

INSPECTION REPORT

**WASHINGWELL COMMUNITY PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Whickham

Newcastle upon Tyne

LEA area: Gateshead

Unique reference number: 108356

Headteacher: Mr I. Morton

Reporting inspector: Mrs G. Crew
22837

Dates of inspection: 16th – 20th October 2000

Inspection number: 224819

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Community Primary
School category:	Infant and Junior
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bucks Hill View Broom Lane Whickham Newcastle upon Tyne
Postcode:	NE16 4RB
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs B. Smith
Date of previous inspection:	20 th January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs G. Crew OIN: 22837	Registered inspector	English	What sort of school is it?
		Art and design	The school's results and the pupil's or students' achievements
		Physical education	How well are the pupils or students taught?
		Religious education	How well is the school led and managed?
		Foundation Stage of learning	
Mrs K. Anderson OIN: 9572	Lay inspector		Pupil's attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils or students?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr A. Hicks OIN: 25778	Team inspector	Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils or students?
		Information and communication technology	
		Music	
Mrs C. Caniff OIN: 18703	Team inspector	Mathematics	
		Design and technology	
		Geography	
		History	
		Equal opportunities	
		Special educational needs	

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Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	15
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	19
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	21
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	24
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	25
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	28
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	29
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN	

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Washingwell Primary school admits children in the September of the year they are five. Pupils transfer to the next stage of education at eleven. The number on roll, 162, has decreased from 190 since the last inspection due to the decline in the number of young children in the school's local catchment area, which is predominately owner-occupied housing. Attainment on in-take into the reception class is below national expectations. There are 17 pupils eligible for free school meals, which is broadly in line with the national average and 34 pupils on the school's special needs register. This is in line with the national average. There are no pupils for whom English is a second language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with many significant strengths. Standards pupils attain by the end of Key Stage 2 are above average for their age when compared nationally. Teaching is good overall. This results in effective learning; pupils are challenged and make good progress whatever their previous attainment. The contribution of the headteacher, governing body and key staff in managing the school is very good. Very good planning and monitoring of performance means that effective action is taken to continually improve. The school applies the principles of best value in most aspects of development and expenditure, therefore making good use of all resources available for the benefit of pupils. A stimulating learning environment, that promotes pupils' intellectual, creative and physical development, is provided. The school is constantly striving to improve standards further and provides good value for money. The shared commitment and capacity to improve further is very good.

What the school does well

- The reflection of the school's aims and values in all that happens in the school is excellent.
- Leadership and management of the school, including clear identification of strengths and weaknesses and action taken to improve, are very good.
- The learning opportunities made for pupils' personal, social and health education are outstanding.
- Links with the community and partner institutions make an excellent contribution to pupils' learning.
- The Foundation Stage provides the pupils with a very good start to their education.
- Assessment procedures, and the use of information to inform planning for groups or individual pupils are very good in literacy and numeracy.
- Links with parents and their impact on the work of the school is very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in Year 4.
- Standards in information and communication technology.
- Schemes of work in art and design and design and technology.
- The balance of the curriculum and the use of time available for teaching.
- Assessment procedures in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The previous inspection identified several good features of the school, but also serious weaknesses to be addressed. The headteacher, key staff and governors have worked diligently to improve provision and raise standards. Improvement has been good. School development planning has been refined and it is monitored and evaluated regularly to assess the impact of priorities. Standards have improved in English, mathematics, science and religious education. Improvement in planning has been good due to the implementation of

detailed schemes of work. Pupils' knowledge and understanding are built on progressively through the school. Teachers make very good use of assessment in English and mathematics so there is improved understanding of pupils' attainment and progress. The school recognises the need to raise standards in information and communication technology. There has been satisfactory improvement in the presentation of pupils' work, particularly writing. Expectations of what pupils can do have improved and are generally good. In addition, the majority of teachers identify the key objectives in a lesson so that they are sure what knowledge they want to impart to pupils and help them acquire skills and understanding. Whilst this has improved the quality of teaching overall there continues to be unsatisfactory teaching in Key Stage 2. Improvement in punctuality and marking registers has been good.

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	C	D	B	A
Mathematics	C	E	B	B
Science	C	D	B	B

Key	
Well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

By the time they leave school pupils are achieving high standards in English, mathematics and science, and are doing very well by the time they leave in English. Taking the pupils' performance together over the last three years they have attained broadly in line with the national trend. In the tests and assessments at the end of Key Stage1, in the Year 2000, pupils achieved well above the average in comparison with all schools and similar schools in reading, writing and mathematics. In the end of Key Stage 2 tests, performance was above average when compared to all schools. In comparison with similar schools it was well above average in English and above in mathematics and science. The school exceeded the targets set for improving standards. Work seen during the inspection confirms these high standards are being maintained in English, mathematics and science. All pupils achieve well in terms of their earlier attainment and work seen in lessons was generally demanding in these subjects. Standards are in line with expectations in religious education, but below in information and communication technology.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are generally motivated and show enthusiasm.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good overall. Behaviour lapses when teaching is unsatisfactory. Pupils are usually polite to adults and each other. They generally concentrate well and get on sensibly and independently.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is very good. Pupils co-operate well and take responsibility for many tasks in class and around school. The 'kids council' gives pupils a very good opportunity to contribute to school development. Relationships are very good overall.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is satisfactory in 21 percent of lessons. In 35 percent of lessons it is good and in 30 percent very good. One excellent lesson was observed when a very specific spelling programme tailored to meet pupils' individual needs was delivered. However, 12 percent of teaching is unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is a strength. Staff understand the needs of young children very well. This is reflected in the activities planned and the challenges set. In Key Stage 1, teaching is good overall. Lessons are planned well and work is targeted to build on pupils' skills and knowledge progressively so that they make good progress. In Key Stage 2 teaching is more variable. When lessons are good and better the subject matter is interesting and activities motivate pupils well. Particular attention is given to supporting pupils with special educational needs and presenting challenging work for the brightest pupils. All unsatisfactory teaching is in Key Stage 2 lessons. Lessons do not place sufficient demands on pupils to ensure that learning is satisfactory. Planning is not precise and does not clearly identify what it is the pupils are expected to know and do. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good overall and pupils are achieving well as a result. Pupils use their skills to support learning in other subjects. Good features of teaching mean pupils are helped to learn effectively because they concentrate well, listen carefully to their teachers and each other and work independently.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of learning opportunities are good, but the balance and allocation of time to some subjects is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Individual education plans are of a good quality and set relevant and achievable targets that are reviewed regularly.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is a strong emphasis on developing very good moral and social attitudes. Spiritual awareness and self-knowledge are strong features in the daily life of the school. Pupils have a very good knowledge of their cultural heritage, but their understanding of the richness and diversity of other cultures is more limited.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good overall. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are excellent. All pupils are supported very well in their personal development. Data available is being used effectively to track progress and target work for all pupils in literacy and numeracy

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher has a depth of insight and vision for the school that is based on continuous improvement. Co-ordinators for English, mathematics, science, religious education and early years have been influential in raising standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good overall. They provide clear direction and are very keen to support the school in the best possible way and to act as a critical friend. Their understanding of strengths and weaknesses is very good.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The reflective way in which the majority of staff monitor and evaluate strengths and weaknesses and identify priorities is very good.
The strategic use of resources	Resources available to the school are used well and always with a view as to how their use will influence learning opportunities. Principles of best value are applied well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • Behaviour is good. • Children make good progress. • Parents can approach the school with questions or a problem. • School helps the pupils to be mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents are concerned about the amount of homework. Some feel there is too much, others not enough. • A small number of parents do not feel well informed about progress and feel that expectations of the children are not high enough. • The range of activities outside lessons.

Inspection confirms the positive views of the parents. Evidence gathered during the inspection supports some of the views held by the cross-section of parents who attended the meeting and responded to the questionnaire, but not others. Inspectors judge the homework programme and the use of pupils' work in school to be satisfactory. There are many ways in which parents are informed about progress, but the quality and depth does vary depending on the teacher and could be more consistent. Generally expectations of what pupils can do are good. However, in some lessons seen expectations were not sufficiently demanding in Key Stage 2. The range of activities outside lessons is good. Visits, visitors and extra-curricular clubs have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Standards of attainment for children on entry to the school are below expectation overall. Staff work hard to develop children's personal and social education so that they have a firm foundation on which to build as they settle into the school. Children are provided with appropriate activities and experiences that cover six areas of learning. They are frequently provided with opportunities to develop skills and knowledge across several areas simultaneously. For example, when using the sand tray they search for hidden stones and compare their size and shape when they find them. They are developing language, mathematics and their social skills all at the same time. All children have a full year in the reception class and this gives even the younger pupils the opportunity to have had sufficient experiences to prepare them for the Key Stage 1 curriculum. By the time they are at the end of the reception year, most of the pupils have made good progress and achieve the learning goals for this Foundation Stage.

2. The school has given high priority to teaching reading in ability groups and has linked this to individual spelling programmes. A greater emphasis has been placed on developing pupils' understanding of basic number skills within mathematics lessons and a scheme of work, that allows pupils to develop their skills systematically, has been introduced in science. Improvement in standards has taken place as a result.

3. In the Year 2000 tests and assessments, the percentage of pupils in Key Stage 1 achieving the expected level and above is well above the national average, and the average for similar schools, in reading, writing and mathematics. In science, standards were in line with the national average and the average for similar schools. The results in Year 2000 tests and assessments represent a considerable improvement overall in this key stage.

4. In Key Stage 2, trends over time show that the pupils' performance has been well below the national average. The co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science have analysed the results of tests and assessments very closely and set very specific targets for improving performance at particular levels for each subject. As a result, they pitched teaching in more focused way and this had a positive impact on the standards achieved in the Year 2000 tests and assessments. When compared to all schools, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level and above is above average in English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 2. In comparison to similar schools, pupils achieved well above average in English and above average in mathematics and science. These achievements represent a significant improvement from the previous year.

5. Each year the number of pupils taking the tests is relatively small and this makes comparison of data year on year insecure. It is more important for the school to analyse the performance of each group of pupils against their own previous performance and against previous data on the performance of the group in order to assess if pupils are making sufficient progress. The school's procedures for assessing what pupils know and can do are very good in English and mathematics and good in science. Good use is being made of statistical data available to track how well pupils

are doing. Furthermore, the school has set challenging targets for pupils, either individually or for groups, so that their prior learning is built on systematically and they make good progress by the time they leave the school.

6. In work seen during the inspection, pupils' attainments in English, mathematics and science are generally above expectations by the time pupils are in Year 6. After a generally low standard on entry to the school pupils of all abilities make good progress to reach this level by the end of Key Stage 2.

7. Speaking and listening skills are developed well from the time pupils start in school and they quickly become confident to talk in front of the class. In Key Stage 2, pupils are generally confident to contribute their ideas and opinions to class discussion, although a significant minority, who have special educational needs, do not have a wide vocabulary. In reading, all pupils achieve well because of the support that they receive in well-targeted group sessions each week. In Key Stage 1, pupils' handwriting is usually formed well and by the time pupils are in upper Key Stage 2 standards of handwriting are almost always at the expected level for pupils of this age. Work from the previous year shows that a significant number of pupils have developed good flair and personal style when writing. Pupils write for a range of purposes and this is frequently linked to work in other subjects, for example writing about the Tudor period in history.

8. In mathematics, pupils build on their knowledge of number and apply this to help them to solve number sums. As they move through the school, they improve their knowledge and understanding of space, shape and measure. Pupils are grouped by ability and work is pitched at a level that builds on what they have done before. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils can order numbers to a hundred and count on and back from different numbers in multiples of ten. They recognise the relationship between addition and subtraction and say and write the subtraction fact corresponding to a given addition fact. They use their understanding of addition and subtraction to solve simple money problems. Pupils learn the names and features of common two and three-dimensional shapes. They are developing a satisfactory understanding of the concept and the vocabulary related to time. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils understand the processes of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They are developing their understanding of the relationship between fractions and percentages. Pupils are able to use a number of mental strategies and pencil and paper methods for solving number problems. They become increasingly familiar with mathematics vocabulary. However, their ability to apply their knowledge and mathematical skills when interpreting word problems is less well developed. Pupils represent and interpret data in a range of tables, charts and graphs.

9. Science topics are planned carefully in each key stage. The published scheme that has been adopted by the school gives clear guidelines to ensure planning is effective. As a result, there are better opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and more opportunities for experimentation. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know that animals and plants need food in order to grow. They make predictions and investigate mixtures of materials. They have a good understanding that once mixed together materials cannot easily be separated again. Pupils experiment well and record work satisfactorily following scientific investigations. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a good understanding of the relationship between living things in food chains and they know how environmental pollution affects life. Pupils can draw bar graphs for tables of data and interpret results correctly. They understand that materials can exist in solid, liquid and gaseous form, and know in simple terms how this is related to molecular structure. Pupils follow well-established investigation procedures to ensure that their testing is fair and use associated vocabulary.

10. In information and communication technology, the standard of attainment is below

national expectations by the end of both key stages. In Key Stage 1, pupils practise simple word processing skills. Although the standard of work was low for pupils of this age, it was appropriately set due to their lack of previous experience. No other completed work was available at the time of inspection in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, a small display of play-scripts show satisfactory attention to layout and editing. Pupils have begun to experiment with a computer-painting program, but the standard of work seen was below that expected for pupils of this age. However, all pupils used the computers confidently. They use the mouse correctly to control routine operations, such as printing work and for closing computers down.

