

INSPECTION REPORT

ABINGDON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Middlesbrough

LEA area: Middlesbrough

Unique reference number: 131519

Head teacher: Mr R C Eastwood

Reporting inspector: Mr T Elston
20704

Dates of inspection: 26th – 29th March 2001

Inspection number: 230269

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Abingdon Road Middlesbrough
Postcode:	TS1 3JR
Telephone number:	01642 210567
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Councillor R Brady
Date of previous inspection:	No previous inspection

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20704	T Elston	Registered inspector	Geography	The school's results and pupils' achievements.
			Physical education	How well are pupils taught?
13462	R Mothersdale	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
				How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
25802	A Patterson	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Special educational needs	
14991	A Hardwicke	Team inspector	Equal opportunities	How well is the school led and managed?
			Science	
			History	
29188	G Ulyatt	Team inspector	Children in the Foundation Stage	
			English	
			Music	
11611	J Hall	Team inspector	Information and communication technology	
			Art and design	
			Design and technology	
			Religious education	
21020	T Galvin	Team inspector	English as an additional language	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Abingdon Primary is a very large school in the centre of Middlesbrough that was created in 1998 by combining the infant and junior schools on the same site. The school educates boys and girls aged between three and 11. There are 350 full time pupils on roll, and 78 who attend the Nursery part time. The surrounding area is disadvantaged in social and economic terms, and most pupils come from terraced housing close to the school. Seventy eight per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds, by far the most common of which is Pakistani, and nearly all of these speak English as an additional language. These figures are very high compared with other schools. Nearly 40 per cent of pupils claim free school meals, which is well above the national average. The school has over 21 per cent of pupils on its register of special educational needs, which is broadly the national average. No pupil has a statement of special educational need, and this is below average. During the last school year, 60 pupils entered the school other than at the usual time of first admission and 78 left it at times which were not those of the normal leaving or transfer for most pupils. This degree of mobility is very high compared with other schools, and reflects the large number of refugees who come to this school for a short time. Thirty four per cent of pupils attend from outside the school's catchment area. When children enter the school their attainment is very low compared with the levels expected for their age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Abingdon Primary is a good school, where pupils are keen to learn. It serves this diverse community well, and is held in high regard by parents. The great enthusiasm of the head teacher, and the high standards he sets for the care of pupils, are central to the school's success and popularity. Pupils' standards are still low by the time they leave, but they make substantial progress, especially in the junior classes where the quality of teaching is good. These strengths, alongside the good use of funds and the low costs per pupil, mean that this school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school has very effective links with parents, and they are delighted with the progress their children make.
- The head teacher's excellent relationships with the pupils, staff, parents and the local community are important reasons for pupils' good behaviour, and the very high degree of racial harmony throughout the school.
- The provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good, and they make good progress in their use and understanding of English.
- The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good, and supports their personal development very well.
- Pupils' attitudes to work are very good, and help them make the most of their time in school.
- There is a very good selection of extracurricular activities to extend pupils' knowledge, particularly in sporting and cultural areas.

What could be improved

- Pupils' standards in the national tests, despite improvements from year to year, are low.
- Pupils' attendance and punctuality are poor, and this affects their attainment.
- The school's development plan says too little about how standards will be raised.
- The school makes too little use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in other subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has not been inspected before.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	N/A	E*	E*	E
Mathematics	N/A	E*	E	E
Science	N/A	E	E	D

<i>Key</i>	
top 5% of schools	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
bottom 5% of schools	E*

Overall, the school's results were well below those found nationally, and, in English, in the bottom five per cent of all schools. A high proportion of pupils have English as an additional language, and many enter the school mid-way through the year with no English at all, and these factors affect their progress in many subjects. Compared with similar schools, pupils' scores were still low. Standards are rising though; last year's results show an improvement on those in 1999, and pupils are on course to meet the challenging targets set for them this year. This inspection finds that standards have risen further, and, whilst still below average in all three subjects by the end of Year 6, are edging closer to those found nationally. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are below average. Although a few pupils read well, overall their reading lacks fluency and expression. Their written work is interesting, but often poorly punctuated. In mathematics by the end of Year 6, most pupils are confident in using the four rules of number, but a few still struggle with these basic skills. In science by the end of Year 6, pupils' experiments show a sound understanding of how to test a theory, but their insecure scientific knowledge sometimes slows down their work. In information and communication technology, Year 6 pupils' skills are below average overall. Their word-processing skills are average, but their understanding is limited in other areas such as simulation, modelling, control and classifying information. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in religious education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils' work in all other subjects is in line with national expectations.

At Key Stage 1, the 2000 national tests showed that standards were well below average in reading and writing, and very low in mathematics. Whilst still low, pupils' scores were much improved from those of the previous year. This inspection confirms these standards. A few pupils read accurately and with confidence, but, for many, new words are difficult to work out. In writing, pupils use interesting words well, but their spelling and punctuation are well below average. In mathematics, most count confidently in multiples of two, five and ten, but few pupils have the basic skills necessary to add and subtract quickly in their head. In science, standards are below expectations by the end of Year 2. In information and communication technology, Year 2 pupils' standard of work is in line with that expected, and in religious education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils' work by the end of Year 2 meets national expectations in art and design, design and technology, history, geography, music and physical education.

Children in the Foundation Stage make steady progress, but few attain the nationally agreed targets for very young children in all areas of their development.

Given their very low attainment on entry to this school, pupils achieve well to reach the standards found in this inspection. A significant number of pupils enter the school with limited English, often part of the way through the school year, and make good progress in a short time in their use and understanding of English.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	These are very good. Pupils are very proud of their school, work hard and delight in their successes.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is good overall. In most classes they behave very well, but a few in the infant classes soon lose concentration and disrupt others around them.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good. They are keen to take responsibility, and work well independently. Relationships are very good among all members of the school community.
Attendance	This is poor. Too many pupils are taken for extended holidays, and this affects their progress. In addition, many are late for school in the mornings, and miss the start of the day.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, and good in the juniors, and generally meets the needs of all pupils well. Of the 71 lessons observed, 46 per cent were satisfactory, 35 per cent were good, 14 per cent very good and three per cent excellent. Only one lesson was unsatisfactory. The best teaching is in the junior classes, with that in Years 5 and 6 particularly strong because of the teachers' very high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. In these classes, pupils learn new skills quickly and make the most of their time in school. Some good teaching was seen in the infant classes, but teachers' management of pupils' behaviour is not always good enough, and this slows down the pace of learning. The teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes is satisfactory, and gives pupils a sound start, but these children are not given sufficient opportunities to choose activities and develop their independence. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good overall. Teachers plan these lessons well, and ensure that pupils learn the basic skills of reading and number well. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good, and these pupils make good progress towards their targets. The teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is good, and pupils make good progress in their use and understanding of English. The teaching of higher attaining pupils is good in science, and they do well in the national tests, but not enough is done to extend these pupils in other subjects.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is good overall, and well organised to give pupils a wide variety of experiences. The school has adopted the national numeracy and literacy strategies energetically, and these are steadily raising standards in English and mathematics. There is a very good selection of extracurricular activities to extend pupils' knowledge, particularly in sporting and cultural areas. The school makes too little use of computers to support pupils' learning in all subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is well organised. Pupils have clear targets set for them, and their good progress is monitored carefully.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good provision overall, which supports pupils' learning well. Bilingual staff provide very good support in lessons, but not enough is provided for pupils who return after a long time in Pakistan.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is very good overall. Very good spiritual provision in assemblies and lessons gives pupils the chance to reflect on issues, and develop a good understanding of the place of religion in their lives. Equally good moral provision teaches pupils how to behave, and develop a clear understanding of right and wrong. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills, and pupils work and play very well together. Very good cultural provision, particularly supporting pupils' knowledge of art and design, music and other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils very well. Good assessment and tracking procedures mean that pupils' progress is monitored carefully, and this helps teachers provide good support for pupils' learning. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent, and does not always say enough about how pupils can improve. All staff work very hard to make pupils feel safe and valued.

The excellent multicultural provision is at the heart of the school's ethos, and explains why relationships among all ethnic groups are so good. All staff work very closely with parents, and this aspect is a significant strength of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	The head teacher provides good, inspirational leadership, and has been a key figure in the creation of a committed team of staff from two separate schools. The deputy head teacher provides good support, and sets a very good example by her own teaching. Senior staff meet regularly, and have developed into a good team. However, co-ordinators do not all monitor their subject sufficiently.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors support the school enthusiastically, and all statutory requirements are met. They are well-informed, and have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are well led by a knowledgeable Chair.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school analyses the performance of pupils and staff well. Pupils' results in the national tests are examined carefully to see where improvements can be made. The quality of teaching is monitored systematically by the head teacher and senior staff.
The strategic use of resources	Specific grants are used well, for example, to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs. The administration of the school's funds is good, and the school has sound procedures for judging how well money is spent.

The staffing, accommodation and learning resources at the school are satisfactory. The high number of bilingual staff to support pupils with English as an additional language is a strength of the staffing, and has a very good impact on pupils' learning. The school's development plan has too many targets for staff to keep in their head for it to be a useful working tool, and it does not say enough about how the school will raise standards. The school's playgrounds and outside learning area for the Nursery are in poor condition, and are included in the next phase of building work.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The high quality of care • The head teacher's strong leadership • Their children love coming to school • The good provision for pupils with English as an additional language • The good progress their children make • The good quality of teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few parents do not feel well-informed about their child's progress • Not enough, or too much homework is set

Parents speak glowingly about this school. The inspection team confirms their views of the school's strengths. Pupils' annual reports give some good indications of how pupils are progressing, but do not, however, comment on all subjects. The provision of homework is good, and builds up appropriately as pupils get older.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 The school's results in the national end of Key Stage 2 tests in 2000 show that, compared with all schools, standards were very low in English, and fell in the bottom five per cent of all schools' results. Standards were well below average in mathematics and science. Compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards were well below average in all three subjects, but these figures are distorted to some extent by the significant number of parents who do not claim their entitlement for free school meals for their children. There are no comparative figures for schools with similar proportions of pupils with English as an additional language.

2 The percentage of pupils attaining higher than the expected standard was very low compared with the national average in English, well below average in mathematics and average in science.

3 When the averages of the school's end of Key Stage 2 test results for 2000 are compared with those reached by the pupils in 1999, they show a significant rise in standards, and at a higher rate of improvement than that found nationally. There is no significant difference in standards attained by boys and girls

4 The school has set appropriately challenging targets for 62 per cent of its pupils in English, and 58 per cent in mathematics, to reach, or exceed, the expected level in the national end of Key Stage 2 tests this year. These targets are significantly higher than the standards attained by last year's pupils, and the school is on course to meet them in both subjects.

5 This inspection finds that, in English, by the end of Year 6, pupils' reading is below average. Many have difficulty reading independently and understanding the ideas within the text because they do not read with sufficient fluency, accuracy and confidence appropriate to their ages. Higher attaining pupils locate information from non-fiction books and read with expression and understanding. Standards in writing are below average, and many pupils have difficulty recording their ideas in good, clear English. Pupils' speaking skills are below average by the end of Year 6. They listen reasonably well, but few express their thoughts clearly.

6 In mathematics by the end of Year 6, pupils' standards are below average. Most are confident in using the four rules of number, but a few still struggle with these basic skills.

7 In science by the end of Year 6, pupils' standards are below average. Their experiments show a sound understanding of how to test a theory, but their scientific knowledge sometimes slows down their work. Their environmental work in geography links well with science, and explains why their knowledge of scientific aspects of pollution is good.

8 In information and communication technology, Year 6 pupils' skills are below average overall. They develop their keyboard skills well in entering and drafting longer pieces of text, and understand the methods of storing and retrieving information on hard and floppy disks. However, their understanding is limited in other areas such as simulation, modelling, control and classifying information. They do not understand what a spreadsheet is, and have only experienced simulation using a simple adventure program. There is currently little opportunity for pupils to use and extend their computer skills in other areas of the curriculum, and this limits the degree to which they build up their confidence and skills.

9 By the end of Year 6 in religious education, pupils' attainment meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. They have a particularly good knowledge of a range of religions and their celebrations, and supplement these skills well through visits to local places of worship.

10 In art and design, pupils' work is average. Year 6 pupils make good use of their sketchbooks to study the textures and tones of landscapes from photographs. They adapt these ideas well to produce paintings, showing a sound knowledge of colour mixing and discuss their work comparing techniques to paintings by artists such as Renoir and Turner.

