children's progress. However, there are few formal arrangements, such as parent consultation evenings, for parents of children in the nursery.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership of the headteacher is very good ensuring clear direction for the school. The school's aims and values are reflected very well in its work. The leadership and management of the headteacher and other senior staff are good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors make a significant contribution to the success of the school though they have not ensured that all statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There are good systems to track pupils' performance throughout the school and to set targets for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	The finances for pupils with special educational needs and other grants are used effectively. The school's use of displays of pupils' work enlivens the environment for learning and enhances the appearance of the school. The level of staffing is good overall but classroom assistants are not deployed sufficiently to support children in the reception classes. The outdoor accommodation and resources both within classrooms and outdoors for children in nursery and reception classes (the foundation stage) are unsatisfactory and restrict teachers' planning for developing children's learning. The governors spend the allocation of funding to the school prudently.

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 school and behave well. • The teaching is good and children make good progress. • The school expects children to work hard and to achieve well. • Members of staff are approachable and parents are comfortable talking to them. • The school helps children to become more mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework is inappropriate. • They are not kept informed well enough about how well children are progressing. • The range of activities outside lessons is insufficient.

The inspectors agree with the positive views of the parents; however, they disagree with some of the views of a minority of parents regarding homework, information on children's progress and the range of activities available outside lessons. Pupils receive sufficient but not excessive amounts of homework though the practice of setting regular homework is inconsistent. The information provided for parents and the opportunities provided for parents to discuss their children's progress are appropriate for children in reception to Year 6, but inspectors agree with parents that there are too few opportunities to discuss children's progress in the nursery. The range of activities available outside lessons is good, particularly for older children.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The 2000 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds show that:
 - pupils' performance in English, mathematics and science was in line with the national average and well above the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds.
2. Inspection judgements of the current Year 6 show that:
 - pupils' performance in English and mathematics is in line with the national average.
 - pupils' performance in science is above the national average.
3. The 2000 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds show that:
 - pupils' performance in reading was above the national average and well above the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds.
 - pupils' performance in writing was in line with the national average and well above the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds.
 - pupils' performance in mathematics was below the national average and above the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds.
4. Inspection judgements of the current Year 2 show that:
 - pupils' performance is in line with the national average in reading and science.
 - pupils' performance is below the national average in speaking and listening, writing and mathematics.
5. Inspection judgements concur with the standards in 2000 tests for eleven-year-olds in English and mathematics. The difference between the results of the national tests in science and the higher standards seen during the inspection reflect the successful introduction of a new scheme of work and the strong emphasis the school now places on practical enquiry and experimentation. The differences between inspection judgements and the results of the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2000 are attributable mainly to a lower attaining group of pupils in this year's Year 2 with a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs.
6. Analysis of pupils' performance over several years shows that girls attain significantly higher than boys in English, mathematics and science compared to the national average for boys and girls. However, the boys' lower attainment in comparison to girls can be traced back to their attainments at the age of seven. The group of eleven-year-olds who took the national tests in 2000 showed wide variations between the attainments of boys and girls at the age of seven in 1996. The steps taken by the school in the past have had a positive effect on boys' performance. From 1997 onwards in the national tests for seven-year-olds there were no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls and in the current Year 6 no significant differences are apparent between the attainment of boys and girls.
7. Standards of pupils' attainments since the last inspection have improved significantly and consistently in English, mathematics and science in the national tests for seven and eleven-year-olds. The improvement in the standards of eleven-year-olds in English, mathematics and science has exceeded the national trend since 1996. The school's realistic targets for 2000 in English and mathematics were surpassed significantly. It is on course to meet this year's much more demanding targets.
8. Inspection judgements show that:
 - pupils' overall achievement is good relative to their prior attainment.
9. The achievement of children in the nursery and reception classes (the foundation stage) is good. Children make good progress in all the areas of learning for children in the foundation stage; however, because of their well below average attainment on entry to the nursery, they are still below the standards expected of children in the reception year in all areas of learning.
10. Pupils' achievements in Years 1 and 2 (Key Stage 1) are satisfactory in the development of the skills of speaking and listening, and in writing and mathematics. Pupils achieve well in reading and science as a result of good teaching and an effectively planned curriculum. Pupils' achievements between the

ages of seven and eleven (Key Stage 2) are good in the development of the skills of speaking and listening, and in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to practise their skills of speaking and listening through discussions in all subjects; the strengths of teaching and curricular guidance are maintained in science and the good implementation and teaching of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is having a positive impact on pupils' attainments in English and mathematics. However, pupils could do even better in writing at both key stages, particularly average and higher attainers.

11. In information and communication technology pupils reach national expectations by the age of seven and eleven and their achievements are good; however, insufficient use is made of information communication technology to support learning in other subjects, particularly English, mathematics and science. Literacy and numeracy skills are underdeveloped in other subjects.
12. Pupils' achievements are good in design and technology, geography, history, physical education and religious education; in these subjects pupils reach an average standard by the age of eleven and achieve well in relation to their below average attainment on entry to Year 1. It was not possible to make a judgement on pupils' attainment and achievements in art and design and music.
13. Overall, pupils make good progress in their learning at all levels of attainment though higher and average attainers do not do as well as they could in writing. Pupils have too few opportunities to consolidate their learning in literacy lessons by writing a complete piece of work for a particular purpose or by consolidating and extending writing skills in other subjects of the curriculum such as science, geography and history. In addition insufficient attention is given to the teaching and learning of handwriting.
14. Higher attainers, pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make good gains in skills, knowledge and understanding so that by the age of eleven they achieve appropriately in relation to their age and prior level of attainment in most subjects. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language benefit from working with specialist teachers or trained support staff in small groups and this has a positive effect on their learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. The quality of pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal attributes reported in the last inspection report has been maintained. Throughout the school pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They are interested in their work and are pleased to discuss with visitors what they are doing and share their activities, such as number sequences in numeracy. Most pupils respond positively in class and take part enthusiastically in the range of activities offered. In lessons pupils try hard to answer questions. There are, however, a number of young pupils who have a restricted vocabulary and lack the confidence to explain their thoughts and ideas. This causes them to be passive in lessons unless specifically involved by the teacher. Most teachers are aware of their difficulties and work hard to encourage all pupils to participate in the lessons. Pupils usually settle well to work quickly and get on with the task given to them. Older pupils work independently when the teacher is talking to the other groups.
16. Behaviour in and around the school is good. Pupils of all ages clearly understand what is expected of them and this has a positive impact on their behaviour. In lessons pupils' behaviour is very good. They listen attentively to their teachers and other adults. They do as they are asked readily and comply with the school's expectation very well. Consequently, most lessons are calm and controlled with the transition from different parts of lessons, such as from the carpet to tables during literacy lessons, taking place calmly and efficiently. When they are out of school on educational visits, such as the geography field trip to Marsden Bay, their behaviour is excellent. They are polite and respectful to adults. Entry into assembly is calm and controlled and pupils show a high level of respect for the proceedings. There is a noticeable respect for property in lessons, where pupils take good care of books and equipment, and around the playground where there is very little litter. Behaviour in the playground is satisfactory, albeit boisterous, but this overflows into the dining hall making eating lunch a noisy experience. There is no evidence of bullying and there have been no exclusions recently.
17. Relationships between pupils, and between adults and pupils are very good. The quality of relationships is very constructive and has a strong impact on pupils' learning. Pupils with special

educational needs and those learning English as an additional language are integrated effectively into the life of the school. Pupils are learning to work well in groups. Pupils show respect for other people's opinions and feelings in assemblies and discussions. Consequently, lessons take place in a caring and supportive atmosphere where all contributions are valued by adults and pupils alike.

18. Pupils' attendance rates are broadly in-line with those found nationally. The incidence of unauthorised absence is below that found in other schools. Registration is completed quickly which enables lessons to start promptly. The regular and punctual attendance of the overwhelming majority of pupils positively impacts on their learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. The quality of teaching is good. It is good or better in 68 per cent of lessons and very good or better in 16 per cent. In 32 per cent of lessons the quality of teaching is satisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The quality of teaching is good overall in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, information and communication technology and physical education.
20. The quality of teaching and learning for children in both the nursery and reception classes is good. Teachers have a good understanding of how children learn. This has been maintained since the last inspection, although assessment on entry to the nursery class to inform planning has improved. Teachers are skilful in their very good management of the children. Trusting relationships are forged with the children so that early learning experiences are positive and effective; for example, nursery children plan their chosen activity with the teacher and as a result of painstaking encouragement begin to talk haltingly about their choice. The reception teachers have skilled methods of reminding children of ways to answer questions and so whole class discussions are very constructive. Lessons are thoroughly planned for groups and individuals, resulting in work that is well matched to children's needs. Teachers and support staff work closely together during lessons to assess the children's achievements and these are used effectively to plan the next stage of learning. When teachers are left without the additional support of qualified staff there are important opportunities missed to develop communication and language skills in each area of learning. Examples occurred during practical tasks such as baking which could be used to develop early scientific understanding about how ingredients change or during art when painting techniques could be discussed.
21. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is good overall. In a Year 1 literacy lesson the very good planning ensured that tasks were well matched to pupils' needs. Basic skills were taught through small steps so that learning was consolidated and constantly reinforced. Learning resources in a very good science lesson on completing circuits in Year 2 supported the pupils' full involvement in very well presented tasks. On occasions in Year 2, such as in physical education, the teacher did not establish acceptable noise levels from the outset and this initially distracted the pupils and reduced the effectiveness of the teaching.
22. The quality of teaching of the older pupils is good overall with examples of very good and excellent teaching. In the best teaching very detailed planning for each level of attainment was linked with very good questioning to continually challenge pupils' thinking. In addition, very good resources supported tasks and maintained pupils' interest effectively, such as in a numeracy lesson in Year 3. Excellent use, in a Year 5 physical education lesson, of an individual pupil's high quality demonstration resulted in a more polished performance from the rest of the pupils. Other features of the high quality lessons seen were very good communication of the learning objectives shared with the pupils at the start of lessons, excellent organisation and management of pupils and tasks and the consistent use of key vocabulary and questions to extend, challenge and assess learning. In addition very good relationships with the pupils meant that they were motivated and confident, willing to listen and engrossed so that very productive learning took place.
23. Teachers' good subject knowledge provides effective learning through tasks well matched to pupils' attainment. In a very good numeracy lesson in Year 3 very detailed planning based securely on the national strategy supported an effectively paced lesson where pupils were challenged to think for themselves. In a Year 1 literacy lesson teachers' very good management and relationships with the pupils and their skilled awareness of how to develop their basic knowledge of letter sounds meant that the pupils tried very hard to persevere with the tasks set.