11. In art and design, design and technology, geography, history and music insufficient evidence was available at this time of the year to make a secure judgement on standards. There are no assessment procedures for these subjects and recording of what pupils know and can do is limited. The standard of attainment has improved in physical education since the last inspection when it was in line with age related expectations throughout the school. Standards are now in line with expectations in Key Stage 1 and above expectations in Key Stage 2. The adoption of a policy and specialist teaching has had a positive effect on standards achieved. Standards have improved in religious education and are now in line with expected levels. The school has adopted the locally agreed syllabus and this provides clear guidance to help staff with their planning. Religious education is taught as a discrete subject, rather than making tenuous links to whole school themes, and standards are monitored and evaluated on a regular basis. These factors have contributed positively to improved performance.

12. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, relative to their prior attainment. Teaching and support is given to pupils, which relates to their individual needs. The progress of more able pupils is in line with their peers. Graded and extension work for more able pupils is usually provided at a level which challenges them. However in English and mathematics lessons in Year 4, work is insufficiently levelled to match the ability of pupils in the class and the majority of pupils mark time in the group work element of the lesson.

13. The school has put some initiatives in place that are contributing to raising standards. In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 pupils are taught the appropriate curriculum for their age and are also ability grouped so that all tasks can be pitched at a level appropriate to their needs. This allows pupils to be challenged to achieve their individual best and make good gains in their learning. Additional booster classes are provided in English for pupils who are almost achieving the next level of attainment, and this is improving their achievement. The introduction of individual spelling programmes, and specific spelling group work in Year 5, ensures that pupils can be taught at a level appropriate to their personal ability and need. This has had a positive effect on standards. The school has introduced target setting in English and mathematics and this ensures that work is pitched more closely to the pupils needs. It has also increased the pupils' understanding of what they need to do to improve and helped pupils to achieve better standards. In Key Stage 2, pupils are ability grouped for most lessons so that the work set matches the needs of the group. This generally improves standards, except in Year 4 when planning is unsatisfactory and care is not taken to ensure pupils are building on their earlier learning. During some afternoon sessions specialist teaching occurs in Key Stage 2. This is having a positive effect on standards when the staff have secure subject knowledge for example in physical education, religious education and citizenship lessons. However, in information and communication technology teacher knowledge is insecure and planning is poor. This results in too little attention to imparting knowledge at a level that will challenge pupils' thinking and standards are not improving.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. The school has improved upon the positive pupil attitudes previously identified in the last inspection. It is an orderly community where pupils show enthusiasm, enjoy their work and generally behave very well. Their relationships with staff and each other are very good

15. Pupils come into school and settle down to work quickly and quietly at the beginning of each session. Registration is carried out quickly and no time is wasted at the beginning of lessons or when moving from one activity to another. Parents and pupils agree that children like coming to school. Pupils enjoy the work they do, out of school visits and social events that take place. They talk enthusiastically about what they are doing. A good example was observed in Year 6 when pupils clearly enjoyed their study of the Tudors and took pleasure in talking about the wall displays in their classroom, explaining about what they had learnt. In the playground pupils were pleased to answer questions about their school. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy their work. They learn to concentrate for longer and longer periods. They work hard in lessons, especially when the teaching is good and the task excites them. They do their best for their teachers and the learning support assistants, who encourage independence and determination.

16. Parents, in response to the pre-inspection questionnaire and meeting, all agree that behaviour is good. Inspectors found behaviour in class, around the school and at break times is generally very good. Movement between lessons and at break times is very orderly. An example of very good behaviour is seen when reception children are all fully involved and enthusiastic in a physical education lesson. They respond very quickly and sensibly when their teacher asks them to undertake a range of different movements inside and outside a hoop. In a Year 3 mathematics lesson, a forest of hands goes up to answer the teacher's questions during whole class discussions. In the group work element of the lesson, pupils give the activity their total attention and effort. Pupils who find it more difficult to comply with school expectations of behaviour are generally sensitively managed and take pride in their achievements. They make good progress towards a calm approach to work and sensible attitudes in class. However in a minority of lessons where pupils are less well managed standards of behaviour fall below acceptable levels. An example was observed in an art lesson in Year 4. Pupils were given a task that did not challenge them and so they became disinterested. They talked over the teacher and wandered around the class. Two were seen to be arguing and the learning of the whole class was disrupted.

17. Pupils respond very well to the clear moral and social code that the staff promote and have a clear sense of right and wrong. Pupils all know the class rules, which they helped to compile, and generally keep to their 'lunchtime promises' that they have made with the dinner nannies. Mealtimes are very well organised. Pupils queue quietly to collect their food, sit at allocated tables and chatter happily as they eat their lunch together. A strong emphasis is placed on table manners. Pupils help each other, are polite and friendly to their friends, teachers and visitors. Lunch times are effective in developing pupils' social skills. In the yard, most pupils play sensibly together and are keen to take part in any organised activities, such as lunch time football. There have been no exclusions in recent years.

18. Opportunities for personal development are extensive. Pupils are given a range of responsibilities in school, for instance, as classroom monitors, football captain and packed lunch trolley supervisor. These jobs, which are carried out with diligence and pride, effectively develop pupils' initiative and sense of personal responsibility. Members of the 'kids council' take their job very seriously and show an impressive awareness of their role in the school community. When given the opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning, pupils do so well, although opportunities to do this in lessons are sometimes missed. Reception aged pupils are aware of the class routines and know that they must wear an apron when painting. Older pupils use and select resources, such as dictionaries, independently. They work well

together in pairs and in small groups and help each other when appropriate. For example, in a Year 3 citizenship lesson children discussed the work quietly in pairs before commencing the task. The high standard of motivation of most of children enables them to work and learn without disturbance in the majority of lessons. In the Friday 'achievements' assembly, pupils are given awards for good behaviour and the attitudes they display towards their work. Pupils take pride in their certificates and say 'it feels really good' to be awarded one.

19. Pupils get on well together and learn from each other's ideas and suggestions. They help each other and understand the effect of their actions on others, showing a great respect for the values and beliefs of others. In a Year 3 citizenship lesson, pupils express their feelings when discussing the effects of vandalism. They are aware of the consequences of a selfish act and the impact of this on others. Pupils listen attentively whilst others speak; for example, at the end of a literacy lesson when some pupils read out the start of their newspaper articles about life during the Blitz. Religious education and history programmes of work encourage pupils to consider the values and beliefs of others; for example, when two very young pupils discussed birthdays one clearly understood why the other could not attend her party due to 'what she believes in'. Through the school's chosen charity fund-raising project pupils learn to appreciate the needs of those less fortunate. This year the school is supporting Barnados. They have raised an impressive sum of money as their harvest offering.

20. Relationships with each other and between pupils and staff are very good. Teachers know their pupils very well and are, for the most part, sensitive to their individual needs. Pupils answer teachers' questions with enthusiasm and confidence. A good example was seen in a whole school assembly when the headteacher asked for ideas about which vegetables would be used to make vegetable soup. Many pupils made suggestions and offered to help illustrate the theme.

21. At the time of the inspection attendance levels were satisfactory. Attendance rates for 1999/2000 are in line with national averages. Pupils' time keeping is monitored and few examples of lateness were observed. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

22. The quality of teaching is good overall and has improved from that reported in the previous inspection. Teaching is satisfactory in 21 percent of lessons, good in 35 percent, very good in 30 percent and excellent in 2 percent. However, unsatisfactory teaching was seen in 12 percent of lessons, with 80 percent of this seen in Year 4 lessons. A key issue of the previous report was to improve the teaching in Year 4. The school addressed the issue raised at that time and the school has made good improvement in addressing the aspects identified as being weak in teaching overall. However, current planning, organisation and management are generally unsatisfactory for this year group and this has a negative effect on standards achieved in lessons.

23. The quality of teaching was very good in Foundation Stage, the reception class, overall. The teacher and child-care assistant work very effectively together. They both have a very good knowledge of how young children learn and bring a sense of fun to learning as they realise the importance of children being happy at school. The use of time and resources is excellent and a very good range of activities is planned for the different ability groups in the class. This results in children improving their knowledge and understanding in a structured way. The expectation staff have of what the children can achieve is excellent. Children are helped to understand what is expected of them as staff use simple language to explain tasks.

Children practise the skills they already have in general activities and these are developed further in whole class teaching sessions. Overall, the activities and tasks provided promote very good intellectual and creative learning.

24. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is good overall. The pupils' early learning is built on progressively and the teaching of basic skills is very good, particularly since the implementation of literacy and numeracy strategies. This results in very good acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding. The management of pupils is very good and as a result all pupils pay good attention to what the teacher or learning support assistant tells them. Pace of lessons is generally good and the main objective of lessons is frequently explained through the use of a game. This ensures that pupils concentrate hard, but enjoy learning and show good levels of interest and enthusiasm.

25. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is more variable. Sixty-three percent of lessons in this key stage are judged to be good or better, which includes one lesson that is excellent. Twenty percent of lessons are satisfactory, but a number of these contain unsatisfactory elements of teaching. When teaching is excellent, the programme of work provided is tailored precisely to the needs of the pupils and teaching inspires them to apply effort and concentration to their learning. In very good lessons teachers' personal subject knowledge contributes to motivating the pupils. Organisation of lessons generally allows pupils to be actively involved throughout and tasks place demands on them, which promotes new learning. In the majority of lessons, pupils learn new skills as well as practising more familiar ones and their achievement in lessons is very good. However, the organisation of some lessons to span a whole afternoon, for example in science, is too long for pupil or teacher enthusiasm and pace to be maintained. In addition, several observations in Year 4, and in information and communication technology lessons, the lesson begins well, but the pace drops off and pupils are insufficiently challenged by the overall quality of the lesson. In addition to this, less able pupils are not given sufficient direct support from the teacher to help them achieve what it is they are expected to learn in the lesson.

26. Seventeen percent of lessons in Key Stage 2 are unsatisfactory. These are in Year 4 and in information and communication technology. Planning does not effectively outline what is to be taught and work is insufficiently tailored to meet the needs of the different abilities in the class. Pupils lose interest in the lesson quickly as they are not presented with any challenge and are not helped to understand what to do when the task is too difficult. As a result, pupils become bored and their behaviour is unsatisfactory for some, or most, of the lesson. The teacher does not effectively check this and pupils' learning is affected. Attainment in unsatisfactory lessons is below the expected level and pupils make little progress.

27. The effectiveness of the school's strategy for teaching literacy skills is very good. The majority of staff plan well to ensure that pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are built on as they move through the key stages. This results in clear, organised and logical lesson plans. Good planning leads to teaching that is well structured and tasks are set at an appropriate ability level, rather than merely matched to the age of the pupils in the class. As a result, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and the more able, make gains in their learning based on what they already know and can do. The school has structured the teaching of literacy to include one lesson each week that is for some part focused on improving spelling and handwriting skills. Associated comprehension skills and some writing activities are also built into these sessions. The pupils make good gains in learning due to this intensive work.

28. The effectiveness of the school's strategy for teaching numeracy is very good. Teachers are competent at teaching basic numeracy skills. The organisation of lessons is generally very good and the strategy implemented by the school allows the majority of pupils

to keep up with the work and complete the tasks set. The lessons have a defined structure, which includes a mental mathematics session, followed by a period for teaching or reinforcement of a skill and then a group activity. During this time, teachers generally check pupils' understanding through focused questions and give them individual help if this is required. This contributes to all pupils, including those with special educational needs and the more able, making good progress overall. At the end of the lesson, pupils are confident to answer questions and to give the answer to sums, which gives the teacher an opportunity to assess what the pupils know.

29. The adoption of literacy and numeracy strategies has given consistency to the teaching of English and mathematics. Teachers encourage pupils to use the skills they have learnt in other subjects. For example, pupils' use their knowledge of graphs in science and writing skills to present what they know in history. Teachers generally encourage pupils to write with consistently neat handwriting and present work in way that adds to the overall quality. However, the work seen in Year 4 workbooks, and those of pupils in Year 4 last year, shows that standards are not consistent with those in the rest of the school. The use of information and communication technology to promote standards in literacy and numeracy is under-developed. For example, pupils were not seen to be confident to use simple programs to word process or read information from the Internet.

30. The effectiveness of teachers' planning is very good in Foundation Stage and good in Key Stage 1. The long-term plans are translated into a good range of activities for each age range. These are then further adapted for different ability groups. This results in suitable challenges being set for pupils. The pace of work and productivity of learning is very good in the Foundation Stage and good in Key Stage 1. Pupils understand what is expected of them because the staff are clear what it is they want the pupils to learn. They take care to explain this in precise and understandable language. As a result, pupils achieve well and make good progress.

31. In Key Stage 2, planning is satisfactory overall, although there are limited planned opportunities for pupils to use their initiative within lessons. Weekly plans for subjects other than English and mathematics are an overview of what is to be learnt. This is effective when lesson plans are broken into small steps that make it clear precisely what it is the teacher wants the pupils to learn as a result of the lesson. However, this is not consistent across the key stage and the rate of progress varies as a result. Schemes of work for subjects contribute to ensuring that short term planning can build progressively on what they know and can do. However, the lack of schemes in art and design and design and technology means that staff do not have a clear reference point to build on year on year. As a result, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have not made the best progress possible in these subjects. The time planned for teaching science, humanities, art and design, music and drama frequently spans a double period. While teachers try to plan lessons effectively to cover this time, the sessions are too long and the pace of learning is not maintained, resulting in only satisfactory progress by the end of the lesson.