11 In design and technology, pupils' work is average. They plan their designs carefully, adapting and improving their work at the making stage. Pupils evaluate their work well, and some carry out tests for strength and for which materials are best suited to the purpose.

12 In geography, standards in Year 6 are average, but whilst their geographical knowledge is often good, their weak literacy skills limit the quality of their recording. Pupils show that they have an average knowledge of how settlements evolve over time, and link their work usefully with history as they plot the development of Middlesbrough from the 19th century to the present day. They have a good knowledge of some other countries, and of Pakistan in particular, where the teaching is supplemented effectively by pupils' first hand accounts.

13 In history, pupils have an average knowledge of the past, and speak confidently about such subjects as the buildings of Tudor England, and the lives of the Ancient Greeks.

14 In music, pupils' attainment is average. Pupils benefit from the good support of a music specialist each week, and each class is involved in playing musical accompaniments. They use a variety of instruments and read simple notation confidently. However, pupils in the school do not sing with much enthusiasm and many have difficulty singing the words clearly.

15 In physical education, pupils' attainment is average. They have a good level of fitness, and play games and swim to a reasonable standard.

16 At Key Stage 1, when the school's results in the 2000 national tests are compared with those of all schools, they show that standards were well below average in reading and writing, and very low in mathematics. When this data is compared with similar schools, standards were well below average in all three subjects. Whilst still low, these standards were much improved from those of the previous year. In the teachers' assessments for science, pupils' attainment was well below average overall, and below that of similar schools.

17 The findings of the inspection are that, by the end of Key Stage 1, standards are well below average in speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematics and below average in science.

18 These pupils enter the school with very weak literacy skills, and while they make steady progress during Years 1 and 2, many fail to achieve the national standard in reading and writing. Pupils' speaking skills are below average. They listen reasonably well to stories, but their speaking is often limited by their poorly developed English. A few pupils read accurately and with confidence, but, for many, new words are difficult to work out. In writing, pupils use interesting words well, but their spelling and punctuation are well below average. In mathematics, very few pupils sort and count to an average standard, and they generally lack the basic skills necessary to add and subtract quickly in their head. In science, standards are below expectations by Year 2. Pupils carry out experiments methodically, but struggle with the scientific concepts involved, and the recording of their work is weak. In information and communication technology, Year 2 pupils use computers confidently to work with text, but there are currently insufficient opportunities for them to develop their use of these skills in other areas of the curriculum. In religious education, standards are

average. Pupils listen very attentively to stories and respond thoughtfully to questions as they discuss relevant points.

19 Pupils in the Foundation Stage make steady progress overall. Attainment on entry to the school is very low and by the time they enter Year 1 they have made some progress, but their attainment remains well below what is normally expected of children of this age. Most children have limited communication skills and this affects their overall learning. Children in the Nursery use words and gestures to express their ideas, but very few are able to communicate well. Towards the end of the Reception class, some children speak in simple sentences, but do not clearly connect their ideas or use a sequence of sentences to express their feelings. All children show genuine interest in stories, have good access to books, and know how to handle them correctly. In mathematics, children count up to 10, and some can recognise numerals. A few higher attaining children learn to calculate when they show two fingers on one hand and three on the other, and find the total by counting them altogether. Through careful guidance by staff, they are beginning to understand the language associated with addition. In their knowledge and understanding of the world, children's attainment is very low.

20 Children enter the Nursery with very little general knowledge, and make sound progress. Children become aware of changes in plant and animal life, plant cress and beans, nurture them as they grow and observe how the roots and shoots change. Children make good progress in their technology skills. They cut, fold and join materials, and make sensible choices in the resources they use when making objects. In physical activities, children balance, climb and move backwards and forwards on equipment such as benches with reasonable skill. Most children handle paintbrushes, scissors and pencils correctly. In their creative activities, children explore colour well as they paint. They use a range of media and materials, but their work is sometimes over directed, which stifles their creativity. Overall, pupils make good progress through the school, and the standards found in this inspection by the end of Year 6 represent significant progress from their starting point. Their progress in the Foundation Stage and infant classes is satisfactory, and they make steady gains in their skills and confidence. Those pupils with English as an additional language settle quickly into school life, and make good progress in their use and understanding of English. The pace of progress accelerates in Years 3 and 4 as pupils build well on their solid start, and learn new work quickly. In Years 5 and 6 pupils make very good progress. In these classes, where the teaching is very demanding, pupils quickly reach the stage where they attain, or come close to, nationally expected standards in most of their work. Here, the strong focus on the teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is successful in giving pupils confidence to read with reasonable confidence, produce interesting poems, and work out mathematical problems by the time they leave. In science, teachers' good subject knowledge, and the strong curriculum, encourage pupils to think scientifically, and this helps them attack new experimental work with confidence. Their creative skills develop well, and profit from the good focus provided by the school to play instruments, sing in public productions and produce exciting pictures and models.

21 A high number of pupils enter the school during each year outside the normal starting times, and many of these are refugees with little or no English. The school does well by these pupils, and they soon develop the communication skills necessary for them to fit into school life. They benefit from very good targeted support from visiting bilingual support workers. Parents of these pupils speak highly of the school's provision, and of the vast gains made by their children.

22 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Their individual targets are clear and achievable, and pupils make good progress towards them. Their reading progresses well, helped by the support they get, particularly in the literacy hour. Setting the pupils into ability groups works well for these pupils in the juniors as they are helped by the small classes, and teaching which is focused clearly on their needs.

23 High attaining pupils make steady progress overall, but few achieve high levels in the national assessment tests. This is because much of the teaching is focused on bringing pupils up to national levels,

and sometimes those who could move on to more advanced work have too little planned for them. In science, high attaining pupils do well because the school provides demanding work in the junior classes that enables these pupils to develop a deeper understanding of science. This explains why over one quarter of last year's Year 6 pupils attained the higher Level 5 in the science national assessment tests.

24 Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in the Foundation Stage and this is maintained throughout the school. In the Foundation Stage and in the infants this progress is made better by the support they are given from bilingual support staff. They use pupils' home language successfully to help pupils reinforce their learning, understand new ideas and work more easily. Class teachers give pupils some opportunities to speak and listen carefully, for example when they ask pupils questions. At Key Stage 2, pupils such as asylum seekers and refugees, who are at the school for short periods of time, make very good progress. At this key stage a few pupils who have recently returned from extended visits to Pakistan are making unsatisfactory progress. This is because the school does not deploy the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant teachers to best effect. As a result the specific needs of these pupils are not being met sufficiently.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

25 Pupils' attitudes to school are generally very good. Pupils enjoy attending a range of activities at school, including, for example the penny whistle club and art club. They enjoy meeting the wide range of visitors to the school, such as local football celebrities or students from the university. They are very proud of their school, and speak enthusiastically about the excitement of learning, for example, mental maths exercises, and the opportunities they have for residential trips and visits. Pupils are very keen to take advantage of the clubs they can go to during lunchtime and after school, and do not differentiate in their enthusiasm over whether the clubs have a social, sport or academic aim.

26 Pupils' behaviour in the school is generally good. There have been no exclusions and most pupils know the principles of the five school rules and the skills that support these rules. Pupils generally behave well in lessons and apply themselves diligently to their tasks. This was seen to good effect in one literacy lesson where pupils were exploring traditional myths and showed great interest in researching stories and helping each other. Where activities for younger pupils are not well planned, they sometimes argue over roles in play situations, and do not work well together. Pupils' behaviour can also be unsatisfactory when they do not find their work sufficiently interesting, if they have spent a long time away from school or are new to the school and still adjusting to the school's high behavioural expectations. Pupils behave well outside of school, as was illustrated on a visit to a local mosque when all were very respectful of the cultural traditions of the Muslim faith, and the respect due to the Mosque's Imam.

27 Pupils' personal development is very good and is a strength of the school when considered against the diversity of backgrounds that the pupils come from. The installation of drinking fountains is in direct response to a School Council initiative and council members are designing a brochure, to be translated into several languages, for new pupils to learn important features of the school. Pupils across the school help by returning attendance registers to the school office, and pupils are generally very responsive to teachers' requests to, for example, clear tables after a lesson and get ready for the next task. Pupils take their responsibilities to the community very seriously, particularly when representing the school as 'ball boys' at Middlesbrough Football Club, or singing in charity events such as the Circle of Light. Older pupils enjoy a wide range of responsibilities in the school, and take these duties very seriously. The '8.30' team of pupils arrive early to help staff get the classrooms ready for lessons, and prefects undertake a range of jobs throughout the school. Pupils' relationships are very good, both between school friends and with the staff. There is a very striking sense of community in the school and very little friction between different ages, gender or background.

28 Children who are working in the Foundation Stage enjoy coming to school. They all have a good attitude to their work, play sensibly with each other and share equipment and resources readily. They are learning to listen to each other and respect each other's ideas. The opportunities for choosing their own activities are sometimes limited, and this is why this aspect of their development progresses more slowly than others.

29 Pupils' attendance at the school is poor, and well below the national average for a school of this type. The high number of pupils who are joining or leaving the school within a school year has a significant impact on the school's overall attendance and absence percentages. Some families leave the area, and do not inform the school that their children are not in fact absent, but no longer attending the school. Additionally, many pupils in the school are absent from the school for the Eid celebrations. A significant number of pupils each year are taken abroad by their families for an extended holiday during a school term. Many pupils are regularly late to lessons at the start of the school day and miss the school's morning registration time. Most of the pupils who are late for registration are being brought to school by their families.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

30 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, and generally meets the needs of all pupils well. Of the 71 lessons observed, 46 per cent were satisfactory, 35 per cent were good, 14 per cent very good and three per cent excellent. Only one lesson was unsatisfactory.

31 Parents feel that the quality of teaching is good, and that it promotes good progress. The school has done much to make literacy and numeracy lessons effective, and the teaching here is generally good. Teachers are enthusiastic about the national strategies, and comfortable with the division of lessons into direct teaching time, activities for individual pupils or groups and the plenary session. Consequently, pupils make good progress in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, and their results are improving in the national assessment tests each year. Throughout the school, however, teachers accept work that is untidy and poorly written, and of a lower standard to that found in English lessons. This affects pupils' quality of work in all subjects, and leads to unnecessary mistakes in mathematics. The school's decision to split pupils into ability sets for English, mathematics and science in the juniors is working well and is starting to raise attainment. In this way, teachers are able to focus on a narrower band of ability, and ensure that pupils learn at an appropriate pace.

32 The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Adults have made a concerted effort to plan the curriculum through the nationally recommended 'early learning goals'. The planning of activities has clear objectives, and, as a result, children are steadily acquiring new skills and understanding, particularly during activities directed by the teacher. However, plans do not take enough account of the need for children to initiate their own learning, and this inhibits this important part of their development. Staff know children very well, and make effective use of assessments. Overall, they support children well, but do not always interact sufficiently in their play to help them increase their skills and knowledge. Adults set high expectations for good behaviour, and this has a positive impact on pupils throughout the school. They encourage children to share books or play games at home with their parents. In this way the learning that takes place in school is well reinforced at home.

33 In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers generally show a very secure knowledge of the subjects they teach, and all make lessons interesting, so that pupils enjoy learning. Their direct teaching works well, and promotes pupils' learning of new skills effectively. Their management of pupils' behaviour is satisfactory overall, but there are some inconsistencies. In most lessons, teachers set clear standards for the way pupils will behave, and pupils work hard throughout, and learn much. When these standards are not applied consistently, however, the teacher has to spend too much time reminding pupils to get on with their work, and valuable teaching time is lost. The planning of lessons is

generally good in the infant classes, and provides much to support those pupils with poor language. Teachers use a rich and wide vocabulary with pupils to promote an interest in new words. They make sure pupils use the correct terminology for all subjects, and display these words well in the classrooms.

34 In the juniors, the quality of teaching and learning is good, and is very good in Years 5 and 6. Lessons are generally well planned, but, outside the ability sets, do not always provide enough challenge for higher attaining pupils. This has the effect of all pupils moving towards national standards, but few exceeding them. The best progress that higher attaining pupils make is in science, where the teachers' very good focus on investigations, and their high expectations of how rigorously they will be conducted, challenges pupils to achieve high standards. The fact that 28 per cent of pupils attained the higher Level 5 in last year's national tests illustrates how well this policy works. Teachers have effective strategies to manage pupils' behaviour, and apply their rules consistently. They reward pupils who behave very well in an obvious way, praising them enthusiastically, and this makes all pupils strive for this standard. The direct teaching is done well, and teachers are careful to ensure pupils do not sit too long listening to them talk. As a result, pupils learn new work quickly, maintain their interest and apply their new skills productively.

