

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WEST PELTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

West Pelton, Stanley, Co. Durham.

LEA area: Durham LEA

Unique reference number: 114004

Head teacher: Mr. John Heron

Reporting inspector: Mr. T. Hemsley  
1609

Dates of inspection: 30<sup>th</sup> October to 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2000

Inspection number: 224282

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	West Pelton Primary School, West Pelton, Stanley, Co. Durham.
Postcode:	DH9 6SQ
Telephone number:	0191 3700238
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Councillor Keith Potts
Date of previous inspection:	5 <sup>th</sup> November 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr. T. Hemsley 1609	Registered inspector	Science	What sort of school is it?
		Geography	The school's results and achievements.
		History	How well is the school led and managed?
		Equal Opportunities	
Mrs. J. Menes 11468	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development.
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr. M. Pinch 1550	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?
		Music	How well does the school care for its pupils and students?
		Physical Education	
		Religious Education	
		Special Educational Needs	
		English as an additional language	
Mrs. J. Stephenson 27384	Team Inspector	English	How well are pupils and students taught?
		Information and Communication Technology	
		Art	
		Design and Technology	
		Under Fives	

The inspection contractor was:

Durham Local Education Authority

Inspection Office,  
Education Department,  
County Hall,  
Durham.  
DH1 5UJ

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33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

West Pelton is a small primary school that currently provides education for 97 boys and girls in the age range 4-11, including 13 in the reception class. This is slightly more pupils than at the last inspection. Most pupils come from West Pelton, an ex-mining village to the west of Chester-le-Street in County Durham. Some parents from Beamish, Grange Villa and High Handenhold also choose to send their children here. No pupil is learning English as an additional language or is from an ethnic minority background. 44 pupils (45%) are eligible for free school meals; this is well above average. Children enter school with below average levels of attainment. The number of pupils on the school's special educational needs (SEN) register is often above average, but at the time of the inspection twenty pupils (21%) were on the register, which is broadly average. There is an increasing level of mobility of pupils as families move in and out of the area, around two-thirds of the pupils currently in Years 4-6 have not spent all of their time at this school. The school has spare capacity in its accommodation and a room is used by a local playgroup.

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

The school is effective in providing a sound education. The school has significant strengths in its ethos and the caring relationships it develops. Good leadership ensures that pupils are treated as individuals and valued by all staff. Consequently, pupils learn to help each other and have very good attitudes to school. Pupils make satisfactory to good progress because of the quality of the teaching and some small classes. By doing so they reach standards that, at the end of Key Stage 2, although below average, are as good or better than similar schools. Standards in Key Stage 2 are still not as good as they could be because there are some aspects of teaching and management that could be improved. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Pupils under five and in Key Stage 1 make good progress. This is because of the good teaching and the small classes that the school has organised.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of good teaching and small group support.
- The head teacher provides good leadership. He works well with all staff. Together they develop a very caring ethos and very good relationships.
- There is a great deal of care and concern for individuals and all staff value pupils.
- The school develops very good attitudes and enthusiasm among pupils. In particular, pupils help each other very well. Small "family" group arrangements are successful in this development.
- Provision for personal development is very good, particularly through moral and social education. This helps pupils to develop a great deal of initiative and personal responsibility.

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

- Standards in English and science at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Standards and provision in information and communication technology (ICT) in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- The use of assessment, which is not effective as it should be in helping teachers provide the right standard of work.
- The provision to support learning for older pupils in Key Stage 2.
- Financial planning by the head teacher and governors.
- Management systems, in particular the roles of key staff in raising standards.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1996 and at that time it provided a sound quality of education. Since then there has been sufficient improvement overall, but there is a mix of strengths and weaknesses in what the school has done.

Standards in Key Stage 2 in the core subjects are lower than they were at the last inspection, but there is an increasing level of pupil mobility and small numbers of pupils in each year. The school has set itself challenging targets for improvement. Art and design, and design and technology (DT) have improved and are now at the expected level. ICT was below average in Key Stage 2. It has not improved sufficiently and is now below average across Key Stages 1 and 2.

The greatest and most significant improvement is that teaching is now good, having formerly been unsatisfactory in 21% of lessons. This is beginning to help standards rise again.

Although there are some improvements to the assessment system, it is still not used effectively enough. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for pupils with special educational needs are now fully implemented and help pupils to make good progress.

While the supportive governing body has improved its involvement, its role in leading and monitoring school effectiveness remains a weakness as shown in the unsatisfactory financial planning.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A	E	E	C
mathematics	A*	D	B	A
science	A	D	D	B

  

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

Pupils start school with standards below average but make quick progress so that in the reception class and by the age of seven they are achieving well and reach average and better standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science.

At the end of Key Stage 1 standards vary each year because of the small numbers involved, this is particularly true in mathematics. Nevertheless, standards in each subject are rising. Test results in 2000 in writing and mathematics were well above average and in science above average. In these subjects, results were well above similar schools and writing standards were very high. Pupils currently in Year 2 are attaining standards broadly in line with expectations at this stage.

Small numbers mean that standards also vary each year in Key Stage 2. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall and most achievement is satisfactory. Test results in 2000 show above average standards in mathematics, below average standards in science and well below average standards in English. Standards have not risen with the national trend. In comparison with similar schools, results were average in English, but better in science and much better in mathematics. Pupils who transfer to the school part way through tend to have lower levels of attainment. Pupils currently in Year 6 reach average standards in mathematics but below average standards in English and science. The school's

emphasis on numeracy has helped to raise recent standards in mathematics. The school has set suitably high and challenging targets for attainment in the core subjects and met its targets in 2000.

In Key Stages 1 and 2 standards in geography, history, DT, art and design, music, physical education (PE) and religious education (RE) are broadly in line with expectations. Across Key Stages 1 and 2 standards in ICT are below what is expected nationally. This is because the school does not yet have full use of the resources needed and teachers do not have sufficient skills and knowledge of the subject.

In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science girls usually attain higher standards than boys in statutory assessments. However, small numbers in each year group means that this is usually not a significant feature of learning in lessons.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy school. They are involved in the range of activities provided by the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good, pupils work very well together. Relationships are warm, secure and trusting. Pupils regularly help each other.
Attendance	Satisfactory

Pupils' attitudes are a strength of the school, reflecting the school's aims and the ethos created by all staff and exhibited in the small family group arrangements. Attendance could be improved if fewer families took holidays in term time.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Teaching is overall good. 100% of lessons observed were satisfactory or better. 55% of lessons were good or better, and 5% of lessons very good or better. While most of the good lessons were seen with younger pupils, good teaching occurs across the school. Teaching in Key Stage 2, although overall satisfactory, includes a significant number of good lessons.

Teaching of English and literacy is good for pupils under five and in Key Stage 1 because it is well planned and pupils are effectively motivated by interesting work which is at the right level of difficulty. In Key Stage 2 it is satisfactory. The teaching of mathematics and numeracy is good for pupils under five and in Key Stage 1 because it is well planned using the national numeracy strategy and there is a brisk pace of learning. In Key Stage 2 it is satisfactory. The class size and the wide spread of ability in the class at the end of Key Stage 2 reduce the impact of the hard work of the teacher.

Teachers have great concern for individual pupils and work hard to support them. Their subject knowledge is good except in ICT, they plan well and have good expectations. Teaching methods are largely very effective and resources are well used. Teaching supports pupils with special educational needs well and enables them to make good progress. The quality and use of day-to-day assessment is unsatisfactory.

Pupils' learning is good and they make good progress in learning new topics and developing skills. They

have good interest, concentration and independence.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. Good for pupils under five. Good for personal, social and health development. The statutory curriculum is in place.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good, because of good teaching and the small group support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall, especially for moral and social development. Good for spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall. The school provides a caring, secure and welcoming environment. Staff know pupils well and value them as individuals. The school does not make enough use of assessment to help pupils make progress. Insufficient support for older pupils in Key Stage 2 to help them make as much progress as others.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Overall satisfactory. Good leadership from the head teacher soundly supported by key staff. The school runs well on a daily basis. Weaknesses in the role of key staff in raising standards, and in documentation.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Sound support for the head teacher. Good and sincere concern for the welfare of pupils and staff. Statutory requirements met. Best value principles are applied. Governors act as critical friends but have weaknesses in leading and monitoring school effectiveness.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory overall. Monitoring has helped the school to identify areas for development leading to improvements such as the provision of small classes and better teaching for younger pupils. However, there is insufficient use of assessment data for the school to know how well pupils are doing and this has reduced the impact of good teaching.
The strategic use of resources	Unsatisfactory strategic and financial planning. The school does not always budget systematically for all expenditure and is unclear about the cost of its developments. Consequently spending decisions are not always directed towards the improving the areas of lowest attainment.

