

INSPECTION REPORT

BATTLE HILL FIRST SCHOOL

Wallsend

LEA area: Tyne and Wear

Unique reference number: 108595

Head teacher: Mr K Arthur

Reporting inspector: Mr D Hardman
17794

Dates of inspection: 14th – 17th May 2001

Inspection number:230274

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 10
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Berwick Drive Wallsend Tyne and Wear
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs D Hindson
Date of previous inspection:	February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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17794	Mr D Hardman	Registered inspector	Science	What sort of school is it?
			Information and communication technology	How high are standards?
			Art and design	How well are pupils taught?
			Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?
			English as an additional language	
			Equal opportunities	
19741	Mr T Smith	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23375	Mr J Hicks	Team inspector	English	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Geography	
			History	
			Music	
			Special educational needs	
22452	Mrs M Farman	Team inspector	Mathematics	
			Religious education	
			Design and technology	
			Foundation stage	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Battle Hill First School is in the middle of a major reorganisation programme by the local education authority. From September 2002 it will become a centre for education of pupils from 1 to 11 providing care for the younger children. It is situated in an outlying residential district of Wallsend in the Metropolitan Borough of North Tyneside. The school serves a mixed socio economic neighbourhood, however, there are high levels of unemployment and some social deprivation in the area. There is a broad social mixture in the school. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below average. There are 129 boys and 128 girls currently on roll. There are approximately 5 per cent of pupils who have English as an additional language and about 9 per cent from minority ethnic groups. There are 45 per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals, which is above the national average. Nineteen per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, this is similar to the national average and 1 per cent have statements of special educational need, which is below the national average. Most pupils with special educational needs have severe learning difficulties or emotional and behavioural problems. There is a high turnover of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the normal entry dates.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Battle Hill First School is going through significant changes because of the new status of an emerging primary school, a number of staff changes and the extensive building work being undertaken. The head teacher and all staff, very well supported by the governors, are managing these changes very well. The leadership and management by the head teacher, key staff and governors are good. In the current Year 2, pupils' attainment is in line with the level expected for seven year olds, except in writing where it is below the level expected. By the time the pupils are 10, they meet the standards expected for most pupils of their age in all subjects and they are above the level in music. Pupils' achievement is improving, even in the one area that is below the expected level, and they achieve well in relation to their previous attainment. This is mainly because of the good teaching and learning and pupils' very good attitudes. Although it costs more to educate each pupil than is the case nationally, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The leadership and management of the school by the head teacher and governors are good. Good financial planning supports educational priorities.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and, by the end of Year 5, pupils achieve well when compared with their previous attainment.
- Children in the reception classes are provided with a very good start to their education because of very good quality teaching and learning and the effective teamwork of staff.
- Good teamwork by staff encourages very good relationships. As a result, pupils have very good attitudes to their work and school life.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good, it is very good for social and moral development.
- The partnership with other institutions is very good and improving the learning opportunities for all pupils.

What could be improved

- Pupils' attainment in writing is below that expected for their age in Key Stage 1 and opportunities for extended writing are limited in both key stages.
- Teachers' reports to parents do not contain sufficient information on pupils' attainment and

progress in all 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 made good progress in addressing the issues raised in the last inspection in 1997. The school has established, and uses well, a clear system for planning the curriculum which ensures that teachers are more secure in what they are to teach in each subject. As a result, teaching is good and pupils' learning is improving. There has been good progress in refining the school's assessment procedures, which are now used well by teachers to guide their planning of lessons or series of lessons. This means that work is better matched to pupils' abilities and previous knowledge and understanding. The quality of leadership and management by the subject co-ordinators has improved since the last inspection. The head teacher regularly observes teaching and learning throughout the school and shares the good practice observed with all staff. The school has been very effective in the development of systems to analyse pupils' results in tests and to identify specific weaknesses which are then targeted for improvement. This system shows the levels of attainment when children enter the school in the reception classes and how pupils are making progress in their learning as they move through the school.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	E	D	D	A
Writing	E	B	D	C
Mathematics	E	E*	D	B

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

The table shows that in the 2000 National Curriculum tests for seven year olds the school's results were below average in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared to similar schools, pupils' performance was average in writing, above average in mathematics and well above average in reading. Inspection evidence shows that standards have improved and reflect the good teaching and learning for pupils in the school. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in all subjects, except writing, is in line with that expected for their age. In Year 5, pupils' attainment in all subjects, except music, is in line with the level expected for their age. In music, it is above the level expected for their age. This is the same group of pupils who took the end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests for seven year olds in 1998, which indicated that their attainment was well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Since then, pupils have made good progress mainly due to the good quality of teaching which leads to good learning. The school is aware that more work is still needed to raise pupils' standards in writing further. In English, mathematics and science the trend of pupils' attainment over time has not been rising as quickly as other schools but is now improving. The school is setting realistic targets for improvement in these subjects. During the inspection, there was no significant variation noted in the attainment of boys and girls in any subject.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to the school and their work. The majority enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is good both in class and around school. The behaviour management system is having a positive effect and pupils respond well to what is expected of them.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good but their independent learning skills are limited. Relationships are very good, many take on extra responsibility and those on the school council are proud of their contribution.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory and in line with the national average. Most pupils arrive at school promptly, settle into class quickly and lessons start on time. There have been no exclusions from the school in the last year.