24. Opportunities for consolidating and extending literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects are underdeveloped, though the development of the skills of speaking and listening for older pupils is generally effective. For example, in a Year 3 history lesson about the Anglo-Saxons, the teacher used dictionaries well to encourage the children to find the difference between the terms 'invade' and 'settle'. While in contrast, in a Year 5 religious education lesson there were some missed opportunities to extend pupils' skills of speaking and listening through the development of their contributions. In a physical education lesson the very good use of key vocabulary meant questions were effectively focused and helped the pupils to understand how to position their body weight in a balance. The effort, concentration and perseverance of the pupils as a result produced a higher quality performance. When teachers miss opportunities to introduce specific terms associated with subjects this affects progress; for example, in a history lesson the teacher gave no explanation about why the term 'Victorian' is used to describe a school and this limited the pupils' knowledge of significant dates and eras.
25. Homework is used satisfactorily to consolidate learning at school particularly in English to develop early reading skills; however, homework is inconsistently set to develop writing skills throughout the school. Teachers do not make good use generally of evaluative comments to support progress, particularly in English. Often teachers' quality and style of handwriting does not set an appropriate model for pupils.
26. Overall, the quality of teaching of pupils who have special needs is satisfactory. However, when these pupils are withdrawn for specialist support the teaching is good, mainly due to the very tight structure and focus of the work on the pupils' individual difficulties. Consequently, in these lessons pupils make good gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding in literacy and in the awareness of their behaviour. The majority of pupils on the register of special needs have difficulties in these two areas. In the lessons where pupils are taught literacy in their own class the learning is satisfactory and, although teachers use classroom support staff effectively to work with the pupils with special education needs in group or independent activities, their role is underdeveloped in many whole class sessions. This reflects the planning that makes insufficient use of the individual education plans to provide specific activities that build upon and develop the work done in the supported sessions.
27. The specialist teaching of pupils for whom English is an additional language is very good. The teacher has a thorough understanding of pupils' language development in English and prepares lessons which build on class work and are, at the same time, very well focused on individual pupils' language needs. The quality and variety of activities maintain pupils' interest and motivation. The very good relationships established between the pupils and the teacher make lessons enjoyable and pupils try hard, making very good progress in individual sessions. They carry their enthusiasm over into class lessons and achieve well overall.

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

28. The school has a well-balanced curriculum, which provides good opportunities for pupils, including those with special educational needs, to achieve well. Teachers make good use of nationally recommended schemes of work in all subjects. These ensure that each aspect of the curriculum is taught in appropriate depth and detail, and pupils develop their understanding in a systematic way; an example of this is in science, where pupils' ability to plan and carry out scientific experiments has improved significantly since the last inspection as a result of the new scheme of work. Similarly, teachers have worked hard to implement the national programmes for literacy and numeracy and the impact of these programmes is being seen in rising standards across the school. Nevertheless, there is still further work to be done to raise standards of writing in all subjects.
29. Since the school was last inspected the provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved and it is now good. The school has established a comprehensive policy that is reflected in the everyday provision. There are individual education plans for each pupil on the register of special needs. The cornerstone of the provision is the use of small group teaching for literacy. The targets in the individual education plans are generally specific short-term learning goals and these are used effectively by the specialist support teacher as the basis for these lessons; however, outside these sessions, the targets are not used sufficiently. Members of staff provide positive support for pupils with special educational needs in lessons, although there are occasions in lessons when classroom

assistants are inefficiently deployed to assist pupils' learning, particularly when all the class is being taught together by the teacher.

30. The school makes good provision for activities such as clubs, school visits and visitors into school to enrich pupils' learning. Some of these events take place after school, and older pupils take part in an annual residential trip to support their work in science, geography and physical education. Pupils are encouraged to enter competitions and tournaments, often with great success. During the week of inspection three pupils received their prizes from a national writing competition, and the school was proud to learn that their winning entries would be published on the Internet. The provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory, based on a scheme used throughout the school.
31. The school has given careful thought to ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunities and access to the curriculum, particularly in the mixed age class in Years 3 and 4. A few parents report that they do not like this arrangement but inspectors feel that the school is making the best provision it can with the resources available to it. By the time they reach Year 6, all pupils will have had similar experiences across the subjects.
32. A strength of the curriculum offered by the school is the provision it makes for pupils' personal development. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good. Teachers make very good use of school assemblies to develop pupils' spiritual awareness and encourage them to reflect on the world around them, to learn stories from other faiths and to develop their understanding of right and wrong. Assemblies taken by the headteacher are calm and orderly occasions, which make a very strong contribution to the school's positive ethos. On these occasions pupils' achievements are celebrated and pupils are encouraged to think about how their actions affect others. There is a clear code of behaviour. It is used very effectively to promote moral and social development and pupils have a say in how it should be applied in their own classrooms. Older pupils develop their social awareness through good opportunities to help the school run smoothly; for example, they look after younger ones at playtime, take messages around the school and help with the delivery of fruit to each classroom. Pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils are given many opportunities to learn about their own culture through visits to places of interest such as a local museum and through visitors who come into school to share their expertise in music and the arts. The religious education curriculum and assemblies offer good opportunities for pupils to learn about other faiths but there are fewer opportunities in other subjects for pupils to recognise and value the contribution of other cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. There is a supportive and positive ethos in school that promotes pupils' interest in their learning and, as a result, influences pupils' good attitudes to their work and their behaviour. Appropriate notices around the school provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on the positive impact good behaviour has on their own personal achievements and those of others. Members of staff further promote the need for pupils to be responsible for their own actions very well which enhances pupils' personal and social development. Parents strongly support the work the school does in ensuring that their children are able to enjoy school and in eradicating unacceptable or oppressive behaviour.
34. The school makes good use of the 'house point' scheme in Key Stage 2 which rewards pupils' good behaviour, good attitudes to work and personal achievements. Pupils value the points and are visibly pleased when they are awarded to them. The award of 'student of the week' to one pupil from each class which is celebrated in the whole school assembly further enhances pupils' personal and academic development. The school's 'Positive Playtimes' initiative has a positive impact upon pupils' overall behaviour. Resources such as balls, and skipping ropes and playground games markings enable pupils to play more constructively which helps to eliminate oppressive and unacceptable behaviour. The school maintains successfully the standards of pupils' overall good behaviour identified in the previous inspection report.
35. The impact of support for pupils with special educational needs in the classroom is positive. Members of the support staff have good relationships with the pupils and use this to encourage and guide the pupils. Training has enabled support staff to provide effective help for the pupils. They have a good awareness of the personal as well as the academic needs of their pupils helping to create a safe and secure environment for them. External services give effective help for pupils with specific difficulties by

conducting assessments and providing advice.