The overall level of accommodation, staffing and resources available to the school is satisfactory.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school's ethos.</li> <li>• The care for individual pupils.</li> <li>• Real efforts to welcome new pupils.</li> <li>• How bullying is effectively dealt with.</li> <li>• The community spirit.</li> <li>• The teaching of basic skills.</li> </ul>	<p><b>A small number of parents suggested the following aspects:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of extra-curricular activities.</li> <li>• The quality of information on pupils' progress.</li> <li>• The need to receive sufficient information about the school.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with what pleases parents most. The range of extra-curricular activities is as good as may be expected given the size of the school and boys and girls are treated equally. Information on pupils' progress is satisfactory overall. Clearer targets on reports to help parents to support their child's learning would be useful. Reporting arrangements are to the standards of the Basic Skills Quality Mark. The quantity of information from the school is good.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Standards across the school are broadly average. However, the oldest pupils currently in Key Stage 2 are not reaching expected levels in English and science, and pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 are below average in ICT. Pupils are mostly achieving satisfactorily across the subjects relative to their prior attainment, but there is scope for higher attainment for the oldest pupils.
2. Pupil's attainment on entry is below average. They have fewer social and physical skills than may be expected and their understanding of language and number is below average. This is confirmed by the LEA baseline assessments used by the school. Girls, however, start school with satisfactory skills in speaking and listening and mathematics. Pupils make good progress throughout the reception year because they are taught well in a small single-age class and provided with a wide range of opportunities to learn. Therefore by the time they are entering Year 1 most pupils are reaching the early learning goals. Even at the time of the inspection, relatively early in the school year, pupils have made good progress. They work well socially in pairs and small groups. The more competent pupils can read simple sentences and are beginning to write their own name. Many pupils can count up to ten in order. They can talk about the weather and recognise that there are seasons. Pupils experiment satisfactorily with paints and in physical activities. They still need to develop the way they play on large toys and the school plans to develop this aspect.
3. Pupils continue to make good progress through Key Stage 1. At age seven, in the 2000 national tests, pupils attained average standards in reading, well above average standards in writing and mathematics and above average standards in science. In comparison with similar schools, pupils reached well above average standards in reading, mathematics and science, and very high standards in writing. Standards in all subjects, and particularly in mathematics, vary each year because of the small numbers of pupils. Nevertheless, standards in each subject have risen over the past five years. Standards are rising because of good quality teaching and the school's arrangements to teach pupils in small classes and groups. In addition, the national developments in literacy and numeracy are helping to raise standards; the school has been able to demonstrate its commitment through the Basic Skills Quality Mark. By the age of seven the gap between girls and boys can still be seen. Girls reached higher standards than boys in national tests in 2000 and other recent years.
4. Inspection evidence shows that pupils currently in Year 2 are achieving well across the rest of the curriculum except for ICT. These pupils reach average standards in reading and writing. However, a small number of pupils reach higher than average standards in these two aspects of English. Pupils have average standards in speaking and listening and they listen attentively to stories. In mathematics and science, pupils are reaching average standards. Given the relatively low starting point of pupils when they enter school, pupils in all of these subjects are achieving better than may have been expected because of the school's good teaching of basic skills.

5. Progress through Key Stage 2 is not as good as Key Stage 1, but it is still overall satisfactory. Pupils do not achieve as well as in Key Stage 2 partly because of the limitations caused by the difficulties of catering for a large mixed-aged class at the end of the key stage. Further to this, the level of pupil mobility is high. Some of the relatively low Key Stage 2 test results in 2000 can be attributed to a group of pupils with special educational needs who did not spend all of the key stage at the school. In the current Year 6 group are many pupils who have had their education broken by changing schools. Ten of the fourteen pupils have not spent all of their time at this school, and six of the fourteen have not spent all of Key Stage 2 at the school. The school's own statistics show that pupils who remain at the school throughout a key stage achieve better and reach higher standards.
6. At the age of eleven, in the national tests in 2000, pupils attained above average standards in mathematics, below average standards in science and well below average standards in English. In comparison with similar schools, standards were well above average in mathematics, above average in science and average in English. The school's work on numeracy has helped to maintain and raise standards. Standards in all subjects vary each year because of the small number of pupils, but overall standards are lower than previously. Standards fell particularly in 1999 but recovered partly in 2000 and the school met its own targets. Overall, standards have not improved in line with national trend. Girls generally reach higher standards than boys do at the end of Key Stage 2, although the difference was less marked in 2000. Differences between boys and girls are also not so marked in the individual year groups in lessons, but numbers are so small that statistical comparisons are unreliable.
7. Inspection evidence shows that pupils currently in Year 6 are attaining at least average standards in mathematics, but below average standards in English and science. While their achievements are overall satisfactory, with strengths in aspects of mathematics and English, pupils could still achieve more in English, science and ICT. In mathematics, pupils are particularly proficient in mental and oral work. In English, pupils express themselves confidently and clearly when speaking but their reading skills are weak and they do not produce a wide enough range of writing. In science, pupils have satisfactory knowledge of some recent work but do not have sufficient skills in investigation. The school has set appropriately challenging targets for improving standards before the next national tests. However, the Year 6 pupils are taught in a large mixed-age class meaning that the teacher has to work very hard to ensure that all pupils can make sufficient progress. It is evident that, although pupils in Year 6 could achieve more than they have, pupils in the other year groups in Key Stage 2 are achieving satisfactorily. This is one feature that helps to explain how overall the school has made sufficient progress since the last inspection.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress across the school. This is because the school treats pupils well as individuals and the good quality teaching of the small groups. Individual educational plans have appropriate targets associated with basic skills. These are used well by all staff to support pupils.
9. In English, the pupils' ability to speak and listen is at least average by the end of each key stage. Most pupils listen attentively, and speak fluently and with confidence. This is because the teachers provide suitable opportunities in class to respond to questions and describe their opinions. Confidence is built through features such as the small group assembly.

10. The pupils' achievements in reading are satisfactory in Key Stage 1 but in Key Stage 2 too many pupils are attaining standards below what is expected. Many pupils have difficulty in reading fluently and reading unfamiliar words. While pupils work at reading in school and use the school library, they cannot talk about favourite authors from wider reading at home.
11. In writing, pupils achieve well in Key Stage 1, writing familiar stories with imagination. In Key Stage 2 pupils do not have enough opportunities to write in a range of styles. Most writing is based upon story telling. There is insufficient opportunity to write factual accounts, such as scientific experiment reporting, resulting in standards being below the expected level. The school has set itself high targets in the national tests for Year 6 and is intending to add extra short-term support from the head teacher to help improve standards.
12. In mathematics pupils at the end of both key stages reach standards that are at least what is expected nationally. Pupils achieve well in developing their mental and oral work, for instance by Year 6 they can mentally add and subtract decimals. In Key Stage 1, they have satisfactory knowledge of number relationships. They know the basic ways to add and subtract, to use coins and to draw simple graphs. In Key Stage 2 pupils know how to work with large numbers by rounding them up or down. They know how to begin tackling mathematical problems. Pupils could do better if the teaching provided more opportunities for recording their mathematical approaches to revise and reflect upon later. The school has set appropriate targets for attainment in the national tests in Key Stage 2 and is on course to achieve them.
13. In science, pupils reach satisfactory standards in Key Stage 1 but are below average in Key Stage 2. In both key stages they know about healthy approaches to food, with pupils in Key Stage 2 extending their learning by being aware of food groups. In Key Stage 1 pupils know about the major parts of plants and how lack of water or sunshine alters their growth. In Key Stage 2 pupils know about the movement of the sun and shadows, and about changes in the state of water. In both key stages pupils do not know enough about how to investigate and are not sufficiently involved in planning their own experiments. This is where teachers need to challenge them more. The school has set high targets for pupils in Year 6 in the national tests.
14. Pupils are not achieving enough in ICT and are below average in Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2. Pupils have limited keyboard skills and cannot use the school software successfully. The school has not made enough progress in this subject, which was below average for all pupils in Key Stage 2 at the time of the last inspection. The school has decided to teach ICT within other subjects. However, teachers do not know enough about how to use the available software and ICT is used in few lessons. The school has recognised the problem and a major programme of staff development is planned to begin very soon.
15. At the time of the last inspection, standards were below average in art and design, and design and technology at the end of Key Stage 2. The school has made sound progress in improving the standards in these subjects which are now satisfactory. For instance, in art and design, pupils understand the importance of colour and design in drawings. In design and technology pupils plan and revise their work successfully, such as when they design and make slippers. History standards were above expectation in Key Stage 2 at the time of the last inspection. Because of the limited evidence available, that judgement cannot be reconfirmed but pupils are attaining standards that are at least average.

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

16. The strengths identified at the time of the last inspection have been maintained and improved and continue to be a strong aspect of the school. This is because the school places a high value on pupils as individuals.
17. Pupils respond very well to the welcoming and caring ethos that the school fosters. They feel secure, they like coming to school and they are friendly and confident in their relationships with fellow pupils and adults, which are warm, secure and trusting. Their attitudes to school are very good and have a very positive effect on learning and standards attained.
18. Pupils listen attentively in lessons, they show an interest in their work and are eager to answer questions and take part in activities such as making rock buns or when working hard in PE lessons. They are aware of their own learning and expect to improve on their achievements.
19. Behaviour in lessons is usually good, and pupils concentrate and get on with their work well. Occasionally, a minority of pupils becomes inattentive as the lesson progresses, and noise levels rise. Pupils move quietly and sensibly around the school, they behave well in the dining hall, and when confined to the building during wet playtimes. Behaviour in the playground is usually good, helped by the spacious grounds and separation of activities, such as football, from quieter play. Pupils have a good understanding of the kind of behaviour that is expected of them and the sanctions that will apply if they do not meet expectations. No incidents of bullying or misbehaviour were seen during the time of the inspection and pupils know what to do if they are hurt or in trouble. No pupil has been excluded from school during the past year.
20. Pupils entering reception quickly learn to work independently, in groups, and where to find the materials they need. They are able to sit quietly and listen to the teacher. Older pupils take on responsibilities such as helping with pre-reception children at coffee mornings for new parents. Pupils help younger ones with coats at break times, and willingly take on duties that support the smooth running of the school.
21. Across the school, pupils are willing to listen to each other and show respect for each other's point of view, for instance in lessons on subjects such as Buddhism, and in small group assemblies. Parents value these small "family group" assemblies and they are effective in developing very good attitudes and mutual help. They co-operate very well with each other in class and other activities and are helpful and considerate. Relationships are very good throughout the school and pupils are able to grow in confidence and maturity in an atmosphere where they feel valued as individuals. Their personal development is very good.
22. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average, but there is a significant number of pupils whose parents take them out of school to go on holiday. Parents are conscientious in informing the school when pupils are ill and there is no unauthorised absence.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