Pupils' very good attitudes result from the school's positive ethos and their response to the school's behaviour policy. They understand the need for school rules and demonstrate this in their behaviour towards others. Pupils have very good relationships with each other and with staff. The majority are considerate of others when they move around the building, use the dining hall and play at break times.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-10 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Good	Good

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

Fifty eight lessons or part lessons were seen. Teaching is satisfactory or better in 98 per cent of lessons. It is good in 55 per cent of lessons and very good in a further 26 per cent. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was seen and this was mainly because the tasks set were too easy and pupils lost interest, as a result they did not improve their knowledge in the lesson. Teaching is consistently good and often very good in both reception classes, now called the Foundation Stage. Teaching is good in both key stages, it is sometimes very good in Key Stage 2. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, particularly for children in the reception classes. The quality of teaching and learning has been monitored by the head teacher and district inspectors from the local education authority. The information from this monitoring has been used to modify and improve teaching throughout the school.

The teaching of basic skills in English is satisfactory and in mathematics it is good in most classes following the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the subsequent training received by staff. However, the school does not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to further develop their writing skills. The widespread use of prepared worksheets, which only require brief responses, limits pupils' chances to develop their ideas in increasing detail, especially in subjects such as science, religious education, history and geography. Teachers' planning is clearly linked to the requirements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and where tasks are organised to challenge different ability groups, pupils make good progress. Classroom assistants give good,

effective support to both individuals and groups of pupils when they are working with them. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are well supported by good teaching that provides challenging activities. As a result, these pupils make good progress in both key stages.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is satisfactory, but it is not effectively balanced because the provision for pupils to refine and explore their ideas and feelings in writing are underdeveloped, largely due to the use of worksheets in most subjects. Children in the Foundation Stage are provided with a wide range of activities that are appropriate to the learning needs of children of this age.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The procedures and provision for pupils with special educational needs are good. Teachers and support assistants know their pupils well and provide challenging activities that make a positive contribution to their attainment and learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. All staff work with groups and individuals to make sure they join in all the activities available. As a result, pupils make good progress in their knowledge, understanding and use of English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good. It is very good for their social and moral development. Teachers are very good role models and pupils know the difference between right and wrong. Teachers encourage pupils to work and play together sociably and respectfully. There are very effective systems in place to support pupils' personal development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. They give a clear picture of pupils' standards and progress over time.

The curriculum is broad in both key stages and meets the statutory requirements for all subjects. It includes several features that enrich it, for example, there is a good personal, social and health education programme which pays due attention to both sex education and drug misuse. The school is to be commended for achieving the "HEALTHY SCHOOL AWARD" for the past four years. The school has formed a good partnership with parents and partner institutions, which makes an effective contribution to pupils' learning. The information in teachers' annual reports to parents is often too general and does not give sufficient information on pupils' skills or the progress they have made over the preceding year.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	The head teacher and key staff provide good leadership and management and give a clear educational direction for the school. The quality of teamwork by all staff is good and fosters a family atmosphere in which all pupils are valued and their efforts well supported.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body is committed to helping the school move forward. Governors make an effective contribution to the running of the school and are committed to maintaining and raising standards further. Governors' annual report to parents is a well written document, however, there are a few items missing and so it does not meet statutory requirements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school knows its strengths and areas for development. The observation of teaching and learning by the head teacher is having a positive impact on the quality of teachers' work.
The strategic use of resources	The school has sufficient staff and they are well deployed. Support staff play an important role in the life of the school and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. The accommodation is well maintained. Resources to support pupils' learning are satisfactory and used effectively. The school's finances and administration procedures are good.

The head teacher and key staff provide a clear direction for continued future improvement. The school development plan has challenging targets and the monitoring of teaching and learning is used to identify areas for improvement. Governors are regular visitors to the school, monitor financial planning and have formed committees that are involved in all aspects of the school. They make a good contribution to the preparation of the school development plan. Governors and the head teacher keep a close eye on spending to ensure that they get the best possible value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school • Their children are making good progress • Pupils' behaviour in the school • The amount of homework given • Teaching is good • They feel they can go to the school with any questions or problems • The school expects children to work hard • The way the school is led and managed • The school helps children to become more mature and responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few parents expressed concern about the information on pupils' progress • The range of activities outside lessons

Inspectors agree with the positive comments and views of the parents. The inspection team agrees with the concern over the information on pupils' progress. This is because teachers' written reports do not contain sufficient information about pupils' skills and understanding and do not set targets to help pupils to improve. There is a satisfactory range of extra activities which make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Regular informative newsletters and an "open door" policy make a good contribution to the partnership with parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1 In Battle Hill First School, the Foundation Stage is made up of two reception classes. The previous inspection findings showed that the school made good provision for children in the reception classes. The school continues to maintain its good level of provision for these young children. This has a positive impact on their learning, progress and achievements. The school has plans to improve the provision further by developing an outdoor play area to increase children's physical development. Children enter the reception classes at the beginning of the academic year in which they are five. The class teachers are very skilful in providing work that effectively meets the needs and abilities of all children. This ensures all children have equal access to the curriculum. The initial assessments by teachers show that most children begin school with below average skills in most areas, including speaking, listening and mathematics. Most children meet the expectations for their age in all areas of learning by the time they begin work in Year 1. This represents very good learning. It is a direct result of the patient, careful and high quality teaching. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

2 Standards in English have risen since the last inspection, particularly in reading. The school builds on the good start made in the reception classes and pupils make good progress in English in Key Stage 1, except in writing. For pupils in the present Year 2, attainment in writing is below the levels expected for their age and in reading and speaking and listening it is in line with what is expected. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests, pupils' attainment in reading and writing was below the average and the number achieving the higher levels was also below the national average. Pupils' performance in the reading tests was well above average in comparison with similar schools and in line with the average in writing. In Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is improving because of improved teaching and the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. Pupils' attainment is improving in Key Stage 2 and inspection findings show that by the age of 10, pupils' attainment is in line with the level expected for reading, writing, speaking and listening. There has been positive progress in raising attainment in English by the age of 10, because of the successful introduction of the Literacy Strategy and the detailed analysis of pupils' previous results. This analysis of information also means the school has evidence of the good progress made by these pupils over the last 3 years. In English, mathematics and science the trend of pupils' attainment over time has not been rising as quickly as other schools but is now improving. The school is setting realistic targets for improvement in these subjects. During the inspection, there was no significant variation noted in the attainment of boys and girls in any subject.