36. There is a culture of care in the school and pupils are well known to members of staff; however, the school's procedures for systematic and regular workplace risk assessments are insufficient. The headteacher and caretaker make termly checks around the school and accurately record any defects; however, these procedures do not include the recording of any remedial work or indicate that all required work has been completed. The conditions and facilities within all pupils' toilets are poor. There is insufficient involvement by the governing body to ensure that procedures for the regular monitoring and recording of health and safety issues are fully implemented.
37. There is a suitably trained and designated person responsible for child protection issues. There is an appropriate child protection policy which conforms to the local education authority's guidelines. In practice the policy is implemented satisfactorily; however, there has been no recent staff training on child protection procedures.
38. Procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' regular attendance are satisfactory. The school works efficiently in partnership with the education welfare service in dealing with the very few cases where pupils' attendance is unacceptable.
39. Procedures for promoting and monitoring pupils' personal development are good. Arrangements for monitoring the personal and social development of children in the nursery are good. Members of staff routinely monitor and record children's progress and use this information effectively in their daily activities. Through personal and social education programmes, the school prepares pupils well for the risks and dangers in life; for example, pupils in Year 6 recently visited a teaching centre where they witnessed fire, ambulance and lifeboat professionals demonstrating safety guidance and rescue techniques. This exemplary experience was later used to good effect by these pupils in a personal and social education lesson in which they were able to plan effective escape routes in the event of a house fire. The school teaches sex education to Year 6 pupils in lessons such as science. The subject is handled sensitively and carefully. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions and expect to be held accountable for any misdeeds. Pupils are actively and enthusiastically engaged in roles of responsibility within school and undertake duties such as returning registers, acting as door monitors and setting up equipment for use in assemblies.
40. Assessment procedures for checking pupils' academic progress have undergone a considerable and very effective restructuring in response to the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection. The assessment co-ordinator has implemented a rigorous system of tracking each pupil's progress throughout their time in school using assessment information gathered in the nursery and reception classes and the results of statutory tests in Year 2 and Year 6, together with additional information obtained from non-statutory tests and teacher assessments. This information enables realistic targets for pupils' achievement to be set for the following year. Teachers utilise this information and actively incorporate it into their planning. This is having a positive impact upon teaching and learning and, as a result, standards in English, mathematics and science have risen significantly since the previous inspection.
41. During termly meetings involving the headteacher, assessment and subject co-ordinators, information contained in portfolios of pupils' work in English and mathematics are scrutinised and compared to national standards. From this process, pupils are grouped by achievement into three levels of attainment from which a representative from each is specifically monitored. This monitoring ensures that these pupils and their associated cohort maintain the level of academic progress predicted as they move through the school.
42. The school has satisfactory procedures for identifying, recording and monitoring those pupils with special educational needs. The school's procedures comply with statutory requirements and ensure that these pupils make good progress overall. The pupils on the register of special needs have an individual education plan which is reviewed to a satisfactory time scale. These procedures ensure pupils' individual education plans remain appropriate and achievable.
43. Within the first few weeks in school, children who are under the age of five are assessed and individual profiles for each child are compiled. This is a good improvement since the last inspection which reported that children's attainment on entry was not recorded. Members of staff routinely monitor the

children's progress and use this information effectively in their planning. As a result, children make good progress in their acquisition of new skills, knowledge and understanding. Teachers pass on assessment information gathered during the time the children are in the nursery to colleagues in the reception class on a routine basis. This enables these staff to have good knowledge of pupils' levels of attainment to ensure continuity of teaching and learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. Parents are very pleased with the standards of education and teaching their children receive and the good progress they make. Their view that the behaviour of pupils in school is good is fully supported by inspection evidence. Parents state, rightly, that their children enjoy coming to school and feel safe and free from any bullying or oppressive behaviour.
45. Information provided by school for parents is satisfactory overall; however, there are a number of statutory required items of information absent or insufficient in the school prospectus and annual governors' report to parents.
46. The school provides three formal opportunities each year for parents to discuss their children's progress with staff in all classes except the nursery. Parents value these meetings and are pleased with the quality of information they receive. However, there are no similar arrangements for parents in the nursery which limits these parents' opportunities for visiting the school to view their child's work and discuss the progress they are making.
47. The school provides parents with their own meeting room in which they can meet informally and wait in comfort for their children; the room is well stocked with interesting and appropriate literature and pamphlets on a broad range of educational and health matters for parents' benefit. Parents assist regularly in school and provide valued support to teachers in the development of pupils' reading, communication and social skills. A group of parents have recently completed a ten-week course that has equipped them better to support the school's literacy initiatives.
48. Parents of children with special educational needs are kept satisfactorily informed about their children's progress. However, apart from the annual review meetings, parents are not sufficiently involved in the drawing up of appropriate individual education plans, nor are they fully informed about the progress their children are making to achieve agreed targets or provided with guidance as to how they can assist with their children's learning at home.
49. At the parents' meeting and in the questionnaires, parents raised concerns about the sufficiency or insufficiency of homework, particularly in Year 6. Inspection evidence confirms that overall the amount of homework set is appropriate though it is not set consistently by staff to develop writing skills.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. The headteacher and senior staff work very effectively together, sharing vision and educational direction for the all-round development of the school. The school's aims and values are reflected very well in its everyday life, such as the emphasis on valuing individuals, which is evident throughout the school. Pupils are encouraged to feel good about their own achievements and to respect the achievements of others. There is a good level of morale in the school community. Equality of opportunity is embedded in the school's practice. School management is good. The headteacher and senior staff work well together to develop the school's educational provision and they share a commitment to improvement. Members of the senior staff make significant contributions to the growth and development of the school. Their work is more structured, and therefore more effective, than at the time of the last inspection, representing a good level of improvement. The subject co-ordinators' role is well developed in English and mathematics, but is not yet developed sufficiently in other subjects. Pupils' progress and welfare are considered individually.
51. The governing body is well organised and effective. Governors take their responsibilities seriously, working closely together with the headteacher, providing support and monitoring the effectiveness of the school's work. The governing body gives clear direction to the development of the overall provision, a significant improvement since the last inspection. Individual governors take responsibility for subjects

or aspects, such as literacy or special educational needs, monitor the provision and make sure the governing body is kept up to date. Governors have a close understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, which guides their thinking for the future, such as in planning improvements in provision for information and communication technology. They monitor standards, such as looking at the results of the national tests, and set targets for improvement. The governing body has not ensured that all statutory requirements are met in relation to information in the prospectus, the annual governor report to parents and workplace risk assessment.

52. The senior members of staff analyse the results of the national tests to discover strengths and weaknesses in pupils' progress. They take action on this information, changing the provision to strengthen areas of weakness. This is effective in improving standards. The monitoring and development of teaching is beginning to promote consistency in the quality of teaching in English and mathematics. The action taken by the headteacher and senior staff in response to the last inspection report has brought about a good level of improvement in the school's provision and standards of attainment. The school is up-to-date in preparing for the introduction of performance management.
53. The school makes good use of financial resources. The minor recommendations made after a recent audit have been addressed. Funding for special educational needs is used well to give pupils good quality support. Since the last inspection the special needs co-ordinator has given a very clear direction to the development of the provision. There is a good policy that meets the requirements of the Code of Practice and clearly outlines for all staff the processes involved. Day-to-day management of the school's provision is very good. The administrative procedures are comprehensive and ensure that statutory requirements with regard to statements of special education needs are met. The part-time teacher for pupils learning English as an additional language provides very good individual support.
54. There are sufficient suitably qualified teachers to teach the full range of the National Curriculum. The team of teachers is strong. The provision for supporting and developing teachers new to the school is effective. The classroom support assistants provide good support to teachers and make a positive contribution to raising standards.
55. The building generally provides adequate accommodation; however, the size of the halls when used for physical education and whole school assemblies is limiting. In addition the size and condition of outside play area for the nursery and reception classes (the foundation stage) limits children's progress in creative and physical development. Many of the learning resources in the nursery and reception areas are ready for replacement and the reception teachers do not have sufficient classroom support for the further development of pupils' language and communication skills.
56. Externally, many of the school and boundary walls have been decorated in an imaginative way and significantly improve the external appearance of the school. Attractive playing fields and school gardens further enhance the appearance of the school and provide additional learning opportunities in support of pupils' personal and social development. Internally, the fabric of the school has been enriched with well presented examples of pupils' work covering a broad spectrum of the curriculum. The very good use of displays of pupils' work supports the school's aims and ethos in celebrating their successes.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

57. The school should improve the standard of pupils' writing*; to do this it will be necessary to undertake the following:
- Increase opportunities for pupils to write in different styles and for different purposes.
 - Provide more emphasis on teaching pupils how to structure and develop text.
 - Ensure the policy for marking is followed consistently.
 - Place more emphasis on the teaching of handwriting.
 - Improve the presentation and the quality of writing in all subjects by regular monitoring of written work.
 - Make more systematic use of homework to build on pupils' learning in lessons.
- (see paragraph numbers 10, 11, 13, 24, 25, 28, 49, 84, 87, 88, 90, 100, 106, 119, 121, 122, 145)
58. The school should improve further standards in the foundation stage (nursery and reception) through the following:
- Increase the quality and range of resources to enable teachers to enhance further children's communication and language development within all areas of the curriculum.
 - Improve the provision for creative and physical development in an outdoor environment.
 - Review the support teachers receive from classroom assistants in the reception classes.
 - Involve parents further in their children's learning in the nursery through providing them with formal opportunities, such as parent consultations, to discuss their children's progress and ways they can assist their learning.
- (see paragraph numbers 20, 46, 55, 63, 64, 67, 71, 76, 79, 81)
59. The governors should ensure that all statutory requirements are met in respect of workplace risk assessment and information in the prospectus and in the annual governor report to parents.
- (see paragraphs 36, 45, 51)
60. In addition to the key issues above the following less important weakness should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:
- The provision of more opportunities for pupils to use and practise their skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology in other subjects.
- (see paragraphs 11, 13, 24, 90, 100, 106, 119, 121, 122, 127, 130, 145)
- The review of the roles and responsibilities of subject co-ordinators in respect of systematically monitoring standards in their subjects.
- (see paragraphs 50, 116, 123, 145)

* This area for improvement had been identified already by staff and governors.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

82

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

68

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	15	52	32	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	16	316
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	117

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	86

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	9

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.0
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	24	23	47

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	22	23
	Girls	20	22	20
	Total	43	44	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (83)	94 (78)	91 (85)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	24	24
	Girls	20	20	22
	Total	43	44	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (73)	94 (83)	98 (88)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	14	18	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	11	9
	Girls	16	15	17
	Total	25	26	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (77)	81 (77)	81 (73)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	10	9
	Girls	16	15	16
	Total	24	25	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (77)	78 (79)	78 (75)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	1
Indian	8
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	0
White	260
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.2
Average class size	26.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.0