35 In Years 5 and 6, teachers step up the pace of the teaching, and pupils are expected to work very hard. These teachers' lessons are challenging and exciting, and are packed with learning. In one of the best lessons, Year 6 pupils were studying religious artefacts following their visit to a mosque. The teachers' very good subject knowledge immediately gained her the pupils' respect, and they listened intently as she explained about the objects. Her high expectations of their understanding made pupils strain to do their best, and her challenging questions ensured that all were keeping up with her. The teacher made her objectives very clear, and pupils were certain about the learning expected of them. At the end of the lesson, the teacher questioned pupils to measure their learning against these objectives, and ask them to evaluate themselves how much they had gained. By the end all pupils had achieved the lesson's purpose, and the breathless pace had swept them all along.

36 A shortcoming in the teaching lies in the lack of sufficient opportunities for pupils to use their information and communication technology skills in other subjects. The school is still building up its supply of computers, but those in classrooms lack the programs to support pupils' learning in subjects such as art and design, geography and mathematics.

37 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good, and ensures that pupils make good progress towards their targets. Teachers have a good awareness of pupils' difficulties, and provide work that is generally well matched to their needs as identified in their individual education plans. Teachers and pupils are mostly supported well by the classroom assistants, who have a good knowledge of pupils' needs, but sometimes these assistants stay on the sidelines when the teacher is teaching the whole class, and pupils are left too long without support.

38 The quality of teaching for pupils with English as an additional language is good. In the Foundation Stage and infant classes bilingual support staff successfully support pupils who are learning English as an additional language, particularly those children who are at the early stages of learning English. This leads to them making good progress in their learning. In a lesson in the Nursery, the bilingual support assistant used her expertise in Punjabi well to explain the outdoor play activity to the children, and how to use the equipment safely. In a Reception class, the bilingual support assistant gave the children instructions in Punjabi and English. This helped them to play the reading game successfully and read the English words on the cards. In the Foundation Stage and infant classes the teaching by monolingual classroom teachers and support staff is satisfactory. Teachers use the literacy hour soundly to promote the reading and writing skills of all pupils, but plan too few activities for pupils to speak in pairs or in small groups, or for them to act out a role in drama.

39 In the junior classes, the teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is good in the main, and pupils make good progress in their use and understanding of English. For example, in a Year 6 science lesson the class teacher had a fairly small group. This enabled her to focus effectively on the needs of pupils who were learning English as an additional language. She used skilful questioning to encourage them to express their thoughts and ideas clearly. ‘What temperature is the water?’ ‘What happens when it evaporates?’ As a result they made good progress in their learning. A visiting bilingual specialist gave very good additional tuition to two Libyan pupils. She had high expectations of what they should achieve in their work. For example, after completing a worksheet she expected them to spell correctly some of the words on it and they spelt them correctly. She kept the pupils’ interest by providing a variety of activities that were challenging yet matched to their needs. She gave them lots of praise for their efforts and achievements. As a result pupils made very good progress in their learning. They enjoyed their work; for instance they gave a beaming smile when they were successful.

40 At Key Stage 2 the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant teachers use their expertise well to promote effectively the English speaking skills of pupils during class lessons. For example, in a Year 3 lesson one of these teachers asked the pupils to read out the words they had made with specific suffixes, such as *helpless* and *usefully* and explain the meaning. She read out part of a story and pupils had to listen carefully and think of a suitable word for the words that were missed out in the text. These strategies promoted effectively pupils’ speaking and listening skills. In a Year 6 literacy lesson an Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant teacher provided challenging work, explained it clearly and asked probing questions. ‘I’ll read the text again and you need to listen for the important words. What is the very first point made in the text?’ The work in these pupils’ books shows that the teacher extends pupils’ learning effectively. She does this through the good marking of their work in which she points out clearly to pupils the ways in which they can improve it. As a result the majority of pupils make good progress in their learning. In this lesson two of the pupils had returned recently from an extended holiday in Pakistan. These pupils had poor English language skills, but the school has no strategies to provide the extra support they needed. As a result, the rate at which these pupils progressed was too slow.

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

41 The school provides for its pupils a rich and varied range of learning opportunities. The curriculum is both broad and balanced for all subjects, apart from information and communication technology, where teachers use computers too little to support other areas of the curriculum. It meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. It makes very good provision for pupils’ personal, social and health education and includes appropriate provision for sex education and drugs awareness. The school’s provision for ensuring equality of access and opportunity for all its pupils is very good, and this is a strength of the school. Pupils’ personal development is well promoted through opportunities to take significant responsibility and initiative.

42 Procedures for the early identification of pupils with special educational needs are thorough. Their individual work plans are updated regularly, evaluated fully and ensure that work is closely linked to that of their class. These pupils, and those for whom English is an additional language, receive very positive support from support assistants, those with bilingual expertise and other adults. Very good planning and effective use of resources enable pupils to work successfully towards their identified targets.

43 Throughout the school, teachers have worked hard to implement the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, and are making satisfactory use of the guidance to plan their lessons. In particular, they successfully use the initial part of their mathematics lessons to develop pupils’ mental calculation, to reinforce mathematical vocabulary and the final part of the lesson to highlight and recall what they have learned. From Year 3 onwards, pupils are set in ability groups for literacy and numeracy and this is beginning to have a positive effect on raising pupils’ attainment, particularly by the end of Key Stage 2. In

Literacy lessons, teachers are raising standards by focusing on the development of pupils' speaking, listening and writing skills. These skills are satisfactorily promoted in other subjects, such as history and art and design, and give an added dimension to pupils' personal development. Parents are very supportive of the regular homework offered to pupils, and all of this is having a positive impact on pupils' progress.

44 Teachers plan well in year groups. This medium term planning provides a very clear picture of what will be taught in each year group throughout the school. This planning is carefully monitored by both the head teacher and senior staff, thus ensuring that blocks of work are presented in a logical sequence that builds upon what has previously been taught.

45 The curricular provision for the youngest children in the school is generally satisfactory. Adults plan effectively towards the nationally recommended 'early learning goals'. They provide a sound range of learning opportunities for children, especially through activities directed by the teacher, and the curriculum is covered well. However, planning, particularly in the Reception classes, does not take into account activities from which children can choose; consequently children's independence and initiative are insufficiently developed. In both Reception and Nursery classes, the planning over directs children. Throughout the day, staff support children to help them develop their skills in communication, language, literacy and mathematics. All children, including those with special needs, are given equal access to what is on offer. Children who do not speak English at home are well supported by bilingual staff, who make sure that each child understands what is said. All staff encourage children to understand the rules of the school and positively encourage good behaviour through praise. The co-ordinator has been in post for three weeks and is keen to improve and develop the curriculum for all pupils in the Foundation Stage.

46 The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities and clubs. Pupils have many opportunities to be involved in sports such as football and cricket, art and design, science and attend video clubs. They learn to play a variety of musical instruments, and many are members of the school choir. They take part in inter-school sports, Christmas productions, and pupils from Year 3 upwards attend residential visits to Carlton Outdoor Centre, Dukeshouse Wood Centre and Egton House.

47 The school has established very good links with the community. Of particular note is the strong link between the University of Teesside Meteor Project and Year 6 pupils. They have opportunities to visit the university to take part, with student mentors, in a series of activities such as information and communication technology, science and music making. These activities further enrich the curriculum and develop pupils' social, cultural and personal education. Most parents agree that the school does, indeed, provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

48 There are regular visitors to the school, including various religious representatives, the police, the school nurse and parents, thus providing an added dimension to the curriculum.

49 The school has equality of opportunity, and inclusion for all pupils at the heart of its ethos and day to day life. The school song, which is sung with enthusiasm by all the pupils, teachers and friends of the school in assemblies and other occasions, gives voice to the principles by which the school tries to live. The school's commitment to equality of opportunity for all is very well reflected in all its work.

50 During the inspection many examples were seen, both in classrooms and around the school, of pupils and teachers showing care and respect for others. The School Council, for example, is currently devising a 'Welcome Book' for new pupils, which will give information about the school and help new pupils to feel welcomed and at home, particularly if they do not speak English.

51 The majority of pupils who are learning English as an additional language are given the teaching they need to enable them to take part as equals in the curriculum experiences teachers give them. In the Foundation Stage and in the infants bilingual support assistants give effective support to pupils who are at the

early stages of learning English as an additional language. A few pupils at Key Stage 2 are given similar additional support by visiting specialists. Over time this enables them to share in all the curriculum experiences offered to pupils in the school. However, older pupils who return from extended holidays in Pakistan are not able to gain full access to the curriculum as quickly as they should because the school does not give them the specific additional support they need.

52 The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, and a strength of the school.

53 Both the provision for pupil's spiritual development and the quality of collective worship which encompasses all faiths, is very good. School assemblies make a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual development through their clear messages and the opportunities for reflection. In one assembly, for example, based on the theme of journeys, pupils were filled with awe and wonder as they listened so intently to the story of Noah's Ark. As they imagined the water rising above the boat, so, too, did they move upwards and sit bolt upright as if they were part of the experience. Spiritual development is implicit in the school's ethos of valuing each individual, and teachers clearly value pupils' ideas and opinions during their lessons. For example, in a Year 2 lesson where pupils sat in a circle to share thoughts and values, the teacher encouraged them to interpret, in their own way, a variety of feelings and explain these to each other. The school has very good contacts with the local church and mosque, and the provision gains much from the many people who visit to promote the importance of spiritual awareness. This sense is also evoked through some sensitive art-work displayed around the school. For example, in one hall is a very colourful display of 'Living Things', beneath which the caption reads, 'We need the sun and rain to give us life.'

54 Provision for pupils' moral development is very good and is a clear strength of the school. The head teacher and all adults in the school set very good examples, and this makes pupils aware of the importance of rules which promote the values of honesty, justice and care for others. Each classroom has a display of school rules, and pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong. Teachers take opportunities, as they arise, in lessons and in assemblies to reinforce positive values. For example, in a Year 3 class, the teacher praised the pupils for their good behaviour, and photographs on the wall highlighted the "Pupil of the Week". All are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions, and this is evident throughout the school where pupils work together, share resources amicably and take turns politely. The head teacher is always evident around the school, praising pupils who are doing well, and ensuring that school rules are adhered to and that pupils are aware of the impact of their behaviour on others.

55 Provision for pupils' social development is also very good and, again, is a clear strength of the school. This has a very positive impact on pupils' progress in lessons and relationships in the school. Pupils are encouraged to work collaboratively, to support each other and to value the contributions of their classmates as they listen to each other. The head teacher sets a very good example by his personal approach to raising staff and pupils' self-esteem, and all adults in the school mirror this example. Pupils are valued for their contribution to life of the school. The school recognises the need to enhance pupils' self-esteem. For example, Year 6 pupils have written letters of thanks to the University of Teesside for a recent visit that they made. Year 5 pupils have written persuasive letters to the Lottery Grant Department, asking them to consider supporting their project for a swimming pool. Pupils are taught to respect themselves, other people and property. This makes a very positive contribution to their understanding of living in a multicultural community. They are encouraged to take responsibility seriously, both in classrooms and around the school. Class monitors, for example, look after books and other resources in classes, older pupils take care of younger ones at break-times and the School Council is learning to take responsibility for supporting the aims and values of the school. Pupils are given many opportunities to participate in the community, for example, through sports activities such as football and cricket.

56 Provision for pupils' cultural awareness is very good and yet another strength of the school. Pupils learn about the social and religious traditions of their own and other faiths through visits, for instance, from

parents who demonstrate Jamaican, Asian and Chinese styles of cooking. They learn about famous composers, their music and artists from different countries. Year 5 pupils learn about the culture of ancient and modern Greece. The school is very involved in community life which supports the curriculum well. For example, pupils take part and achieve success in musical competitions, such as the recent choir festival at Hartlepool and regular drama productions. They visit places of religious interest, such as the church and local mosque. There are a large number of visitors to the school, including music teachers, who tutor brass, guitar, recorder and the penny whistle. Students and parents visit regularly and work in classrooms to provide valuable support to teachers. As a result, these resources raise teachers' and pupils' awareness of their cultural heritage. Religious education and geography make a strong contribution to pupils' multicultural awareness.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

57 The school takes very good care of its pupils. Health and safety procedures are well established and are a central feature of all staffs' daily routines. The recent and current building work in and around the school has thoroughly tested these procedures. The caretaker makes daily checks of the school playgrounds and surroundings for any dangerous substances or vandal damage. There are three qualified first-aiders on the staff, and midday supervisors have had training in emergency first aid procedures. Pupils are supervised well by staff at breaktimes and lunchtimes. The school makes good use of assemblies to monitor and guide pupils' personal and social development. The school is working towards a Healthy Schools Standard award, and this is already having an effective impact on pupils' sex education, drugs awareness, citizenship awareness, healthy eating, confidence and self-esteem.