32. In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, there is a very good emphasis placed on developing a positive climate for learning. This results in a very good level of intellectual and creative learning. Pupils show good interest in their work, keep a good level of concentration on their tasks and even the youngest think for themselves. This contributes to the good progress they make. In Key Stage 2 the majority of pupils face the challenge of learning tasks positively and learning is good overall. However, while some lessons begin well and demands are placed on pupils, teachers do not consistently maintain the momentum of this pace following the introduction. As a result, the effort pupils put into tasks dwindles as the lesson progresses and learning opportunities are lost. In addition, in lessons in Year 4 and for information and communication technology, insufficient opportunities occur for lower ability

groups to benefit from direct teaching at the level they require to help them get on well. Pupils become bored or disenchanted and occasionally opt out altogether. Overall, pupils' learning, including the pace at which they work and how much they do in a lesson, is good, but work is not consistently challenging across Key Stage 2 and there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use personal research skills and initiative.

33. In Foundation Stage the use of learning support staff and volunteers is excellent and it is good in the rest of the school. This contributes most effectively to pupils' learning. In the Foundation Stage, the contribution that the child-care assistant makes to pupils' learning is outstanding. Her work in providing relaxation programmes to pupils throughout the rest of the school is exemplary. This use of her personal skill makes an outstanding contribution to the overall climate for learning and pupils' personal development. Adults have lesson plans that outline what it is they are required to do. In good and better lessons they are well briefed and they work with the teacher as a team encouraging, supporting and praising the pupils thus giving them consistent messages about how well they are doing. When teaching is less than satisfactory, the learning support assistants use their initiative very well and offer good support to groups or individual pupils, which contributes effectively to the progress they make in the lesson. The use of time is good overall. However, the time available in some lessons, for example science and humanities, is too long and pupils could achieve just as much in a shorter time if teaching and learning was more focused. This is particularly evident in Key Stage 2.

34. Opportunities for assessing what the pupils know and can do occur during lessons when teachers ask pupils questions to check their understanding. This is very good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in the rest of the school. In Key Stages 1 and 2, the final part of lessons is frequently used to review what has been covered in the session. However, these opportunities are not used effectively to help the pupils understand whether they have achieved what the teacher intended, or to explain how they could further improve. Marking of pupils' work is generally consistent, but the use made of the pupils' own work to help them understand their own learning is inconsistent. There is evidence to show that teachers sometimes ask pupils to redo work to help them understand. However, this is not always effective in Key Stage 2, as work is not consistently rechecked to ensure that pupils have understood and will not make the same mistakes again; learning is not improved and this has a negative effect on standards. Evidence of this was seen in Year 4. Assessment and evaluation is built into most of the planning. In most classes it is clear to see how this information is used to inform teachers' future plans and to set targets for pupils so that they know what they need to do to improve. However, this is inconsistent across Key Stage 2.

35. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good overall. Teachers mostly show special concern that pupils with special educational need make good progress in lessons. They make sure that support assistants work where they can be of most use in helping pupils with their work. Pupils are sometimes taught as part of the usual classroom programmes while others are given more specialist teaching, which is very good. Where this is used to best effect, the specialist teacher matches the programme of work directly to the needs of the pupils within the context of class lessons. Teaching is excellent as pupils' interest and motivation is maintained at a high level and opportunities for learning are maximised. Planning for pupils' learning is good. There is close teamwork between the special educational needs co-ordinator, class teachers and support assistants. Teachers make every effort to provide suitable work and support learning for these pupils.

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

36. The quality and range of learning opportunities across the school is good, and is very good for pupils in the Foundation Stage. The headteacher and staff have given good consideration to all the curriculum needs of the school. They have established a broad curriculum, which focuses very clearly on English, mathematics and pupils' personal and social development. This is very relevant to pupils' needs and reflects clearly the school's aims set out in the prospectus and other school documents. The curriculum meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education.

37. Due to the focus placed on developing literacy, numeracy and personal development, the school has not yet established a satisfactory balance between some subjects, especially in Key Stage 2. A new scheme of work provides satisfactory provision for information and communication technology as an individual subject, but arrangements to teach the subject in association with other curriculum areas are not yet established. The school is aware of this weakness, which has been identified as a priority in the school development plan. Some lessons, such as science and humanities (history and geography), are too long and work planned could be covered in less time than that allocated. The school places a very strong emphasis on pupils' personal development, which includes lessons on 'citizenship'. These two factors combine to reduce the time available for other subjects, such as design and technology, which are consequently given insufficient time over the whole year.

38. The quality of curriculum planning for pupils in the Foundation Stage is very good. New teaching and curriculum requirements have been successfully addressed, including provision for the early learning goals set out in new national documentation. Medium term and weekly plans are thorough. They address the needs of all pupils and say how learning objectives are to be achieved. The high quality of planning in this stage is contributing very well to the achievements and good progress that pupils have already made in the short time they have been in the school.

39. Both the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy have been very successfully implemented in the last two years, and have contributed very well to the rising standards seen in English and mathematics. Some aspects of the strategies have already been reviewed and changes have been made to remedy weaknesses found. For example, the school places increased attention on spelling across the whole school, following review of this aspect of pupils' work. This additional focus is already proving to be of benefit and standards are rising.

40. The school has successfully addressed weaknesses in planning identified in the last report. The overall quality of teachers' long and medium term plans is good except in Year 4. The medium term planning frameworks set out in the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy are closely followed, and teachers set out good weekly plans. In other subjects half-termly plans give good detail about what is to be taught, activities to be undertaken and how learning is to be assessed. Plans ensure that pupils build steadily on what they know, understand and can do as they progress through the school. However, in Year 4, medium term plans do not contain sufficient detail and lesson objectives are often not clear. This affects the quality of teaching and learning in Year 4, where for instance pupils make insufficient progress in science.

41. The school ensures that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum, regardless of aptitude or gender. Work is sufficiently challenging for all pupils, and very good arrangements are made to support pupils with special educational needs. They receive additional specific guidance from support teachers and assistants through a combination of well-organised in-class support and withdrawal in small groups or as individuals. The individual education programmes have clear and measurable targets and planning in both class and withdrawal

sessions are closely linked to pupils' needs. There are a few pupils who require additional support in mathematics although, as yet, no targets have been identified in order to provide them with this support.

42. The school makes excellent provision for pupils' personal and social development. It is firmly established at the heart of the school's curriculum and aims, and permeates all that it strives for. It includes very good provision for health, sex education and drug awareness. Programmes, such as the 'healthy school award' and 'Police box' are used very effectively to link work in subjects such as science, citizenship and physical education. For instance, during the inspection a Year 5 science lesson focused on the dangers of smoking. Older pupils take part in residential visits to Dukes House Wood and West Relton Outdoor Pursuits Centre, where they learn how to live sociably together as well as taking part in challenging outdoor pursuits, such as climbing. Pupils have good opportunities to take on responsibilities in school. For example, the 'kid's council' provides an excellent forum for pupil-staff discussion, and for pupils to learn how to represent fairly others' views and to take part in democratic decision making. However, the opportunity for pupils to use their initiative within lessons is less well developed. The excellent provision for pupils' personal development is reflected very well in the high standards of behaviour and very positive attitudes which pupils bring to school.

43. The school's aims, behaviour code and a series of appropriate experiences and activities successfully promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. It is underpinned by the themes for school assemblies and the content of religious education lessons. There are many opportunities for pupils to explore values and appreciate being valued by others. The well-planned 'circle' times, the opportunity for pupils to discuss issues important to them, make a significant contribution to this aspect of pupils' development. Pupils are taught to reflect upon their inner feelings and the beauty and richness of the world about them. A particularly good example was the Year 6 relaxation class where pupils' response to the special atmosphere created was quite exceptional. They sat motionless and totally engrossed for the whole session. Assemblies include suitable spiritual content and other acts of collective worship provide a positive experience for pupils. Planned opportunities to extend pupils' spiritual awareness across other areas of the curriculum, for instance science and art, are less well developed.

44. The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral and social development. These aspects of pupils' development are closely inter-linked and are built into the heart of the school. The excellent provision for personal, health and social education provides many opportunities for pupils to consider moral and social issues. There is strong emphasis on the teaching of moral values and distinguishing right from wrong and the school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour. They are encouraged to make responsible choices and to take responsibility for themselves, each other and the school. Teachers take care to show that all pupils are valued. Pupils respond positively, enjoy their work and show care for the school. The school council provides pupils with good opportunities to play a more significant role in the school community and enables them to develop a better understanding of the nature of responsibility. It represents pupils' views responsibly to staff. Monitors help with the smooth running of lessons and the daily life of the school. Pupils are encouraged to care for the environment and take part in community projects, such as the planting of willow trees at Watergate Forest Park. The school promotes a good understanding of citizenship.

45. The school's overall provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are given opportunities to develop a very good understanding of their own cultural traditions, which reflects the findings of the previous inspection. The programme of visits, to places such as the Beamish Open-air Museum, and visitors to the school, contribute effectively to

this aspect of pupils' learning. They are given suitable opportunities to gain an understanding of the central beliefs and practices of different faiths through religious education. There are, however, too few planned opportunities for extending pupils' multicultural awareness and appreciation of other cultures and this is unsatisfactory at present. The contribution of the arts to this aspect of pupils' development is not strong as yet.

46. The school has excellent links with the local community, including local businesses and other primary and secondary schools. These links have been systematically developed in recent years, and play an important part in the life of the school. Commercial sponsorship of the school's prospectus helps ensure that it is produced to a high quality. Other commercial sponsorship pays for school sports equipment, and last year a project to redesign the cloakroom area in Year 5 was supported by the local branch of an international home improvements company. A local public utility company has paid for the development of materials to support mathematics and geography teaching through a project based on Gateshead's 'Metroland' shopping development. The school makes good use of visits to local places and further afield. For example, Year 3 pupils visit the Roman Fort at South Shields to support their study of the Ancient Romans.

47. The local 'Community Education Initiative' has provided good support for the development of the playgroup that now meets in the school. Further plans are already under development to set up courses for adults in information and communication technology in conjunction with Gateshead College, to make use of new information and communication technology equipment in the school. This initiative has also supported development of the school's support staff and local parents through a 'positive parenting' course.

48. The school has other extremely effective links with the local community. For instance, a number of people, such as pupils' grandparents, aged miners, the local traffic warden and police officers visited the school to read stories as part of the school's contribution to the 'World Book Day'. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities, which are well supported by many pupils. These focus on a wide range of sports such as basketball, dance, athletics and music. Visitors, such as students and coaches from the local secondary school, form part of the excellent links that exist between the school and its partner institutions. In particular, Year 6 pupils follow through a link project as they move from primary to secondary education. This year it focused on improvements to the environment. It involved joint planning between the staff of the two schools and shared teaching. Work begun in the summer term has been followed up as pupils transferred. The project provides excellent support to help pupils to achieve a smooth transition to secondary education.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

49. The care, which this school offers its pupils is very good and is one of its strengths. It effectively achieves its aim to bring out the best qualities in children and help them to develop their own identity.

50. The school provides a friendly, welcoming and secure environment where pupils can work and learn within an orderly community. A high priority is given to pupils' welfare, health and safety. Systems are in place for reporting of major accidents and a first aider is permanently on site. Child protection procedures are in place and staff are aware of the relevant steps to follow should they have any concerns. The accommodation is suitable for disabled pupils and wheelchair access. Local services give the school good support; for example, the school nurse is involved in organising a range of health checks and helps to deliver the personal, health and social education programme.

51. Arrangements for looking after pupils' personal needs are very effective throughout the school. The child-care assistant is an extremely valuable member of the staff. She provides excellent support to all pupils and is available if they need a confidante. She conducts relaxation sessions in every class and a daily session for pupils in Year 6 when they are taking their national tests and assessments. This helps them to be calm and prepared and therefore to do their best. The beginning and end of the day, dinner times and play times are well supervised by dinner nannies or staff on a rota basis. All staff are constantly alert to any signs of unacceptable behaviour, bullying or harassment. When instances do occur, they are usually handled immediately and effectively. The school encourages pupils to think of others, be polite, helpful, and to keep their classrooms and corridors tidy.

52. Staff are available to parents at the beginning and end of each day when information or concerns can be shared. Parents also know that they can make an appointment if a longer, or more confidential, discussion is required. Parents rate pastoral care highly and inspection evidence supports this. Staff know their pupils very well and are responsive to their needs. As a result, informal monitoring of each pupil's personal progress is continuously taking place. However, at present no systems are in place for the formal monitoring of personal development and pupils are not involved in keeping their own records. Responsibilities are given to pupils in class as monitors and within school. A particularly impressive initiative is the 'kids council' where one boy and one girl is elected to represent their class and be involved in suggesting developments for the school. Opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning are offered in some classes, but are not consistent throughout the school. The school has taken part in the 'healthy school' award. The personal, social and health education programme gives children a very good understanding of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle and the citizenship programme encourages pupils to become responsible members of the community. A local policeman visits school regularly and takes part in some of the citizenship lessons. During the inspection this was observed in a Year 3 lesson when pupils were encouraged to consider the impact of vandalism on their favourite article and favourite place.

53. Arrangements for children joining the reception class are extremely thorough and include a home visit made by the class teacher and child-care assistant. Children visit school during the summer term prior to entry and attend on a part time basis for the first two weeks. The vast majority of children settle into school quickly and are happy to start learning straight away. The quality of support given to the youngest pupils is of very high quality and this results in them settling into school quickly with an enthusiasm to learn. Strong links have been established with the local comprehensive school so that Year 6 pupils progress to their next stage of education smoothly. Pupils make visits to their next school and the previous Year 6 return to talk about their experiences when moving on. There are many opportunities for pupils to visit the comprehensive through sport and a joint curriculum activity.

54. Procedures to promote good behaviour and attendance are extremely well established and very effective. The last inspection found that registration procedures were not always efficiently carried out and a small number of pupils were regularly late. However, the school has thoroughly addressed these issues. Registers are completed neatly and consistently at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session and late arrivals recorded. Registers are monitored and any emerging patterns of poor attendance or lateness quickly identified and followed up. The education welfare service is available when required.