Total number of education support staff	1.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	34

Number of pupils per FTE adult	8.0
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999
	£
Total income	564278
Total expenditure	564903
Expenditure per pupil	1707
Balance brought forward from previous year	19998
Balance carried forward to next year	19373

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	350
Number of questionnaires returned	114

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	42	2	1	3
My child is making good progress in school.	43	49	4	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	27	65	4	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	19	54	16	4	7
The teaching is good.	37	52	8	2	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	50	19	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	42	51	3	3	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	42	1	2	1
The school works closely with parents.	27	52	14	4	3
The school is well led and managed.	29	53	9	4	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	32	57	4	3	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	14	36	19	14	17

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

61. Attainment on entry to the nursery is well below the level expected for children of their age. Children joining the reception classes have not all attended the nursery, and assessment information shows that attainment remains low, particularly in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and personal, social and emotional development. Children's achievements in the nursery and the reception classes are good, although children's attainments by the end of the reception year are still below those typically expected in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative and physical development.
62. Good improvements have been made since the last inspection in the assessment of the children in the nursery, particularly when they start the school; together with those assessments made in the reception year these form an effective record to track children's progress. Teachers use the assessment information well to ensure that children's learning experiences in relation to their prior attainments are built upon progressively.
63. The accommodation in the nursery and the reception classes has a number of limitations that affect learning, including lack of appropriate and readily accessible outdoor space and an inadequate range of equipment, particularly in the nursery. The lack of appropriate resources and suitable accommodation reduces the level and quality of provision for creative and physical development and the development of communication skills.
64. Teachers create attractive displays that support an effective learning environment and make the very best of the resources available; however, resources are in need of refurbishment and do not sufficiently support the development of communication and language skills, including imaginative activities. The level of staffing in the nursery is appropriate but staffing levels in the reception classes are insufficient to provide continuous qualified adult support and opportunities are missed to develop communication and language skills particularly when children work independently or in small groups.

Personal, social and emotional development

65. By the time children leave the reception class they have not reached the expected levels in personal, social and emotional development though they achieve well as a result of good teaching in the nursery and reception classes.
66. On entry to the nursery most children are very immature and do not communicate easily with unfamiliar adults. They do not join readily in the planned activities or speak to the adults or each other. Many children require constant support to take part in the interesting activities planned effectively by the staff, as they very often prefer to work alone. Members of staff know the children very well and plan activities carefully and intervene sensitively and effectively to develop confidence and interest.
67. In the reception classes members of staff build effectively on the good start in the nursery; for example, school routines are taught successfully and the children begin to take turns, share equipment and move around the classroom and school sensibly. Classroom management and organisation are very good in the reception classes. There are clear rules and routines and most children begin to select and use resources and activities independently; however the inappropriate height of sinks does not support the development of independence, examples being in washing paintbrushes or changing water during art activities. Higher attaining children begin to develop an awareness of the needs of others; for example, a group of children shared materials for cutting and sticking sensibly whilst other groups of children needed the help from adults to complete tasks. Although the children work sensibly in small groups this is due to the constant guidance of the adults.

Communication, language and literacy

68. In communication, language and literacy most children by the end of the reception year do not attain the expected levels though they make good progress in their learning because the teaching in the nursery and reception classes is good.
69. Children enter the nursery with poor language and communication skills; for example, only a few higher attaining children speak in simple sentences whilst many use single words or remain silent. Teachers plan opportunities effectively to develop skills of speaking and listening and early reading and writing. Most children choose an activity to develop their language skills but they have little vocabulary or confidence to form a descriptive sentence in role play; for example, a small group of children dressed up in Santa Claus outfits and delivered presents although they needed much prompting to talk about what they were doing and why. On most occasions adults need to use many prompts to develop a simple conversation. Teachers read stories well to children and work very effectively to engage interest, and to encourage concentration and participation. Questions are used effectively to help the children to understand stories. Generally a few answer eagerly, although at a very basic level, whilst most children listen passively. Few children can recall events at the beginning of the story. Planning to encourage early writing and reading skills is thorough.
70. Useful assessments of the children's progress are passed onto the reception teachers so that future learning builds on the skills already developed in the nursery. As a result a few higher attaining children begin to recognise words, read and write simple repetitions of words and write some initial sounds of the alphabet. Some higher attaining children can read a few simple sentences made from several words although others read one or two-word sentences hesitantly and with much prompting. Many lower attaining children still need support to talk and to tell a story although they show great interest when trying to read simple sentences from a book the children have made themselves. Most children demonstrate perseverance and interest in reading and writing because of the teachers' thorough planning. Effective management of the children and good organisation ensure that small groups of children receive tasks that are well matched to their prior attainments. Only a few parents actively help their children at home, such as learning key words or listening to their children read, and as a result the children's literacy development benefits greatly and progress is more rapid.
71. Members of staff plan together effectively to encourage reading, writing and the development of the skills of speaking through a range of formal and practical tasks. Sometimes at those crucial times when curiosity and interest need to be harnessed to develop the children's limited conversations, opportunities are missed because of the absence of regular informed adult support; for example, whilst experimenting in the water.

Mathematical development

72. In mathematical development most children achieve standards below those normally expected by the end of the reception year, though achievement is good relative to prior attainment. This area of learning is taught well through many practical tasks. Members of staff plan carefully and make thorough assessments of early mathematical understanding.
73. In the nursery most children's mathematical language and understanding is very limited and the teacher and the nursery nurse ensure that each area of learning provides opportunities for mathematical vocabulary to be developed such as in counting, colour and in shape and size games or finding and making simple patterns. In a baking activity, for example, the children, with support, counted the number of spoonfuls of flour and sugar needed in the recipe or played a shape game with an adult to deepen their understanding of shape and colour. Most children lack confidence and concentration during these activities and although the staff work extremely hard to develop mathematical understanding the children have very limited language and communication skills. Help from adults is given consistently so that activities are purposeful and the children made good progress as a result.
74. By the time the children enter the reception class they have gained more confidence and their concentration skills have greatly improved due to the good teaching and learning in the nursery. Children eagerly join in a counting game because the teacher uses exciting resources and by the end of a whole class session most, with support, can attempt to count beyond ten with confidence. Teaching and learning in the reception classes are good because members of staff plan together

effectively and run well-organised and managed numeracy lessons. Teachers are confident and knowledgeable about teaching basic numeracy skills and each session provides challenging tasks that are well matched to the children's prior understanding. Teachers use focused questions effectively to assess individual children's understanding during whole class and small group sessions and careful records are kept in order to assess progress before moving into Year 1. A few higher attaining children know that they need to add one more coin to the four they have already to make five pence. Lower attaining children can put the correct three coins in their purse to buy a toy. Most children have difficulty with deciding how much change they have left and need the teacher to support this activity. Higher attaining children begin to record their work and count, match and record sets of numbers to five though lower attaining children still need support in this activity and have difficulty in putting a set of bears of different sizes in the correct order.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

75. Standards in knowledge and understanding of the world are below those typically expected by the end of the foundation stage. The quality of teaching is good and the children achieve well in relation to their prior attainment as a result of experiences in the nursery and the reception classes being planned effectively in order to attract children's interest and curiosity and to stimulate learning; for example, in the nursery the teacher joined in with the children's role-play as they pretended to be Santa Claus or the fairy on the Christmas tree. Although most children's contributions were limited due to poor communication skills, they were encouraged to learn more about the traditions associated with Christmas and concentrated on the activity for lengthy periods of time. Planning includes exciting opportunities, such as a visit to a local pantomime or listening to a visitor talking about road safety.
76. In the reception class the children extended their understanding and built on previous experiences when they made Christmas pictures; for example, a higher attainer deepened his understanding about time as he was encouraged by the adult to discuss Santa's visit on Christmas Eve. A lower attainer was very proud of his picture but was unable to talk about the special outfit Santa wore without prompts from the adult. Effectively planned activities provide opportunities for children to make choices and select their own activities and resources, such as to control a computer program, to 'dress the teddy' or to paint a picture. Early scientific experiences are supported well by activities such as baking when a group of lower attaining children concentrated very well as they made biscuits. Volunteer support is used effectively for some practical work as the nursery nurse works with other classes as well as the reception class. The children listened carefully as the parents used specific vocabulary such as rolling, turning and flattening to help the children to manipulate the dough. Sometimes opportunities to develop understanding further are missed; for example, it was not pointed out to the children that ingredients change when mixed and cooked. The children in this group could not recall the activity or name the ingredients although they had tried very hard and behaved well and clearly enjoyed the task. Most of the children need support in these practical experiences, and when informed adults are on hand to encourage communication and discussion, the children made good progress.