3 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in mathematics is in line with the level expected for their age. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests for mathematics for seven year olds, attainment was below the national average but above the average for similar schools. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 5 is in line with that expected for their age. This represents good progress from a low base. It is a direct result of the high quality teaching and the effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. The school has made good progress to address the key issue from the last inspection to improve the analysis of test data and target areas for improvement. This, coupled with the very thorough and careful procedures and use of assessment to plan future work and set challenging targets, makes a positive contribution to improvement in the subject.

4 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in science is at the level expected for their age. In the teacher assessments in science in 2000 for seven year olds, pupils' attainment was well below the national average. It was in line with the average when compared with similar schools.

Pupils' attainment in the present Year 5 is in line with the level expected for their age. This is a similar picture to that found in the previous inspection. The present Year 2 pupils achieve well when compared to their previous attainment and their attainment is in line with that expected for their age verbally, although their skills are less well developed in the written aspects of science. This is mainly because of the widespread use of prepared worksheets that limits the opportunities pupils have to record their own results. Pupils' attainment is improving in Key Stage 2 because of the focus the school has placed on maintaining the good investigative and experimental aspects of science and the good teaching of the subject. As a result, there is a good capacity for further improvement.

5 Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress. These pupils are all working at levels which are well matched to their abilities and their previous experiences. Teachers set work, paying particular attention to the targets identified in the individual education plans. Extra support is provided for these pupils and teachers assess their work regularly and review their individual educational plans accordingly. The curricular opportunities for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are good. All pupils on the special educational needs register have their areas of need identified and appropriate activities are planned. The special needs co-ordinator gives clear guidance to individual teachers and support staff and assists in the reviews of pupils' individual education plans. Pupils with special educational needs meet the targets set out for them. There is a weekly timetable for extra support and pupils are withdrawn from classes for small group teaching. During this time pupils make good progress in their learning, particularly in their literacy and numeracy skills.

6 Standards in information and communication technology have been maintained since the last inspection and the school is in a good position to continue the improvements because of the very good action plan in place to improve pupils' attainment. Pupils' attainment is in line with the level expected for 7 and 10 year olds. The use of the new computers means the pupils make good progress in their development of computer skills because basic skills are being taught well now that the resources are in place to allow more focused teaching and learning. There are plans to expand Electronic mailing in order to provide greater access to the recently acquired Internet facilities. The subject is used effectively to support pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Teachers make sure that these pupils understand the tasks and use programs that are speaking their own language. This means that their learning of English is improving rapidly.

7 By the age of seven and 10, pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with the level expected for their age in the Agreed Syllabus. Pupils in Key Stage 1 visit a church, where they identify special features such as the altar, font and lectern. They make sound progress as they learn about belonging to a family, special events and celebrations linked to the Christian calendar. By Year 5, pupils work in groups to discuss moral issues in a sensible and mature way. In discussion, they talk about the beliefs, special people and symbols of other major world faiths, particularly Islam and Hinduism. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress in religious education.

8 In music, pupils' attainment is in line with that expected for seven year olds but is above that expected for 10 year olds. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have detailed music notebooks that add to the music curriculum and develop a better understanding of music. They record their learning about tempo, musical notation and the lives and works of famous composers such as Strauss and Tchaikovsky. This makes a positive contribution to their progress and attainment. In all other subjects, pupils' attainment is in line with the level expected for their age. However, especially in history and geography, there is too much reliance on worksheets that only require short answers and pupils' writing skills are not used sufficiently. This limits the opportunities for pupils to conduct their own research into topics and to write their own descriptions of events in the past or in the wider world.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9 Pupils' attitudes to work have improved since the last inspection and are now very good. They enjoy coming to school, are very well motivated and keen to respond to the challenges offered, particularly when practical tasks are involved. Overall, they listen well, answer questions sensibly and contribute confidently in discussions. For example, pupils in Year 5 discussed the progress of an experiment in science about substances dissolving.

10 Behaviour remains good, both in and out of class. Pupils fully understand the system of discipline operating in the school and react well to it. Bullying is not a problem and no incidents were observed or reported during the inspection. There have been no exclusions in recent years. Pupils genuinely care for their school and treat its fabric, fittings and resources well.

11 Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and staff are now very good. This makes a significant contribution to the quality of education provided. Pupils work well together, are polite, friendly and sociable. They show respect for other people's feelings and clearly understand the impact of their actions upon others. For example, they listen quietly when others are speaking. The youngest children in the reception classes are well settled into school life and already starting to develop very good working habits. They take turns and share sensibly and pursue activities without the need for constant supervision from their teacher. Pupils willingly take on responsibility and perform their duties well. Members of the School Council have pride in the roles and take them seriously. As a result, the council functions very effectively and makes a valuable contribution to school life. The buddy system, operating between Year 5 and reception children also works very well. However, opportunities for pupils to plan their own work, or to show initiative through their studies, are limited.

12 Attendance remains satisfactory for primary schools. Unauthorised absence is negligible. Punctuality is good. Almost all pupils arrive on time and are settled in class promptly at the start of sessions, which makes a positive contribution to their learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13 The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in almost all lessons. There was only one unsatisfactory lesson seen during the inspection. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. The number of very good lessons seen also represents an improvement. Teaching is very good in the reception classes. This is the new Foundation Stage which was introduced in September 2000. Teachers plan adult-led activities very carefully to ensure children have opportunities to express themselves as well as experience direct teaching. There are very good procedures in place to review and identify developing and changing needs. The school analyses results of the initial assessment of children's basic skills and uses these very well to plan work for groups and individuals. The teachers are confident and have a good understanding of the curriculum for this age group. This is coupled with a very good knowledge and understanding of how young children learn. As a result, there are well planned, stimulating activities, which appeal to the children, generating a productive working atmosphere. A particular strength is the good teamwork by staff who work together very effectively. This has a positive impact on the good progress children make.