55. The school has considerably improved assessment practices in the core subjects and the Foundation Stage since the last inspection. The process begins with the assessment of their early skills not long after they enter school. Different weekly targets for each ability

group are then set for English and mathematics. All targets are evaluated and information is used to plan the next stage of work. The progress of children in the reception class is closely monitored.

56. Assessment in literacy and numeracy is very good. The results of standardised tests, taken annually, in Key Stage 2 and the end of key stage national tests in both key stages are analysed in great detail. Pupils in both key stages are assessed and tested frequently throughout the year and the results carefully recorded and monitored. These aspects of assessment are strengths of the school. Assessment pinpoints exactly where pupils are going wrong and teachers build extra opportunities for developing these points into the next year's work. Information is also used to set whole school and group targets. Pupils are made aware of these targets, which are then inserted into their English and mathematics books so that they can monitor their own performance. Parents are also kept informed of these targets. In addition, information from assessment is used to identify pupils who will benefit from additional teaching support. The outcomes of this are the rising standards in both subjects.

57. New procedures for assessing pupils' progress in science and information and communication technology are good, although overly detailed. However, it is still too early to judge the effectiveness of these procedures. Assessment procedures for religious education are also good and the criteria, which form the basis of judgements, are closely linked to the attainment targets identified in the locally agreed syllabus. The setting up of assessment procedures for other subjects of the curriculum begun following the last inspection has lost momentum, due to the implementation of literacy and numeracy strategies, and is under-developed.

58. The assessment co-ordinator has set up a useful system designed to track the pupils' attainment and progress. Individual portfolios contain samples of work. In most year groups these are up-to-date in English, mathematics and science, although inclusion of examples from other subjects has lapsed. Samples kept are marked and levelled against the end of key stage descriptors so staff are clear about standards pupils are achieving in these subjects. However, the lack of information in other subjects prevents a clear picture of standards. The use of day-to-day assessment in lessons is variable, although there were several examples of teachers using on-the-spot assessment of what pupils have learned and making relevant changes to the next lesson as a result.

59. The school makes every effort to identify at an early stage pupils who may have special educational needs. The school makes very good use of assessment procedures and data to aid identification. The monitoring of pupils' progress is very good and regularly reviewed against their individual education plans. The assessment of academic and personal progress of pupils with special educational needs is strength of the school. The individual education plans show good diagnosis of areas of weakness and specific, measurable targets and statements of what actions will be taken to bring about improvement.

60. The level of support and guidance the school gives has a positive effect in raising pupils' achievements.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

61. At the last inspection the school was found to welcome parents and encouraged their involvement. The school continues to work very well with parents.

62. The majority of parents have very positive views about this school. The questionnaire, parents meeting and discussions held during the inspection confirm their high degree of satisfaction. All agree that their children like school and the vast majority feel comfortable to approach staff with problems or concerns they may have. They feel that the school

encourages their children to become mature and responsible and that behaviour is good. Inspectors endorse these positive views. During the last academic year the school sought the views of parents through the use of a questionnaire. Results of this highlighted homework as an issue. This was discussed at the annual parents meeting with governors and the school has laid down a minimum amount to be completed by each child. However, a significant minority of parents continue to feel that the school does not provide the right amount of homework. Some parents perceive there to be too much, others too little. The inspection team finds that most teachers do set an appropriate amount of homework for pupils at this stage in their education. Key Stage 2 pupils keep a homework diary, but its use is inconsistent, thereby reducing its value in raising standards, particularly in Year 4. A minority of parents felt that the school does not provide a good range of activities outside lessons. Inspectors do not support parents' views on this point. Activities available include sporting and dance clubs, music tuition, choir outings, a wide range of school visits out, visitors into the school and a residential visit for Year 5 and 6.

63. Parents are encouraged to come into school and share their expertise. A number of parents regularly help in classes throughout the school. They are well briefed and effectively used to support pupils' learning in lessons. For example, during the week of the inspection a parent was observed giving good support to reception children who were making wheel paintings with sponge shapes. A rota of parents help tidy up the reception class at the end of the day and others frequently accompany out of school visits. The 'Friends of Washingwell Association' is very active. Through events, such as a Christmas Fayre, Summer Fete, discos, tabletop sales and raffles they raise a considerable amount of money. These funds have been used for the benefit of pupils to purchase resources; for example in the library, for English and mathematics materials and equipment for information and communication technology. Teachers have also been given a sum of money to use in their own classrooms to buy equipment. Members of the association organise refreshments for school events, such as the harvest festival. Parent governors are very involved in the school and this contributes to their awareness of what happens in the school on a day to day basis. The headteacher values all support and parental contributions have a very positive impact on children's learning.

64. Through the school brochure, newsletters, meetings and the notice board in the school entrance, parents receive good quality information about the work and routines of the school. Reports to parents are informative, telling parents what it is their child knows, and comply with statutory requirements. In addition to the reports, target sheets are being sent home on a half-termly basis. Through this, parents know what the pupils need to work on specifically in English and mathematics to improve their performance. These sheets also outline the topics to be covered so parents know what area of learning they can support at home. The school has good links with parents of pupils with special educational needs and they are kept well informed. The school holds meetings to inform parents of important issues; for example, the literacy strategy or the national tests and assessments. Attendance at parents' evenings and events is extremely good; information evenings are less well supported.

65. A 'home/school agreement' has been introduced, but initial response to this was poor. Parents contribute to their children's learning at home through the homework programme and topics. They are asked to sign the homework diaries every week though not all do so.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

66. The headteacher has demonstrated a very clear vision for the way forward for the

school since the last inspection. The key issues relating to management of the school that were highlighted in the previous inspection have been addressed well. The headteacher has shown very good leadership and management skills, for example in analysing current strengths and weaknesses and, in partnership with other key managers, producing school development plan to provide focused direction. The headteachers' contribution to the school management and leadership has been purposeful and focused on raising standards.

67. Following the last inspection the school was not in a viable financial position to maintain a deputy headteacher. Subsequently, the position of second in charge was created. This role has been developed successfully and the second in charge has a clear understanding of her role and responsibilities and most effectively supports the headteacher in all that she does. In addition to management responsibilities, the second in charge leads development in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. She also has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in Key Stage 2. In addition to these key management responsibilities, the second in charge co-ordinates the subject of information and communication technology. Whilst she has undertaken this role willingly, the time available for her to carry out her responsibilities is limited.

68. The implementation of the school's aims and values is excellent and they are securely reflected in the daily life of the school. The importance of pupils' personal development, including moral and social development, is at the heart of all the school does and parents appreciate this. The general school aim reflects this and is focused on developing the good qualities in all pupils. The aim is clearly understood by staff, communicated to the pupils and provides a shared vision towards which all members of the school community can strive.

69. Governors are well informed about the school in general and about the responsibilities they have. The governors are enthusiastic and give a good deal of support to the headteacher, and their role in shaping the direction of the school is good. The school governors' understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses is very good. They achieve this through regular meetings and formal visits and in monitoring and evaluating performance, including setting appropriate priorities for development. For example, members of the governing body are currently reviewing the school's performance over time and predicting the amount of progress pupils can be expected to make. The governing body has a good knowledge and understanding of the work that has been done to address the key issues of the last inspection report and the effectiveness of the governing body in fulfilling statutory duties is good.

70. Since the last inspection, the school staff have spent time implementing national initiatives, such as literacy and numeracy, and reviewing provision for science, religious education and information and communication technology to be taught more effectively. The focus the school has placed on developing basic skills has improved pupils' achievements and standards have improved English, mathematics, science and religious education on those reported in the last inspection. Standards in information and communication technology are currently below those expected, but staff are due for further training in this subject. Issues highlighted in the previous report linked to development planning have been fully addressed. The plan, and subsequent action plans formulated by the co-ordinators, drive school improvement. An annual audit, which includes input by parents through the use of a questionnaire, and the pupils via the 'kids council', ensures that the school sets priorities according to specific needs. The ability of school managers to identify the correct direction in which the school needs to move to improve further and the action taken to achieve this is very good. Overall the commitment to improvement and the capacity to succeed is very good.

71. Since the last inspection, all staff have had training in the role of the co-ordinator and most staff are leading the subjects they manage successfully. The work the co-ordinators for English, mathematics, science, religious education and early years have done to ensure successful implementation of new strategies or curriculum is commendable. They have produced detailed action plans that set targets for improvement, with set dates by which action will have taken place, and evaluated the success of action by monitoring standards. They are clear how the action taken has had an impact on standards. Work has had a clear focus on improving pupils' performance and this is reflected in current levels of attainment. The key subject co-ordinators have sufficient knowledge of the planned curriculum, they have a defined role in monitoring and evaluating performance data and, when appropriate, teaching. The effectiveness of their work is very good.

72. The co-ordination of physical education is very good. In history, geography and information and communication technology it is satisfactory overall. However, current arrangements for music are suitable only as a short term solution until a member of staff can be trained to fill this post. The co-ordination of art and design is poor and design and technology is very weak. An action plan seen to cover these subjects is not focused on raising standards and does not define the differences in the two subjects. In addition, schemes of work have not been produced for the subjects in line with set time deadlines and staff have no guidelines adopted from national guidance to help them plan work progressively as pupils move through the school. The management of provision for special educational needs is very good. The learning support teacher increases the staff expertise by arranging training. She expertly writes individual pupil learning programmes and programmes to enhance development of curriculum areas such as spelling. The paperwork is complete and up-to-date. The school has access to a range of specialist services with which it has very good relationships.

73. Good financial planning supports educational priorities and the school applies the principles of best value well overall to make good use of resources. For example, the headteacher and governors compare standards and costs with other schools locally and review the value of contracted-out services, such as ground maintenance. However, this work has not been securely linked to evaluating the balance of the curriculum or the time allocated to teaching some subjects in blocks rather than in smaller time slots to place greater demand on pupils. The headteacher makes good use of the services available through the local education authority to periodically monitor the school's budget. The governing body is fully involved financial planning and monitoring of expenditure. They evaluate the effectiveness of spending against the outcomes and how this affects performance. A large contingency budget has been accrued due to prudent management. However, it is not documented how the governing body intends to use this for the benefit of the pupils in the short or long term. The office personnel carry out day to day administration and management of finances very well. Specific grants are used very well to improve provision. For example, to provide additional adults in classes so those groups of pupils can be supported appropriately during literacy lessons.

74. The school is suitably staffed and the teacher pupil ratio overall is favourable. There are no staff new to the school at present, but the procedures applied for inducting new staff, and particularly for newly qualified staff, are very good. The temporary teacher working at the school during the inspection upheld this. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall. However, the library is an under-developed and under-used resource at present and does not currently contribute to raising standards. The area is being redeveloped to provide a 'communication' room that will promote a love of books in pupils, enable them to conduct research and use the computer network, thus developing pupils' skills of independent learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

75. In order to further improve standards achieved by all pupils the school should now;

- (1) Raise standards in Year 4 by:
 - implementing planning in line with agreed school procedures;
 - ensuring short term planning contains sufficient detail of the aims of the lesson, the learning objective to be achieved and the activities to be provided for pupils of all abilities;

- raising expectations of pupils' achievement;
- consistently managing pupils' behaviour in line with school policies;
- monitoring and evaluating teaching.

(Paragraphs 12,13,16,22,25,26,29,31,32,34,40,62,117)

- (2) Raise standards in information and communication technology by:
- developing the role of the co-ordinator to monitor teaching and learning;
 - providing the necessary training for staff to improve levels of expertise and confidence;
 - adapting and implementing the scheme of work and assessment procedures to plan more effectively and set realistic targets for learning;
 - using information and communication technology as an integral part of teaching and learning;
 - raising expectations of what pupils can do;
 - using all available means to ensure adequate appropriate resources throughout the school.

(Paragraphs 10,13,25,26,29,32,67,70,74,125)

- (3) Provide schemes of work in art and design and design and technology to:
- define the appropriate attainment targets for each subject;
 - guide teachers' planning;
 - ensure pupils' knowledge skills and understanding are built on systematically as they move through the school.

(Paragraphs 31,72,126,129,130,133)

- (4) Review the balance of the curriculum and revise the use of time available for teaching to:
- ensure appropriate coverage of all subjects;
 - maximise the time available to promote effective learning in all subjects;
 - ensure that the pace of lessons is consistent and the rate of pupils' progress is maintained throughout the lesson.

(Paragraphs 25,31,32,33,37,73,129)

- (5) Develop and implement manageable assessment procedures in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education.