23. Teaching is good overall. All lessons observed on this inspection were at least satisfactory. 55% of lessons were good and 5% lessons were very good. Considerable progress has been made since the last inspection when 21% of the teaching was unsatisfactory. The teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good, particularly so when taught in small groups.
24. A significant proportion of the good and very good lessons was observed in reception, Key Stage 1 and in classes for pupils with special education needs. The good quality teaching ensures that children learn effectively and make good progress. This is reflected in the very high 2000 Key Stage 1 standard test results for reading, writing and mathematics. In Key Stage 2, the teaching is at least satisfactory and frequently good. The teaching of all subjects seen is at least satisfactory.
25. Teachers are dedicated and hard working. Relationships are very good between teachers and children. This helps to create a warm and trusting environment in which children are secure and confident to learn.
26. The reception teacher makes very good provision for the personal and social development of the under fives. She knows her children well and has a good understanding of their needs. Children grow in confidence and become secure in the relationships built up within the class. There is good teaching of basic skills, such as phonics and counting. These are well integrated into other activities, the teacher making the most of every opportunity. For example, in reading a story the teacher emphasised an "I spy" rhyming words game and encouraged children to join in with words they felt would fit. In doing this children were practising and developing their skills, whilst still being involved in the story. Pupils learn at a good pace and expectations are high. A variety of opportunities is provided for children to use their initiative and to be independent.
27. At Key Stages 1 and 2 teachers continue to take a close interest in individual pupils and work hard to support them. Consequently, pupils respond very well to this approach, show very good interest in their work and have satisfactory concentration. Good use is made of additional teachers and adults throughout the school. Most of the additional support is targeted to the teaching for Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2 pupils. This high quality support ensures that work is well matched to these pupils' needs and different levels of ability. These pupils, particularly those with special educational needs, make good progress. Years 5 and 6 pupils are taught in a very large mixed-ability class. On occasions, tasks do not always match older pupils' different levels of ability and not enough recognition is given to their different experiences. Sometimes tasks are too difficult for children to understand and so pupils do not know how well they are doing. This affects their concentration levels. They become easily distracted and noise levels increase. This interferes with the pace of the lesson and the progress that some pupils make is not as good as it should be.

28. Teachers' planning and preparation of lessons are good. Learning objectives are clear and provide a good framework for learning. All teachers use methods that promote learning, for example, strategies for developing mental proficiency in number. Different organisation methods are used effectively. A mixture of direct teaching and discussion, group work and individual tasks make lessons interesting and keep pupils involved. Sensible and practical questions are asked by teachers to involve pupils in their learning. For example, in a Year 3 class the teacher effectively involved all pupils in an English lesson by continually checking their understanding of the vocabulary used in the "Pied Piper" play script. Teachers always value pupils' answers and contributions. They offer praise and reward to encourage, motivate and support pupils.
29. Overall, teachers' management of behaviour is satisfactory to good. They generally set high standards for behaviour and pupils usually respond well to this. However, on occasions, teachers do not always insist on silence and attention to ensure full understanding. A small number of higher-attaining pupils sometimes enthusiastically shout out answers that create higher noise levels. Consequently, other children are unable to listen to the teacher with sufficient care.
30. The quality and use of day-to-day assessment is unsatisfactory because it does not provide teachers with sufficient information to help them plan for the range of pupils. Teachers use positive marking to encourage and motivate pupils. However, marking is not specific enough in telling pupils what they need to do to improve. On some occasions teachers mark in great detail instead of concentrating on comments that will have the most effect.
31. Learning resources are used well to support teaching. The quality of teacher-made materials is good and lessons are often supplemented by the use of natural products. For example, in reception class before the reading of "Each, Peach, Pear, Plum" the children were able to observe and examine the fruit. Several adults provide extra support in class, for individuals, groups or more generally, and this support is useful and valued by teachers. For instance, in one class the supporting adult was able to help groups of pupils with the practical aspects of design and technology while the teacher worked with other pupils, resulting in pupils learning well across the whole class. There is still scope for more efficient use of support staff in lessons while the teacher is working with the whole class.
32. Teachers occasionally use homework to support the work in class but this is not consistent throughout the school. There is a school policy for regular homework but it is not monitored fully to ensure its effectiveness.
33. The teaching of literacy and numeracy are good overall. Teachers have attended the relevant national and local training and introduced the national strategies in discreet lessons. Word and sentence work, whole class shared reading and writing, individual and group work, and plenary sessions are regular and positive features of literacy lessons. In numeracy lessons pupils are used to taking part in effective mental work, and considering and practising useful approaches to calculation. The school properly takes account of the needs of pupils in planning activities. The individual and group work possible in the small sets and withdrawal groups is particularly effective in supporting pupils. Areas for development in writing styles and in recording of mathematical approaches are referred to in this report's sections on English and mathematics.

34. No formal teaching of ICT was seen. The skills and knowledge needed are taught in a limited way through other subjects. However, computers are not used sufficiently to support pupils' learning.

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

35. The curriculum provided by the school is appropriate and reflects its aims. It meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Since the last inspection, the national literacy and numeracy strategies have been successfully introduced without unduly affecting the breadth of the curriculum offered to pupils.
36. The school has revised its subject policies and has adopted the national advice on schemes of work. These are being systematically adapted to meet the particular needs of the school and its pupils. However, the range of writing in English is insufficient. Recording in mathematics to demonstrate learning and practice of calculation and problem-solving are not sufficiently apparent in pupils' work.
37. At the time of the last inspection, curriculum planning had some weaknesses in supporting teachers. Revisions have been made to planning strategies and these more clearly indicate the skills, knowledge and understanding which pupils should acquire, therefore the quality of planning is now good. Individual teachers have good and detailed plans of all of their work. An aspect to continue to develop is the planning of curriculum content for pupils in mixed-age classes to ensure good skill development.
38. The curriculum for under fives is very good and effectively meets the needs of the youngest pupils. Planning is very good and the teacher is strongly aware of the needs and capabilities of young children. All areas of learning are sufficiently well resourced and the foundation stage of education is becoming well established. The quality of the curriculum provided is a major factor in the very successful start young children receive in the school.
39. The curriculum for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 is suitable and enables them to make sound progress. The governors' policy for sex education is implemented sensitively and together with drug awareness is carefully planned into the curriculum. The curriculum reflects the school's aim to raise standards and makes an effective contribution to pupils' intellectual and personal development. Consideration for others is given a high priority and personal and social issues arise in all subjects and generally in the life of the school. The caring ethos pervades the school and provides a safe and happy environment in which pupils can learn. All pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education and links with the local secondary school are good. Pupils not only benefit from the pastoral liaison that takes place but are also involved in curriculum initiatives between partner schools.
40. The curriculum is enhanced by visits including residential stays, field-work in the local area, evidenced by a particularly good study of a stream, and a range of visitors to the school. Opportunities beyond statutory requirements are provided which widen pupils' experiences and are in line with those in other small schools. There are activities in sport and music that take place out of lesson time and sporting fixtures with other schools. Instrumental music tuition is offered and a small but enthusiastic group is beginning to learn to play the trumpet. The school has a very good recorder group in which pupils of all ages take part.
41. A small number of parents expressed a view that the school did not have enough extra-

curricular activities and that boys and girls were being treated differently. However, what the school provides is at least as good as may be expected and pupils are treated equally. The dedication of the staff voluntarily supporting pupils beyond the school day has a very positive effect on pupils' attitudes and their learning.

42. Provision for the substantial number of pupils with special educational needs is good. Full access to the curriculum for all pupils is recognised as important by the school and equality of opportunity in all areas of learning and social activity are ensured. The school embraces the principles of the Code of Practice. There are effective arrangements for the withdrawal of pupils' groups who are very well taught, for part of the time, by a special educational need learning support teacher. There is good liaison with class teachers and individual educational plans for pupils are detailed and contain appropriate targets. These plans are regularly reviewed by staff who work together effectively in planning provision and monitoring progress. Links with support services are good and reviews are held regularly and parents are kept informed of progress. Detailed records are maintained and are well organised.
43. Overall provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and is a strength of the school. It contributes to the well-being of pupils and to their learning and evidences the aims of the school being carried out in practice.
44. Pupils are given time to reflect in assemblies and lessons and are helped to consider their feelings about people's actions and about things. Acts of collective worship are well organised and have a clear emphasis that during the time of the inspection was about hope. The school also helps a range of charities through which pupils are helped to understand the beliefs and circumstances of others. Spiritual development is good.
45. Pupils' views and work are valued throughout the school and provision for moral development is very good. There are clear values and expectations that are strongly promoted through the life of the school. Pupils learn to share and acquire a sense of fair play. They clearly understand what is right and what is wrong. Pupils have a strong awareness of each other and the things that they do.
46. The school provides pupils with the opportunity to extend their personal and social understanding. This leads to very good social development. Pupils of all ages work and play together, help each other and form good relationships. In these aspects of pupils' social development, the staff provide excellent role-models. Pupils are encouraged to consider environmental issues both locally and in the wider community.
47. Pupils' cultural development is good. Opportunities are provided for pupils to become involved in their own culture and appreciate the beliefs and traditions of other cultures. Pupils engage in studying their locality and making music. They have strong links with Beamish Museum and local churches. Within the school grounds there is a nature area which symbolises the natural environment in which their village is situated. A wider cultural dimension is provided through the information about traditions and beliefs held by different faiths that is prominently displayed in the school.