Physical and creative development

77. In physical development and in creative development children do not reach the level expected by the time they complete the reception year. The quality of teaching is good. Children's achievements are satisfactory overall though they could achieve more as teachers have insufficient opportunities to plan outdoor activities because of the inadequacies of resources and the limited suitable outdoor accommodation.
78. In the nursery, teachers provide the children with a variety of opportunities for physical and creative development during indoor, rather than outdoor, situations. Within the limits of the outdoor space and resources the children begin to move with confidence, control and co-ordination although the area is small and restricts what the children can do, such as when using the wheeled toys. Opportunities for imaginative play or paired or collaborative play are minimal, as members of staff are too heavily involved in managing the safe use of the resources in the small space. Despite the restrictions the children are sensible and listen very carefully as the teacher or nursery nurse explains clearly the importance of safe play.
79. By the time the children move to the reception classes many are confident to climb up large indoor equipment and jump from a height although they do not land correctly. In the reception classes higher

attaining children notice the change in their heart rate after running and jumping in a 'warm up' session. Lessons are well planned, brisk and challenging, although there are some missed opportunities to develop correct landings and key vocabulary associated with gymnastic skills, as the teacher has no additional support during formal physical education lessons. A number of higher attaining children are on target to attain the expected level by the end of the reception year. Other effectively planned activities are taught well and the children persevere with tasks that support discussion about choice of materials, such as careful cutting and sticking or joining construction kits to follow a plan. Assessments of children's attainments are recorded carefully and used to plan further work in both the nursery and the reception classes so that the children gain in confidence and handle tools and equipment safely with increasing control.

80. In creative development members of staff plan thoroughly to support this area of learning although only the higher attaining children produce work that shows developing detail. In the nursery the higher attaining children concentrate quite well when painting pictures although the pictures themselves are very immature. Although members of staff encourage the children to talk about their pictures, few bear much resemblance to the subjects discussed. Most choose colour randomly when painting independently although the children are quite absorbed with the results. By the time they move to the reception classes higher attaining children can paint three-dimensional models that they have made quite accurately although they still require adult guidance to do so. Lower attainers still require support and have some difficulty manipulating brushes. Where adult support in small groups is available the quality of the children's work improves further; for example, the children were engrossed with the changing colours and patterns in a finger painting session and concentrated carefully because the teacher helped them to express and communicate their ideas. A small group of higher attaining children worked independently on creating a patchwork elephant. They thought carefully about their choice of colours before cutting and using the glue quite precisely to produce a pleasing result. Similarly in singing activities the children begin to understand the importance of joining in sensibly together, try hard to follow the words and keep in time to the music.
81. The co-ordinator for early years together with the early years staff, has worked successfully to plan the new curriculum for the foundation stage. Termly plans have been thoroughly discussed and revised to reference each small step of learning. Careful assessments made in the nursery and the reception classes are reviewed regularly to inform future targets for learning. Parents are encouraged to become involved in their children's learning and a reading diary includes targets to help them. Opportunities for parents to discuss their children's development and to share the individual profiles compiled for each child by the nursery staff are largely informal which is rightly a concern to some parents who are unable to visit the school during the day.

ENGLISH

82. Provision for English has improved significantly since the last inspection and standards of attainment have risen considerably during the last two years. Pupils are now achieving well, in relation to prior attainment, including pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language.
83. In the 2000 national test for eleven-year-olds, pupils' performance is in line with the national average. Their performance is well above average when compared with pupils in similar schools. The trend over the last four years is rising more rapidly than the national trend, particularly during the last two years. There are differences between the attainment of boys and girls by the age of eleven. Girls do better than boys; however, when their results are compared with the results they achieved at the age of seven, boys have made very good progress and girls have made exceptional progress. Overall, pupils' achievement, in relation to their prior performance, is good throughout the school.
84. Inspection evidence shows Year 6 pupils' overall attainment in English is again in line with the national average; however, pupils' performance in reading is above average whereas in writing it is below average. No significant differences are apparent between the performance of boys and girls.
85. In the 2000 national tests for seven-year-olds, pupils' performance in reading was above the national average. Pupils' performance in writing was in line with the national average. When compared to similar schools, pupils' performance is well above average in both reading and writing. This shows considerable improvement since the last inspection. Analysis of the most recent test results for seven-year-olds shows no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.

86. Inspection evidence shows that, in the present Year 2, pupils' overall performance in English is below that expected for their age. Whilst pupils' performance in reading is in line with the national average, performance in writing and in speaking and listening is below. Standards have fallen from last year because the present Year 2 class has significantly more pupils with special educational needs. Most of the pupils with special educational needs in this class are boys.
87. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the National Literacy Strategy so pupils make good gains in reading. A substantial proportion of pupils' writing lacks fluency through insufficient practice. By the age of seven, pupils' performance in reading is in line with that expected for their age. They know how to go about reading new words by using their knowledge of letter sounds and blends, looking at pictures, and using the context of the story. They are developing an appropriate understanding of how texts are structured. The higher attaining pupils are developing appropriate library skills. By the age of eleven, attainment in reading is above the national average. A good proportion of pupils read at a higher level. Pupils read a good range of texts with enthusiasm and talk readily about their favourite authors. Most show a good level of insight into characters' motivation and behaviour. They readily compare and contrast texts using elements such as style, theme, setting, and character. Most pupils make use of reference books, libraries and the Internet to search for information.
88. Lesson planning is clear and in line with the National Literacy Strategy so that pupils are tackling work at the right level for their age. Teachers plan activities that are well matched to pupils' needs so that the majority work productively. By the age of seven, pupils' performance in writing is below that expected for their age. Pupils' writing is generally underdeveloped. A significant proportion of pupils' work lacks a proper sentence structure and pieces of writing are too short for pupils to develop either a logical sequence or an appropriate structure to the text. Pupils' attainment in spelling and punctuation is generally satisfactory. Most pupils' handwriting is not well formed or consistent in size. By the age of eleven, attainment in writing is below the national average. The higher attaining pupils write with interest and sensitivity, developing and sustaining their ideas through the text. They use punctuation correctly, such as speech marks, commas, question and exclamation marks. However, many pupils work slowly on writing tasks and do not extend their writing well enough. Writing is not well enough developed in purpose and organisation to reach the standard expected for their age. Throughout the school insufficient use is made of homework to consolidate and extend work done at school. The marking of written work is inconsistent and often does not include sufficient evaluative comments. Teachers plan too few opportunities for pupils to develop their writing in other subjects. By the age of eleven most pupils' handwriting is fluent and legible, but not always well formed or consistently joined; teachers in junior classes do not show a sufficiently high standard of handwriting on teaching boards and in books. Standards by the age of eleven of spelling are generally sound and pupils make frequent use of dictionaries.
89. Teachers build successfully opportunities for speaking and listening into their lessons. This contributes to pupils achieving well, reaching expected standards by the time they leave the school. Pupils enjoy the lessons and are keen to take part in discussion. Most teachers keep a brisk pace to their lessons so pupils are involved and responsive. By the age of seven, pupils' attainment is below expectations in speaking and listening. A significant number of pupils are talkative in class but do not listen well enough to the teacher and to each other. They show a satisfactory understanding of the main points of what is being said only when working individually with an adult. Most pupils speak out readily, using an appropriate tone of voice, but use a restricted vocabulary in their speech. By the age of eleven, pupils' attainment is in line with the national expectation in speaking and listening. Pupils express themselves clearly and speak confidently. They are aware of the needs of the listener, adding detail as necessary, such as when talking about their preferences in literature. Pupils listen carefully, in a discussion about play scripts, for example, and are ready to respond to each other. They make appropriate use of Standard English when speaking with adults, adapting their speech appropriately to the situation.
90. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support in literacy and make good progress. Pupils learning English as an additional language receive very good teaching from a specialist teacher and achieve well. There are insufficient planned opportunities for pupils to write in other subjects though the skills of speaking and listening and of reading are generally appropriately developed.

91. The National Literacy Strategy is well established and is taught consistently throughout the school. The monitoring of teaching and learning in the subject has done much to improve the overall quality of teaching and make practice more consistent. Procedures for assessing pupils' work are effective and teachers' knowledge and understanding of pupils' learning is generally good. The monitoring of individual pupils' progress through the school tracking system is a recent initiative; pupils who need extra help can be easily identified through this system and extra provision made for them.

MATHEMATICS

92. The results of the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2000 show that by the time pupils leave the school their performance was in line with the national average and are well above the average achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In the tests for seven-year-olds in 2000 pupils' performance was below the national average though above average compared with that of pupils in similar schools. Inspection judgements agree with the results of the national tests. This represents good achievement for pupils, including those with special educational needs and pupils learning English as an additional language, who enter the nursery with attainment in mathematics at a level which is well below average.
93. At the time of the last inspection the performance of seven-year-olds in the national tests was well below the national average. Since then it has improved sharply and is now just below the national average. The performance of eleven-year-olds at the time of the last inspection was in line with the national average and increased significantly during the following two years to match the improving trend seen nationally. Girls outperformed boys in the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 1999 and 2000; however, the boys who took the tests in 2000 built on their performance, reported when they were seven, at a faster rate than the girls. The eleven-year-old boys who took the test in 2000 achieved very well in relation to their prior attainment whilst girls' achievements were good. No significant differences in the attainments of boys and girls are apparent in the present group of pupils at Year 6.
94. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall; it is satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' attitudes to work and their behaviour improve as they progress through the school; seven to eleven-year-olds particularly show above average standards of interest and behaviour and this is reflected in their good level of achievement at all levels of attainment.
95. In Years 1 and 2 the teaching of basic skills is effective. Pupils gain a good understanding of mathematical language and of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of numbers up to 20. By the age of seven most pupils understand and use language connected to subtraction, such as 'difference', 'subtract' and 'less than'. Higher attainers mentally halve numbers up to 20 quickly and accurately whilst lower attainers and those pupils with special educational needs split objects into two sets and record the results. Most pupils are interested and well motivated especially when presented with interesting activities such as playing a game of 'bingo' in order to practise additions and subtractions. However, in some lessons teachers have to remind pupils frequently about their behaviour during whole class teaching at times when pupils lack concentration and become fidgety.
96. Classroom assistants help lower attainers and pupils with special educational needs effectively to take a full part in small group activities though, too often, they are not deployed efficiently during occasions when the teacher is working with the whole class. Teachers share lesson objectives with pupils well and this enables them to know what is expected of them. This happened in a lesson to develop pupils' understanding of halves. Lower attainers drew around shapes and with help split these into two halves whilst higher attainers split a range of shapes into halves by folding. The teacher extended the work of the higher attainers well to consider quarters but when the average attainers completed their work on halves quickly the same opportunities to extend their understanding of fractions was not given to these pupils.
97. In Years 3 to 6 teachers' planning is effective and based well upon the National Numeracy Strategy; for example, in a very good lesson in Year 3 there was very detailed planning for all levels of attainment based securely on the national strategy. In this lesson a pacy mental oral session with good prompts and tips to develop pupils' range of mental strategies enabled pupils to think for themselves as they counted forward and backwards in tens from given two-digit numbers. The level of challenge and learning resources were well matched to individuals' prior attainment; for example, boards with numbers

up to 100 assisted the learning of lower attainers very well. The teacher had very effective strategies for managing pupils' behaviour and response which ensured that pupils were fully involved in the lesson and worked productively.