14 Discussion with teachers and analysis of pupils' work show that the quality of teaching is improving. This improvement is the result of the observation of teaching and learning by the head teacher and inspectors from the local education authority who regularly observe colleagues teaching and check to ensure that all pupils are learning effectively. This strategy has been successful in establishing a climate within the school where teachers are more aware of their strengths and areas

for development. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented and pupils' standards are improving by the time they are 10. The quality of teaching is having a positive impact on pupils' learning and is raising attainment by the end of their time in school. Teachers assess individual pupils' attainment and progress regularly and use their daily observations of pupils' work to set challenging tasks but this is not always consistent throughout the school. For example, the school has identified pupils' writing as an area for further development. However, there is still a heavy reliance on published worksheets and this restricts the opportunities for pupils to use and extend their writing skills in other subjects.

15 The teaching of basic skills in English and mathematics is good in both key stages. Teachers' planning is clearly linked to the requirements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and tasks are often organised to challenge different ability groups in classes. Pupils have very good relationships with teachers and adults in the classroom and this has helped to improve the quality of pupils' learning. Teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour and effort are high and pupils are expected to do their best. This was seen in a Year 5 English lesson, when pupils improved their knowledge and skills of poetry when using "rap music" to emphasise the use of punctuation and where to put the emphasis to create the best effect. They were very attentive to the teacher's introduction and when they moved into groups they followed the plan to share the reading of a selected poem using their voices to create an atmosphere. The brisk pace of the lesson and the mature attitude of pupils led to very good learning and pupils' improving skills in both speaking and listening. The pace of most lessons is good and teachers use the techniques of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to best effect. For example, in a Year 3/4 mathematics lesson pupils joined in enthusiastically with the shared mental addition and multiplication when using the 9 times table. Pupils were given challenging work in estimation by rounding up numbers such as 367 to the nearest 10. The practical session and the very good use of the correct mathematical language by the teacher made sure that pupils' learning was improving throughout the lesson.

16 Teachers in both key stages have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects of the National Curriculum. They use the correct language to develop the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the particular subject. This was particularly evident in English, mathematics and science where specific technical language was used well. For example, in a Year 1 science lesson pupils understood the concept of "sorting" and the teacher used a wide selection of different plants that pupils sorted by colour or size. This was very well developed when pupils had to sort the plants by the part that is eaten. Many, by the end of the lesson, knew whether it was the stem, fruit, leaves or root that was eaten. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the teaching of English and mathematics and they use good assessment of pupils to build upon the areas that pupils need to develop. For example, in a session using computers in Year 3 the teacher used well chosen questions to check that pupils understood the key elements they needed to create an imaginary garden. Pupils used different elements to first build a plan and then use the facility of the program to see it in profile. The teacher kept all pupils interested and enthusiastic in the session and used good examples to make sure everyone understood the objective and the different elements they could use.

17 Teachers know and manage their pupils well, particularly in Key Stage 2, and provide good support for different activities. The very good relationships between staff and pupils create a secure climate in which to learn. Teachers make daily informal assessments during lesson times on which to base their future planning. Most teachers include positive comments when marking but do not consistently provide precise comments on what pupils need to do in order to improve. For example, comments on how to improve writing skills or the setting of achievable targets to use their writing skills in different ways. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is good. All staff have a very positive attitude towards these pupils and know their strengths and areas for development well. Class teachers, the special needs co-ordinator and support staff all work effectively together ensuring pupils take part in the curriculum and make good progress.

Teachers plan according to the targets set for pupils in the individual education plans. All adults working with pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are enthusiastic in their approach and liberal with praise. For example, to support work in science, staff use a special computer program in which the language of the pupil is selected and then the English translation given to help towards an understanding of the different names for parts of the body. This effectively encourages pupils and helps them develop confidence. Clear records are kept on each pupil's attainment and this information is used effectively to inform future planning and teaching. When withdrawn for specialist help, pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are well taught.

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

18 The school's curriculum is broad and promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and moral development satisfactorily. The curriculum provision has been maintained since the last inspection. However, there is an imbalance because there are not enough opportunities for pupils to write at length for a range of purposes. The curriculum for the reception classes is good and, with very good teaching, children make a very good start to their school life and are well prepared to begin studying the National Curriculum at Key Stage 1. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good in all stages and they make good progress. The school has a number of pupils who speak very little English and supports them well in lessons and by special projects, sometimes run by volunteers. For example, pupils with English as an additional language use a combination of pictures and language to act out the story of a journey by ship to an island inhabited by a horrible king. This activity also helps their social development as they work together and consider each others contributions.

19 The school uses the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies effectively. As a result, although pupils enter the school with below average attainment in English and mathematics, they make good progress and attain satisfactory standards by the time they leave. Nevertheless, there is a particular weakness in writing, which the school has recognised and is beginning to address. Given the limited opportunities for pupils to write at length during the Literacy Hour the school needs to look at ways of developing writing, including basic writing skills like handwriting, through all other subjects of the curriculum. It is particularly important that pupils are given the chance to write at length and for a wide range of purposes that reflects their developing needs as independent learners. Marking is also inconsistent and not always used well to show pupils what they need to do to improve their work.