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

48. Since the time of the last inspection, the school has continued to exercise satisfactory care for its pupils, with clear strengths in the school's provision for pupils' welfare, but weaknesses in assessment.
49. Parents have high regard for the way in which the school cares for their children and are confident of their involvement if concerns arise about pupils' welfare. Staff know the pupils well and have very good relationships with them. This enhances the strong ethos that exists in the school and contributes to successful teaching and learning. Staff and other adults work well together for the benefit and welfare of pupils.
50. A policy and guidance document based closely on the local education authority's advice is in place for child protection and a handbook is available for consultation.
51. The school makes provision to ensure the health and safety of its pupils and staff. The local education authority's guidelines have been adopted and can be seen to operate satisfactorily from day-to-day. Supervision at break and lunch times is carried out well and accidents and illness are dealt with appropriately. Pupils move round the school sensibly and in an orderly way. The school provides a safe and secure environment for pupils and staff. However, the school does not effectively record action taken in response to risk assessments or problems that arise.
52. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. The school maintains records of pupils' achievements. In practice assessment is not always focused sufficiently on what pupils can do and what they need to do to improve. Consequently, teachers do not know well enough how pupils are progressing with their work and how they can improve.
53. The quantity and range of data collected by the school about pupils' attainment and progress are substantial. However, the school does not judge effectively the standards attained by the many pupils who come to the school during a key stage and so cannot judge effectively the impact of the school's provision. At present teachers are not using this data or the day-to-day information they collect sufficiently well to improve standards or assist the progress of individual pupils or guide curriculum planning for mixed-age classes.
54. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory with good features. Pupils are carefully identified, their needs analysed and progress monitored. The school works well with outside agencies and parents in the care and support of these pupils. Statutory requirements are met.
55. The good behaviour, which is a significant aspect of the school ethos, is well supported by the value and care that is placed on individuals and on good relationships. The school's measures to promote good behaviour and to eliminate harassment and bullying are effective. These are all central to the aims of the school. No pupil has been excluded from the school during the past year.
56. Good attendance is encouraged by ensuring that pupils enjoy coming to school and by following up any unexplained absences. Pupils' interest in learning, good relationships and the school's ethos all have a positive impact on attendance.

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

57. The school regards parents as partners in their children's education and actively welcomes parents into school to talk to staff, to attend school events and meetings, to help in a variety of ways and to express concerns or make suggestions. Parents are overall very satisfied with the work of the school, particularly the welcoming and caring environment it provides for their children. Links with parents are effective in supporting pupils' learning.
58. Parents of pupils about to join reception are invited to coffee mornings and reception class "Good Work" assemblies, the term before children start school. These familiarisation activities help pupils become confident and they are happy to start school. Information about the school and the work pupils will be doing is provided for these parents by letter and at meetings, although the prospectus is less useful in this respect. Arrangements are in place to introduce children gradually to reception and once there help them to settle in quickly.
59. The school informs parents about the life of the school and issues relating to their children's education through newsletters once or twice a term and letters from the head teacher or class teachers. Information is provided on the curriculum, homework and how parents can help their children at home. In addition the school invites parents to meetings to provide further information, for example about the numeracy strategy, and new story sacks. They attend their children's "Good Work" assemblies, which help them to be aware of work done in school. Communication between school and home through the reading scheme is not consistently maintained. A minority of parents feels that they would like better communication with the school regarding the range of its work. However, what the school provides is good and the head teacher will continue to review procedures.
60. A few parents are not satisfied with information provided by the school on their children's progress. Evidence from inspection shows that written annual reports and meetings with teachers give overall satisfactory provision. Nevertheless, written comments could be improved by identifying more consistently what parents could do to help their child's learning. The school encourages parents to ask for further information if they have concerns about progress. The school also has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark that includes the requirement to provide a satisfactory standard of information.
61. Parents contribute to the quality of education and the life of the school by volunteering to help in class, make story sacks, and help with various social and fund-raising events such as the summer fair. The school values their contribution and support which has a positive effect on the work of the school.

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

62. The overall effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school is satisfactory, with leadership having a significant impact, but with weaknesses in financial planning and management systems.

63. The head teacher provides good leadership. He has a strong personal philosophy that includes an emphasis on relationships and ethos while trying to improve standards. This is shown in the development of a shared commitment from all staff to further the school's aims and values that include care for all pupils. It results in an ethos where individuals are valued within a framework of good relationships and equality of opportunity. Consequently pupils have good attitudes to school and enjoy their education. Parents are pleased with this approach and the way pupils are integrated into school. The school is very welcoming to visitors. All staff share a commitment to the work of the school and the head teacher, teaching and non-teaching staff and pupils work well together. Governors provide sound support for the head teacher in this approach. They have a good and sincere concern for the welfare of pupils and staff.
64. Management, while overall satisfactory, is not as successful in raising standards through financial planning and the school's management systems.
65. The head teacher and governors have been particularly successful in improving the quality of teaching in the school. They have done this by monitoring weaknesses with support from the LEA and then taking action. Extra provision to enable pupils to be taught in small groups has contributed to this improvement. To help this, governors have used specific grants effectively. There are sufficient, suitably qualified, staff with a range of subject qualifications and experience, and most classes are small. The effect has been that pupils in Key Stage 1 have higher standards and pupils in lower Key Stage 2 now make much better progress than previously. Governors acted as useful critical friends to the school in support of the head teacher in dealing with issues of teaching quality from the last inspection.
66. Financial planning and the strategic use of resources are unsatisfactory. The governors and head teacher do not budget effectively. For instance, governors set their most recent financial plan with around 13% of the budget unallocated. They have identified in discussion the probable uses for this money and have begun to transfer money to projects such as building and resource maintenance and improvement, so that by the end of this financial year the unallocated amount may be at a reasonable level. The governors have concerns to keep class sizes small. However, funds have not been directed effectively towards the areas of lower attainment, that is the standards at the end of Key Stage 2, where pupils are taught for most of the time in a large mixed-age class. The head teacher produces an annual development plan that is shared and discussed with governors, but the financial detail in the plan is too limited for the head teacher and governors to know the true costs of their decisions. Consequently, the governors are not able to monitor school effectiveness satisfactorily. They are aware of the procedures to follow in ensuring best value in purchasing and work with the head teacher and the LEA appropriately, although they have not effectively compared their costs and expenditure with other similar schools.
67. The school runs well on a daily basis and day-to-day management is good. The practical systems of administration allow pupils and teachers to concentrate on learning. The school secretary is effective in supporting the head teacher. Overall costs of administration are higher than might be expected but this does not detract from other work of the school. Pupils are well looked after because of the daily management. For instance, there was good supervision of pupils during the wet breaks seen during the inspection, with pupils enjoying the learning and recreational activities carried out inside the building.
68. There are some weaknesses in management systems, specifically the role of key staff in raising standards and documented procedures for school organisation.

69. During the term of the inspection, the school was preparing to implement a new policy on performance management and was in the process of changing its arrangements. All staff have job descriptions and in the past the school has had satisfactory arrangements for appraisal.
70. Currently the roles of key staff in raising standards are unclear. There is not a defined role in standards improvement for those staff who have extra management responsibility. Similarly, while the deputy head teacher provides good practical support to cover for the head teacher when necessary, her role in improving standards more generally is not made plain. Consequently, key staff do not know enough about standards generally or in their subjects across the school. Progress is beginning to be made in literacy and numeracy where there has been some monitoring of lessons. This has helped teachers to implement the national strategies in literacy and numeracy. Monitoring needs to focus more on what it is that pupils know, understand and can do, and what activities may help them improve. The collegiate and sharing atmosphere of the school provides a good basis on which the school can build. Teachers are committed in their work and with a clearer management focus will be able to improve these areas of their work.
71. Some of the documentation for areas such as health and safety, and child protection procedures has been closely reproduced from general LEA guidance documents with little to explain the actual school procedures. While governors fulfil their overall statutory responsibilities and no concerns about pupil welfare in these areas were raised during the inspection week, the school should ensure that its procedures are able to deal with any problems that inevitably arise in any school. Weaknesses in using assessment data reduce the impact of good quality teaching. Some unsatisfactory elements of other school documentation were reported to the school during the inspection.
72. The governing body provides overall satisfactory support for the school. Recent changes in membership will help to strengthen its position. Both the chair and vice chair of governors speak to the head teacher regularly, and they and others are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The vice chair gives practical support for the school's developments in ICT and this helps him to understand the aspects which need developing. Governors take satisfactory responsibility for monitoring developments in literacy, numeracy and special educational needs. They are beginning to hold the school to account for the standards attained by pupils. For instance, the governors have set appropriate targets for the head teacher through the developments in performance management.
73. The progress made by the school since the last inspection is overall satisfactory, with a mixture of strengths and weaknesses. The most successful improvement has been in the quality of teaching. The last inspection report identified five areas for development and the governing body's action plan has supported improvements. However, the reviews of the progress in the action plan did not focus sufficiently on the outcomes of the action and therefore governors did not appreciate how much work remained.