(Paragraphs 11,57,58,129,133,137,142,147,153)

76. In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Planning opportunities for personal development and initiative in lessons. (Paragraphs 18,31,42,74)
- Development of pupils' awareness of the multi-cultural society in which they live. (Paragraphs 45,129,147)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

43

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

48

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	30	35	21	12	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)	0	162
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	17

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	34

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	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	94.8
National comparative data	94.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.7
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	12	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	9	9
	Girls	11	10	11
	Total	21	19	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (71)	82 (79)	87 (75)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	9	10
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	21	20	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (79)	87 (79)	91 (79)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	15	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	12	13
	Girls	14	13	15
	Total	25	25	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (68)	83 (59)	93 (81)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	12	14
	Girls	13	10	15
	Total	24	22	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (65)	73 (65)	97 (78)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	3
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	159
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	66

Financial information

Financial year	99/00
	£
Total income	295084
Total expenditure	291411
Expenditure per pupil	1745
Balance brought forward from previous year	20024
Balance carried forward to next year	23697

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	162
Number of questionnaires returned	44

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	32	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	41	7	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	50	5	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	45	25	2	0
The teaching is good.	39	50	5	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	43	9	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	30	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	30	9	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	50	39	7	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	50	39	2	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41	55	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	48	11	5	11

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

Context

77. Children begin school in the reception class at the beginning of the autumn term in the year that they will be five. This is the Foundation Stage of their learning. At the time of the inspection, there were 21 children who were four or five. The majority of children have had some pre-school experience before coming to school. The results of initial assessments of what pupils can do soon after they have settled into school indicate, and inspection evidence confirms, that children's attainment is generally below the expected level when they start school. The curriculum for the reception-aged children is very good and covers all the appropriate early learning goals for pupils of this age. Children are sometimes taught as a whole class to introduce new work or to reinforce learning. Subsequent group work is supported by either the teacher or child-care assistant. At other times, children work independently on structured tasks or play activities. The inspection took place very early in the school year, but scrutiny of past work shows that children make good progress in the first stage of their education and most attain the nationally expected levels by the end of the Foundation Stage. There are no children on the school's register for pupils with special educational needs. However, staff monitor children closely and identify those who may require additional support as they progress through the school. Currently, the staff have identified seven children to be tracked. The most significant feature of provision for the youngest children in the school is the strength of the relationship between the staff in the class. The very good use of humour in lessons, and the repartee between the child-care assistant and the teacher, give a strong message to the children that learning is fun. As a result, the children are all happy at school and give of their best.

Personal social and emotional development

78. Children make good progress in personal and social development because the class provides a welcoming environment that helps young children to settle in quickly and feel part of the school. Children observed during the inspection had only been in school for a matter of weeks and they were quick to respond to class routines. They show confidence and relate to adults, with each other and with older pupils in the school well. They are confident to try new activities and initiate ideas. For example when working in the 'office' they are acting the role of secretary and 'write' messages. Children are developing a good level of independence in choosing activities, in dressing themselves and in their personal hygiene even though it is early in the year. They take on class responsibilities quickly and undertake jobs, such as tidying up, efficiently. The staff and adults who help in the first class sensitively encourage children to participate in activities when they are required to sit and listen to others. Children are very eager to participate in activities and are sometimes keener to contribute than listen. However, they are learning the 'rules' for classroom behaviour and an understanding that they need to take turns. Children attend acts of collective worship with the rest of the school and this helps them to get to know pupils in other classes as well as developing the understanding of the different needs of other people. A pupil who had just turned five demonstrated this when talking to inspectors about other children who needed their help linked to fund-raising for Barnado's charity. Children have the opportunity to mix with their friends or brothers and sisters at break-times. This helps children to develop their social skills

in a range of different situations and to consider the needs of others as well as their own.

79. Teaching in this area of learning is very good. The teacher and the child-care assistant provide a broad range of activities that successfully promote children's development in a variety of settings throughout the day. For example, opportunities for children to work alone with construction resources to build structures, or in groups when they use similar resources to construct the roadways. Opportunities for children to share their knowledge of books develops turn taking and the very high level of interaction and humour from the staff encourages them to share their knowledge. Children's self-esteem is developed as staff value each child's contribution. Activities, such as role-play in 'the office', sand and water, help the children to develop their imagination at the same time as encouraging them to 'play' together co-operatively. Staff set very good examples for children to follow. They work together superbly as a team and children can see the value of co-operating with each other as a result. They have very high expectations for good behaviour and this encourages the children to behave well. All children are taught to be independent as they are given regular opportunities to select from a range of activities on offer. Some children are quite dependant and reliant on staff choosing for them initially, but they very soon understand that they are 'allowed' to make their own choice a certain times during the day and can change their activities when they are ready to. Good examples of this were seen during the inspection when children who had only been in school for a few weeks moved confidently from their writing activity to the water area when they had completed their tasks.

Language and literacy

80. Children become competent in key literacy skills, together with gaining confidence in speaking and listening. They quickly recognise the names and sounds of letters and that writing can serve a range of purposes and their achievement in this area of learning is good. Children contribute to discussions positively and share their ideas and experiences. They acquire new vocabulary from listening to the staff and each other and their speech improves in fluency and expression. Pupils' ability to use a developing range of vocabulary is demonstrated by their ability to describe their walk to the post box linked to geographical study. They used specific words to give a better description of what they saw when on their way. All children, including those of lower ability, quickly learn to recognise and link individual letters by name and sound due to the very good teaching of a programme designed to promote learning in this area. Consequently, pupils make good progress. Before long children recognise their own names in written form. The more able children know their friends' names or can read familiar words around the room. Children listen with enjoyment to stories and poems and they retell parts of familiar stories, for example 'Dear Daddy'. The more able children know that print carries meaning and understand about the importance of the beginning and end of stories. Early writing skills are promoted through children learning to write their own names, labels and captions. They use their knowledge of letter sounds and the alphabet to write common words and begin to construct sentences, sometimes using full stops correctly. Work from last year shows that at the end of the Foundation Stage children write for a range of purposes and in different ways.

81. The quality of teaching is very good in this area of learning. Opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills are linked to all structured learning tasks and play activities. Children are very enthusiastic to participate and very good management of lessons quickly teaches them to take turns. The organisation of literacy lessons provides all children with opportunities to share in the whole class element of the session, as skilful questioning involves them all. A good focus is given to word and sentence work and, as a result, children learn to connect the names and sounds of letters and to understand that these make up words. Focused questions aimed at the younger or less able children during these times encourage them to respond and give them confidence to participate. This results in good

achievement. At other times, the less able children are taught as a group so that they can share rhymes, stories and non-fiction books that help them to learn to use and read familiar words for themselves. Children have lots of opportunities for hearing stories that they have chosen themselves or that staff have selected. Staff use this time to promote an enjoyment of words and pictures and develop good reading habits. Children are encouraged by staff to 'write' for themselves from the time that they start school. Gradually, they learn to form letters and spell simple words correctly during specific time slots, which are allocated to teaching these skills each week. Children are subsequently provided with many and varied opportunities to practise the skills they have learned and they make good progress in communicating their ideas and knowledge through writing.

Mathematical development

82. Children develop their knowledge and understanding of number, initially by learning about numbers around the classroom. Early in the reception class children match objects, for example when doing jigsaws, and as their skills develop they sort and match objects to reorder them depending on pattern, size or shape. Water and sand activities give children lots of opportunity to experiment with volume, when they fill and empty containers of different sizes, and weight, when they compare how heavy stones that are buried in the sand are. Children enjoy joining in number rhymes and these help them to talk about and recreate patterns and use mathematical language, such as 'more than' and 'less than', 'bigger' and 'smaller'. Discussion with pupils who have just recently moved into Year 1 show that, by the end of the Foundation Stage, they count from 0 to 10 in order and recognise the numerals associated with the numbers. Pupils talk about 'sums', adding to and taking away, the characteristics of shapes and they solve simple problems. As a result of all the experiences the children encounter, they achieve levels of attainment appropriate for their age and progress from the time they start at school is good.

83. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good. A range of mathematical experiences is provided through the structured play activities that are available on a daily basis and the chance children have to participate in the daily numeracy session. The management and organisation of lessons, or parts of lessons, is good and staff are used to the best effect to support children's learning. In a similar way to literacy, children are encouraged to participate in the whole class aspect of these lessons at an individual level appropriate to their abilities. Following this, the children take part in group activities that build on their previous experiences at an appropriate level so their knowledge and understanding of mathematical concepts is taught through practical activities, daily routines, speaking and listening activities and opportunities for structured play. When it is appropriate, children are taught to record their observations or findings in a range of ways, for example as 'sums' or in a graphical form. Whenever it is appropriate, all aspects of numeracy work are linked to other subjects and there are planned opportunities for children to explore, think and develop as mathematicians.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

84. Children learn about how to make sense of the world around them and this lays a good foundation for later work in science, history, geography and technology in its various forms. Children are presented with appropriate activities and consequently progress in learning is good. Most of the activities that contribute to this area of learning are based on practical experiences, which encourage the children to develop skills, knowledge and understanding that is appropriate to their age and individual ability. Children develop a sense of place when they walk to the local post box. They talk about the route they take and the buildings they see. The children's understanding of means of communication is also developed. As they look at their own addresses, see the postman deliver a parcel and

discuss the telephone box they pass. Children's understanding of the past is developed as they study their own lives and how they have changed since they were babies. Children find out about and use technology. For example, they use construction equipment to build models and design layouts. They have the opportunities to use audio equipment independently and the most able can operate the control buttons effectively. Children are confident to use the computers, either as a choice activity or when opportunities are planned to enhance learning in other subject areas.

85. The quality of teaching is very good. Within this area of learning a full range of opportunities is made available, which are enjoyable for the children. For the most part, activities are based on first-hand experiences so that exploration, observation, problem solving and discussion are promoted. Children are given many opportunities to express their knowledge and understanding, for example in model making, drawing and by talking about what they know with their friends or staff. Whenever possible, staff encourage children to use information and communication technology to help them practise skills or to use their knowledge of other areas of learning to solve problems that are associated with learning in that area. For example, children use the computer independently to practise matching skills that promote mathematical learning. Children are encouraged to think about their culture and beliefs; for example when hearing stories and in acts of worship. They begin to develop an awareness of the wide world through the very good use of literature and illustrations in all aspects of work.

Physical development

86. Within the classroom, children move around with confidence as the room is organised well and there are distinct areas that are dedicated to promoting learning in particular aspects of the curriculum. Children are taught to handle pencils, crayons, brushes and scissors with control and safety. They have satisfactory control when manipulating these tools. Children are helped to understand the importance of exercise through lessons in the hall, and at break-times. Children have the opportunity to use small and large apparatus over the course of their time in this stage of education. Observation of pupils who have just moved into Year 1 shows that over time they develop the skills necessary to do this well. In a physical education lesson, children practise different ways of walking and develop knowledge of moving using different body parts. They demonstrate imagination and creativity when doing this and when moving with a hoop.

87. The quality of teaching is very good. There are suitable daily opportunities for children to use and practise their fine motor skills and teachers intervene appropriately to enhance these. For example, many children hold their pencil incorrectly when they start school, but intervention from staff teaches them the correct way and helps the quality of handwriting to improve. Staff correct this during sessions focused on writing skills. Physical education lessons are planned carefully so that the learning objective of the lesson is targeted on improving skills. This leads to good progress overall.

Creative development

88. Evidence available indicates that children make good progress from the levels they achieve on entry to those attained by the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage. The more able children, and some in the middle ability group, achieve levels appropriate for their age by the time they are five and this means that they have built appropriately on the standards achieved when they come into the school. Children have good opportunities to 'play' in the role-play area. This stimulates their ability to make believe and be creative. This enhances many other areas of learning, for example writing and number. Examples of

children's painting show that they have been encouraged to consider style and presentation when doing their own work following the study of creating colours by mixing. Creative development is also fostered through the music curriculum. Children learn about rhythm, through clapping and tapping, and by using percussion instruments. They participate in singing by joining in the words they are familiar with initially.

89. The quality of teaching is very good overall. Art activities are matched well to children's interests and stage of development. Demonstration by staff is planned if it is required. This contributes to pupils' knowledge and understanding. Following this, they are provided with more opportunities to consolidate learning, if this is required, and children have the chance to experiment. During the inspection, children were provided with many opportunities on a daily basis for pupils to 'act out' either make believe or real scenarios that contributed to their creative, and frequently social, development and this was due to good planning. Even when an activity may be a 'choice' by the children, a good level of interaction from staff is always provided if required to further promote learning and develop children's ideas.

ENGLISH

90. Pupils' performance in the end of year tests and assessments in Year 2000 was well above the national average in reading and writing in Key Stage 1 and above the national average in English in Key Stage 2. When compared to similar schools, pupils' achievements are well above average in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The inspection took place early in the school year and most pupils are on target to reach or exceed nationally expected by the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards have improved from those reported in the previous inspection and from the previous year. Pupils of differing ability are achieving well because work is suitably matched to build on their earlier attainment and they receive sufficient individual attention in many lessons to contribute to progress being made. In reading, the majority of pupils achieve well, because of the intensive support that they receive in well-targeted group reading sessions and pupils' progress in spelling is enhanced through the use of individualised programmes matched to pupils' personal needs.

91. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1, with achievements in line with their abilities. The less able pupils point to pictures in books and say what they are, and perhaps who the people in the pictures are. They recognise their name, based on the initial letter. Other pupils read simple sentences in their reading books, or words on cards or captions around the room. They copy individual words, and some sentences. Some make up their own sentences linked to the text they have studied. For example, pupils write simple instructions of how to make a gingerbread man in the correct sequence. Handwriting is generally well formed, but some pupils write with very large letters, spread over the page instead of being on or near the line, and on occasion, some letters that are not recognisable. More able pupils think carefully about the size of letters and print them with care. The less able pupils attempt their own writing, trying hard to put their thoughts onto paper, and being able to read their efforts to the teacher afterwards. More able pupils begin to write with some feeling and imagination. All pupils listen to stories well. They enjoy them and can mainly recount who did what, and the more able pupils can give reasons why things might have happened in stories. They will discuss matters of immediate interest with each other, and with staff, and work alongside each other well.

92. Pupils' progress is good by the end of Key Stage 2. However, scrutiny of current and past work shows that coverage and the depth of content of work is not consistent with the rest of the key stage in Year 4. As a result, standards are not as high and pupils do not make

the progress they are capable of. By the end of the key stage, the more able pupils read a range of texts fluently, often with real confidence, expression and enthusiasm. They have sufficient research skills to look up information in library reference books, but have more limited experience doing this on the computers. They understand the purpose of writing in different styles for different effects, such as comedy, dramatic effect, or information. They make a good effort in such styles themselves. In one lesson, for instance, pupils in Year 6 understood that an autobiography had been written in a particular style because it needed to relate precise information. Pupils demonstrate understanding of implicit and explicit references in different texts.