98. In a very good lesson in Year 6 pupils developed very good strategies for mental calculations through plenty of challenging questioning and explanations from the teacher. Pupils used effectively individual small white boards and marking pens to record answers that enabled the teacher to check pupils' understanding efficiently. The teacher had very good strategies for maintaining high levels of pupils' concentration and as a result pupils put a lot of effort into their work. Pupils deepened their understanding of multiplication by 10 and 100. They knew multiplying by 10 involved moving the digits one place to the left and the teacher explained very carefully, and made more understandable to pupils, why adding a nought when multiplying by ten was incorrect terminology. Pupils were very well prepared for group tasks and solved written problems of increasing complexity quickly and efficiently; this enabled the teacher to give very effective help to pupils with special educational needs. Higher attainers answered difficult written problems accurately using their skills of multiplication and division. Average attainers answered progressively more challenging calculations using addition, subtraction, multiplication and division as appropriate; those pupils who completed their worksheets quickly and correctly were given opportunities to extend their learning by starting to work through the higher attainers' worksheet. Lower attainers were challenged appropriately by similar work to others involving single digits and less complex calculations.
99. Where the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory for older pupils there is a balance of strengths and weaknesses; for example, a lesson observed at Year 6 reflected these features. The teacher introduced effectively the relationship between addition and subtraction when calculating, by starting with single-digit and two-digit numbers before moving on to larger numbers. The pace of the lesson was slow and a few pupils were quite lethargic and lacked concentration. The teacher organised small group work well so that higher and lower attainers could work together. Higher attainers assisted lower attainers patiently and competently; these pupils gained confidence and by the end of the lesson could work out relationships between a set of numbers on their own whilst higher attainers developed an increased understanding by the challenge of having to explain to others. Most pupils were able to calculate $1002 - 250$ given $1001 - 250 = 751$, but all except the highest attainers floundered on calculating $1001 - 249$, which the teacher identified and then clarified pupils' understanding appropriately.
100. Teachers' planning to use mathematics in other subjects is limited; for example, examination of pupils' work in science, design and technology and geography showed few examples of mathematical skills being used or developed. Literacy skills are not practised sufficiently in the subject; for example, teachers' writing on the teaching board and in the books of the older pupils is usually inappropriately printed rather than joined script, or a mixture of both within sentences, which results in pupils printing instead of joining their writing. The use of information and communication technology is underdeveloped to practise basic skills and presentation of graphs, though recently the school has begun to use, in a limited way, new software to enable pupils to consolidate their learning of number operations and to check their rate of success.
101. The leadership and management of the subject are good and have supported the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy effectively. The co-ordinator has worked productively alongside the headteacher and local authority advisers to monitor pupils' work and teachers' planning as well as having some opportunities to work with teachers in their classrooms. The school has prioritised its initiatives well since the last inspection resulting in improved standards.

SCIENCE

102. Standards in science are good and by Year 6 pupils are attaining standards that are above the levels expected nationally in all four areas of the subject. In the national test for eleven-year-olds in 2000 pupils were in line with the national average, but there has been steady year-by-year improvement over the past three years and pupils are on course to do even better this year. In the 2000 tests girls outperformed boys though significant difference between boys and girls in the current Year 6 is not apparent. This represents very good achievement for most pupils, including those with special educational needs and pupils learning English as an additional language, considering pupils enter Year 1 with a knowledge and understanding of the world that is below that expected for their age. There are

several factors that have contributed to the improvement in science since the last inspection, one of which has been the introduction of a scheme of work that places strong emphasis on practical scientific enquiry and experimentation. The subject co-ordinator is very well qualified to lead the subject and his hard work has been another significant factor in the improved standards. He has analysed results of national tests to identify areas of weakness and ensures that teachers know what to concentrate on in their teaching.

103. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Some very good features of teaching are evident in practical lessons. Teachers use a wide range of good quality resources to ensure that all pupils are purposefully involved in the activities. Pupils in Year 2 who are learning about electric circuits find out by trial and error how to construct a simple circuit with a battery to make a bulb light up. They can record what they have done with simple drawings and discuss their work using the correct scientific vocabulary. Work in their books shows that they can sort food into healthy and unhealthy groups and give more than one example of how human beings change as they grow.
104. Teachers take care over how pupils are grouped, so that all can have success with the practical tasks, and learn from each other. This practical group work develops pupils' social skills very effectively. This was seen in a Year 1 lesson on what makes shiny objects shine. Pupils took turns to shine the torch into their blackout boxes onto sparkly and non-shiny objects. They were fully engrossed in their task and behaviour was exemplary as a result. Pupils' behaviour is generally very good, because they find the subject so interesting. They want to learn more, and concentrate for extended periods on their practical activities.
105. Teachers' planning is good and uses a wide variety of methods to maintain pupils' enthusiasm for the subject. Lessons are interesting and teachers strike the fine balance between leading pupils to expected conclusions and allowing them to find out for themselves. Pupils in Year 6 are given many opportunities to develop enquiring minds and find things out for themselves. They can pose a scientific question, for example, 'Do different sugars dissolve at different rates?' and set about planning a fair test to find out. Pupils used a planning format to ensure they covered all the important steps in the procedure, but those who wanted to pursue their investigation from a different angle were encouraged to do so. In all lessons, teachers move around the classroom, supporting and guiding individuals and groups to help them achieve their best, move their learning on and deepen their understanding. They support pupils with special needs very well, but not all teachers expect enough of what the higher attaining pupils should achieve in the time available.
106. Aspects of teaching that require some improvement are the quality of pupils' written work, teachers' marking, the development and use of numeracy skills and the use of information and communication technology. The presentation of work in the majority of classes in Years 3 to 6 is unsatisfactory. Some diagrams are drawn without rulers and the labelling is untidy. Pupils' writing is simplistic and few give sufficient detail when explaining reasons for their thinking or when recording their findings. With the notable exception of Year 6, where teachers' marking is very effective, other marking is often limited to words such as 'good' or 'well done', with few comments or suggestions as to how work could be improved. There is some use of information and communication technology and mathematics to support work in science; for example, a sensor was used to monitor noise in the classroom in a Year 5 topic on sound and line graphs to show changes in pupils' pulse rates. Nevertheless, these are areas for further development.

ART AND DESIGN

107. It was not possible to see any art lessons during the inspection and there was only a limited amount of pupils' work on display around the school, some of it from last year. Consequently, it was not possible to make firm judgements about standards or the quality of teaching and learning. Nevertheless, evidence gained from the work on display and from talking to pupils and staff about the subject indicates that art and design is an important feature of the school's work.
108. Attractive wall displays are evidence of a good range of two-dimensional work throughout the school. Pupils use an appropriate variety of materials such as fabric, paper, card, natural materials and clay to make pictures and collages in response to a range of starting points. Work from Year 2 pupils reflected an activity in which they had extended an extract from a landscape. They had used crayons

to blend in their own work with the original picture, matching colour and tone carefully and copying the original style. The standard of their finished work was good.