74. Standards in art, and design and technology, which were below average in Key Stage 2, have improved and are now average. However, information technology which was below average in Key Stage 2, is now below average across Key Stages 1 and 2. This is partly due to the changes in the nature of the subject and the stage in the development of the school's provision of equipment and staff training. The school has new equipment and a planned programme of professional development about to begin. Most teachers are not yet able to make full use of new technology to support their own administration and lesson preparation.
75. Teaching was inconsistent in Key Stage 2 but is now consistently at least satisfactory and often good. Very good progress has therefore been made in this issue.
76. The school was asked to improve assessment to match work to the ability of pupils. Although some action has been taken, with advisory support, assessment is still not used well enough to support pupils in mixed-age classes, and to know more generally what pupils across the school need to do to improve and what progress has been made.
77. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are now improved and provide good support for teachers. The result is that, together with small group support and good quality teaching, pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
78. The school was asked to improve the role of the governing body in leading and monitoring the effect of planning upon pupils' work and standards. Governors have improved their involvement and now do more monitoring of what happens in school. However, because of the unsatisfactory financial planning governors still do not know enough about the effect of their planning decisions. Therefore, not enough progress has been made on this key issue.
79. The school has spare capacity and more than sufficient accommodation for the current number of pupils. However, it makes good use of one room for a library and as a part-time teaching space for small groups. Another room is available as a history and ICT base. The history base is useful, as it includes a good mix of artefacts from the local museum and from personal collections that are used to develop pupils understanding of life in the past in the local area. A further room is used by a local playgroup which is appreciated by local parents and helps an increased number of pupils to have some pre-school education.
80. The school is very well looked after by an effective and committed caretaker, it provides a good environment for learning. The building is in need of some external repair and maintenance but this is not currently affecting the quality of learning. The school grounds are well kept and include a nature area that provides a good model for how pupils should look after their own village. The accommodation has a good effect on pupils' learning and the standards they achieve.
81. Resources for teaching are at least satisfactory in all subjects; the school also makes use of external support and links such as an LEA resource base and visits to local study areas. The quality and range of resources makes a positive contribution to standards.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

82. In order to raise standards, the head teacher, staff and governors should act on the following issues:

- (1) To raise standards in English and science in Key Stage 2; (Paragraphs 7, 10, 13, 99, 100, 129, 130)
  - further share good practice of teaching in English and science,
  - extend the range of pupils' writing in English,
  - involve pupils in more investigational work in science.
  
- (2) To raise standards in ICT at Key Stages 1 and 2 (Paragraphs 14, 158, 160, 161, 162))
  - complete the installation of the computers and software,
  - follow the school's intended programme of staff development in ICT.
  
- (3) To enable the use of assessment to help teachers provide the right standard of work; (Paragraphs 30, 52, 53, 113, 121)
  - link assessment more closely to National Curriculum levels,
  - assess the attainment of pupils who start school during a key stage,
  - use collected data to inform curriculum and lesson planning.
  
- (4) To improve the quality of learning of older pupils in Key Stage 2; (Paragraphs 27, 66, 109, 135)
  - provide extra support for the large mixed-age class containing the older pupils.
  
- (5) To improve financial planning; (Paragraph 66)
  - include sufficient financial information in development plans so that the head teacher and governors can judge the effectiveness of their strategic planning.
  
- (6) To improve management systems; (Paragraph 70)
  - complete the performance management processes to ensure that all key staff have identified roles in raising standards.

83. In addition to the key issues above, the less important weaknesses relating to:

- Improving the quality of information in annual reports to parents so that they can help their children improve; (Paragraph 60)
  
- School documentation; (Paragraph 71)

should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	42
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	60

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5	50	45	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)		97
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		44

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		23

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.9
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	9	4	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	--	--	--
	Girls	--	--	--
	Total	12	12	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92	92	100
	National	83	84	90

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	--	--	--
	Girls	--	--	--
	Total	11	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100	100	100
	National	84	88	88

No data is included for boys and girls separately because the number is 10 or less in each group.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	10	6	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	--	--	--
	Girls	--	--	--
	Total	10	11	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63	69	75
	National	75	72	85

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	--	--	--
	Girls	--	--	--
	Total	9	9	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	56	56	69
	National	70	72	79

No data is included for boys and girls separately because the number is 10 or less in each group.

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	97
Any other minority ethnic group	

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

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

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

*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)	5.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.3:1
Average class size	24.3

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

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	53

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	212,951.00
Total expenditure	215,196.00
Expenditure per pupil	2,090.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	23,303.00
Balance carried forward to next year	21,058.00

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	99
Number of questionnaires returned	34

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71.0	26.0	3.0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	53.0	47.0	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	50.0	47.0	3.0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41.0	50.0	0	3.0	6.0
The teaching is good.	68.0	32.0	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	55.0	33.0	6.0	6.0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74.0	21.0	3.0	3.0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67.0	27.0	3.0	0	3.0
The school works closely with parents.	56.0	29.0	9.0	3.0	3.0
The school is well led and managed.	65.0	29.0	6.0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	71.0	26.0	0	3.0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	29.0	26.0	29.0	3.0	12.0

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

A small number of parents thought that boys and girls were not treated equally in the provision of extra curricular activities.

## **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**

84. Children start the reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they will be five. Overall, there is a very wide spread of ability at this stage but it is overall below average. Results of assessments made as children enter school show that girls always perform better than boys. Girls enter school with levels of attainment generally in line with national expectation for speaking and listening and mathematics. However, boys have poorly developed skills in these areas, and attainment is well below national expectation.
85. The school is committed to offering reception children a very good start to their educational life. They are taught in a very small class size that allows the teacher to fully address their individual needs. Children therefore make good progress throughout the reception year so that by the time they enter Year 1 most attain levels in line with the early learning goals.
86. The school rightly places a high priority on the development of personal and social skills. Children's levels of attainment in this area when they start school are generally well below national expectation. All children learn to work on their own, in pairs and in small and large groups. This is a deliberate strategy used by the teacher who gradually increases the level of independence and challenge into children's free-choice and directed activities. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions, such as choosing how to organise their time in a number of activities and putting on appropriate protective aprons before working in practical areas. Children are encouraged to dress themselves after PE. This is promoting children's high levels of independence, as well as developing their determination to succeed. There are planned opportunities for children to share feelings. For example, in "candle time" children reflected upon the day and talked about a range of emotions, such as "happy", "upset" and "worried". Children make rapid progress in developing their personal and social skills, so that by the end of the reception year many are attaining levels in line with national expectation.
87. Children make good progress in developing language and literacy skills. In whole-class lessons they listen extremely well and are able to respond enthusiastically to stories, such as "Each Peach, Pear, Plum". Almost all children can hear rhyming words in the text and more-able children can suggest further examples of their own. The teacher carefully chooses the correct language to help develop children's understanding of "title", "author" and "illustrator". Following the use of very good, probing questions, one more-able boy was able to explain that an illustrator "draws or paints pictures". Most children are developing their knowledge of letter sounds. Middle and higher-ability children have made a good start to reading. They enjoy books and are able to read simple sentences. Children of lower-ability have also made good progress and are able to tell a story in a very enthusiastic way, using the pictures as clues. Most children are able to copy over the teacher's handwriting. Higher attaining children form letters well and some are beginning to write their name.

88. In mathematics children make good progress. Many can say and use the number names to ten in order. Higher-attaining children are able to count confidently beyond ten and understand the mathematical language of “before”, “after” and “more than”. Lower attaining children are able to count accurately by touching the object. Teaching in mathematics is good. The teacher uses her knowledge of individuals to ask challenging questions. This was particularly evident when the teacher intervened with a group of higher-attaining children, to ask questions to check their understanding of conservation of number.
89. Children make satisfactory progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world through a range of activities. They are able to talk about the seasons and can identify different weather patterns from pictures.
90. In creative development, children can explore colour, shape and form in two-dimensions. They experience that different paint patterns will be made by squashing sponges in a variety of ways. Children enjoy singing activities and are able to use appropriate actions. The teacher provides a range of creative activities that allows children the opportunities to develop their skills through exploration and experimentation.
91. In physical development children make good progress. The teacher plans a range of activities to ensure that fine motor skills are developed appropriately. Children use the space well during physical education lessons in the hall. They have an increasing awareness and control over their movements and move well at a variety of levels – on the floor and on raised areas. Although there is a dedicated area for outdoor play, the children do not have regular access to large toys, which limits the opportunities to develop their sense of balance and ability to play safely on wheeled toys. The school has plans to raise funds so that large toys can be purchased.
92. The quality of teaching is good and sometimes very good in reception class. Lessons are extremely well planned, organised and managed to provide children with activities that combine working with an adult and working on their own. The teacher continually evaluates what the children can do, particularly by asking skilful questions. The pace of sessions is always good. The variety of activities provided ensures that children are motivated, interested and enthusiastic about the work they are doing.
93. The curriculum for reception children is good. It is broad and well matched to the areas of learning identified for children of this age. The teacher has worked hard to implement and integrate the curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. The good quality teaching and the very good breadth, balance and relevance of the curriculum provide a very good basis for children beginning Key Stage 1.
94. The progress of children in the reception class is a strength of the school.