93. Pupils learn to write expressively, in stories and in poetry, and this shows imagination and flair in the use of language. They have opportunities to write for different purposes, such as writing out instructions or a letter. In lessons other than those dedicated to literacy, pupils use their skills to write about a science experiment or to present historical data. Pupils' handwriting is almost always good, except in Year 4. Although some pupils in this class can write neatly, few choose to do so except in specific handwriting lessons. The majority of teachers tend to insist on good presentation and neatness, but there is less evidence of this in the workbooks of pupils in Year 4, either this year or last year. Pupils in this year group do not bother themselves about presentation. This leads to most written work looking scrappy and worse than it actually might be in its content. Similarly, spelling mistakes in this year group are not consistently corrected, and this also detracts from the general appearance of pupils' work. By the end of the key stage, the majority of pupils write using sound Standard English grammar and punctuation, but the lower achievers struggle with aspects such as speech marks. Pupils listen to explanations and stories, and generally understand the point that is being made. They are mainly able to act upon instructions they have heard, whether in English lessons, science or art, for instance. Most pupils recall the main points of a story or written text, and recount what they understand to be the most important features by paraphrasing accurately. Many speak aloud to an audience with confidence, whether from a prepared text or from the heart, about personal matters at times when the whole class have the opportunity to join in discussion.

94. Teaching and learning are good overall in both key stages. This is an improvement since the last inspection. However teaching continues to be variable in Key Stage 2. The introduction of the literacy strategy, since the time of the last inspection, has contributed very well to teaching standards. Planning is mostly very good and teachers are clear about what it is they want the pupils to learn as a result. However, when teaching is unsatisfactory weekly and daily plans lack detail and do not show how work will be presented at different levels for pupils of differing abilities. It is not clear what the teacher wants pupils to know at the end of a lesson or how it will be evaluated to see if they have learnt anything new. Marking of pupils' work is variable and it is not always clear in Key Stage 2 how it is used effectively to help the pupils improve.

95. Teaching is generally well organised and resourced, and teachers use the resources well to support learning in lessons. The school's literacy strategy is followed closely, in generally well-structured lessons that teachers teach with confidence. Time is allocated each week to teaching reading and associated comprehension skills, handwriting skills and spelling strategies. Pupils are most frequently taught in ability groups for these sessions, and learning support assistants give a good level of support to less able pupils. The intensive, well-focused work helps pupils to learn well, and all pupils were achieving at least at level 4, the expected level, on the standard tests at the end of Key Stage 2 last year. This is an achievement for the school, gained through these sessions, and through silent reading, shared reading and general expectations in other subjects that pupils will read books or use computer programs in order to gain information. Literacy skills are frequently taught or used in conjunction with the teaching of other subjects, for example history. While this is beneficial

in promoting pupils' learning in literacy this is sometimes to the detriment of learning the skills associated with the other subject. Examples of this were seen in history and science lessons.

96. An example of a very good literacy lesson in Year 2 is well planned with clear aims and a good structure throughout. The teacher makes it clear to pupils what they are going to do and how this will link to other work. The initial activity is presented to pupils as a game and the teacher requires pupils to think by very good use of questions about the sounds of individual or blends of letters for the different levels of pupils' understanding. The main text they are considering, a recipe for gingerbread men, is being analysed for the differences between statements and instructions. The use of a very large printout of a page from the book is good, especially as the teacher uses a white board to write on so that all pupils can see exactly what she means. Her lively style encourages the pupils to try harder, to put their hands up to answer questions, and to make sensible suggestions. The lesson continues in groups and all pupils have related work to do, structured differently for each group so they are challenged very well by the work. The teacher works very effectively with one group in particular, and also interacts with the other groups to help them with their learning. The work of the learning support assistant is planned well and she is able to work to good effect with a group of pupils. As a result, they make good progress. The teacher's review of what has been learnt at the end of the lesson is very good. It brings all the pupils together and reinforces the use of clear instructions, with more examples and a lively series of questions and answers with the pupils. Two pupils find their task quite difficult and the teacher uses their experience very well to reinforce the initial objective of the lesson and offer support to the pupils' for the next lesson. All pupils are involved in evaluating how work could be improved and the teacher makes good use of their comments to reinforce the importance of clarity when writing instructions. Before the end of the lesson, the teacher gives a good explanation of how the work done in the lesson will contribute to learning the following day.

97. When teaching and learning are unsatisfactory in a Year 4 lesson, planning is brief and the activities outlined do not match the objective of the lesson closely enough. The initial part of the lesson, word level work, helps some of the pupils to improve their own spelling strategies and learning in this element of the lesson is satisfactory for these pupils. However, the introduction to the second part of the lesson, sentence level work, has no secure learning objective and there is no new learning. Following this, the tasks given to pupils place no demands on them and they do little as a result. For example, one group are expected to underline or circle adverbs and another to copy out a piece of text. The pupils are not told why they are doing this and neither task helps pupils to understand the mood of the text, which is the focus for the lesson. Pupils are able to carry out the task easily, but they are disinterested and put little effort into their work. Consequently, they produce little written work and spend a good deal of time disturbing each other or chatting about things other than work. The teacher gives some attention to one group to help them compose 'a little poem'. They are expected to write a cinquain, but are not taught what the characteristics of these poems are and don't know themselves. Others receive no input from the teacher. Pupils' behaviour is not managed in a satisfactory way and the teacher does not provide a good role model. Pupils do not respond to the strategy used. There is little demand placed on the pupils during the lesson and expectations of what the pupils can do are low. The final part of the lesson, the plenary, has no real purpose and pupils chatter while the teacher reads out some of the poems that have been written.

98. The leadership and management of English are very good and there has been good improvement since the last report. At the time of the last inspection, there was not a scheme of work or guidance to ensure continuity between key stages. This has been rectified and the literacy strategy has been implemented very well and adapted to the school's individual circumstances. The co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the strengths and

weakness of the subject and there are very good priorities for further development. There are very effective systems for assessing pupils' attainment and monitoring progress, but these are not carried out consistently well throughout Key Stage 2. Pupils are set individual and group targets and these are focused on improving their attainment. Pupils' achievements are reported to parents well. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' plans, and the implementation of the strategy throughout the school. Pupils' work is sampled regularly and the co-ordinator has a very good knowledge of standards across the school. These are improvements since the last inspection. Expectations, especially of handwriting, spelling and presentation have generally improved, except in Year 4. Overall, marking now gives pupils guidance on how to improve. The resources have been developed well and are used effectively to support pupils' learning. As a result of all the improvements and the quality of leadership, standards have improved, particularly in Key Stage 2.

MATHEMATICS

99. Standards reached by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 in the 2000 national tests and assessments were well above the national average and well above average when compared with similar schools due to the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels. At the end of Key Stage 2, results in the most recent national tests were above the national average and above average when compared with similar schools. There has been a considerable improvement in results from the previous year; for example the results show that the percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above rose by forty percent. Pupils start school with standards that are below average. Secure foundations are laid in the Foundation Stage and pupils make good progress in their learning. Work seen during the inspection indicates that pupils are on line to reach or exceed the expected levels by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

100. The school's commitment to raising standards is underpinned by the very good assessment procedures for monitoring pupils' achievement and progress and by the successful implementation of the national numeracy strategy. Standards at both key stages have risen significantly since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs learn effectively because of the good support provided in most classes. However, pupils' learning is less effective where no additional adult support is available for pupils requiring specific help with numeracy.

101. Year 2 pupils learn effectively because they are taught well and lessons are well planned to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding. They make good progress towards the standards expected of seven-year-olds, as teachers are careful to match work to the needs of the different ability groups within the class. Pupils can order numbers to a hundred and count on and back from different numbers in multiples of ten. They recall pairs of numbers that total twenty. They recognise the relationship between addition and subtraction and say and write the subtraction fact corresponding to a given addition fact. They use their understanding of addition and subtraction to solve simple money problems, such as finding totals and giving change. Pupils are developing a sound understanding of place value and know what each digit in a two-digit number represents, and most are able to separate a two-digit number into a multiple of ten and ones. They add two sets of two-digit numbers and higher attainers add a two digit numbers to a three-digit number. Pupils learn the names and features of common two and three-dimensional shapes. They are developing a satisfactory understanding of the concept and the vocabulary related to time. Many can read the time to the hour and half hour on an analogue clock.

102. The quality of pupils' learning in Key Stage 2 is good overall. Pupils' learning is only unsatisfactory in Year 4 and this is directly related to the quality of the teaching. Most

teachers set work at different levels to meet the needs of different attainment groups within the class. This helps pupils to make good progress when it is set at an appropriately challenging level based on evaluation of pupils' previous learning, as clearly seen in the Year 5 lesson where pupils are estimating the position of a point on an undivided number line. Year 6 pupils understand the processes of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They multiply and divide whole numbers by ten, a hundred and a thousand. Although their understanding of decimal place is satisfactory pupils are not yet confident in applying this knowledge when multiplying decimal numbers by ten and a hundred. They are developing their understanding of the relationship between fractions and percentages. Pupils use a number of mental strategies and pencil and paper methods for solving number problems. They are becoming increasingly familiar with mathematics vocabulary, which teachers encourage them to use when talking about their method of working. However, their ability to apply their knowledge and mathematical skills when interpreting word problems is less well developed. As they move through the school pupils extend the knowledge and understanding of shape, space and measures. They understand and use the formula for finding the area of compound shapes which can be split into rectangles and classify two and three-dimensional shapes by their properties. They use their measuring skills to estimate and measure angles to the nearest degree. By the end of Year 6, past work shows that pupils solve problems by representing and interpreting data in a range of tables, charts and graphs. For instance, Year 5 pupils collected data about the frequency with which letters of the alphabet occurred in a piece of writing. They made a tally chart and then represented the information on a bar-line graph. However, their understanding of probability is under-developed, as the opportunity to predict was not built in as part of the lesson.

103. The quality of teaching is good overall and sometimes very good. The overall quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. It is very good in Key Stage 1, but continues to be more variable in Key Stage 2, although teaching was good in half the lessons seen. Teachers' management of pupils' behaviour is a real strength in all year groups, except Year 4, and has a significant impact on the creation of a positive learning environment and pupils' attitude to work. As a result, pupils are well behaved, they listen attentively to their teacher and to each other's contributions. Only where teaching is unsatisfactory and work not appropriately matched to pupils' needs are pupils inattentive.

104. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the national numeracy strategy. Planning for pupils learning has improved since the last inspection and is a strength of the teaching in most year groups. The weekly and daily structure promotes learning that builds on what has gone before. The outcomes of these lessons are evaluated and the information used to inform future lessons. Lessons have a clear focus and teachers explain the learning objectives to pupils so that they know what they are expected to achieve by the end of the lesson. Teachers have a good understanding of their pupils and base the tasks and activities on assessment of what pupils know and can do. The work set is achievable and, for the most part, appropriately challenging. Planning for the different ability groups within the class is generally good. It is particularly effective in Key Stage 1 where activities are well matched to the different needs within the mixed age class and extension tasks require pupils to work at a higher level.

105. Basic skills are taught systematically and thoroughly with teachers using an effective range of methods and resources. Teachers give clear explanations and involve pupils in demonstrating new concepts and methods to help move pupils' learning forward. The quality of teachers' questioning skills is variable. In some lessons teachers tend to tell pupils too much rather than use questioning to draw information from them and encourage them to think more deeply, thereby developing their powers of mathematical reasoning. Although there is good teaching in mental mathematics sessions there are occasions when not enough time is allocated to rehearsing the skills that have been taught in order to consolidate

understanding and promote speedier recall of the number facts and strategies learned. In most lessons monitoring of pupils' work enables teachers to intervene and give appropriate support to ensure that pupils make progress. Where teaching is less effective, insufficient use is made of assessment to identify instances where work is not matched well to pupils' prior learning. In addition, the last part of the lesson is not used effectively to clarify misunderstanding and consolidate pupils' learning in line with the stated objectives before moving on to more difficult examples. This limits the potential progress of pupils. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is of variable quality and does not always contain sufficient guidance to show pupils how they might improve their work.

106. Teachers generally promote the subject well and pupils enjoy lessons and are prepared to persevere when they find work difficult. For instance, a small group of Year 4 boys have many attempts at solving problems that are too difficult for them. At no stage in the lesson seen do they give up although the teacher offered no support. Praise is used effectively to reward successes, effort and attentiveness. This helps to build pupils' confidence and encourages them to rise to the challenges presented. For instance, pupils in Year 3 are keen to demonstrate their understanding of mathematical vocabulary and number skills by asking questions in the mental starter game 'guess the number'. The quality of pupils' learning is good overall in both key stages. Features of the unsatisfactory teaching in Year 4 include weak behaviour management skills, insufficiently clear explanations and detail of working examples to engage and involve all pupils. As a result, pupils are inattentive during whole class teaching sessions. Also, planning does not take sufficient account of pupils' prior learning and work is not appropriately matched to pupils' needs. This limits the progress pupils make.

107. Teachers deploy support staff very effectively in both key stages. They are well briefed by class teachers, who provide helpful plans for guidance. Support staff work competently with small groups of lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs. They help pupils to understand the work and keep them focused on the task in hand. The strength of relationships within the school ensures that the children trust them and work as hard for them as they do for their class teachers. This support has a positive impact on pupils' learning and not only is the quality of learning by these pupils good, but in some lessons they also produce a greater quantity of work than those working independently. However, this support is not available in all classes. For example, no additional support is provided for Year 6 pupils who have been identified as needing additional support in mathematics. As a result, these pupils are unable to access the work successfully and this has a detrimental effect on their learning.