58 The school's procedures for child protection are very good, and the two designated members of staff update their knowledge of procedures regularly, and have recently formalised the school's child protection policy. The school has close links to the area Child Protection Committee, and staff regularly attend social services meetings. Parents are informed in the School Prospectus that there is a requirement for any child protection concerns to be passed onto the relevant authorities.

59 The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are very good. The head teacher makes a point of being present at the school gate to remind families and pupils on a daily basis of the importance of punctuality. The school is very persistent in following up any absences, and has well-organised and effective systems to monitor patterns of attendance and punctuality. These systems are supported effectively by their computerised registration system, very efficient administrations procedures, letters home and telephone calls. The school has a very good working relationship with the multi-disciplinary support service in the area, and educational social workers from this service visit the school weekly and follow up any referrals over attendance concerns, at pupils' homes. Frequent newsletters are sent to pupils' families on the importance of attendance. Certificates are awarded for 100 per cent attendance over a term. The school works closely with the Refugee Support Service to impress upon families who are new to the country the statutory requirements of regular attendance and punctuality at school for their children.

60 The school's procedures for monitoring behaviour are good, and their procedures for making sure that there are no bullying, racist or oppressive incidents are very good. Pupils understand the school's use of sanctions through the 'red card' system, and pupils who do not meet the school's high behavioural standards are identified in school assemblies. The school makes sure that it enlists the correct specialist help for pupils, and has close links to the educational psychology service and the local education authorities behavioural support team.

61 The school has good procedures in place to assess pupils' attainment and progress. These include a comprehensive number of tests which provide a great deal of information about pupils' achievements which are carefully recorded. The results of national tests are analysed most carefully by the head teacher and co-ordinators to look for trends or areas for concern. Other opportunities for assessment are clearly identified throughout the school. For example, half-termly tests are given in English, mathematics and science. These results are carefully recorded by all teachers and from these results, on most occasions, achievable targets are set for each pupil. These are used as a means to predict how standards may be further improved. However, where these are not monitored carefully, high attaining pupils in particular do not make sufficient progress. As a result, work is not then sufficiently challenging and is at times repetitive. The school is building up useful collections of pupils' work in English, mathematics and science to illustrate expected standards in each year, but this has not yet been extended beyond Year 2. In subjects other than English and mathematics, teachers regularly assess their pupils' work at the end of each topic and use this information to guide their planning. However, this form of assessment is still at the early stages of development in information and communication technology and music.

62 Good use is made of assessments in the Foundation Stage. Adults use a commercial system which clearly shows children's attainment and progress in all six areas of learning. Adults use assessments regularly and use the information well to inform their plans. They assess children's work regularly, and make useful comments about their progress.

63 The school has a clear marking policy, but, although work is regularly marked, the policy is not yet being implemented fully. The quality of teachers' marking is not consistent throughout the school. Where it is at its best, pupils are always informed of what they do well, and what they need to do next to improve their work. These teachers then know clearly what they need to plan for their next lessons for each ability grouping in order to raise standards further. Where this standard of marking is less accurate, teachers' weekly plans are not sufficiently clearly focused on what pupils know, understand and can do and this has a negative impact on some pupils' progress.

64 The assessment systems for pupils from 3 to 11 years who are learning English as an additional language are satisfactory. The Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant teachers and classroom teachers keep good records of pupils' achievements in reading and writing and use these satisfactorily to plan future work for them. However, the school does not have a system for assessing the spoken English skills of pupils who are at the early stages of learning English or for recording the progress they make. This makes it less easy for teachers to plan work to extend effectively the speaking skills of these pupils by providing work that is matched sufficiently to their needs. The school makes a good analysis of the performance of pupils from different ethnic groups and uses this information to track pupils' progress across the school.

65 Pupils with English as an additional language who are going on an extended family holiday are usually given some work to complete while they are absent. However, at Key Stage 2 they are not given sufficient additional targeted support on their return to compensate for the work they have missed.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

66 Parents' views of the school are overwhelmingly positive. They hold the head teacher especially in high esteem, and seek him out to help them with family issues, bureaucratic affairs and personal matters, as well as their children's education. Parents have a high degree of trust in the school and are pleased that the school increases their children's confidence and learning. Parents enjoy the fact that they can come into, or phone, the school, to talk to staff or to see how their child is getting on. They are happy with the information they receive from the school, especially the monthly newsletters, and enjoy coming into assemblies and performances to watch their children. A few parents and families help in the school on a regular basis, but families are very willing to support school events and celebrations for example by making refreshments. A recent mathematics workshop held in the school attracted a very good response from parents to work and learn alongside their children.

67 The quality of information that the school provides for parents is good. The school has addressed all the requirements for providing parents with a governor's annual report to parents, newsletters, school brochure and information for new parents in the Nursery. Annual written reports on their pupils' attendance, progress and achievement are generally informative, but do not yet meet with statutory requirements by reporting information on the progress made by pupils in all subjects of the curriculum. The school works hard to keep in contact with the parents, families and carers of pupils by occasional home visits, regular telephone calls and written and verbal messages. Home/school communication can be as detailed as providing a breakdown of the school day for a parent to track a pupil's behaviour. The presence in the school of so many bilingual staff and bilingual support services, such as, for example, the support worker from the Teeside Tertiary College, enhances the partnership between school and parents and dispels any misunderstandings quickly and efficiently. A home/school contract, Working Together, is in place but was not formulated after any significant input from parents or pupils. Homework in the school is well organised, and enjoys the support of parents.

68 The communication with parents of children who are learning English as an additional language is very good. The school provides written translations for important letters and documents for those parents who want them. Bilingual classroom and administrative staff use their expertise to successfully communicate with parents when they visit the school, for instance, on special educational needs and at parents' consultation evenings. This adds to parents' understanding of the ways that they can support their children with their work at home. As a result it makes a positive contribution their children's learning in the classroom.

69 Until a few weeks before the inspection the school used to provide a very good range of lessons for parents of children who are learning English as an additional language, for instance in English and cookery. This is now undertaken very successfully by the new purpose built 'Sure Start Centre', which is attached to the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

70 The head teacher provides the school with good leadership and management. He offers active leadership in promoting a positive and supportive environment where all the teaching and non-teaching staff work well together for the benefit of all the pupils. The head teacher has a commanding presence around the school, and is always available at key times for parents, pupils and staff. The knowledge that he is always accessible contributes much to the high standards of behaviour seen. Although there are some pupils who present challenging behaviour in the school he confronts any difficulties positively, and the pupils in particular appreciate this. He often talks to pupils individually, discussing their day in school, or achievements in the classroom, and he knows all the pupils, and their families, very well. His depth of knowledge, understanding and involvement in the local community gives him valuable insights into pupils' backgrounds and individual needs.

71 The head teacher is well supported by the deputy-head. She is a consistently good classroom practitioner who provides a good role-model for other members of staff, and who also takes an active part in promoting the school's caring and inclusive ethos. Teachers with subject-management responsibilities work hard to oversee the day to day running of their subjects, in line with their job-descriptions, although these, along with that of the deputy-head, are not sufficiently specific about some aspects of their role. In addition, the co-ordinators for subjects other than English, mathematics and science are not sufficiently involved in monitoring the standards of work, or the quality of teaching, to be able to raise standards of attainment. In some cases they have had no opportunities to look at work in other classes, particularly those in the key stage in which they do not teach.

72 Whilst there is a very strong drive at all levels of management in the school to give all pupils opportunities to develop within a caring and inclusive environment, and strive for high standards in their work, the school's aims and Mission Statement do not make these priorities explicit. The School Development Plan is too lengthy and complicated, and does not say enough about how standards will be raised, particularly in the core subjects of English, maths and science. Despite these shortcomings, the head teacher has put in good measures to raise standards, and they are having a positive effect. Pupils' books, for example, are monitored rigorously to see patterns of strengths and weaknesses in their learning and teachers' teaching. Older pupils benefit from extra literacy and numeracy sessions after school, and the school provides a 'mathematics workshop' for pupils and parents to develop their understanding further. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 benefit from additional literacy lessons, and four teachers and a bilingual assistant have been trained to provide this. These are good strategies which are improving standards in English and mathematics.

73 Teachers and classroom assistants are supported well in their professional development. They are encouraged to attend whatever courses are available, and benefit from useful monitoring of their teaching by

the head teacher and senior staff. This monitoring focuses appropriately on teachers' planning, and their expectations of pupils' attainment and behaviour. Teachers benefit from helpful feedback after a lesson has been observed, and are given appropriate targets for improvement.

74 The school's governing body is very supportive. Since the establishment of the new school, much has been done to build a team of committed people, who bring a variety of talents and experience to the school. They are well-informed, and now have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are very supportive of the head teacher, and acknowledge his influence in building a united approach after a period of difficult change and adjustment. The work of the different committees of the governing body is well regulated, and there has been a range of training opportunities available to governors which have helped develop their expertise and understanding. Regular meetings are held, at which the governors and an advisor from the local education authority talk about standards, set targets, and monitor progress. These have helped the governing body clarify the school's strategies, put in place accurate assessment procedures, target specific weaknesses in pupils' attainment and improve their scores in the national tests.

75 The management of the school's finances and administration is good. Administrative staff work well together and have a sound grasp of day to day procedures. Their work provides a strong base for the day to day running of the school. Specific grants and additional funding, such as funds for the support of children of asylum-seekers, are very effectively deployed and used, so that pupils' needs are very well met. The principles of best value are satisfactorily applied.

76 The school does not deploy the Key Stage 2 Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant teachers to best effect. This year these teachers teach groups of pupils in Year 3 and Year 6 mainly for the literacy and numeracy hour lessons. The timetable they are given does not allow them the flexibility they need to support effectively bilingual pupils who return from an extended holiday in Pakistan. As a result the rate at which pupils progress is too slow and their learning is unsatisfactory.

77 The grant for pupils who are learning English as an additional language is used very effectively. It is used to fund Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant staff. It also funds additional help very promptly for pupils who attend the school for short periods, such as refugees and asylum seekers. The school also uses money from its own budget to employ additional bilingual assistants to help pupils in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.