## ENGLISH

95. Pupils reach average standards at Key Stage 1 and below average standards at Key Stage 2. Although pupils in Key Stage 2 make sufficient progress and are learning satisfactorily in lessons, there remains scope for further improvement for the oldest pupils.
96. Since the last inspection, standards have fluctuated from year to year, particularly in Key Stage 2, because of small cohorts. Girls tend to attain higher standards in national assessments than boys, although this is not as noticeable in individual classes where numbers are small.
97. In the most recent national tests (2000) at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils had average standards in reading. They were above average in writing. When compared with similar schools, they were well above average for reading and they had very high standards in writing. Standards of English at Key Stage 1 have been improving faster than the national rate of improvement. This is a reflection of good teaching which helps pupils to learn well and achieve more than might be expected given the standard at which they first come to school.
98. The oldest pupils currently in Key Stage 1 are reaching average standards. A small number of more able children are attaining higher levels in both reading and writing.
99. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in 2000 in English were below the national average. The class had a high number of pupils with special educational needs and a large number of pupils entered the school after the start of the key stage. When these factors are taken into account, the attainment of pupils who remained within the school and who did not have special educational needs is much closer to the national average. Standards in recent years have been lower than previously, although there was some improvement in 2000.
100. Pupils currently in Year 6 are at a below-average standard in English and there has been a high level of pupil mobility. Only the higher-attaining pupils are working within expected levels for their age. A small number of average-attaining pupils have the potential to achieve the expected level by the end of the academic year. The school has identified this and a planned programme of action, led by the head teacher, is to commence in the very near future. Standards are better for younger pupils; those in Years 3, 4 and 5 are reaching standards around average for their age.
101. In the development of speaking and listening skills, pupils achieve well in Key Stage 1 and satisfactorily in Key Stage 2. Through Key Stage 1, they learn through listening attentively to stories and responding enthusiastically to questions. All pupils enjoy discussing stories or matters of immediate interest. Occasionally a minority of pupils shout out enthusiastically or do not listen to the teacher with enough care. The more competent Year 2 pupils speak clearly and communicate their ideas well, occasionally applying logic to their answers. At Key Stage 2 pupils build upon the skills they have acquired. They listen well to the teachers and respond appropriately to questions, sometimes in a thoughtful manner. More able pupils are able to express themselves in a clear, fluent manner. For instance, Year 3 pupils were able to explain and describe their opinions carefully when discussing the play script of the "Pied Piper". The school is successful in its aim of pupils having high levels of confidence in a range of speaking situations.

102. In reading, pupils achieve satisfactory standards in Key Stage 1 but in Key Stage 2 pupils do not achieve enough despite sound to good teaching. Too many pupils throughout Key Stage 2 are attaining standards below what is expected of their age. They could improve their standards by reading more widely outside of school.
103. In Key Stage 1 pupils make steady progress in developing their reading skills and therefore have satisfactory achievement. All pupils enjoy reading and like stories. Younger pupils read with understanding and satisfactory fluency. They use their knowledge of letter sounds and blends to read unfamiliar words. Older, more able pupils read with confidence. They are quick to recognise some word irregularities, spotting them before reading them incorrectly. For instance, one very proficient reader provided an excellent demonstration of “reading for a purpose”, with an enjoyable and interesting poem about food she did not like.
104. An exciting initiative to develop a “storysacks” library has evolved over the last eighteen months. Parents and the wider community have been involved in this. Children have responded well by showing more enthusiasm for reading coupled with a love for books. The co-ordinator has identified the need to develop this initiative further by using different and relevant books to catch the interest of older Year 2 and lower Key Stage 2 pupils.
105. Pupils’ reading skills throughout Key Stage 2 vary considerably. By the end of the key stage they have not achieved as much as should be expected. Most pupils have sound attitudes to reading and take books home from the school library for pleasure. However, few pupils can talk about their favourite authors. Older, more fluent readers, are able to discuss the books of Roald Dahl or J.K. Rowling. Lower Key Stage 2 pupils lack fluency in reading. Some pupils are developing the skill of expression and are recognising that punctuation can aid their understanding of the text. However, many pupils have limited strategies to read unfamiliar vocabulary. Year 5 pupils and higher-attaining Year 6 pupils express the most interest in reading. They read with good understanding and use inference and deduction to say what might happen next. These pupils can express opinions and ideas about characters. They are able to locate information within books using contents, index and glossary pages. Standards for these pupils are around average.
106. Pupils’ writing in Key Stage 1 is average, but in Key Stage 2 it is below average.
107. Year 1 pupils can write familiar stories, letters are well formed and spelling is generally accurate. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 write stories of a reasonable length with good use of imaginative vocabulary. Capital letters and full stops are nearly always used and occasionally sentences are extended through the use of connectives.
108. In Key Stage 2 standards in writing range from good to below average. Much of the work that pupils do is based on story writing, although there are a few examples of other forms of writing on display around the school. The head teacher’s enthusiasm for English is shown in the quality of some pupils’ displayed work that contains very good use of imaginative and sensitive vocabulary. There is little other evidence of extended writing or ways in which pupils could improve, edit drafts or organise their work. The narrow range of writing is reflected across other subjects. For instance, in science, pupils do little to write up practical experiments and investigations. Many pupils throughout the key stage are improving their knowledge of spelling and punctuation, although the school has not yet developed a systematic approach to these skills. Handwriting is usually well formed and the majority of work is presented in a satisfactory way.

109. The quality of teaching is good for most pupils. Pupils in Years 1 to 4 have been organised into small “sets” of similar ability for some of their lessons. Therefore teaching effectively ensures a good match of work to the ability of pupils, which promotes good progress. Teaching for Years 5 and 6 is satisfactory, the quality of learning being affected by the difficulties of teaching a large mixed-age class with a wide range of ability. This means that on occasions tasks do not build as well as they could upon pupils’ prior learning.
110. In the best lessons the teachers plan carefully with clear expectations for their pupils and these are significant factors in pupils’ good learning in English at this school. Teachers use a range of sensible questions to challenge the thinking of all pupils. For instance, in a Year 2 class a pupil identified “heart” for an “at” word. The teacher then used questions to explore the spelling of this word, encouraging pupils to apply previously learned facts. The result was a better understanding of the spelling pattern.
111. Teachers generally organise tasks well and use their time effectively to target specific groups of pupils. This was demonstrated particularly well in a mixed-class for lower-ability Year 1 and 2 children. A variety of tasks was provided to encourage good levels of independence and concentration for the majority of children, which allowed the teacher to focus her time on developing reading skills with two children with special educational needs. However, there are a few occasions when children either take too long to settle down to their work or do not always listen to the teacher with sufficient care. These factors slow the pace of learning, especially on the small number of occasions when the teacher does not deal effectively enough with interruptions.
112. The library is currently being refurbished and re-organised. Although the number of fiction and non-fiction books is small, the quality of them is good. The teaching of library skills is effective. Tasks are well planned and prepared to allow pupils to work independently. They are successfully developing their research and information skills.
113. The management of English throughout the school is satisfactory. The teaching guidance has recently been reviewed in the light of the literacy strategy and it offers some useful practical suggestions to develop the full range of skills in English. Teachers are therefore satisfactorily using the lesson structure of the national strategy. A systematic approach to assessment has not been fully developed to ensure that children progressively build upon their skills. In the past, teacher assessments at both key stages have been relatively higher than test results. This improved in the 2000 assessments. The school is now better placed to develop a thorough system for ensuring consistency in teacher assessment through moderation and standardisation. This, potentially, will have a positive impact on raising English standards.

## MATHEMATICS

114. Standards are broadly average at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils are achieving well in Key Stage 1 and satisfactorily in Key Stage 2 because of sound to good teaching based upon the national numeracy strategy.
115. Attainment in national tests has shown considerable variation in recent years, from very high to below average, partly because the small cohorts exaggerate the variations between years. In the last two years, in comparison with other schools through national tests, the standards at Key Stage 2 have been relatively lower than those at the time of the last inspection. The number of pupils joining and leaving the school has been increasing in recent years and this movement has had an influence on the final standards attained. Girls tend to attain higher standards in national assessments than boys, although this is not as noticeable in individual classes where numbers are small.
116. In the most recent national tests (2000) standards at Key Stage 1 were well above average, and in comparison with similar schools they were above average. Standards at Key Stage 2 were average, and well above the average for similar schools.
117. Those pupils currently in the last years of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are reaching standards that are at least average. In Key Stage 1 pupils are achieving better than might have been expected given their below-average skills when they start school. They are achieving these standards because they have good teaching that enables them to learn well in a small class. In Key Stage 2 pupils are achieving standards that are satisfactory given their previous attainment. The sound teaching they receive combined with the small size of groups in the lower part of the key stage help pupils learn satisfactorily and sometimes well in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs generally make good progress in learning.
118. In Key Stage 1 pupils achieve their understanding of number through using and learning number relationships. The youngest children learn to count and acquire an understanding of number, shape and measures. Pupils learn simple number conventions and strategies for adding and subtraction. Particular emphasis is placed on the mental and oral aspects of their work. Their work shows evidence of using money, understanding the value of coins and making graphs. They match patterns and sequences and use mathematical vocabulary. In their work on shapes pupils learn correct mathematical language, gain an understanding of dimension and learn the criteria which define their properties such as numbers of sides and the shape of faces.
119. In Key Stage 2 pupils become particularly proficient in mental and oral work and by Year 6 they demonstrate this by adding and subtracting numbers and decimals with ease and without writing them down. They learn good strategies for calculating which involve rounding and adjusting numbers. There is evidence of a wide range of mathematical activity that covers measuring, data-handling, shape and problem-solving. However, insufficient recording of pupils' work takes place to demonstrate practice in calculating, use of standard methods and problem solving. Pupils need this recording in order to review and revise their approaches and learn from a greater understanding of their own performance.