20 A range of materials produced by the National Qualifications and Curriculum Authority currently supports the curriculum well. These are being reviewed during the year to ensure that they fully meet the needs of the pupils and to integrate them with the existing policies and schemes of work. Teachers generally plan well, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. This good planning makes a positive contribution to the good teaching and progress observed during the inspection. The curriculum is satisfactorily supported by extra-curricular activities in spite of the difficulties currently being caused by the extensive building work and the move to full primary status. The school recognises there are many pupils with special talents and there are well-advanced plans to introduce extra-curricular clubs in sport, music and the creative arts using additional funding.

21 Sex education is taught in the school and the school is currently working with the local education authority to develop sex education and personal, social and health education curriculum programmes to address the needs of 10 year-olds. There is a comprehensive system for teaching drugs awareness and the school has received a certificate recognising its work in this area. Homework is used to support learning, particularly in the development of reading skills. Strong links have been maintained with the local community, and these continue to benefit pupils' learning. A wide range of visits and visitors are used effectively to support the curriculum, particularly in science, history

and geography, and residential visits help pupils to gain confidence. The school has active links with the local Education and Business Partnership and takes part in many projects run through it. Good links exist with local churches and there are very close links with other schools and colleges in the area, particularly through music and sport. Regular support for charity raises pupils' awareness of the needs of others, and has also resulted in some useful links being developed with a school in Romania. In the near future, community links are to be strengthened further by the school's planned involvement with a newly established Education Action Zone project.

22 The school's provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good and the provision for their moral and social development is very good. Overall, this reflects the findings of the previous inspection. The school makes very effective provision to develop, broaden and deepen pupils' social skills and their understanding of moral issues.

23 The provision for the spiritual development of pupils is good. All pupils experience a range of activities that give them valuable opportunities to reflect and wonder. For example, they grow and care for plants and explore the meaning of care and friendship. The school provides many opportunities for reflection in the daily act of collective worship. Pupils reflect on the meaning of caring and being a good neighbour for example, after the story of the "Good Samaritan". The school incorporates spiritual opportunities carefully into lessons. An example of this is during sessions at the end of lessons when pupils reflect on and consider what they have learnt. Another example is in Year 2 when pupils end the day with a short prayer and reflection. The calm spiritual atmosphere in assemblies and many lessons provides a positive contribution to the thought pupils give to the needs of others within the school.

24 The provision for the moral development of pupils is very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The school is very effective in teaching pupils the principles that distinguish right from wrong. This begins on entry to the reception classes and develops well as the pupils progress through the school. There is a very strong code of moral conduct implicit in all actions. All members of the teaching and non-teaching staff provide good and effective role models. They ensure that their dealings with issues are firm but fair and observe the schools code of conduct consistently. This helps the pupils to know and understand what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. They have many opportunities to explore and develop moral issues within the curriculum and assemblies. For example, pupils explore the meaning of living by a set of rules in their religious education lessons. They apply these principles when they help the community keep the area free from litter. The school successfully promotes pupils' appreciation of moral issues concerning other people's property. It encourages them to tidy away equipment and to respect the work and artefacts on display around the school. The school ensures that pupils develop a good understanding of the effects of their actions on other people and on themselves. Pupils respect and value each other, their teachers and adults who work in the school.

25 The provision for the social development of pupils is very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The school gives all pupils opportunities to develop independent attitudes to learning. Teachers build on this and increase these opportunities as pupils become older. An example of this is the successful "Buddy" system between Year 5 and the reception classes. The pupils take this very seriously and give effective support to the youngest children in the school. Pupils of all abilities mix well together during break and lunchtimes. This includes children in the reception classes. All pupils develop their ability to work co-operatively and collaboratively in lessons very well. In music, for example, children in the reception classes work together very well when they compose and perform music. This encourages the effective development of social skills. The school gives the older pupils the opportunity to take part in residential visits. This enables pupils to develop a strong sense of group identity and acceptable group behaviour. All members of staff promote good relationships between pupils and between pupils and themselves. This enables the pupils to flourish

within a secure learning ethos. The school develops pupils' concept of citizenship through their participation in the work of the school and the wider community. It has a strong and effective school council in which pupils take much pride. The school prepares pupils very well for their transfer to their next school.

26 The school makes good provision for the cultural development of pupils. Pupils have many opportunities to develop awareness of their own culture. They visit local places of interest as part of their work in history, geography and religious education. For example, during the week of the inspection two classes visited the local church. This visit made a positive contribution to their understanding of Christian traditions and how the church works as a community. The school teaches pupils well about other religions, cultures and beliefs. This mainly happens during religious education lessons where pupils learn about Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Christianity. Representatives of different beliefs visit the school and the school makes effective use of the cultural mix within its own community. The school is effective in its teaching of pupils to value and respect a range of faiths and beliefs. It prepares them well for life in a multi-cultural and multi-faith society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

27 The school continues to have proper concern for the welfare of its pupils. They are supervised carefully throughout the day and working practices adopted by all members of staff are good. Suitable health and safety arrangements are in place and there are plans to commence formal risk assessments in the near future. However, during the inspection a few health and safety concerns were identified and drawn to the head teacher's attention. Child protection arrangements remain effective.

28 The school's systems for assessing pupils' attainment are good. They provide a suitably wide range of information about the pupils. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The school's use of assessment to effectively develop and modify the curriculum to improve standards is satisfactory. This is also an improvement since the previous inspection. There is a clear over-view of how assessment informs curriculum planning. The analysis of National Curriculum tests and tasks gives a clear picture of the effect the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have on pupils' standards. The teachers use the results of assessment to build effectively on pupils' previous knowledge as they move to the upper part of the school. There is no formal monitoring and evaluation of progress in religious education. This does not give a clear picture of progress against the targets in the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The school has a well-structured policy for marking pupils' work. However, not all members of staff use the marking policy consistently. As a result, not all pupils receive the guidance needed to improve and correct their work.