78 Staffing, accommodation and learning resources at the school are satisfactory. The high number of bilingual staff in the school is a strength of the staffing, and has a very good impact on pupils' learning. Arrangements for the monitoring and induction of staff are well organised. Features in the accommodation such as a purpose built computer suite have benefited from the recent development of the neighbouring 'Sure Start' initiative. The school's playgrounds and outside learning area for the Nursery are in poor condition, and are included in the next phase of building work. At present, the noise of some of the large play equipment of Nursery pupils in the quadrangle can be distracting to lessons in adjoining classes. Overall, learning resources throughout the school are satisfactory to meet the needs of the curriculum, although the school is still waiting for the information and communication technology suite to be fully equipped and the range of books is limited in the Foundation Stage and some are in poor condition.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

79 To continue to raise standards, the governing body, head teacher and staff should:

1 Improve pupils' performance in the national tests by

- Focusing more on the presentation of pupils' work, and have clear and consistent expectations of pupils' writing and neatness. (paragraphs 31, 94, 105, 109)
- Improving the consistency of teachers' marking so that pupils are clear where they have gone wrong and how they can improve. (paragraphs 63, 107)
- Use co-ordinators more to raise standards in their subject by monitoring how well teachers teach and pupils learn. (paragraphs 71, 115, 128, 133, 139, 145, 149, 154)
- Make sure that higher attaining pupils are challenged sufficiently in all subjects so that they attain the standards of which they are capable. (paragraphs 23, 34, 61, 92, 105, 145)

2 Improve pupils' attendance and punctuality, by making it clear to parents the link between regular attendance, punctuality and good progress. (paragraph 29)

3 Ensure that the School Development Plan states clearly how the school intends to raise the standard of pupils' work. (paragraph 70)

4 Raise the standard of pupils' work in information and communication technology by making more use of computers in other subjects. (paragraphs 8, 36, 113, 132, 137)

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

- Provide more opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage to develop their independence. (paragraphs 20, 32, 45, 82)
- Improve the play area for children in the Foundation Stage. (paragraph 76)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	71
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	49

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	14	35	46	1	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)	39	350
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	139

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	76

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	275

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	60
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	78

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.9
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	3.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	28	21	49

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	15	21
	Girls	15	14	15
	Total	29	29	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	59% (51%)	59% (42%)	73% (56%)
	National	83% (82%)	85% (83%)	90% (87%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	21	20
	Girls	14	15	16
	Total	29	36	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	59% (40%)	73% (51%)	73% (64%)
	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	22	25	47

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	12	13
	Girls	14	11	17
	Total	21	23	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	45% (33%)	49% (35%)	64% (46%)
	National	75% (70%)	72% (69%)	85% (78%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	12	11
	Girls	14	12	15
	Total	21	24	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	45% (38%)	51% (44%)	55% (48%)
	National	70% (68%)	72% (69%)	80% (75%)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	3
Pakistani	234
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	77
Any other minority ethnic group	36

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)	17.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.3
Average class size	23.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	261

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	39

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	60

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	684,318
Total expenditure	718,584
Expenditure per pupil	1,630
Balance brought forward from previous year	76,937
Balance carried forward to next year	42,671

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	362
Number of questionnaires returned	136

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	24	0	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	65	30	1	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	68	26	1	1	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	58	31	7	1	3
The teaching is good.	74	23	2	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	66	24	7	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	30	2	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	25	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	60	31	7	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	68	26	1	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	30	1	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	62	22	7	1	8

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

80 The school admits children to part-time places during the afternoon session in the Nursery class when they are three years of age. As children approach four years of age, they transfer to morning Nursery sessions. Children who are five years of age between September and February are admitted to a full time place in the Reception class in September; children who are five between February and August join the Reception class in January. In September the school had only one Reception class, but from January, two additional classes were created to accommodate all the eligible children.

81 The majority of children begin Nursery with very poorly developed skills, particularly in communication, language, mathematics and personal independence. This is confirmed by the initial assessments conducted with these young children. A high proportion of children do not speak English at home. Throughout the Foundation Stage the teaching is satisfactory, and the progress children make is steady. However, their attainment on entering Year 1 is still well below the national average in all six areas; this is mainly due to pupils' limited communication skills.

Personal, social and emotional development

82 In personal, social and emotional development, the teaching is satisfactory, and contributes to the steady progress children make. Children in the Nursery begin to develop confidence as they undertake a variety of activities, and bilingual support staff help children in their understanding. The youngest children learn to separate from their main carer, and older children in the Reception classes link up easily with different staff for support and guidance; they show their work confidently to adults. Most children behave well and respond appropriately to staff's directions and requests. Reception children are familiar with school routines, lining up sensibly before moving out of the area. Teachers' expectations for good behaviour are high; they explain clearly and this helps children to understand right and wrong in relation to school rules. Through good examples from staff, children begin to establish good relationships and friendships with others as they play together. Planning in both Nursery and Reception classes, for adult-directed work, is good, and teachers use the nationally recommended 'early learning goals' as reference. Activities from which children can choose, however, are not planned sufficiently and do not have a clearly stated objective. This slows down the rate at which children develop initiative and independence in their learning. In the Reception classes, the planned use of accommodation is insufficiently developed, and therefore activities tend to encroach on each other. This prevents children's concentration skills improving. In the Nursery, children's movement and choices within the room are too restricted. Children learn to share adult attention and take turns when they play structured games. They have good opportunities to respond to religious and cultural events as they occur throughout the year and have recently celebrated Eid and Mother's Day. Children are fortunate to work and play alongside those of many differing cultures and beliefs; staff are good role models and encourage all children to become aware and respectful of the needs of others. In the Reception classes, for example, they show great curiosity and interest in the tadpoles, and are concerned when one is quite still and appears to have died. Staff take time to teach children to become personally independent. They learn to remove and put on their coats in the Nursery, and successfully undress and dress themselves for physical activity in Reception classes.

Communication, language and literacy

83 The quality of teaching and the rate of pupils' progress in communication, language and literacy are satisfactory overall. By the time children leave the Foundation Stage, the majority are working towards the 'early learning goals' but have not achieved them. Children in the Nursery use words and gestures to express their ideas, but very few are able to communicate well. Towards the end of the Reception year,

some children speak in simple sentences, but do not clearly connect their ideas or use a sequence of sentences to express their feelings. The planning in both Reception and Nursery does not allocate enough teaching support to speaking and listening skills, given the fact that most children do not speak English at home. There are too few activities available on a regular basis for children to practise and improve their vocabulary. For example, role-play in both the Reception and the Nursery is insufficiently varied over the year, and there is limited use of technology to support language development. There are well-planned sessions for children to enjoy and share books with adults. All children show genuine interest in stories, have good access to books, and know how to handle them correctly. However, the range of books is limited, and some are in poor condition.

84 Bilingual staff are very vigilant; they offer encouragement and good support to all children. Most children recognise their name and have the opportunity to register their own attendance each day. However few children make a recognisable attempt at writing their name. The Nursery and Reception classes have clear print in the environment, for example posters, but some of the words are inappropriate and very few children recognise familiar words. Some children are beginning to recognise letters by shape and early reading skills are only just developing for most children. Children are familiar with several songs and rhymes, but teaching, particularly with the younger children, does not clearly emphasise the recognition of patterns and syllables in words to help with early reading skills. In the Nursery children learn to express their ideas through painting and mark making. In the Reception class, teachers support children with early writing and act as scribes for them.

Mathematics

85 In mathematics, the quality of teaching is generally satisfactory. Children enter the Nursery with very low standards of attainment. The progress children make in the Foundation Stage is sound, but by the time they go into Year 1, even though standards of attainment have improved, they are well below that which is expected of children of this age. Teaching makes effective use of rhymes and songs to help children become aware of numbers increasing and decreasing; for example in the Nursery they sing rhymes about ‘jumping bears’ and in Reception they buy ‘currant buns’ and calculate how many are left. Older children in the Reception classes count up to 10, and some recognise numerals. Higher attaining Reception children learn to calculate when they show two fingers on one hand and three on the other, and find the total by counting them altogether. Through careful guidance by staff, they are beginning to understand the language associated with addition. Staff work closely with children to help them count and record numbers; children in the Reception classes, for example, count penny coins and write the numeral. Role-play sometimes focuses around buying items in a shop, and this supports learning about money well. However, these worthwhile activities are not always supported by staff, and so opportunities to challenge children in their learning are sometimes missed. Children in the Nursery become aware of equipment of various shapes, and they learn to compare objects by size, for example through the effective use of the story of the ‘Three Bears’. They learn to recognise differences in shapes and to sort and match objects. Children in the Reception classes use commercial resources to make and repeat mathematical patterns, and consolidate their learning in workbooks. There are some planned activities where the teaching encourages children to use mathematics to solve problems in a practical way by, for example, weighing ingredients when baking gingerbread men.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

86 In their knowledge and understanding of the world, children’s attainment is very low. They enter the Nursery with very little general knowledge, and satisfactory teaching in this area means they make steady progress. Reception teachers plan interesting sessions where they talk about the life cycle of a frog, and make good use of models to illustrate. There are tadpoles in the classroom for the children to observe, and in this way their learning is developed well through direct observation. Children plant cress and beans, nurture them as they grow and observe how the roots and shoots change; they know plants need water in

order to grow. Nursery children observe their own faces and record what they see by painting self-portraits. Children play with water and sand, but opportunities to investigate and discuss materials are less well developed. Most children make good progress in their technology skills. They cut, fold and join materials well, and make sensible choices in the resources they use when making objects. Children have access to computers, and programs support learning in some aspects of the curriculum. The staff know children well, and discuss events from home, but the children's low level of communication skills prohibits discussion in any depth. Children become aware of the environment in which they work and play.

Physical development

87 In their physical development children make satisfactory progress. Children in Reception classes move spontaneously in a large area and develop an awareness of their space and the space of others. They move in a variety of ways, including slithering, crawling, walking, jumping and running. The teaching of physical skills is satisfactory. Teachers encourage the development of their skills by asking children to demonstrate their good practice, and this helps other children improve their performance. They provide opportunities for children to balance, climb and move backwards and forwards on equipment such as benches. They are encouraged to use their imagination creatively as they move. Nursery children have access to a range of wheeled apparatus, and they learn to use their feet to push and pull and to negotiate around others. However, the apparatus they use is limited and old. Children are beginning to develop fine finger skills in using the range of tools and equipment available. They have access to some commercial construction equipment and they learn to push and pull to join two pieces together. Most of the older children handle paintbrushes, scissors and pencils correctly. They manipulate malleable materials, such as dough, as they play. Teachers help children become aware of the importance of eating healthy food and having regular exercise.

Creative development

88 Children enter the Nursery with poor creative skills. Overall, the teaching in this area is satisfactory, and they make sound progress in their creative development. Children learn to explore colour as they paint. Staff encourage children in their creativity and show how much they value their efforts by displaying their work well. Children use a range of media and materials, but their work is sometimes over directed, which stifles their creativity. Children have some opportunities to explore sound as they play percussion instruments when singing, and learn to beat a steady rhythm. However, opportunities to explore sound are sometimes limited as instruments are not always available for them to use. There are some activities planned to encourage imaginative play, such as the home area and story-boards, but support is not always available here to encourage children to express their ideas and feelings using creative language. Planned activities, such as making gingerbread men, help children develop an awareness of their senses as they smell and taste their produce.

ENGLISH

89 Pupils' results in the 2000 national tests for seven year olds were well below the national average in both reading and writing. Very few pupils exceeded the national level in reading, and none did so in writing. When compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, attainment in reading and writing was well below average. Results achieved by Year 6 pupils in the 2000 tests were very low when compared with the national average, and, when compared with similar schools, results were well below average. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 in all areas of literacy was very low when compared with the national average. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall, particularly in their reading. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress, and the well focused support they have means they quickly improve their use and understanding of English. Results in 2000 show a significant improvement when compared with the 1999

test results. The school has set challenging targets to improve these results further this year, and pupils are on course to achieve them.

90 Over the last two years, since the schools amalgamated, measures have been put in place to raise standards of attainment in English. These are now proving to be effective, and standards attained by the current Year 6 pupils, whilst still below average, are significantly higher now than the latest test results show.

91 Pupils enter Year 1 classes with attainment that is very low in all aspects of English. Although pupils are keen to contribute in class, a significant majority still find it difficult to express their ideas because many have a poor command of English, and have only a limited vocabulary. By the end of the infant stage the literacy hour is having some effect, and pupils have gained more confidence in talking and listening, although standards are still well below the national average. Teachers generally promote language development well throughout the curriculum, and this helps pupils build up a store of words they can use and understand. In their history lessons, for example, teachers make sure that pupils' historical vocabulary is developed when they compare similarities and differences between past and present facts. This encourages pupils to include more detail in their answers and vary their use of vocabulary. In Year 3 they are taught to use and understand vocabulary linked to myths and legends. Towards the end of the juniors, teachers use effective strategies with pupils to help their vocabulary improve by linking words such as 'secret' and 'secretary' together. By the time they leave, pupils' speaking and listening skills, whilst still below average, have improved well, and all show increasing confidence. In Year 6, for example, the teaching challenges pupils to discuss ideas based around ghost stories, but whilst pupils respond enthusiastically, and are happy to express their ideas to the whole class, few explain their thoughts in clear, fluent English.

92 Reading skills throughout the school are weak for the majority of pupils, although the literacy strategy is having a positive impact. Pupils' reading of simple texts is generally accurate, and they talk about the main events of a story. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoy stories and recognise simple key words, but whilst a few higher attaining pupils use the sound of letters to help them identify new words, these strategies overall are weak. As pupils move into the junior classes they use a wider range of increasingly demanding texts, and read with some understanding, fluency and expression. With the teacher's guidance, pupils in Year 3 compare texts related to myths, legends and fairy stories, and older pupils discuss the atmosphere created in ghost stories. By Year 6, pupils use a reasonable range of reading strategies. Most use alphabetical texts such as dictionaries and thesaurus, and they know that they offer definitions and word variations to help with spelling. A few higher attaining pupils manage to locate information from non-fiction books, and read with expression and understanding, but they have too few opportunities to develop these important skills to the full. The majority of pupils have difficulty reading independently and understanding the ideas within the text, because they do not read with sufficient fluency, accuracy and confidence appropriate to their ages.