120. Pupils' learning of mathematics is satisfactory overall and good in Key Stage 1. They build on early counting and number recognition skills and progress to completing addition and subtraction sentences using conventional signs and symbols. Throughout Key Stage 1 pupils' learning proceeds rapidly and encompasses the development of initial skills in the areas of number, shape and measure.
121. At Key Stage 2 the pace of learning is slower and, while pupils cover the required curriculum adequately, the match of work to pupils' age and ability is less secure. Tasks are broadly varied according to pupils' ability across classes containing two age groups. Curriculum planning needs to take more account of pupils being in one class for two years and the order of learning mathematical skills. The assessment system does not help teachers enough in identifying what pupils need to do next in order to make progress.
122. Pupils enjoy mathematics lessons and this helps them to learn. They are attentive and generally concentrate well. Pupils know what they have to do and many know what they are expected to learn. They are confident in contributing to discussions and work well together. Relationships in mathematics lessons are good and pupils often help each other and listen carefully to each other's explanations. Occasionally a small minority of pupils will talk while the teacher is giving instructions and this tends to detract from the quality of teaching and learning.
123. The quality of teaching is good in the foundation stage and in Key Stage 1 and is satisfactory with good features at Key Stage 2. Lessons are well planned and organised and pupils are told clearly what they are expected to do and in the best lessons what they are expected to learn. Lessons start on time and are conducted at a good pace following the structure advised in the national numeracy strategy. Class discussions are usually well conducted. Questions are challenging and well directed to individual pupils to promote thinking and understanding. Teachers' mathematical knowledge is generally good and they use a range of teaching styles to carry out different aspects of lessons, retain pupils' interest and make clear explanations. Teachers have appropriately high expectations of pupils and this is reflected in the learning that takes place.
124. The mathematics curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Successful implementation of the national numeracy strategy alongside a recent revision of the school's policy and guidance has secured a sound foundation from which to further raise standards in mathematics. The subject co-ordinator has made a good beginning in monitoring the teaching and learning in mathematics and is aware that the use of secure assessment and systematic teaching of skills will lead to improvement when fully implemented.

## SCIENCE

125. Pupils attain average standards at Key Stage 1. Standards at Key Stage 2 are below average, because pupils do not do enough scientific investigations.
126. Standards vary each year in each key stage. This is partly because there are only a few pupils in each year group. This also makes judgements using statistical data less reliable than in larger schools. However, standards in Key Stage 2 have fallen since the last inspection when they were above average. Girls tend to attain higher standards in national assessments than boys, although this is not as noticeable in individual classes where numbers are small.
127. Standards in Key Stage 1 in the most recent statutory teacher assessments (2000) were least above average. This is at least as good as the standards at the last inspection. All of the 13 seven year olds reached the expected level (Level 2) which was a very high figure when compared with other schools. An average number attained the higher level (Level 3). In comparison with similar schools, standards were at the least well above average. In the previous year (1999), standards were around the national average and an improvement on previous years.
128. Pupils who are currently in the last year of Key Stage 1 reach standards at this stage which are broadly as should be expected. They achieve this standard because of good quality teaching. For instance, pupils satisfactorily investigate science topics such as "What makes a healthy lunch?" They transfer information, make records and use simple graphs to show the information that they have collected. Pupils recognise some of the ways that bodies change as they grow older and put information about this into a sequence. They could do better by doing more investigations where they suggest what may happen and then compare the results they get.
129. In the most recent national tests (2000) for Key Stage 2, standards were below the national average but above those of similar schools. The proportion of pupils who reached a higher level (Level 5) was average when compared with all schools, but above average when compared with similar schools. Standards in the previous year were well below average.
130. Pupils currently in the last year of Key Stage 2 are reaching standards that are below what is expected nationally. Although pupils are learning satisfactorily in lessons, they have not previously learned as much as they could about scientific processes and investigation. However, other pupils in this key stage are reaching satisfactory standards for their age and their previous standards in Key Stage 1 because they have had a better grounding in the subject. At the time of the last inspection standards in that Year 6 class were judged to be around average, but by the time of the national assessments in that year pupils achieved above average standards. The school has set high targets for the current Year 6 group.

131. Pupils in Key Stage 2 do better in learning about the content of the subject than they do in learning how to do scientific investigations. This is because the school has placed more emphasis on those areas. Higher-attaining pupils know about such features as the apparent change in the sun's position and how this affects shadows, they classify substances, they know the differences between evaporation and condensation, and have some limited knowledge of the parts of plants and flowers. Other pupils have covered the same subject content but have less understanding of the features. All pupils could do better if they did more scientific studies. For instance, although they can use scientific keys satisfactorily, and record observations, they do not learn enough about deciding the investigational approaches to use, to vary the factors in experiments or to use graphical techniques to analyse results and come to conclusions.
132. Because of the small numbers in each cohort, differences seen between boys and girls were not significant in work seen, although results over a longer period have shown that girls do better than boys in both key stages. This reflects the different standards that pupils have when they start school.
133. In both key stages pupils do not have sufficient skills in using information and communication technology to help them to learn the subject. This is because they are not taught this aspect of the subject well enough.
134. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good and so pupils learn well. This is because the approach was positive and challenging and backed up by practical activity. For instance pupils watched a video about parts of a plant, looked at an example and then worked in pairs to identify features on diagrams. The teaching made pupils think carefully and relate the topic to their own lives. Pupils learned in an atmosphere of good relationships between different age groups.
135. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory in helping pupils, including those with special educational needs, to learn effectively. This is because the teaching enables pupils to gain information about their new topics, consolidate previous learning and develop new vocabulary. Teaching is most effective in this school when pupils are encouraged to think about the effect of science on their own lives, such as in a lesson about healthy eating where pupils developed an understanding of the need of food to provide energy. Teaching of a whole class together and using a big book to explain was particularly useful. Teaching was less effective when the pace was too slow or unchallenging. There is a particular difficulty in teaching large mixed-age classes when the teacher tries to operate a complicated system of tasks resulting in too much time being spent on organisation. A small number of pupils in Key Stage 2 do not concentrate as well as they should, meaning that they do not listen to the teacher well enough and some talk when they should not. Teachers work hard to overcome this through positive approaches to discipline, but the interruptions from pupils slows the pace of learning.

136. Although the progress of pupils overall in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory, pupils currently in Year 6 have not made enough progress yet. The school has identified disruptions to teaching that occurred earlier in the key stage as a reason for this, although it was not possible to confirm this by inspection. Further factors include the size of the mixed-age class and the school's lack of focus on developing the subject in recent years. This means that although there has been some lesson monitoring there is not enough focus on knowing about pupils' standards. This means that it is difficult for teachers to set work that is well matched to the pupils' range of attainments. The assessment system does not ensure that marking improves the quality of work. The school has rightly spent some time this year reviewing the subject with LEA support and now needs to translate the revised policy and guidelines into more effective classroom practice.

## **ART**

137. No art lessons were seen during the inspection, however, from an analysis of pupils' work on display and from examination of previous work, the school demonstrates that levels of attainment are in line with expectations at both key stages. This is an improvement from the previous inspection when art was judged to be below average in Key Stage 2. The standards in art no longer remain an issue. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily.
138. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make steady progress in developing their art skills. They learn about primary colours and develop their skills in choosing tools for the task. They use a range of materials and methods to represent different textures. A particular feature of the Key Stage 1 environment is the way in which children use their art and craft skills to produce a range of materials to enhance the "storysack" library. Children have developed work using tone, shape, colour and texture to produce this exciting display.
139. At Key Stage 2 pupils understand the importance of colour and design when first drawing. Pupils often link their art and craft work to other subject areas. For instance, in Years 2 and 3 much of the displayed art work was linked to the history theme of Romans. Older pupils use their developing visual perception to record their observations of human life.
140. All pupils have a working sketchbook to illustrate the development of their ideas and processes. Increasingly, this approach is encouraging pupils to develop, consolidate and evaluate their work.
141. Displays around the school are used well to encourage children's natural curiosity. Often they are used as a teaching point, to arouse interest and discussion. On many occasions they are used to reward individual children's efforts to increase self-esteem and acknowledge their achievements.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

142. Only two lessons of design and technology were observed during the inspection. However, sufficient evidence was inspected including displayed work, photographs and teachers' planning to allow judgements to be made.
143. Attainment at the end of both key stages is at the nationally expected level. This is a good improvement from the last inspection when the standards were below average in Key Stage 2 and design and technology no longer remains an issue.
144. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils design and cut out paper patterns for "Joseph's multi-coloured coat". They follow instructions with care and create designs selecting from a variety of materials. They clarify their knowledge through discussion and gather design ideas from fabric samples in a Year 2 design and technology lesson pupils were able to select appropriate tools and use them correctly to make a vegetable dip. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils design and make slippers. They make prototypes from paper before using fabric and discuss problems such as size and seam allowance to ensure a correct fit. Pupils are able to discuss different types of structures for shelters, considering the most appropriate way to make a strong, secure shelter.