29 There are very effective systems in place for assessing the attainment of children under five. The use of these assessments to plan for the next stage in children's learning is very good. The school carefully analyses data from initial teacher assessments on entry to the reception classes. All members of staff use the findings to plan work and set clear targets for individual children and this has a positive impact on their learning.

30 Attendance is monitored thoroughly and there are effective arrangements to investigate all unexplained absence. Pupils are actively encouraged to come to school and rewarded when they do. Measures to promote and maintain high standards of behaviour work well and are implemented consistently by all members of staff. This ensures that pupils act sensibly and that lessons run smoothly. Praise and rewards are used effectively to encourage effort and significant achievements are celebrated in assembly. A high priority is placed on the promotion of a healthy lifestyle, and pupils' personal values are further enhanced through activities such as the school council, residential visits and the "buddy system", which promotes very good relationships throughout the school, particularly

between older and younger pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. Refugee pupils are fully integrated into school life and extra help to learn the English language is offered to their parents.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

31 Parents' views about the school are good and there is satisfactory involvement in their children's learning. Several parents help regularly in lessons, with one in particular giving very effective support with work involving computers, as well as running the gardening club. Two other parents help run the after school football club. Many parents accompany educational visits and special assemblies are well attended. These contributions have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Homework is set regularly throughout the school and most parents are happy with what their children are given to do. Concerns raised by some parents about extra curricular activities are not supported by inspection findings. A satisfactory range is provided. The Parent Teachers Association remains active and continues to give generous support to school.

32 The quality of information provided for parents is not as good as at the time of the last inspection and is now unsatisfactory. In particular, pupils' annual reports do not give adequate details about their achievements in many of the subjects taught and, furthermore, do not identify where improvements could be made. The governors' annual report is also incomplete; lacking necessary information about security, staff development and what has been done to address the issues raised by the last inspection team. The prospectus is satisfactory and there is sufficient on-going correspondence throughout the year to keep parents well informed about school life. Curriculum information is not sent to parents, but is adequately displayed on notice boards around the school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are properly involved from the time the teacher has an initial concern and kept fully informed about subsequent developments.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

33 The head teacher and key staff provide good leadership and give a clear educational direction for the school which has a positive impact on pupils' improving standards. For example, the school has used the analysis of pupils' results in National Curriculum tests to target the improvement of writing as a key area for development. It is a credit to staff that this good provision has been maintained since the last inspection because of the recent upheavals caused by the change to the status of the school, staff changes and the extensive building work being undertaken. The quality of teamwork by all staff is good and fosters a positive family atmosphere in the school where all pupils are valued and their efforts well supported. The governing body takes its responsibilities very seriously; governors make a good contribution to the effective running of the school and are committed to maintaining and raising standards further. The roles and responsibilities of all staff have been reviewed and now give a clearer educational direction to the school. The observation of teaching and learning by the head teacher and local education authority inspectors is regularly discussed with staff and governors who are well aware of the school's strengths and areas for development. Subject co-ordinators are taking much more responsibility for their subjects. For example, they review schemes of work, undertake a regular audit and recommend training needs, regularly scrutinise teachers' planning and pupils' work. The school has worked effectively to address the key issues from the previous report and is well placed to maintain the strengths of the school and build effectively upon them.

34 The head teacher and staff are responding very well to the challenges created by the number of pupils arriving in the area seeking asylum. Most speak very little or no English when they arrive but they are made very welcome and programmes of work started to make sure they learn as quickly as possible. The leadership and management of the school ensures that outside agencies are used to help these pupils, for example, a drama student works regularly with a group of pupils using a combination of language, pictures and music to develop their skills and, in the session observed, pupils made very good progress in their learning.

35 The head teacher and governors work together closely and manage the school well. There is clear direction for the work of the school, ensuring that strategic decisions determine the financial and educational development of the school. The school works closely with the local education authority to ensure that all decisions relating to the budget are closely linked to the development plan, are manageable and the principles of “best value for money” are applied rigorously. Detailed analysis of children’s attainment on entry to the school is undertaken regularly and the results are used effectively to set realistic targets for children’s future attainment. The staff meet regularly, both formally and informally, to discuss curriculum matters. Curriculum co-ordinators undertake their roles conscientiously. For example, there has been a thorough audit of teachers’ skills in information and communication technology, in the new buildings a room has been identified to establish a computer suite and a very good action plan drawn up which includes a training programme that will develop teachers’ skills further.

36 The head teacher and staff are all involved in preparing the school development plan. This working document is then fully discussed with governors before being adopted as the action plan for future years. It is an effective document which clearly identifies the priorities and targets to be tackled and guides the work of the school. It takes into account the changing status of the school and highlights the requirements for the Year 6 pupils from the start of the new term. Where possible, with the new buildings and the status of an emerging primary school, educational priorities are closely linked to financial planning. These include the development of more time for co-ordinators to check on the quality of teaching and learning across the school. The school knows its strengths and areas for development and has a good grasp on how to improve. All staff work hard to improve their own performance and the educational opportunities presented to pupils. The school has clear targets for improvements. For example, the school is aware that further resources are required for information and communication technology to allow pupils to fully develop their skills in all aspects of the subject.

37 All staff have a shared commitment to raising standards. They have succeeded in creating a learning environment where relationships are very good and pupils feel secure and valued. There is a welcoming family atmosphere that reflects the school’s commitment to achieve the highest educational standards and equal opportunity for all pupils. In the day-to-day life of the school the principles of equal access and opportunity are well observed. Teachers ensure that the work is planned in such a way as to ensure that pupils of all abilities are fully included. The governors are committed to maintaining and improving standards in the school. They keep themselves well informed. The good committee structure enables them to support the head teacher and meet their statutory responsibilities, except in certain aspects of their annual report to parents. The chair of the governors works very closely with the head teacher and they meet regularly to discuss the school and its work. The governors have a clear picture of the work of the school and are pleased with the improving attainment of pupils.