93 Pupils' writing skills are well below the national average by the age of seven years. A few pupils are beginning to write short stories with a sequence of sentences about a specific topic or event. The majority of pupils know that a sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with a full stop. Spelling was taught effectively in a Year 1 class where two dice were used to encourage pupils to sound out the beginning, middle and end of words. This worked well, and pupils learned useful skills to enable them to work out new words. Most pupils lack the language skills to sustain independent writing, but with effective classroom support they have undertaken an increasing range of writing, including structured answers, simple book reviews, and comprehension exercises. By the end of Year 6, standards are below the national average, but they are improving, and this is particularly evident towards the end of the key stage where the teaching is consistently good. Pupils are taught systematically through the literacy strategy, and are developing a clearer understanding of grammar and punctuation. They are taught to use writing for many different purposes and are learning clear strategies to support their work. In Year 5, for example, teachers make effective use of support staff to work with pupils to help them use writing to express their feelings

through poetry. In this way, pupils learn how to use their good ideas without their weak spelling and grammar letting them down. Pupils learn to use different forms of writing appropriately, for instance, when reporting on scientific experiments about condensation and evaporation. A few pupils achieve standards above the national average, but very few use paragraphs consistently, and punctuation is not always accurate. They cannot use inverted commas or apostrophes consistently. Many pupils have difficulty recording their ideas in good, clear English.

94 Standards of handwriting are generally below the standard expected. Younger pupils are learning to form letters accurately, but some still mix capital and small letters within words. Older pupils' writing is usually joined up, but some pupils still mix cursive script and printing. In classes where writing and presentation are neat, teachers are good role models for pupils, but often teachers expect too little of pupils' presentation of their work, and it suffers as a result.

95 In the main, pupils' progress reflects the quality of teaching in English. In lessons seen, teaching is satisfactory throughout the infant classes and good overall in the juniors, with some very good teaching in Years 5 and 6. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. Teachers have increased their competence through professional training linked to the National Strategy for Literacy, and this is having a positive impact on the current progress pupils are now making.

96 Teachers use a rich and wide vocabulary with pupils, which promotes their interest in new words. They make sure pupils use the correct terminology for all subjects, and display these words well in the classrooms. This works well, and enables pupils to develop their store of appropriate words which they can then use. However, they do not make enough use of classroom displays to support the spelling of words being targeted in English, and pupils' progress is hampered in this way. Teachers always encourage pupils to answer questions and express their ideas, and they are careful to praise them enthusiastically when they do. In this way, pupils build up confidence in their speaking and try more adventurous answers. The quality of marking is variable; most teachers give positive feedback but only a few stress literacy targets to help pupils improve further. In some classes, especially in Years 1 to 3, some of the work given to pupils is too difficult for them to manage without adult support, and this slows down learning as pupils wait for help. Teachers make good connections to other curriculum subjects such as history and geography by reading and discussing Greek myths and legends, for example. Teachers begin each lesson by making sure that pupils are clear about the learning intentions, and at the end of the lessons they review what pupils have learned. This is good practice, and helps pupils and teachers to evaluate how much they have learned. Pupils are given regular homework, and this is helping them to improve in reading, writing and spelling.

97 Teachers use the framework of the National Literacy Strategy as an aid in setting clear and appropriate targets for pupils. Day to day planning is good in both key stages. However, in 'quiet reading' lessons, the planning is less effective. In this time, pupils are not always reading as they should, and the development of specific skills is not specifically planned for; consequently, much valuable time is wasted. Overall, the school has made strong efforts to raise the standards attained by its pupils. The National Literacy Strategy has been a major focus, and this has improved the planning, delivery and assessment of English. The systems set in place are having some success in raising literacy, especially at the end of Key Stage 2. The medium term planning is based on the national framework, and core skills are well covered through supportive work, which ensures that pupils build well on earlier learning.

98 In the junior classes, the ability sets and extra support for a 'booster' group of targeted pupils, has helped to improve standards. Classes throughout the school have good support from ancillary staff. This helps teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs and pupils who have English as an additional language are able to make good progress in literacy lessons.

99 English is well led and managed. The literacy co-ordinators have good levels of expertise, and have had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning. They have worked hard to raise

standards of literacy planning, teaching and assessment by staff, and this has helped teachers teach more effectively and monitor pupils' progress more accurately. The co-ordinators have looked carefully at the results of pupils' tests, and have begun to track progress and set targets for improvement in literacy standards through a structured analysis of pupils' errors. This is effective monitoring, and is having a good impact on pupils' reading and writing skills. Resources are satisfactory and are used effectively in lessons. The library is currently being developed through funding from the school, the Community Library Project and Sure Start funding.

MATHEMATICS

100 The national assessment tests in 2000 showed that pupils' attainment was well below the standards gained by pupils nationally, and by those from similar schools. Since 1999, standards have been rising in both key stages and teachers are working hard to raise the standards of all pupils further, particularly bilingual pupils. There is now a strong emphasis being placed on teaching mental calculation, mathematical vocabulary and problem-solving throughout the school. From Year 3 upwards, pupils are taught in ability groups, with 'booster classes' for those Year 6 pupils who have the potential to achieve a higher level. The end of each lesson is used effectively to highlight and reinforce what pupils have learned. These measures are making a positive impact on pupils' progress, and standards of the oldest pupils, whilst still below average, have risen further since the tests last year.

101 There are no marked differences between the performance of girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are very well supported by bilingual and support assistants. By the time they leave, these pupils have made good progress.

102 In Year 1, pupils recognise that words represent numbers, but their numeracy skills at this stage are well below average. They order numbers correctly and most learn to count forwards and backwards within at least 10, with more able pupils working within 100. They are learning to add and subtract and to understand the mathematical symbols used to represent this, but only a few work with larger numbers and recognise odds and evens. They compare light and heavy objects of similar size but different weights, but their recording is poor and leads to mistakes. By the end of Year 2, pupils work with larger numbers, but few have the basic skills necessary to add and subtract quickly in their head. They work out simple money sums methodically, and have a basic idea of how much each coin represents. Most count confidently in multiples of two, five and ten, and link this understanding of pattern to the appropriate multiplication tables. Their knowledge of shape, space and time is below average overall. They tell the time in hours and half-hours, but struggle with more detailed units of time. Pupils have a very basic knowledge of the properties of simple two-dimensional shapes, measure straight lines in centimetres and estimate weights in kilograms. As a result, they make satisfactory progress in working with number, shape and data handling.

103 By Year 3, only a few pupils are secure in their understanding of the meaning of multiples of numbers. They show a basic understanding of place value as they work with tens and units, and arrange numbers in the correct order according to size, but these are skills normally associated with Year 2 pupils. They know about odd and even numbers and most are aware of the passage of time, such as one minute, measured on a sand-timer. Their understanding of shape is average, and most create three-dimensional shapes, such as cuboids with pipe-cleaners or straws, skilfully. In Year 4, pupils' skills in these activities are further developed. They make good progress in their understanding of place value, and work with hundreds, tens and units confidently. They achieve well as they collect data by throwing dice, make a tally of the numbers thrown and construct a graph with appropriate labels and title to record their results. In Year 5, the pace of learning accelerates. Many pupils have a swift recall of multiples of tables to 10, building successfully on their knowledge and understanding of number patterns. They work confidently with fractions, numbers to two decimal places, know about parallel lines, angles and the area of simple shapes. By the end of Year 6, most pupils are confident in using the four rules of number and attain standards in line with pupils nationally. A few, however, still struggle with these basic skills. Most are confident with

percentages, and work with average skill with square numbers and factors of numbers. Average and above average ability pupils measure angles correctly, and understand the basics of rotational symmetry. They create a variety of graphs to illustrate, for example, distance travelled in relation to time and compare time in different countries. In one lesson observed, one pupil could explain that the lowest common multiples of 20 are five and four.

104 The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, with the best teaching observed at the upper end of Key Stage 2 where teaching was excellent in both classes. These teachers are lively and work with great enthusiasm, and, as a result, pupils enjoy their mathematics. They have very high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour, and this helps pupils make the very best of their time. They have very good subject knowledge, and this is why pupils learn new skills easily. They use questioning very well to confirm their assessment of pupils' understanding and plan what they need to learn next. All teachers use praise well, and this gives pupils confidence to attempt difficult work. For example, in a Year 1 lesson about weight, the teacher congratulated pupils on their efforts by exclaiming, "Give yourself a clap. Well done!" and they beamed with pleasure as they moved on to the next task. Teachers are familiar and secure with the National Numeracy Strategy, which they apply effectively. The three-part lesson structure is soundly established and the use of clear questions at the end of lessons to assess what pupils have understood is a strong feature of teaching.

105 Teachers' planning of lessons is generally good, but does not always challenge the highest attaining pupils. This means that, whilst most pupils achieve well, and make good progress, those who could attain high standards rarely do. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but they do not always say what they need to do next to improve their work. As a result, particularly in the infant classes, some written work is too difficult and does not build sufficiently on what pupils can do, or address their particular weaknesses; this means that not all pupils make the progress that they should. Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of the quality of the presentation of pupils' work. This leads to too much untidy work, and unnecessary mistakes as pupils add or subtract the wrong numbers. Classroom assistants and other adults provide very valuable support for pupils with special educational needs, and these pupils do well as a result. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are supported well, especially by teachers and teaching assistants as they explain new words very clearly, and get pupils to repeat them over again. These pupils make good progress as a result, and many attain national standards by the end of Year 6.

106 The mathematics curriculum is broad and balanced. It has successfully adopted the structure of the numeracy hour and places a strong emphasis on teaching mental arithmetic, on mathematical vocabulary and on the use of the time at the end of each lesson to share and assess what pupils have learned and to give homework regularly. The ability sets for pupils from Years 3 to 6 are having a positive impact on pupils' progress and levels of attainment. The school places great importance on teaching mathematical vocabulary to all pupils so that they clearly understand how to solve problems.

107 The school has two experienced co-ordinators who work in both key stages and thus have a clear overview of the curriculum. Results of national and school tests are analysed and targets set for each pupil throughout the school. However, these targets do not always accurately reflect pupils' attainment. The co-ordinators are aware of the need for teachers to focus more clearly on the marking of pupils' work so that their targets for each subsequent lesson will relate more accurately to pupils' ability. Both co-ordinators have monitored the quality of teaching throughout the school and used this information well to highlight any areas for further development. As a result of this monitoring, and positive action to address the weaknesses found, information handling is an area which is now being taught more successfully, and teachers now use the plenary session more effectively. Resources are satisfactory, and used effectively to add interest to lessons and enhance pupils' progress. Numeracy is used well to support other subjects such as speaking and listening, science and geography. Social and cultural development is well promoted through, for example, problem-solving activities which involve other cultures, learning about foreign currency and

comparing time in different countries. Parents have attended a mathematics workshop to familiarise them with the Numeracy Strategy so that they may support their children's learning.

SCIENCE

108 In the 2000 National Curriculum Key Stage 2 tests, standards were well below the national average, and below the average for similar schools. At Key Stage 1, teachers' assessments found attainment to be well below the national average. The outcomes of the inspection show that, at the ends of both key stages, standards in science have improved significantly, but are still below those expected nationally. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress, and, in some lessons seen, progress was good as a result of good teaching.

109 In the current Year 6 pupils show standards which are below average. Their experiments show a sound understanding of how to test a theory, but their scientific knowledge sometimes lets them down. In the higher attaining set, for example, pupils were investigating how filtering can be used to separate solids and liquids. Most pupils showed a sound understanding of how to carry out a fair test, but many of them were unsure about many aspects of dissolving, evaporating and solutions. The teacher used questions well, asking, for instance, "If we've put a solid with a liquid, what have these two things done? Can you think of a word to describe it?" The pupils thought hard about what they were doing, and gave sensible answers. Discussions such as this make a valuable contribution to their basic language development. They have a reasonable knowledge of the human body, and the life cycle of plants. Their environmental work in geography links well with science, and explains why their knowledge of scientific aspects of pollution is good. Pupils' understanding of forces is average, but much of their work is recorded in an untidy way.