109. Some examples of very good paintings by last year's Year 5 pupils reflect the high quality of some of the work produced by the older pupils. These pupils had studied the work of impressionist painters and had responded with their own seascapes in a similar style. The work had been carried out over a series of lessons and demonstrated pupils' very close attention to detail, tone and brush effects. Pupils had taken great care over their choice of colour and technique. When questioned about their work they could explain carefully and with obvious pride how they had approached the task and what they would do to improve their work next time.
110. The subject makes a very important contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils learn to appreciate the wonder of the natural world through their close observation of natural objects and the work of landscape artists. Their work is displayed around the school, enhancing the school environment and developing pupils' aesthetic appreciation and pride in their work. Pupils in all classes use sketchbooks to help them develop ideas and refine their work, although some classes use these to greater effect than others. Where they are well used, for example in Year 6 where pupils had sketched athletes depicting a variety of body movements, rapid progress can be seen in pupils' drawing techniques and understanding of proportion.
111. The art co-ordinator keeps a useful photographic record of pupils' artwork which offers further evidence of a good range of work in a variety of media. There is less evidence of three-dimensional work and this is an area for further development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

112. Standards in design and technology are broadly similar to what is expected nationally for pupils by the age of seven and eleven. Teachers make good use of a recommended scheme of work that ensures that all aspects of the curriculum are taught well, and pupils put equal effort into designing, making and evaluating their product. This represents good achievement, especially for the younger pupils who enter school with limited experience of using tools and working imaginatively. Pupils with special needs receive appropriate guidance from teachers and classroom helpers, and make good progress as a result.
113. Standards of teaching and learning are good. Teachers explain the task and its purpose clearly and pupils know what they are aiming for by the end of the lesson. Pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject. They enjoy the practical activity and become fully absorbed in their projects. They share the tools and equipment sensibly and co-operate well in small groups. This happened in a lesson in Year 2 when pupils made a winding mechanism to raise and lower a toy and used tools such as bench hooks, saws, hole punches and scissors safely and with a level of skill and accuracy typical for their age. Pupils took great pride in their work and discussed sensibly with others how they could improve the model.
114. Teachers ensure that all resources are to hand and strike a good balance between instructing and giving pupils freedom to make decisions for themselves; for example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 made a package based on a net. They had studied commercial packages to ensure their net was drawn and stuck together accurately, but had choices about the graphics, text and fonts they would use to decorate their package. They used the specialist vocabulary confidently and were beginning to evaluate their work critically by comparing it with the commercial products.
115. Part of a lesson observed in Year 5 was evidence of a carefully structured project that pupils had worked on for several weeks. Pupils making moving toys had disassembled commercial toys to study the mechanisms and had built their own using wood, cams and dowel. These toys were well constructed and finished, and because the teacher had taken them stage by stage through the full process, pupils could talk knowledgeably about their work. In Year 6, pupils evaluated a variety of slipper designs, looking carefully at fastenings, material and suitability for purpose. Their analysis of commercial designs was detailed and reflected an appropriate focus on suitability although their own designs were simplistic. Their evaluations are perceptive and show good progress from work seen in Year 5, but their writing and presentation skills are below average and limit the quality of their recorded

work.

116. The subject co-ordinator works hard to maintain the subject's profile in the school and provides good advice and support for colleagues. Some teachers keep informal records of individual progress. However, systematic assessment in the subject is an area for development, as teachers generally expect the same from all pupils, and do not plan to extend and challenge the higher attaining pupils.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

117. At the time of the last inspection pupils' standards of attainment were in line with national expectations at seven years of age, but below expectations at eleven. Since then the school has wisely adopted nationally recommended schemes of work and the balance of the curriculum has improved so that pupils' attainment is now in line with national expectations at both seven and eleven years of age. As they move up the school, all pupils, including those with special needs and pupils learning English as an additional language, gain sound knowledge and understanding of the two subjects. They develop subject skills such as basic research and observation, satisfactorily.
118. The quality of the teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. The main strength of the teaching is the management of pupils. Explanations and instructions are clear and explicit so pupils understand what is expected of them and what they have to do. Consequently, in the majority of lessons pupils make sound progress in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding. In addition, this has a major impact upon pupils' behaviour and attitude in lessons. They are enthusiastic and interested in lessons and behave well. When pupils are taken out of school on visits, their behaviour is excellent. They listen very attentively to the guide and follow adults' instructions immediately.
119. By the age of seven, pupils have a secure a sense of chronology and can put specific events on a time-line. They know what took place during important events in British history such as the Gunpowder Plot and in the process they learn about the lives of some famous people such as Guy Fawkes and how they affected the present day. Through, for example, a visit to South Shields looking at the buildings, they develop their ability to compare how places and peoples lives change over time. In geography, pupils develop a secure knowledge of countries in the United Kingdom. They know where South Shields is in relation to other major cities in the United Kingdom, including the capital cities. Pupils in Year 1 begin to develop their mapping skills to put specific buildings and key features on a simple imaginary map. The topic featuring the travels of Captain Bear teaches pupils about different countries around the world and they compare different places and their climates and weather. Although opportunities to write and record their ideas are limited, they use appropriate vocabulary to explain their ideas.
120. As pupils move through from Year 3 to Year 6 they build on previously learnt basic skills in both history and geography so that by the age of eleven they have acquired satisfactorily the subjects' skills, knowledge and understanding of the subject. In history, pupils know about different periods, events and important people in the history of the United Kingdom and in the ancient world such as the Greece. For example, through a topic on the Romans they learn about the reasons for their invasion of Britain and the contribution they made to Britain such as good roads and organisation. Pupils develop their research skills well so that they can use a range of sources such as textbooks, photographs and artefacts to find evidence about specific topics. In geography, pupils build on the knowledge they acquired in Years 1 and 2 about weather and climate to develop a broader understanding of how the physical landscape, such as rivers and mountains affects where settlements are placed and how they are used by people. They learn about physical geographical features and the processes that effect the landscape, such as coastline erosion. In this aspect, the oldest pupils have a good understanding of specific physical features such as sea stacks and arches. When they are explaining their ideas orally or in their writing, they have a secure grasp of the appropriate vocabulary. When on fieldwork the majority of pupils have a good understanding of

mapping skills, so they can locate their position and specific features. Lower attaining pupils need some support to complete these tasks and their explanations in their writing are less extensive, but they do understand the key ideas.

121. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and use this to plan lessons that are well matched to the topic objectives. However, the teachers' appreciation of how history and geography can be used to develop pupils' basic literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills is less evident. Insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to write in different formats and to use the computers to present their work.
122. Teachers expect pupils to remember and apply knowledge from previous lessons. In the introductions to a significant number of lessons the teachers ask probing, open-ended questions, often directed to specific pupils, so that all pupils are fully involved in the discussion and need to use their knowledge to answer. This aspect of assessment is good, but the quality of marking is inconsistent across the school. It gives insufficient information to pupils as to how they could improve their writing and teachers do not place a high enough emphasis upon maintaining a high quality of presentation. Consequently, the quality of pupils' written work, particularly that of the oldest pupils, is below that expected with insufficient attention being paid to handwriting and general presentational conventions.
123. Since the last inspection the curriculum for both subjects has been reviewed in line with the national recommendations. The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development through a good range of visits to local places, such as the town and nearby coastline as well as museums and other places of interest. Information and communication technology is beginning to be used as a method for research, but it is under-used as a presentational tool. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership to the subject by checking planning and providing advice when required, but the lack of a whole school approach to monitoring both the quality of pupils' work and the teaching in the subject limits development of the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

124. The previous inspection report stated that standards in information technology were in line with national expectations for seven-year-olds, but below expectations for eleven-year-olds. The judgement of this inspection is that good progress has been made in developing resources, the curriculum and teachers' skills so that from a low starting point pupils of all levels of attainment, including pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, make good progress in developing their skills across each area of the subject. Consequently, by the ages of seven and eleven most pupils attain standards in line with national expectations.
125. The quality of teaching and learning is good. This is a good improvement since the last inspection when some unsatisfactory teaching was seen and reflects the improvements in resources, in addition to the training and support given to staff by the school and the subject co-ordinator. In Years 1 and 2 the teaching of information and communication technology is based primarily in the classroom with pupils in Years 3 to 6 having timetabled lessons in the computer suite. However, although the computers used by younger pupils are less sophisticated and older than those in the suite, teachers make good use of the resources and time to develop pupils' basic skills in information and communication technology.
126. Pupils are shown how to use specific programs and techniques and then, during the week, are given good opportunities to complete tasks on their own. This enables pupils by the age of seven to develop their knowledge of how to use the computer keyboard well. They can use the space bar, delete key and the shift keys to produce capital letters. The majority of pupils are able to switch on and access specific programs. They know that a computer responds to instructions and can use the keyboard and mouse to control the functions and operation of the machines and the programs. They can enter text, can change the text format and correct mistakes. Lower attaining pupils need help to work on the computers, but higher attaining pupils are independent and need little help to perform basic word processing activities. Pupils in Year 2 can use a paint programme combining a range of techniques such as drawing lines of different thickness and colour spray, to create pictures in the style of Mir'o or Mondrian.
127. In Years 3 to 6 teachers use a similar approach to those in Years 1 and 2 using whole class demonstrations well to teach pupils the basic skills. Pupils then work through the planned task on their own or in small groups through the planned task. By asking probing questions and inviting specific pupils to take part in the demonstrations, teachers are able to check the levels of understanding of pupils and what they have remembered from previous lessons. Since the last

inspection teachers have developed their skills well and all pupils have good opportunities to develop and demonstrate their skills. However, in some lessons, the activities over reinforce the basic skills of information and communication technology so that there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to apply their skills to consolidate and extend their understanding of current topics in other subjects.