38 The school remains well staffed to meet the needs of the curriculum. Teachers are suitably qualified and provide a good balance of experience and expertise. They are well supported by a good range of suitably qualified classroom assistants. The quality of administrative support and caretaking

also remains good. This ensures that the daily life of the school runs smoothly. All staff have job descriptions which are regularly reviewed and reflect their current roles and responsibilities. Arrangements to support newly qualified staff are good and fully meet national requirements.

39 Accommodation is satisfactory, but is about to undergo major refurbishment, after which pupils will be moving into new buildings. Displays are carefully mounted and reflect the curriculum, but often contain limited amounts of pupils' own work, particularly in respect of writing. Resources to support learning remain satisfactory, although for music they are good. There are sufficient computers and computer programs to teach information and communication technology, but at present there is no central library, although there are sufficient books in classrooms to support the curriculum.

40 The school benefits from external sources of funding, such as the Education Action Zone. Money is spent wisely and is linked to the school's priorities for development, the principles of best value are applied rigorously by the head teacher and governors. The cost of educating each pupil is above the national average. There is good leadership by the head teacher, key staff and governors, good financial management and very good relationships in school. Pupils' attainment is improving and their learning is good when compared with their previous attainment. As a result, the school is giving satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

41 In order to further improve the quality of education, standards and progress in the school, the head teacher, staff and governors should:

- A. Improve pupils' attainment in writing in Key Stage 1 and provide more opportunities for writing in both key stages by:
- providing more opportunities for pupils to extend their independent writing skills during lessons in other subjects, such as science, religious education, history and geography;
 - ensuring that all teachers follow the handwriting policy already established in the school;
 - setting simple, achievable targets for individuals or small groups;
 - demonstrating the value of pupils' writing by displaying examples of high quality written work by pupils more often.

(Paragraphs 2, 4, 11, 14, 28, 51, 55, 56, 57, 59, 70, 72, 80, 81, 82, 85, 86)

- B. Ensure that teachers' reports to parents contain sufficient information on pupils' attainment and progress in all subjects and set targets for pupils' future development.

(Paragraph 32)

In addition to the key issues above, governors should include the following minor issue as part of the action plan:

- Ensure that the governors' annual report to parents contains all the statutory information that is required.

(Paragraph 37)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

58

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

25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	26	55	17	2	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

YR – Y5

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)

257

Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals

117

Special educational needs

YR – Y5

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs

3

Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register

48

English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language

12

Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission

40

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

25

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.9
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	25	26	51

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	18	20
	Girls	22	23	23
	Total	41	41	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80% (81%)	80% (96%)	84% (75%)
	National	83% (82%)	84% (83%)	90% (87%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	19	20
	Girls	22	22	22
	Total	39	41	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76% (92%)	80% (85%)	82% (92%)
	National	84% (82%)	88% (86%)	88% (87%)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – Afro heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	206
Any other minority ethnic group	14

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 – Y5

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.8
Average class size	25.7

Education support staff: YR – Y5

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	62

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999 - 2000
	£
Total income	399,743
Total expenditure	406,508
Expenditure per pupil	1,799
Balance brought forward from previous year	10,586
Balance carried forward to next year	3,821

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	257
Number of questionnaires returned	80

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	29	0	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	59	40	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	47	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	48	5	5	0
The teaching is good.	62	32	5	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	39	10	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	33	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	38	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	45	41	9	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	61	32	5	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	52	43	3	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	38	16	4	9

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

42 The previous inspection findings show that the school makes good provision for children in the reception classes, which is now called the Foundation Stage of learning. The school is continuing to maintain its good level of provision for these young children. This has a positive impact on their learning, progress and achievements. The school has plans to improve the provision further by developing an outdoor play area to increase children's physical development.

43 Children enter the school's reception classes at the beginning of the academic year in which they are five. The class teachers are very skilful in providing work that effectively meets the needs and abilities of all children. This ensures all children have equal access to the curriculum. The initial assessments by teachers show that most children begin school with below average skills in speaking, listening and mathematics. Most children meet the expectations for their age in language and mathematics by the time they begin work in Year 1. This represents very good learning. It is a direct result of the patient, careful and high quality teaching. The teaching is very good in six out of ten lessons. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development.

44 The school makes very good provision for this area of children's development. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Both class teachers are good role models. They are calm, patient and sensitive to the needs of young children. The classrooms are stimulating, interesting and welcoming. This provides the children with secure areas in which they flourish and develop an increasing awareness of their own worth. All the children respond very well to the teachers, each other and adults in the classrooms. They work happily together, share and discuss with good humour and clear understanding. This is particularly noticeable in music lessons when children choose and use musical instruments to play their compositions. The teachers encourage the children to choose their own materials and activities. They use them carefully and tidy away sensibly. All children work with a clear sense of enjoyment and purpose. This is a direct result of the high quality teaching. Most children exceed the expectations for their age in their personal and social development.

Communication, language and literacy.

45 The teaching in this area of learning is very good. Many children enter the reception class with below average standards in their communication skills. The teachers ensure that children who have English as an additional language learn quickly and make good progress in acquiring English. At the time of the inspection most children are already working at standards expected for their age. This is good progress and is a direct result of the skilful teaching. The teachers ensure that children have opportunities to see the value of reading and writing in most activities. This is one of the strengths of the teaching. It makes children eager to read and write. They often choose to write letters, for example to "Bob the builder" and talk happily about them. All children have regular opportunities to re-tell and act out stories in the role-play areas. They retreat into the "site office" as they plan the day's work. There is an effective and sensitive level of adult interaction to help develop children's speaking skills. Children of all abilities develop positive attitudes to reading and enjoy looking at books and listening to stories. The higher attaining children begin to write independently and many children form letters correctly. This is very good attainment. Children in the Foundation Stage follow the National Literacy Strategy for children of reception age. This contributes to the maintenance and

development of sound standards in children's literacy skills. Most children meet the expectations for their age by Year 1.