110 In Year 2 standards are also below expectations. They carry out experiments methodically, but struggle with the scientific concepts involved. Pupils needed considerable support from their teacher, and from support staff, in order to carry out an investigation into the properties of materials. They rolled model cars down ramps with different surfaces, measured the distance travelled, and discussed whether their tests were fair. Although most were able to join in the work, many found it difficult unless they were closely supported by adults. Their understanding of the properties of materials was at a lower level than that expected for their age, although the development of their understanding of experimental and investigative science was better.

111 The quality of teaching and learning is good at both key stages. Teachers show satisfactory subject knowledge, which enables them to explain concepts clearly, and so promote good learning for pupils of all abilities. The recent introduction of ability sets in junior classes is enabling teachers to focus their teaching more effectively, and this is starting to raise standards. In these sets, pupils with special educational needs have work that is matched well to their abilities, and they make good progress as a result. High attaining pupils are challenged by teachers providing demanding scientific work in their set, and they attain high standards, both in lessons, and in the national assessment tests as a result. At both key stages, teachers choose a range of interesting activities for their pupils, which engage their interest and promote positive attitudes. Teachers also give good attention to the development of the experimental and investigative aspect, and, throughout the school, pupils are developing an understanding of how to carry out investigations, ensure that tests are fair, and turn their ideas into forms which can be investigated.

112 During the inspection, examples were seen in both key stages where language was a potential barrier to learning for significant numbers of pupils. A good feature of the teaching seen was that teachers made good use of opportunities to use correct scientific language themselves, and also to encourage their pupils to do the same. This emphasis makes a good contribution to pupils' basic language development, and ensures that pupils with English as an additional language make good progress.

113 In many lessons seen teachers missed opportunities to use information and communication technology to support the work. This aspect of teaching is the focus of current staff training.

114 Although there has been some development of assessment procedures, these are still insufficient to enable teachers to use information about what their pupils know and understand in order to plan the next steps in their learning. The lack of detailed assessment information also makes it more difficult for the co-ordinator to monitor standards effectively.

115 The day to day management of the subject is carried out effectively by an experienced and well-qualified co-ordinator, but there is not sufficient focus on monitoring teaching and learning. Not enough emphasis has been put on promoting higher standards, particularly by means of improved monitoring, as a central feature of the co-ordinator's work. The school's resources for the subject are sufficient and well organised, and present plans for the development of the school's grounds will provide opportunities to improve resources for environmental science.

ART AND DESIGN

116 Standards of attainment achieved by pupils at seven and 11 years of age in art and design are in line with those expected nationally.

117 Pupils in Year 1 draw on a variety of photographic sources to explore ways of representing buildings, using a wide variety of materials, such as silver foil, pipe cleaners and card. They produce exciting pieces of work in relief using flat pieces of wood of building site vehicles, such as diggers and 'dumper trucks'. Particularly noticeable is their group work where they co-operate well to produce large-scale colourful displays around themes such as the jungle and park. Year 2 pupils make good observational colour drawings of shells and pebbles after a visit to the seashore. They develop their ideas well and carry through the themes from original designs to finished work successfully. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress as they move through the school and improve their skills from poor on entry to average by the end of Year 6. Year 6 pupils make good use of their sketchbooks to study the textures and tones of landscapes from photographs. They adapt these ideas well to produce paintings, showing a sound knowledge of colour mixing and discuss their work comparing techniques to paintings by artists such as Renoir and Turner. The way in which pupils' work is displayed throughout the school is good, and teachers make the best use of large-scale themes to provide a vibrant, colourful environment, in which pupils can appreciate each other's work. For example, a fabrics theme involving all year groups, as well as visiting artists and parents, gives pupils the opportunity to experiment with, and compare, a wide variety of techniques.

118 Only two lessons were seen during the week of the inspection, and therefore it is not possible to make an overall judgement on teaching. In these lessons, teachers had high expectations of what pupils should achieve, and pupils responded by producing lively pictures. Pupils were encouraged to maintain their interest and enthusiasm very well by the skilful deployment of resources and briefing of support staff. In a lesson in Year 6, pupils were very confident in their understanding of what they were doing due to a thorough, well-prepared grounding in previous lessons, and access to a variety of exciting resources. Teachers place great emphasis on pupils working at projects together, and they do this well, learning from one another and valuing each other's work. They share ideas well, and are prepared to accept the ideas of other pupils to improve their own work.

119 Art is managed well by the co-ordinator, who has a very good knowledge of the subject. Schemes of work are sound and are based on national guidelines. There are good procedures for monitoring pupils' attainment through collections of work which are kept for each year group, and there is a weekly art club after school for those pupils identified as having a particular talent.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

120 Standards of attainment of seven and 11 year-old pupils are in line with those standards expected nationally.

121 Pupils in Year 1 build interesting models of houses from a variety of materials such as card and fabric, as well as kit components. Some pupils plan their work very well, and describe how they could improve it. They respond well to the theme of a building site by making imaginative use of boxes, tubes, and tubs to make model construction site vehicles. By the time they are seven years old, pupils use tools such as saws and scissors with reasonable skill to make model vehicles with moving axles and wheels. They select from materials such as wood, perspex and plastic, and explain their choice by commenting, for example, "This perspex will let the driver see all around". They understand how their work could be improved, and are good at describing the most successful feature of their model. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress because they are supported well. By the time pupils are 11 years old they continue to make good progress. Pupils plan their designs carefully, adapting and improving their work at the making stage. They consider the purpose of their designs well, as was seen when they made a model shelter and selected appropriate materials such as plastic to make it waterproof. Pupils evaluate their work well, and some carry out tests for strength and for which materials are best suited to the purpose. Their models are completed with a sound attention to detail, and pupils are keen to add a good finish to make their work look attractive.

122 Only two lessons were seen during the week of the inspection, and therefore it is not possible to make an overall judgement on teaching. Good teaching was seen in a lesson in which there was a buzz of industry with pupils engaged at various stages of planning and making a model vehicle. The teacher had prepared the resources well, showered pupils with praise, and used individual models effectively to show others how their model could be improved. As a result, pupils were engrossed in their work, and took part in animated discussions about each other's progress.

123 The co-ordinator has adopted the nationally recommended guidelines as the basis for the schemes of work and assessment procedures, and there is appropriate coverage of the curriculum throughout the school in teachers' planning. Resources are relevant and appropriate for the development and coverage of the curriculum, and the co-ordinator has a good grasp of the strengths and areas for further development in the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

124 Standards in Years 2 and 6 are in line with national expectations, but whilst their geographical knowledge is often good, their weak literacy skills limit the quality of their recording. Pupils make good progress overall from their low starting point. Pupils with special educational needs do well; they have good support in lessons, and teachers produce appropriate materials for them to use. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress, because the guidance provided for them in lessons by teachers and support assistants helps them understand the geographical language.

125 By Year 2, pupils have an average knowledge of their own locality, and understand how basic physical and human features are represented on maps. They have a good awareness of places further afield, and make perceptive comparisons between towns by the sea and others inland. Pupils have produced interesting maps of the island of Struay which show a sound understanding of how to show its most important features. Teachers build well on this start in the junior classes, so that, by Year 3, pupils learn how Middlesbrough is linked to nearby towns on the east coast, and Year 4 pupils know how the major buildings are used. By Year 5, pupils are starting to illustrate their findings in graphical form when studying different modes of transport.

126 Year 6 pupils show that they have a sound knowledge of how settlements evolve over time, and link their work usefully with history as they plot the development of Middlesbrough from the 19th century to the present day. They enhance this work by studying census figures from the different centuries, and show a good understanding of the links between the work people do and where they live. A strength of their work is in their topics on environmental pollution, where many pupils display a good knowledge of the importance of conservation. They have a good knowledge of some other countries, and of Pakistan in particular, where the teaching is supplemented effectively by pupils' first hand accounts.

127 No overall judgement is made about the quality of teaching, because too few lessons were observed, but pupils' work shows that teachers provide a suitably balanced curriculum, and a broad range of interesting topics. Pupils' work in the infant classes shows how well teachers had stimulated them by a good range of resources, and guided them towards a sound understanding of different settlements. In the junior classes, where two lessons were observed, the teaching is satisfactory, and pupils develop a solid knowledge of human and physical geography. The planning of lessons is good, and provides appropriate tasks for pupils of all abilities and experiences. In this way, pupils with special educational needs are provided with a good range of materials that they can read and understand, and this means that they learn important geographical knowledge without being held back by their weak literacy skills. Similarly pupils with English as an additional language do well because of the good support they have in classes, with teachers and bilingual staff ensuring that they understand the language being used. Lessons move at a brisk pace, and this keeps pupils interested. The resources that teachers use are selected well to hold pupils' attention; the census materials, for example, used by a Year 3 teacher, were of great interest to pupils as they asked "Why did so many people come here from Ireland?" when studying the population of a convent. Teachers have a good knowledge of the local area. This helps to make lessons exciting, and encourages pupils to ask more about the industries that made Middlesbrough famous.

128 The co-ordinator manages the subject capably, but does not monitor teaching or pupils' standards sufficiently to raise standards further. A strength of the management lies in its links with history, because the co-ordinator manages both subjects. This gives pupils a broader geographical understanding, as the evolutions of towns, for example, is explained, and they are able to grasp the idea of cause and effect. The school provides a good range of visits to enhance pupils' learning about rivers and settlements, and a residential trip to Whitby as a valuable part of their village studies. The nationally recommended scheme of work provides a good basis for teachers' planning, and sound assessment procedures track pupils' progress systematically through each topic. In raising awareness of different cultures and environmental issues and in encouraging collaborative work where necessary, the subject contributes positively to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

HISTORY

129 Standards in history are in line with national expectations at the ends of both key stages. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress. Those with special educational needs, and English as an additional language achieve well, because teachers plan carefully to meet their needs, and support assistants provide good guidance during lessons.

130 It was not possible to see any history lessons in Key Stage 1 during the inspection, but evidence from other sources, such as pupils' previous work, displays around school, and discussions with teachers and pupils, shows that appropriate attention is given to the requirements of the subject. By the time they reach the end of the key stage pupils are developing an appropriate understanding of historical concepts, such as the passage of time, and the similarities and differences between life now, and in the past.

131 As they move through Key Stage 2 pupils continue to make satisfactory progress. They learn about such subjects as the buildings of Tudor England, and the lives of the Ancient Greeks. These, and other interesting topics, allow pupils of all abilities to show a sound factual understanding of aspects of the

history of Britain, and other countries. They also describe some of the changes, events and people, drawing on a variety of sources for the information they need. In a Year 5 lesson on the Ancient Greeks, for example, pupils showed a good understanding of some of the main changes between the ancient and modern Olympic games. They used a good range of information sources about the past, and gained a clear picture of what life was like in those times. Pupils of all abilities were fully included in the lesson, and made very good gains in learning. There was a very good discussion of how to use information sources, and pupils were stimulated by print-outs from the Internet, books and pictures. The teacher's careful use of key words supported well the learning of pupils for whom English is an additional language, and ensured that they understood all of the work.

132 The teaching and learning of history are satisfactory, and ensure that pupils develop a sound knowledge of historical facts, and how people today learn about the past. Some of the teaching in the junior classes was very good. The best teaching featured very good use of questions, to draw out pupils' understanding, very good motivation of pupils, which accounted for their high levels of concentration and enjoyment. As a result, pupils participate well in discussions, and are good at sharing ideas and listening to the opinions of others. In a Year 4 lesson on Tudor houses, for example, they were attentive and well-behaved as they watched a video about Little Moreton Hall. They then made good progress as they discussed what they had seen, how houses were built, and the functions of different rooms. Teachers generally have high expectations, and ensure that all groups of pupils get the most out of their teaching. They use effective teaching methods, which teach pupils appropriate historical skills, and how to gain access to the required facts. They have secure subject knowledge which gives pupils the confidence to ask questions. Some teachers are insufficiently aware of the potential of the computer to assist their work in the subject, and so do not make enough use of information and communication technology as a tool to support learning. The use of assessment is underdeveloped at present. Although teachers know their pupils well, they do not use assessment information to help them decide next steps in learning.

133 The subject is effectively co-ordinated, and the co-ordinator is appropriately experienced and qualified. She has recently overseen the introduction of the latest guidelines for the subject, and has organised and updated resources. At present, however, the monitoring aspect of the co-ordinator's role is weak. She is insufficiently aware of what goes on in the subject in other areas of the school, particularly in Key Stage 1, and so is unable to form a clear view of teaching, learning, and standards.