145. Pupils respond well to lessons at both key stages. They concentrate on tasks and develop their ideas successfully. In both key stages pupils work together and co-operate well. They quickly organise materials and make alternative suggestions when faced with problems.
146. Teaching of design and technology is good. Instructions are explained in a careful way to ensure that all pupils understand. Pupils are motivated because practical tasks are interesting and well matched to their ability levels. Resources are carefully planned, available and accessible so that pupils can immediately access the learning.
147. Design and technology is well co-ordinated. Useful guidelines support teachers' work. The school has a good range of resources that are stored in classrooms and central areas.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

148. It was possible to see only a limited range of evidence and just one geography lesson. However, there is sufficient information to indicate that pupils are working broadly at expected levels at both key stages and achieving satisfactorily through sound teaching that has some good features.
149. In Key Stage 1 pupils are aware of their own local area. This is because the teaching has provided opportunities for them to consider what is good and bad about their environment. They have also studied how the area is changing, for instance why buildings become used for different purposes. The teaching makes good use of photographic display to stimulate pupils' thoughts.
150. In Key Stage 2 pupils are aware about the environmental problems of nearby areas. This is because the school has organised fieldwork to study a local stream. This enquiry approach is useful and pupils have written to the Environment Agency for river pollution information. During this fieldwork pupils have collected and recorded information, drawn field sketches and improved their knowledge of specific geographical words associated with streams and rivers. They have investigated the more difficult aspect of how they and other people feel about pollution, which is a level of study in line with what is expected in the subject. Higher-attaining pupils can relate a map to a real settlement.
151. Teaching stimulates pupils' interest in rivers and many of the older pupils have completed wide ranging projects about rivers of the world. Pupils could improve their work in projects by using their study to answer a geographical question. Many pupils used ICT in their studies, showing that they can extract relevant information from CD-ROMs. The teaching approach in the classroom, which draws on pupils' own experiences and recent events, helps pupils to learn satisfactorily. The teaching makes good use of well prepared resources and this helps to set a good model for pupils' work.
152. Standards are similar to those at the time of the last inspection. Since that time the school has reviewed its documentation and the curriculum, now relying very heavily on nationally produced schemes of work to supplement previous approaches. This is proving effective in improving teachers' planning and in focusing work on the most important aspects of the subject. It has allowed standards to be maintained.

## **HISTORY**

153. Although it was possible to see only a limited range of evidence and just one history lesson, there is sufficient information to indicate that pupils are working at levels broadly in line with national expectations at both key stages and achieving satisfactorily.
154. In Key Stage 1 pupils are beginning to show knowledge of recent changes, particularly for those affecting the local area. They can place events in order, as when the study the development of the human body in science. They can tell stories about the recent past.
155. In Key Stage 2 pupils are beginning to suggest areas of study. They successfully investigate artefacts, such as those from the Aztec civilisation. Pupils learn satisfactorily because they consider possible uses for good quality artefacts provided by the teacher. Higher-attaining and older pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of some major dates associated with their work. Other pupils know how to extract simple information from secondary sources. Pupils are beginning to understand some of the distinctive features of previous civilisations. For instance, pupils in one class spent time making head-dresses and mosaics typical of the period being studied. Pupils should use ICT more to support their learning, but the school does not yet have all of the resources that it needs to make progress.
156. The teaching that was seen was good because the teacher encouraged pupils to research topics and provided them with good resources and therefore pupils learned well. This was despite the difficulties the teacher had of dealing with many different activities in the classroom. In this instance, support from another adult in the classroom was effective in allowing practical work to continue.
157. At the time of the last inspection, standards were judged average in Key Stage 1 and above average in Key Stage 2. Although there was not enough evidence available to confirm the latter judgement, it is evident that the school has good access to resources to support pupils' learning and knowledge about history. For instance, the school has close links with Beamish Museum which is close by, and also has a classroom set up in Victorian style for pupils to experience some features of a previous age. The school has revised its curriculum and is making use of nationally produced schemes of work that will help to support the existing good practice.

## **INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

158. Standards in Key Stages 1 and 2 are below average and insufficient progress has been made since the last inspection because there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to learn, resources are not yet all available, and teachers are not yet adequately trained.
159. No lessons were seen where teachers actually taught ICT skills, so no overall judgement is made about the quality of teaching. Computers were available in all classes and were sometimes used as part of their work in other subjects, but pupils often worked on their own. Teachers' planning has little reference to the development of ICT skills. There was very little evidence of pupils' use of information technology in their previous work; however, there was sufficient evidence from discussions with pupils and teachers to allow judgements to be made about standards and achievement.

160. Standards in ICT are below the expectations of the National Curriculum and pupils do not achieve well enough. Standards have not improved since the last inspection. At that time pupils were below average in Key Stage 2, they are now below average in Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils in both key stages gain knowledge and understanding across most aspects of the subject, but they do not have the opportunity to develop skills they need in order to be able to use computers usefully and independently.
161. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have not gained sufficient confidence to use computers purposefully across the curriculum. For example, as part of a Year 2 science lesson, the teacher had set up a computer programme about labelling different parts of a plant. This was unsuccessful because the task was too difficult and the pupils could not make it work properly. They were, however, able to use the mouse. Overall, pupils do not have the confidence to handle the equipment and software independently.
162. By Year 6 pupils have had experience of word-processing and of using information technology to investigate other subject areas. In a Year 5 and 6 history lesson, two pupils were able to access information from a CD-ROM but this did not help their historical knowledge or skills. Older pupils have used CD-ROMs to investigate a topic in geography for homework and shown that they can extract and print maps, photographs and text. Pupils are not confident in using computers to communicate ideas, for example by combining text, pictures and sound. They are beginning to use spreadsheets and have had experience of other forms of data-handling but are not confident with control technology.
163. A satisfactory policy is in place that indicates that rational guidance will be used to ensure progression and continuity for the development of information technology skills. A number of teachers lack confidence with information technology and are very aware of shortfalls in their own expertise and experience. A development plan has been written in preparation for the school's involvement in the National Grid for Learning and New Opportunities Fund ICT Training. This useful plan offers clear direction for the development of information technology throughout the school when funding becomes available. The school has recently had electrical updating to accommodate new information technology systems and software is being installed.
164. The co-ordinator has a clear idea of future developments and has rightly identified a range of strategies to monitor the effect of these on pupil progress. Links are being made with the nearby secondary school to ensure that all children will have an e-mail address in the very near future.

## **MUSIC**

165. During the inspection no music lessons were observed. However, teachers' planning, music in assemblies, groups outside lessons and instrumental tuition indicate that standards continue to be average as they were at the time of the last inspection.
166. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are achieving as well as they should because of the varied ways in which they learn about the subject and develop their skills. They can sing vigorously and usually tunefully. Pupils enjoy singing, they know the words to a wide selection of songs by heart. Younger pupils demonstrated their enthusiasm for singing by spontaneously breaking into song from an incidental cue. A well-supported recorder group meets at lunchtime. Boys and girls of all ages and different levels of skill play well together and often learn from each other. Pupils are proud of their skills and work hard to improve their performance.

167. The small group of pupils who receive instrumental tuition on the trumpet are keen to learn. They follow instructions carefully and handle their instruments with care. Pupils in the group have developed a good relationship with their teacher and enjoy learning the specialist skills associated with their instrument. More generally, all pupils enjoy listening to the carefully selected music played at the beginning of assemblies. This contributes to their cultural development and demonstrates well the emotions which different styles of music can evoke.
168. Music makes an effective contribution to the school's curriculum. It is well supported by a good range of percussion instruments, some of which are tuned. The co-ordinator for music provides an expertise and enthusiasm that clearly encourages pupils' interest and enjoyment.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

169. During the time of the inspection it was only possible to observe a small number of lessons. These, together with the curriculum which is in place, and the good quality of teachers' planning, serve to indicate average and sometimes good standards of attainment throughout the school. Standards remain similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection.
170. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress and achieve satisfactory standards from the levels of attainment they have when starting school.
171. The youngest pupils can change their clothes and know how to behave correctly when they are being taught in a large open space. They work with care and confidence, developing control and trying hard to improve their skills and performance. Some pupils are able to work together and discuss their activities they are going to perform.
172. Older pupils make satisfactory progress and by the end of Key Stage 2 they can demonstrate a wide range of dance and games skills. They can move well with grace and balance indicating that they have developed a measure of precision and discipline to their work.
173. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and occasionally good or very good. The best lessons help pupils to learn very well because activities are well planned and organised. Pupils know and follow the particular conventions required to enable safe physical activity to take place. This is well established throughout the school. Teachers encourage pupils to perform tasks correctly by providing demonstrations and allowing time for practice. Opportunities are provided for pupils to work independently and they often respond well with imaginative ideas for using apparatus or moving from place to place.
174. The school's curriculum for physical education is enhanced by out-of-lesson activities such as football and netball. There is a wide range of equipment for pupils to use and the accommodation is good. Teaching is well supported by sound guidance and National Curriculum requirements for physical education are met.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

175. Attainment in religious education matches levels expected through the locally Agreed Syllabus. The school has maintained the standards identified in the last inspection.
176. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. This is evidenced from the small number of lessons observed during the inspection, all of which were at Key Stage 2. By the time they leave the school pupils can consider their own lives and actions in relation to simple moral codes. They can explore the meaning of stories, drawing on their own experiences to gain a deeper understanding of abstract ideas and feelings such as “anger” and “hope”. In assemblies and religious education lessons younger pupils learn Bible stories and stories from other world religions. These have a clear message which teachers skilfully align with their own experiences.
177. The quality of teaching observed is generally good. The teachers prepare their lessons well and use interesting materials such as a tin of tuna fish, very effectively. Pupils confidently enter into discussions about, for example, the events in the life of Buddha and his actions. Pupils are beginning to appreciate points of view other than their own through religious education. This serves to enhance the development of pupils’ social and moral values that are a feature of learning throughout the school.
178. School assemblies and smaller gatherings such as “family” assemblies serve to complement the school’s work in religious education and together they contribute strongly to the ethos of the school.