128. The management of pupils is very good in both the classrooms and the computer suite. Explanations and instructions are clear and explicit, so pupils understand what is expected of them and what they have to do. Consequently, in the majority of lessons pupils make good progress in developing their skills. In addition, this has a major impact upon pupils' behaviour and attitude in lessons. They are very enthusiastic and interested in lessons. The organisation of lessons is well thought out to ensure that all pupils, however large the group, have equal opportunities to complete the task; for example in Year 4, the teacher split the class into two groups, providing a parallel, written activity for some pupils and then switching over once the first group had completed the task. In this session, the classroom support teacher provided very good help to pupils, which ensured that pupils were working effectively.
129. As a consequence of the good teaching in Years 3 to 6, by the age of eleven pupils' skills and knowledge of the subject have continued to develop well so that they are very familiar with different ways of finding information on the computers. They know how to use index systems to use encyclopaedic software and can navigate efficiently around websites using hyperlinks and keywords to find specific information. Pupils in Year 5 understand how sensor systems record external events such as noise levels and learn how to interpret the graphed readings. Through a modelling programme, they are developing a clear understanding of how computer systems use sensors and switches to control events. Pupils in Year 6 can create simple spreadsheets to record data, including formulae to calculate mean readings, and then generate graphs of the results. They produce word-processed documents that use a range of font styles and sizes effectively to add emphasis to their writing.
130. The co-ordinator gives good leadership to the subject and has identified appropriate targets for development. The hardware and software have been developed well and, as part of the development of the subject, the school has adopted the recommendations of a national scheme of work; consequently, planning is much improved since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has worked with some teachers in the classroom, checks teachers' planning on an informal basis and gives advice and support to staff when needed, but does not have systematic opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching or the standards of pupils' work. Currently, the teaching is primarily focused upon developing pupils' skills, with fewer opportunities within the wider curriculum for pupils to use and apply their skills. This reflects some teachers' limited subject knowledge and confidence as well as the limited access to the computer suite outside of the timetabled slots. However, the school is scheduled to take part in the national training in the spring term, which is intended to develop teachers' skills further. A whole school approach to assessment is not yet in place, but is identified in the subject action plan.

MUSIC

131. At the time of the inspection, teachers and pupils were busy preparing for an end of term concert so the music lessons that took place were all singing lessons. There was no evidence of pupils' attainment in composing and appreciating music; therefore, it is not possible to make overall judgements about teaching and learning in music, or pupils' attainment in the subject as a whole. Nevertheless, the scheme of work shows the music curriculum is well balanced overall.
132. Teaching and learning in singing are good. Teachers' enthusiasm and expertise motivate pupils to try hard and enjoy the lessons so that, by the age of eleven, pupils' attainment in singing is above the national expectation for their age. They benefit from careful, focused teaching that develops a pleasing tone, clear expression and a good sense of rhythm. Pupils demonstrate a good attitude, singing with confidence and enjoyment. By the age of seven, pupils' singing is better than that expected for their age. They listen carefully, following the teacher's clear directions, developing a good feel for the music. Pupils throughout the school know and sing a wide range of songs, both traditional and modern, in a variety of styles. For example, in preparing for Christmas, pupils in Years 3 to 6 sing challenging carols, such as 'In the Deep Mid-Winter', and modern songs, such as 'The Snowman', equally well. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 sing 'Away in a Manger' and 'Little Donkey', confidently adding percussion parts for effect. The teaching of singing is well supported by a pianist who provides very good quality

accompaniment in singing lessons.

133. Singing is very much a tradition of the school, making a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. Pupils regularly take part in local choir festivals. The lunchtime singing club is a popular aspect of school life. Pupils took part in an exciting European project, where pupils and teachers from Stanhope School joined schools in Belgium and Germany to produce a songbook and compact disc of traditional and modern songs in three languages.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

134. Pupils' attainment by the age of seven and eleven is in line with national expectations. Most pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainments. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and pupils' attitudes to their work also remain positive. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make good progress.
135. Teachers ensure that pupils warm up and cool down effectively and are aware of the need to perform safely, particularly as both halls used for lessons are small. In the best lessons seen the teacher's good subject knowledge means that pupils are very clear about what they have to do throughout the lesson and so pupils are very well behaved, listen carefully to instructions and try hard to improve their performance; for example, in a Year 1 gymnastics lesson a good warm up session resulted in plenty of energetic exercise. Good constructive comments from the teacher to move pupils' learning on at a fast pace meant the pupils began to assess the effect of exercise on their bodies. In Year 2 dance the lesson was effective because the teacher assessed the pupils' work constantly and used their observations as well as her own to increase understanding and improve imaginative and creative movements. Most pupils tried hard therefore to think about how to communicate their nervousness when creeping along a dark street. Higher attainers moved in a more imaginative, controlled and fluid way as they picked their way through tangled branches and the lower attainers quickly learned to imagine obstacles at high and low levels to move over and under in the dark, dark wood. The teacher used different percussion instruments effectively and the pupils concentrated well and tried hard to move to the change in beat and sound.
136. Teachers, generally, use analysis and observation of pupils' performance well. Sometimes opportunities to extend and refine pupils' performance are limited, for example, by omission to check pupils' over heavy landings from apparatus. Most pupils by the age of seven can explore simple actions with control and co-ordination although their level of communication when talking about differences between their own and others' performance is somewhat limited.
137. Most pupils in Years 3 to 6 respond well to the challenges set by the teachers. In a Year 5 lesson the teacher communicated very effectively the learning objectives of the lesson and, as a result, most pupils produced controlled balances using different parts of the body to support their weight. A number of higher attainers produced a more polished and controlled performance and as the lesson progressed a number completed a controlled handstand or headstand quickly after a little practice. The teachers' excellent knowledge and expertise, combined with very good relationships and management of the class meant that pupils of all levels of attainment co-operated and persevered in order to try to complete the task successfully.
138. In a Year 6 lesson the pupils co-operated well, working in pairs to complete a sequence of matching movements. This was made increasingly difficult because the size of the hall restricted the number and length of movements that the pupils could make. It was due to the teacher's good management and control of the class and the positive relationships and generosity of the pupils that no disputes occurred. Higher attaining pupils, after a little practice, gave a skilled performance demonstrating good balance, control, timing and fluency throughout the sequence of movements. Lower attaining pupils tried hard to control their timing and remember their sequence. Numeracy skills were called upon frequently as pupils counted numbers and discussed the shape and patterns of movements. Literacy and the development of the skills of speaking and listening are also used effectively in this subject because teachers challenge the pupils to appraise their own and each other's performance and give opinions about how they could be improved. Sometimes the quality of the pupils' responses is restricted by their limited vocabulary.

139. The curriculum the school provides to support physical education is good. There is a wide range of sports available after school as well as swimming lessons for pupils from Year 1. In addition the pupils are able to extend their skills during school swimming lessons and as an after-school activity to complete life-saving awards. Effective planning means that pupils in each year group, except the foundation stage, receive lessons as part of the curriculum. By the time the pupils reach Year 6 all but a few pupils can swim at least 25 metres. Careful assessments made by teachers record achievement. The standards in the school are good and there are some pupils who are well above average by the time they leave the school. The teaching of swimming is very good. Even though the pupils had not taken part in swimming lessons for a while because the pool was being repaired, most pupils in Year 4 could retrieve at least two objects from the bottom of the pool and more proficient swimmers could retrieve four or more objects. Some examples of high standards of tuition were also seen; teachers enthused and motivated the pupils and this led to a significant increase in confidence.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

140. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and standards are similar to those at the last inspection. Pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, achieve well in relation to their prior attainments and, by the age of eleven, the majority of pupils meet the standards expected in the local education authority's syllabus. Pupils' behaviour, personal development and attitudes to work are good.
141. The strongest teaching was seen at Year 6. The planning was good with clear objectives which were shared with pupils. Learning resources were very appropriate and supported the teaching well. Pupils at the age of eleven gained a deeper understanding of the Christmas story by studying and contrasting extracts from the gospel stories in Matthew and Luke; for example, they compared who the angel appeared to in each story. Pupils listened carefully to the teacher though were sometimes not very responsive. The teacher encouraged pupils to work with a partner and higher and lower attainers were grouped together to good effect. Tasks were very challenging and supported effectively the development of the skills of literacy, such as note making and comprehension.
142. Where teaching and learning were satisfactory overall in Years 2 and 5, strengths and weaknesses were apparent. In Year 2 the teacher linked the learning well to the pupils' own experiences of journeys and to recent assembly themes. The pupils were interested and made suggestions of what they would need before the teacher directed the discussion to Mary's journey. Pupils explained that they had learnt in assembly that the Advent ring had special candles and the central white candle represented Jesus who was 'the Light of the World'. The teacher drew the lesson together well and challenged pupils to reflect on the gifts that God would like to see given at Christmas. The pupils responded by suggesting, for example, 'joy', 'love' and 'peace'. However, some pupils were restless and their inappropriate behaviour was not sufficiently checked by the teacher.
143. In a lesson in Year 5 the teacher managed the pupils well and pupils listened to the story of St Nicholas attentively. The teacher developed the objectives of the lesson effectively to contrast different Christmas traditions, such as in England and in Kenya. A few pupils offered sensible contributions of their understanding of the Kenyan tradition of bringing gifts and related to the story of the Three Wise Men, before discussing well the Christmas celebrations in their homes. The teacher missed opportunities to develop a story about Christmas in a prison by simply reading the story and not questioning pupils sufficiently about the relevance of the account, though some pupils discussed the prisoners' plight sensitively.
144. The subject makes a strong contribution to the spiritual, moral and social development of pupils. Younger pupils' previous work shows an understanding of the beliefs of others in their studies of 'Light' when they compare the Hindu festival of Diwali and the Jewish festival of Hannukah. They consider the symbolism of light and dark and make lists of words linked to goodness and badness. They write prayers about harvest and an account of how they took harvest gifts to local senior citizens. Older pupils reflect on the qualities of the person they depend most upon. They explain why Jesus told parables and consider the relevance of the parables to them; for example, the meaning and message contained in the parable of the Prodigal Son.

145. The leadership and management of the subject are effective. The co-ordinator leads the subject well and monitors teachers' planning to ensure the teaching builds on previous learning, though insufficient attention is given to the monitoring of the quality of presentation of pupils' work, particularly of handwriting.