134 The school has sufficient resources for the demands of the curriculum, and these are well organised, with topic boxes, and collections of historical objects provided by teachers with an interest in history. In some areas, however, such as Tudor England, there are insufficient books, and pupils have to share or take turns in order to consult information sources. Resources for the use of information and communication technology to support history are in short supply.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

135 By the time pupils are seven and 11 they achieve standards in information and communication technology (ICT) which are below those expected nationally.

136 Younger pupils use computers confidently to work with text, for example to enter their names and print them out. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their keyboard skills, but there are currently insufficient opportunities for them to develop their use of these skills in other areas of the curriculum. They recognise that an instruction can make things happen on a computer screen in a pre-determined way, such as moving an object forwards, backwards, right and left. There is little evidence, however, that pupils generate, amend and record their work in different forms such as tables and charts and that they draft longer pieces of text. Pupils in Year 4 enter text using a word processing program and edit it for capital letters and punctuation. Most pupils, however, are uncertain of the keyboard functions and need help in correcting errors. They use commands to move a robot around the screen and "pop" imaginary balloons, but whilst most pupils

understand how to move the robot, often they are working by trial and error. Consequently, most pupils manage to achieve one balloon popped, and only a few produce a sequence of commands.

137 By the time pupils are 11 years old, they have had the opportunities to study the range of National Curriculum programmes of study, but their attainment in some areas is below the level expected because the school is still building up its supply of computers and programs, and their learning is largely limited to their lessons in the computer suite. They develop their keyboard skills well when entering and drafting longer pieces of text, for example, when writing stories in English, and producing, with help, a good quality school newspaper. They understand the methods of storing and retrieving information on hard and floppy disks. However, their understanding is limited in other areas such as simulation, modelling, control and classifying information. For example, many pupils struggle to recognise the ways of retrieving information from a simple database and the associated terms, although they have produced one record each for a class database. They have little understanding of what a spreadsheet is, and have only experienced simulation using a simple adventure program. There is currently little opportunity for pupils to use and extend their computer skills in other areas of the curriculum, and this is the main reason why pupils do not gain the confidence and competence with computers that is expected nationally. Because of this limitation, the progress of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, is unsatisfactory.

138 Only two lessons were seen during the week of the inspection and therefore it is not possible to make an overall judgement on teaching. In these lessons, teachers' planning was good with objectives clearly stated, pupils' tasks were appropriate and resources very well prepared. In one lesson, the teacher worked hard to emphasise and reinforce drafting skills with a word processing program, but learning was restricted by the lack of immediate "hands on" experience, as only half of the pupils had access to computers and the remaining pupils were engaged in a writing exercise.

139 A suite of computers has very recently been installed, and, although the number of computers is currently limited, the school has plans to add to this in the near future. This suite is a good resource, and is already starting to improve pupils' computer skills. Most classrooms, however, are equipped with one older computer each, and too few appropriate programs for pupils to use to enhance their learning in other subjects. Teachers have undergone some good recent training in the basic use of these computers, but they are not yet sufficiently familiar with the range of software available, and the new suite is not currently used fully. The co-ordinator is developing the subject throughout the school, in areas such as planning and assessment, and is aware of the strengths and weaknesses. She is conscious of what is needed to develop the subject in the future and is actively pursuing these aims. There are, however, no formal opportunities for her to monitor curriculum coverage and observe teaching. The planning of the subject is satisfactory, with schemes of work being based on national guidelines.

MUSIC

140 In music, most pupils, in both key stages, achieve standards which are expected for their age. This judgement is supported by lesson observations, assemblies and discussions with pupils and teachers. Pupils enjoy their music lessons, and the tuition provided by visiting specialist teachers has a positive impact on the progress they make.

141 Younger pupils in Key Stage 1, including those with special needs and those who have English as an additional language, make sound progress in music. Teachers use taped music when introducing lessons and this creates a happy atmosphere. Younger pupils learn to sing tunefully, and show a sound control of pitch, dynamics and rhythm. However, they sometimes have difficulties with the rhythm and patterns in words within the songs. In Year 2 they use unpitched percussion instruments effectively, and play high and low notes. They understand the meaning of pitch, and use instruments and their bodies to keep pace with the rhythm. The teaching in Year 1 is very well focused, and so pupils develop good listening skills, and

learn to create long and short sounds with their voice and with instruments. They are encouraged to devise their own simple notation. They identify many percussion instruments by name and know how to use each one correctly. They sometimes record their work to assess and improve the presentation.

142 Older pupils in the junior classes also make sound progress. They have very recently begun to learn how to play various musical instruments, and teachers are pleased with the progress they have made in such a short time. In Year 4, the teacher works with half of the class at a time to teach pupils how to play the recorder. This system works very well, and pupils are quickly learning precise finger skills to play the correct notes. The teacher is able to correct each child and support learning, almost on an individual basis. Some pupils are beginning to read simple notation from interesting music books, which are easy to follow. Older pupils are enthusiastic in lessons, and are learning to pick out tunes using keyboards, which have recently been purchased by the school. In Year 6, pupils are fortunate to have the good support of a music specialist each week, and each class is involved in playing musical accompaniments. They use a variety of instruments including recorders, glockenspiel and percussion and learn to read simple notation. They all show consideration and co-operation towards each other, and are very supportive when their classmates are performing. All pupils treat instruments with care and consideration and show pride in their musical achievements. However, pupils in the school do not sing with much enthusiasm and many have difficulty singing the words clearly. The exception is in Year 5 where the enthusiastic teacher has carefully coached her class to sing in rounds.

143 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, and music is just beginning to have more emphasis in weekly lessons. Teachers place music lessons well in context by discussing previous learning with pupils. This is good, and helps build on the skills pupils have learned before. They demonstrate well for pupils, and encourage good interaction, offering appropriate praise and encouragement. Teachers' knowledge of the subject varies, and this is reflected in the overall quality of learning. However, those who are less secure are well supported by the co-ordinator. Where the teaching is good, and lessons are challenging, pupils make good gains in their understanding. Occasionally, however, when teachers lack confidence, the pace of lessons and the rate of pupils' learning are too slow. Most teachers create an effective learning environment, and manage pupils very well. They make good use of the resources and the range of instruments.

144 The co-ordinator leads a small school choir which sings at local venues including the quayside at Hartlepool and the Civic Centre in Middlesbrough, where they recently received a standing ovation. The school has good links with the Tees Valley Music Service which offers tuition in guitars and brass. A small group of pupils also benefit from penny whistle tuition. These activities lend much to the school's provision, and help to raise standards in music.

145 The new subject co-ordinator has reviewed the nationally recommended scheme of work, and matched it effectively with the commercial scheme currently used by the school. She has worked hard to produce more detailed guidance to help teachers plan their lessons. However, there is still no system for assessing or recording pupils' progress in music from one year to the next. This means that pupils with talent may not be noticed. The co-ordinator has not monitored teaching or planning, and her role as curriculum leader does not focus sufficiently on improving teaching and learning or raising standards. Assemblies are being supported by music and offer pupils an opportunity to listen to a range of music from different eras and countries.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

146 By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in physical education is in line with that expected nationally. Pupils combine running, jumping and walking movements into suitable sequences with appropriate levels of co-ordination. They link movements well on the large apparatus, creating a sequence with a beginning, middle and end. They get out the equipment quickly and safely, but often take a time to

respond to instructions. Pupils are aware of the effects of exercise on their heart and lungs and understand why they warm up before vigorous exercise. Pupils dance well and show a good sense of rhythm. They contribute their own ideas well when, for example, creating a dance to Caribbean music.

147 By the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment in physical education is in line with that expected nationally. In games, they work hard at developing skills associated with football and hockey, and most control balls with reasonable success. A few have very good football skills, and profit from the school's strong links with Middlesbrough Football Club. They play competitive games against other schools, albeit with limited success. They do, however, achieve good marks in the 'Fair Play' competition because of their very good attitudes to the game. In their gymnastics, pupils observe each other's work carefully, and improve their own performance as a result. They have a good understanding of why they need to warm up before exercise, and a few name the correct muscle groups that are being stretched. Year 6 pupils swim at a local pool, and make good progress to achieve average standards in a short time.

148 The quality of teaching and learning, are satisfactory overall, but range from unsatisfactory to good. Teachers plan lessons well to give pupils a good range of stimulating and safe experiences. These ensure that pupils of all abilities are able to develop a wide range of skills. Teachers warm pupils up carefully, and demonstrate skills well, using higher attaining pupils effectively to illustrate their points. This has a good effect on pupils' learning as they are able to refine their movements, and improve their performance. In the infant classes, the teaching is satisfactory overall, but teachers sometimes struggle to control pupils' enthusiasm, and this slows down the pace of lessons as pupils are constantly reminded of what they should be doing. In the junior classes, the teaching is satisfactory, and pupils make steady gains in their learning. The key to the good teaching lies in the control of pupils' behaviour. When this is good, pupils are organised quickly into groups, and the teacher has time to focus on developing pupils' basic skills, and then extend these as pupils grow more confident. In one lesson, for example, the teacher started by teaching basic dribbling skills with a football, and then moved on to dribbling around a line of cones. Her very good management of pupils' behaviour enabled pupils to practise their dribbling, and then move on to the more demanding task. By the end, all pupils had made good progress, and showed greatly improved control of a moving ball.

149 The subject is overseen capably by the co-ordinator, who has a keen interest in physical education. She has introduced a good scheme of work, and the curriculum includes appropriate opportunities for swimming and outdoor activities on residential trips. There has been no monitoring of physical education teaching, and this limits the further development of the subject. The school has two suitably sized halls, but facilities for games are poor, with pupils having to use a playground with a rough surface because of the lack of a playing field. A good range of extracurricular sessions helps to boost standards, especially by the highest attaining pupils in dance, gymnastics and football.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

150 The attainment of both seven and 11 year-old pupils in religious education meets the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

151 The quality of teaching and learning of religious education is predominantly very good throughout the school. Teachers' planning, the work displayed and pupils' books show that a balanced religious education programme is provided for pupils. Older pupils are given many opportunities to develop their literacy skills in their books by, for example, writing about a visit to a church and describing ceremonies such as a baptism and marriage. Pupils respond well to clear routines in the classroom which teachers have established.

152 Younger pupils listen very attentively to stories and respond thoughtfully to questions as they discuss relevant points. Pupils in Year 1 show great interest in the story of Easter, and know much about

the Crucifixion and Resurrection. The atmosphere of wonder owes much to the story-telling ability of the teachers, and in one lesson the pupils became almost too engrossed to notice a communion wafer being passed around to examine. Pupils respond enthusiastically when the teacher asks why we are happy and sad at the same time at Easter, and the teachers' very skilful questioning gives pupils the opportunity to contribute their own experiences. Pupils in Year 2 show their understanding of parables in a class discussion, by responses such as "It tells you something else". One teacher used language and expression very expertly to engage pupils completely in the parable of "The Prodigal Son", and this did much to develop their insight and thinking. Pupils were so concentrated on the story that when the teacher showed a picture of the son who stayed at home, and said, "He doesn't look happy", many pupils immediately responded with, "He's jealous!". A bilingual support assistant was very effectively deployed to explain more difficult concepts and words to some pupils who are at an early stage in their learning of English, and this ensured that that they understood fully the meaning of the story.

153 Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is a second language, achieve well, and make good progress as they move through the school. Pupils in Year 5 developed a good understanding of Islamic prayer through a well-prepared lesson in which the teacher interspersed discussion with good use of visual resources such as a prayer mat. Pupils recognised that it had patterns but no pictures of animals or people, emphasising what they had discussed. Pupils in Year 6 made very good progress, and extended their knowledge of a Mosque significantly through skilful questioning by the teacher and very good use of visual resources. As a preparation for visiting a local mosque, the teacher asked searching questions such as, "What was the building before it was a mosque?" and, "Did the appearance outside or inside change?" Pupils shared their ideas enthusiastically, and their learning was further reinforced when they showed each other objects they had brought to school, such as pictures of mosques around the world, an Islamic calendar and a clock for prayer times. Pupils subsequently visited the local mosque, and demonstrated their knowledge well by responding to questions and identifying areas of the mosque.

154 The subject is managed satisfactorily, and the co-ordinator discusses planning, resources and areas of study with staff. There are, however, no opportunities for the co-ordinator to observe lessons or monitor the coverage of the curriculum and standards. Informative liaison with local religious places of worship is evident from the visits which pupils make to churches and mosques and the visitors to the school representing these religions. Bilingual assistants make an effective contribution to pupils' learning by sharing the experiences of their religion.