108. Leadership and management of mathematics are very good and characterised by a clear sense of purpose and direction. The subject co-ordinator has carried out detailed audit of the mathematics curriculum to inform the comprehensive subject plan. Good progress has been made in relation to the stated targets and strategies for raising standards. For example, all teachers have been observed teaching the numeracy strategy, and assessment procedures have been greatly improved since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has carried out a detailed analysis of data from both the national end of key stage tests and standardised tests. The information has been used well to inform planning and to set end of key stage and half-termly group targets. Pupil portfolios contain useful examples of work, marked against national curriculum levels of attainment, demonstrating their progress. Procedures for tracking progress have just been completed and will provide further information about pupils' learning and the effectiveness of the school's teaching of numeracy. Although there is appropriate coverage of the numeracy strategy programmes of study, pupils have few opportunities to use their mathematical skills in other subjects of the curriculum and too little use is made of information and communication technology to support work in mathematics.

SCIENCE

109. Pupils' standards in science are in line with national averages at the end of Key Stage 1 and are similar to those reported at the last inspection. In 1999 the number of pupils attaining nationally expected standards was well below the national average. Standards improved in 2000, and were in line with national averages overall, and were also in line with the standards attained by pupils in similar schools. One quarter of pupils reached level 3, above the level expected for seven-year-olds. This result is above the level 3 national average, and above the standard for similar schools. Current Year 2 pupils are working at the levels expected for this time of year, and are on target to reach national average levels by the end of the key stage.

110. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' standards in the national tests have risen in recent years. In 1999 they were well below the national average, but rose in 2000 to be above the national average, and also above the standards of pupils in similar schools. Current Year 6 pupils are on target to reach or exceed national average levels by the end of the key stage. Science standards at the last inspection were below the national average at the end of Key Stage 2. Overall therefore, there has been a good improvement in pupils' standards since then.

111. In Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress overall, and acquire a secure knowledge of science facts appropriate for their age. By the end of Year 2 pupils know that animals and plants need food in order to grow. They make predictions about how their own appearance will change as they get older. They investigate mixtures of materials, such as flour and water, and have a good understanding that once mixed together to make dough they cannot easily be separated again. In a lesson in Year 2, pupils experiment with simple electrical circuits. They are set a challenge to make a torch bulb light up using a battery and wires. They experiment well and by the end of the lesson they know how to make a simple circuit and that the bulb will not light if the circuit is not complete. Pupils record work satisfactorily in scientific investigations. For instance they draw diagrams to show the electrical circuits they make, and make lists to show whether materials, such as wool and nylon, are man-made or natural.

112. In Key Stage 2 all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress overall. However, progress in Year 4 is unsatisfactory because work is not covered in sufficient detail to develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding to the depth required. By the end of the key stage, in work on living things, pupils have a good understanding of the relationship between predator and prey in simple food chains, and they know how environmental pollution affects plant life. Assessment portfolios show, for instance, that pupils draw bar graphs for tables of data to show where different types of lichen are to be found. They interpret results correctly by identifying different lichens more likely to be found in woodland, towns and near power stations, according to levels of pollution in the neighbourhood. Pupils understand that materials can exist in solid, liquid and gaseous form, and know in simple terms how this is related to molecular structure. In Year 6, during a lesson on electricity, pupils experiment with fuse wire, pencils and other materials to investigate how to alter the brightness of a torch bulb in a series circuit. They follow well-established investigation procedures to ensure that their testing is 'fair', and construct different series circuits to aid their investigation. By the end of the lesson, pupils learn that different materials have different electrical resistance and they use vocabulary, such as *conductor* and *resistor*, correctly to describe what they find.

113. The quality of science teaching is good overall, but there is evidence of some unsatisfactory teaching in Key Stage 2. Teachers have good science subject knowledge, and

teach it well. For instance, in lower Key Stage 2 pupils study how different animals eat. Good questioning in a whole class discussion develops pupils' understanding of how animals, such as snakes, eat their prey whole by dislocating their jaw, and how other animals such as giraffes eat by nibbling leaves on trees. Teachers write key vocabulary on the board, and use a set of standard prompts to help pupil's record the results of practical work, both of which promote good learning over lessons.

114. Most teachers plan lessons well. Half-termly plans show clearly how pupils' knowledge and skills are to be developed over a series of lessons, and individual lessons are well prepared. Tasks provide an appropriate challenge for pupils, to which they respond well and as a result they make good progress. However, it was not possible to see lessons in Year 4 due to timetabling arrangements. Inspection of pupils' work in this year shows that it is often unfinished, and the superficial depth of pupils' work reveals unsatisfactory planning and low expectations for many in the class. This in turn leads to unsatisfactory progress for many pupils in the class. For example, all pupils copy conclusions from experiments off the board, a practice that prevents higher attaining pupils using their own initiative to develop investigation skills.

115. Teachers manage pupils well, and lessons are conducted in a calm, purposeful atmosphere. Pupils have correspondingly good attitudes to their work and behave well. They work well together in practical work. All pupils contribute to group discussions and they use equipment sensibly. The combination of effective class management and positive attitudes leads to productive lessons where pupils learn well.

116. Teachers make satisfactory use of the time available, but lessons are too long. As a result, lesson pace is less brisk than it could be. Some teachers talk too much and this in turn leads to pupils fidgeting and loss of concentration. Teachers make good use of learning resources. For example in Key Stage 1 lessons on electricity, each group of pupils is deliberately given insufficient apparatus when investigating how to make a torch bulb light up. By carefully staging the introduction of additional items, the teacher is able to develop pupils' understanding of circuits as they investigate how each new piece of equipment could be combined with what they already had to make the bulb light. Where learning support assistants are available, teachers make good use of them. They are fully involved in working with small groups of pupils, and contribute effectively to the progress made by all, especially those with special educational needs. Teachers and support staff assess pupils' knowledge and understanding well through probing questions, both in whole class discussions and in small groups when engaged in practical work. The quality of teachers' marking is satisfactory, but tends to focus on the presentation of pupils' work rather than on developing pupils' understanding of science.

117. The science curriculum is good. It is based on a high quality commercial scheme of work, which meets the requirements of all aspects of the subject, and provides good support for teachers when planning lessons. The rise in standards in 1999 and 2000 owes much to the introduction of the scheme of work over this time. A new system for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress has been recently introduced and this is good, although not all teachers' records are up-to-date. The science co-ordinator provides very good leadership. She has begun to monitor standards of teaching and learning, and the science action plan identifies key areas for development, aimed at raising standards. The school has good resources to support all aspects of science, although insufficient use is made of information and communication technology at present.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

118. Standards in information and communication technology are below national expectations in both key stages and pupils make unsatisfactory progress throughout the school. Standards in Key Stage 1 have deteriorated since the last report, where they were reported as meeting national expectations.

119. A little evidence of pupils' prior work in word processing was available for inspection, and three short small-group lessons were seen. In the Key Stage 1 lesson observed, pupils practise simple word processing skills, such as selecting text using the computer mouse, underlining it and changing its colour. Although the standard of work is low for pupils of this age, it is appropriately set due to their lack of previous experience. It provides a satisfactory challenge and pupils make satisfactory progress over the lesson. No other completed work was available for inspection in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2 a small display of play-scripts with titles such as 'St George and the Dragon', show satisfactory attention to layout and editing. For example, different colours and letter styles are used for stage directions and for different characters, and spellings have clearly been checked before final printing. A collection of letters to 'Ikea', following the company's involvement in developing the Year 5 cloakroom area, show good use of editing skills and correct letter layout. These have clearly been edited successfully before final printing. Pupils have begun to experiment with a computer-painting program, but the standard of work seen in the short Year 6 lesson observed is below that expected for pupils of this age. Work consists merely of a very simple picture made by experimenting with a few painting 'tools' available in the program. However, all pupils use the computers confidently. They use the mouse correctly to control routine operations, such as printing work and closing computers down. A similar lesson was seen with a small group of Year 3 pupils. Work was of a similar standard, but pupils were unable to close the computers down without assistance.

120. Only three short lessons in information and communication technology were seen during the inspection, each with a small group of pupils, and pupils were not observed using equipment at other times. This is insufficient evidence on its own to judge the quality of teaching, but low standards and other evidence indicates that teaching is unsatisfactory overall, especially in Key Stage 2.

121. One satisfactory Key Stage 1 lesson was seen. The teacher has sufficient subject knowledge to teach the skills outlined in the lesson plan, but an overlong introduction and demonstration restricts pupils' work to a very short practical session. This hinders the progress they could otherwise make if given longer. However, pupils are interested in their work and behave well, and they make satisfactory progress overall.

122. In the Key Stage 2 lessons observed, small groups of Year 6 and Year 3 pupils are taught the same thing. The work, introducing pupils to a small range of 'tools' in a new computer-painting program, is appropriate for the Year 3 pupils. They make satisfactory progress and the lesson is satisfactory overall. However, the tasks are not sufficiently demanding for the Year 6 pupils. They make little progress and the lesson is unsatisfactory overall.

123. The quality of planning in Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory. Teaching plans for the half term are not complete, with questions for the assessment of pupils' work sometimes not provided. Lesson objectives, such as 'to have experience of various word processing techniques', lack precision. Activities do not generally provide sufficient challenge, for example in the Year 6 lesson observed. Assessment questions, such as 'have all children worked on the task with confidence' often do not relate well to the lesson objectives, which in

this example addressed elementary word processing skills using particular keys on the computer keyboard.

124. The low standards are also attributable in part to insufficient development in the provision of computer hardware and software since the time of the last inspection. The school recognises this weakness and has begun a long-term development plan for information and communication technology. This action plan takes advantage of Government funding to improve provision and to provide staff training. At the time of the inspection, the first phase of this initiative had been started with a new computer suite being installed in the school library. This provides a good resource for small group work, with high quality hardware and software to support all aspects of the subject, and also gives good support to most other curriculum subjects. However, there are insufficient computer systems for whole class use at present and, despite some classrooms having additional computers, these are old and overall provision in the school is still unsatisfactory.

125. The co-ordinator also has other senior management responsibilities, and since taking over the role has not yet had sufficient time to address the weaknesses. The school has recently adopted a new scheme of work prepared by the local education authority support team. This addresses satisfactorily the development of information and communication technology as a subject in its own right, but the school has yet to adapt it to fit its own circumstances, especially to show how information and communication technology will be taught in association with other subjects. Low standards are also partly explained by the lack of a scheme of work in previous years. A new system for assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is also being implemented, but this is at a very early stage of development, and it is too early to judge its effectiveness.

ART AND DESIGN

126. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection and there is not enough evidence available to make a secure judgement on standards. The previous inspection reported that there was no scheme of work and planning for the curriculum was difficult. Work did not always reflect different levels of attainment and there were limited opportunities for pupils to explore textile and 3D work. Co-ordination of the subject was unsatisfactory. These weaknesses have not been addressed and provision for the subject is poor.

127. Scrutiny of pupils work in Key Stage 1 shows that they have opportunities to develop basic skills and improve their control of materials through drawing, painting and collage activities. Through these activities they are taught about colour, pattern and texture. By the end of Key Stage 2 scrutiny shows that pupils have had sufficient experiences to practise these elements of the subject. However, no evidence was seen of work that showed methods of designing and making images and artefacts or of pupils comparing ideas, methods and approaches and adapting or developing work further as a result. In addition, evidence of pupils' knowledge and understanding of materials and processes used in art, craft and design and the roles and purposes of artists and craftspeople in different times was not available for inspectors to see. The range of work that is covered by the end of the key stage is limited.

128. It was not possible to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. However, in the two lessons seen teaching is satisfactory and unsatisfactory. Where teaching is satisfactory, pupils in Year 6 are taught to consider accuracy of size and position of facial features in portraits. The teacher spends time discussing work with each pupil individually and gives appropriate teaching points that help pupils to improve. For example, when pupils

are encouraged to look carefully at the colours that make up the overall colour of the iris they match their effort more precisely. Time targets for the completion of different stages of work are given and this helps to maintain levels of productivity. Teaching that is unsatisfactory is not supported by any planning and work in Year 4 sketchbooks shows that they have done exactly the same work before. Discussion with the pupils supports this as they say they “don’t know why they are doing this as they have done it before”. As a result, pupils lack interest in the lesson and behaviour is unsatisfactory. The teacher places herself in a poor position at many times during the lesson and doesn’t see what is going on. When there is interaction with pupils who are disinterested, the teaching points offered do little to encourage improvement. Some pupils are self-motivated, but others do not put in any intellectual or creative effort into their work. Pupils produce a portrait of their friend, but the quality is often not as good as their previous work. At the end of the lesson when pupils are asked if they think they have made any improvement to their work only five put up their hands.

129. Co-ordination of the subject is poor. The co-ordinator fails to take the lead and give direction to the curriculum. The action plan provided by the co-ordinator for inspectors did not show that the strengths and weaknesses of the subject have been securely identified. Targets on the plan had not been completed by the set date. There are no systems in place for assessing what pupils know and can do. The sessions timetabled for art are too long and challenge and pace dwindle as the lesson progresses. However, this has not been monitored by the co-ordinator and pupils’ work is not monitored to ensure full coverage of the curriculum or standards achieved. The subject does not contribute effectively to promoting pupils’ understanding of culture or to developing multi-cultural knowledge and understanding.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

130. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection and there is not enough evidence available to make a secure judgement on standards. The previous inspection report indicated that insufficient attention given to the direct teaching of skills, the ineffective use of tools and equipment and a lack of a co-ordinated whole school approach to design and making hindered pupils’ progress. There was no scheme of work and co-ordination of the subject was unsatisfactory. These weaknesses have not been addressed. Improvement since the last inspection is very weak and provision for the subject is poor.

131. In Key Stage 1 pupils have opportunities to develop the basic skills of cutting and assembling when working with a range of materials which include paper, card and re-cycled materials, such as boxes and plastic containers. They cut, shape and join these materials together using glue and sticky tape to make models of their own homes. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are beginning to develop their understanding of the processes involved in designing, making and evaluating their products.

132. It was not possible to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. However, the teaching in the lesson seen is good. This is due to the teachers’ personal desire to provide pupils with opportunities to carry out design and technology despite the lack of curriculum guidance. The project of designing and making packing for a biscuit that would be strong enough to send through the post is well planned. There is clear evidence that pupils are being taught the processes of design and how materials may be combined to create more useful properties. Through evaluation of their products they are beginning to recognise that the product’s quality is dependent on materials, construction and suitability for purpose. Pupils are enjoying the project and worked with interest, purpose, concentration and co-operation.

133. Co-ordination of the subject is very poor. The co-ordinator fails to take the lead and

give direction to the curriculum. The breadth and balance of the curriculum is poor. There are no assessment procedures. There are no systems in place for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning which takes place in the classrooms and the co-ordinator has no knowledge of standards across the school.

GEOGRAPHY

134. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection week. No geography lessons were taking place in Key Stage 2 during this half of the term. Insufficient evidence of pupils' past work was available on which to make a secure judgement about the standards pupils' achieve. Geography was an area of weakness during the last inspection and the school has addressed some of the weaknesses identified. There is now a detailed scheme of work in place to guide teachers' planning. However, in common with many others in the country the school has allocated less time to geography in the last two years to enable them to focus on raising standards in the national priorities of literacy and numeracy. As a result, the scheme is not yet fully established and is still being trailed and adapted to meet the requirements of national curriculum and those of the school.

135. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are developing a sense of place in relation to home and school. They draw maps showing the human and some of the physical features that they see on their route to school. Pupils make good use of their literacy skills when they write clearly about how to get from the school to the library. They are developing their understanding of geographical vocabulary and use terms, such as left, right and straight on when describing directions. Pupils in Year 6 have worked successfully to understand the water cycle and how rivers affect their environment. They make use of appropriate fieldwork techniques, such as sketching the area studied and carrying out an investigation to determine how fast a stream is flowing. They are developing their map skills by using grid references to identify places and through orienteering activities. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their fieldwork activities.

136. In the lesson seen, pupils are keen to talk about their work and sometimes explain in great detail their route to school. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Key strengths of the lesson are the close questioning of pupils to help them understand the location of their homes in relation to the local area, and the setting of tasks matched to the needs of the different ability groups within the class. The provision of a simplified map on which pupils' plot the features observed on their route to school limits the development of their mapping skills. Pupils are unable to represent the directions on the worksheet that they described when talking about their route.

137. A new co-ordinator for the subject has recently been appointed. He is keen to build on the work done by the headteacher in developing the curriculum and an appropriate action plan is in place. It is too soon to be able to judge the effect of the new scheme on standards, but some units, such as improving our local area, need to be more rigorous in terms of planning to develop pupils' geographical skills, knowledge and understanding. There are no formal procedures for assessment. The curriculum is organised into blocked units of work for each year group, but reorganisation of these to meet the needs of the mixed age class in Key Stage 1 has yet to be addressed.

HISTORY

138. Only two lessons took place during the inspection and there is not enough evidence available to make a secure judgement on standards at this stage of the implementation of the newly developed history curriculum.

139. Evidence from Key Stage 1 shows that seven year old pupils have some knowledge of famous people from the past and are beginning to develop an understanding of how things change over time. They make good use of their literacy skills when writing in their own words, for example, the story of King Alfred and the cakes. They know that Samuel Pepys recorded information about major events in British history in his diary.

140. Year 6 pupils recall their lessons from the previous year and know key facts about the Roman conquest of Britain. They are able to describe some of the effects of the occupation and the resistance by Boudicea. The level of their oral understanding is not matched by their written work. Pupils are taught how to glean information from a range of sources. For example, Year 6 study an extract from a letter written by Sir Walter Raleigh. As a result, they understand that information about the past can be presented in different ways and that evidence about historical events and people from the past needs to be interpreted. In Year 4, pupils are learning about the Gods of ancient Greece. The work seen in pupils' books indicates that the level of oral understanding is not matched by the quality of their written work and coverage of the subject is sometimes at a too superficial level. Although there has been some improvement in this aspect since the last inspection, inconsistencies in the quality, quantity and depth of pupils' work between year groups has not been fully addressed. Pupils with special educational needs take a full part in lessons and recording activities are matched to their needs.

141. The quality of teaching seen is satisfactory. A strength of the teaching is the match of activities to the needs of the different ability groups within the class. However, the teaching of specific history skills is less effective. In one lesson, far greater emphasis was placed on the development of pupils' literacy skills than identifying the history skills to be taught and learned. In terms of history the double teaching session allocated is not used to best effect, although pupils consolidated their literacy skills. Pupils in Year 6 were pleasantly surprised that they found learning about the past so interesting and enjoyable.

142. The headteacher has been instrumental in driving the development of the history curriculum. He has provided a detailed scheme of work based on the national guidance, an improvement since the last inspection. It is too soon to be able to judge the impact of the new scheme on standards, but the cycle of blocked units have still to be organised to take account of the needs of the Key Stage 1 mixed age class as it moves up through the school. There are no formal assessment procedures. A new co-ordinator for the subject has recently been appointed. She will oversee the ongoing review of the scheme of work to ensure the development and progression of pupils' history skills. An appropriate action plan for the further development of the subject is in place.

MUSIC

143. Due to timetabling and organisational arrangements only one music lesson, a choir practice and school assemblies were seen during the inspection. Little other evidence was available to support judgements and it is not possible to judge overall pupils' standards, progress, the quality of teaching or improvements since the last report across the whole school.

144. In the lesson and assembly seen, the standard of singing is below that expected for pupils of their age. In the lesson, pupils are taught a song from a new musical based on Dickens novel 'A Christmas Carol', but only half of the class make sufficient effort to join in fully. Consequently, singing lacks enthusiasm and many pupils sing out-of-tune. Whole school singing in assemblies also lacks enthusiasm. Pupils sing hymns, such as 'Lord of the Harvest'. Younger pupils sing in tune, but many older pupils find this very difficult and the overall standard is below that expected for primary age pupils. In the choir practice, pupils warmed up by singing a two-part 'chant'. They did this well, securely holding on to the two different melodies, and paying close attention to the syncopated rhythms. They then rehearsed the song 'Let it Be', which again they sing well. As the practice progresses, good attention to diction and dynamics improve the quality of performance, which is satisfactory overall.

145. A small sample of pupils' work is on display in Year 4. Pupils are beginning to learn to write music using conventional musical notation. They use crotchets and quavers to write short rhythmic patterns, and they write short melodic phrases using the treble clef. This work is at the standards expected for pupils of this age.

146. The lesson observed in Year 4 was unsatisfactory, due mainly to the specialist teacher's inability to control the class effectively. However, this is made difficult by a significant proportion of the class who make constant interruptions and who show little interest in the work. As a result, the whole class is affected and little progress is made.

147. Due to staff turnover, the school does not have a music specialist at present. However, local education authority specialist music teachers visit the school to support class teaching in Key Stage 2. This is a satisfactory interim arrangement until a new co-ordinator can be appointed, but restricts developments in the subject and monitoring. For example, one lesson that was on a class timetable did not take place due as a choir practice took place instead. The class teacher was not prepared for this and it had not been picked up through monitoring of planning. The curriculum for music is based on a scheme provided by the local authority, and is satisfactory, but the school has no formal assessment procedures linked to this. Pupils have good access to extra-curricular activities in music and to specialist instrumental teaching. The school choir performs regularly in school and in the community. For instance during the past year they have taken part in the Millennium Celebrations, a Christian Pageant, and they have raised funds for Dr Barnardo's homes by singing in the local Ikea store. A small number of pupils take instrumental lessons in violin, woodwind, brass and guitar, which are provided by the local education authority. Learning resources for music are unsatisfactory. There are insufficient instruments to support whole class teaching and the range of recorded music available is insufficient to promote pupils' understanding of other cultures around the world.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

148. Pupils are attaining in line with national expectations in Key Stage 1. The school has very well developed links with the local comprehensive, which has sports college status, and much of the Key Stage 2 curriculum is taught by specialist teachers and pupils achieve well as a result. In Key Stage 2, pupils are attaining above the expected level for their age. Year 7 staff, are finding it necessary to adapt their curriculum as a result, confirm this.

149. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils participate in good aerobic exercise during the warm-up aspect of the lesson. Pupils move around the hall in different directions and at

different speeds. They also alter the level at which they work and change their body shape in response to a signal from the tambourine. They copy movements and then use these to create a pattern linking gymnastic movements together to produce dance sequences.

150. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have developed their confidence and competence soundly, especially in team games, where they have learned to co-operate well with each other, are well organised, and understand ideas of team tactics and team spirit. They are appropriately competitive with each other in individual activities and games. In lessons observed, pupils practised attack and defence skills and considered their footwork and movement around the space. They also recognised and responded appropriately to the signals of the referee. Pupils have experience of athletics in the form of throwing, running events and the long jump. They also take part in orienteering activities on the school field and when on residential visits. Swimming is undertaken at the local pool. During the past year pupils have almost all managed to swim twenty metres, and can jump into deep water. Some can dive, a few can swim distances of well over a hundred metres, and they can float in different positions. Dance and gymnastics are built into the programme of class work and after school activities.

151. In the lesson observed in Key Stage 1 teaching is good. Links to previous lessons are established well and pupils use their knowledge well as a result. The lesson is sequenced effectively to include good teaching points and demonstration followed by practise and performance. Pupils are involved in evaluating their own performance and that of their friends as the teacher asks questions such as, "would anybody like to say something about the shape of those movements?" This leads to all pupils responding positively and improving their performance. Pupils behave very well and respond to the teachers' directions quickly, with enthusiasm and confidence. Pupils with special educational needs are given support and encouragement. For example, one pupil skips alongside the teacher as he finds this very difficult and lacked confidence. His self-esteem is raised and he learns when to change feet.

152. Teaching in the two lessons seen in Key Stage 2 is very good. Lessons are well organised and start with a good, energetic warm-up session and a demonstration. Throughout the lessons there are good opportunities for pupils to develop their skills individually and in teams. Teachers have very good subject knowledge. They intervene appropriately to demonstrate and explain teaching points to individual pupils to help them improve. The pace and challenge are very good, with a strong sense of drive and purpose to the whole of lessons. In both lessons the main focus is teaching skills to play a game of basketball. Younger pupils are taught the importance of passing the ball accurately and very good intervention is given to pupils who experience difficulty. For example, those who find it difficult to carry out a chest pass accurately are told to find eye contact with the target. Older pupils understand the need for defending and attacking in a game situation. They consider their position in the space available and their footwork to improve their performance. Pupils learn to respond to the referee and mistakes made are used positively to reinforce the right way to work and to improve performance. In both lessons the pupils are managed very well and are highly motivated.

153. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The scheme of work is based on local schemes and has been adapted to match the school's needs and the use of specialist teaching in Key Stage 2 contributes to standards achieved. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. There is a policy for teaching the subject, teaching has improved, and resources are good. The links made with the local Sports College makes a significant contribution to standards achieved. There is a good range of extra-curricular opportunities provided at the school and at the local comprehensive. Pupils participate in local competitions and tournaments. Although there are no formal assessment procedures, pupils' achievements in physical education, either in school or out of school, are celebrated

and this has a positive impact on pupils' positive attitudes to the subject.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

154. Due to staff absence during the inspection no lessons were observed. Scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work, along with discussions with staff and pupils show that the standards pupils achieve are in line with those expected for their age in both key stages. This is an improvement from those reported at the time of the last inspection.

155. In Key Stage 1, pupils learn about the stories of Jesus as a child and the importance of special places and ceremonies related to Christianity. They extend their knowledge by learning about other important world religions and the artefacts, books and teachings related to these. In Key Stage 2, early learning is built on and pupils increase their knowledge of Bible stories and they understand the importance of the message in the teachings of Jesus. They learn about the significance of prayer in all faiths and relate this to their own lives. By the end of the key stage, pupils have learnt significant aspects of major faiths as recommended in the locally agreed syllabus. Throughout the school, pupils use their literacy skills to discuss and record information.

156. In order to ensure that pupils' knowledge and understanding are built on progressively as pupils move through the school, the co-ordinator teaches all pupils in Key Stage 2. Lessons are planned to match the work to the attainment of the pupils and this is an improvement from the last inspection. At the time of the previous inspection, unsatisfactory teaching was linked to teachers limited knowledge of how to interpret religious education effectively in lessons. This has been overcome by the introduction of specialist teaching at Key Stage 2.

157. A good focus has been given to improving provision since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has worked closely with the local education authority to raise the profile of the subject and this has had a positive impact on standards. Leadership and management are good. There is a comprehensive policy and the locally agreed scheme is used for planning. Good assessment procedures have been introduced, although it is too soon to judge the impact of these, and the co-ordinator monitors standards in Key Stage 1 and 2. Resources have been improved and these are used well. Each class has an area particularly dedicated to displays that contribute to religious education and pupils' spiritual development. Religious education makes a good contribution to developing moral, social and cultural development and links effectively with the schools citizenship programme. Overall, improvement since the last inspection has been good.