Mathematical development.

46 The teaching of mathematics is very good. This has a positive impact on the progress children make in their learning and the standards they achieve. Most children achieve standards expected for their age. This represents good progress from their entry to school. The teachers make number activities interesting and take every opportunity to develop children's awareness of shapes around them. They quickly develop a secure knowledge of mathematical language. For example, they discuss the difference between "taller" and "longer". One pupil explains "It's taller when it goes up and longer when it lies down". They achieve the levels of accuracy expected for their age as they match and count numbers. All children count confidently and recognise numbers to ten. The more able children count to twenty and begin to understand the concept of place value in their practical work. Most children know that six "goes between five and seven" and identify numbers larger than six. They give interesting definitions "It's like a piece of string hanging on a ball". Most children are likely to meet the requirements for their age by the time they enter Year 1.

Knowledge and understanding of the world.

47 The teachers link work in this area of learning very effectively with other areas of the curriculum. For example, children work at making a construction site. They say how the machinery works and explain the need to wear hard hats. This makes effective links with communication and mathematical skills. The skilful teaching ensures children look closely at natural and manufactured objects and enables them to explain the differences and similarities between bricks. Children use the computer confidently and accurately. An example of this is in a literacy lesson where children show good mouse control as they click on to the desired program. They all have opportunities to use headphones to listen to and follow stories. This develops their interest in books and reading effectively. These opportunities and the high quality of teaching ensure that children have a well-developed understanding of the world around them.

Physical development.

48 The provision for the development of children's physical skills is good. They have ample opportunities to develop their ability to control pencils, scissors and brushes. Many children have skills in this area that exceed expectations. They experience a variety of activities, such as cutting and using play-dough, that help them practise and refine their manipulative skills. The teachers promote children's physical skills very well. Most children develop their awareness of moving in a large space very effectively during physical education and dance lessons. They have access to an outdoor area but are unable to use wheeled toys and balancing apparatus on a regular basis. This restricts their physical development in this area of learning. Plans for improvements are already under way. Most children meet the expectations for their age by the time they begin work on the National Curriculum.

Creative development.

49 The teachers have high expectations of children's attainment in the area of creative development. As a result, children mix and use paint confidently and show good progress in their ability to observe objects closely. They have very good access to areas for imaginative role-play. This helps them develop and express their own ideas very well. The children have ample opportunities to express themselves through singing and moving to music. They learn new words quickly and enjoy putting actions to songs. Their singing skills meet the expectations for their age. Their ability to compose and perform music exceeds the requirements for their age. This is a direct result of the

effective and skilful teaching. Most children meet the expectations for their age by the time they begin work at Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum.

Summary.

50 The provision for the Foundation Stage is good. It has many strengths. The most significant strength is the quality of teaching. The teachers plan adult-led activities very carefully to ensure children have opportunities to express themselves as well as experience direct teaching. There are very good procedures in place to review and identify developing and changing needs. The school analyses results of the teachers' initial assessments and uses these to plan work for groups and individuals. It tracks progress very carefully in all areas of learning. This represents a good level of improvement since the previous inspection. The co-ordinator for provision in the Foundation Stage has a clear understanding of how young children learn and develop. This ensures that all children, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress and learn very well.

ENGLISH

51 Standards in English have risen since the last inspection, particularly in reading. This is because of the emphasis placed on improving standards of reading, for example, by taking part in a literacy project, after the last inspection. The initial emphasis on improving standards in Years 2 and 3 has been successful and good emphasis is now placed on teaching the basic skills at Key Stage 1. Due to the current lack of library provision there is not enough use of the higher reading skills such as reading for individual research and personal development.

52 When pupils enter the school their skills in speaking and listening and general language development are below the levels expected for children of their age. By the time they reach the age of seven their reading skills are at expected levels although they do not reach those levels in writing. Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 2 and their reading and writing are broadly in line with the levels expected for pupils of their age when they leave the school. Writing is satisfactory at this point but there are still weaknesses that the school recognises and needs to address. In the National Curriculum tests last year pupils' performance in reading and writing was below the average for seven year olds. Standards of reading were well above average when compared to similar schools. Standards of writing were in line with similar schools.

53 Standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory. Throughout the school pupils show interest when listening to their teachers and classmates and are very willing to answer questions and contribute to discussions. Good listening skills are encouraged, as in a phonics lesson, when a Year 1 teacher said clearly, "The tap is leaking" and encouraged the pupils to identify the "ea" sound. Year 4 pupils also show good speaking and listening skills when they discuss being kind to strangers and explain their thoughts and ideas perceptively. Year 5 pupils show good speaking skills when they read out their own poems on the theme of "Litter" in clear, firm voices, which hold the listeners' attention.

54 Standards in reading are satisfactory in both key stages. Pupils are taught a range of techniques to enable them to tackle unknown words in their reading. For example, in Year 1, pupils learn about the sounds "ee" and "ea" and write sentences like, "It is mean not to share". They learn that the same sound can be made with different combinations of letters and use this knowledge well when reading books together like "Tiger Dreams". Most pupils are quite confident about reading new books and show that they understand the plot and characters of books they have read. Most say that they enjoy reading but a number say they do not, even when their reading is at least average for their age. Pupils of all ages like to use their voices to add expression and interest when reading to other

people. Pupils are encouraged to read regularly at home and at school and their progress in reading is carefully recorded in reading diaries, which are shared with parents. Pupils in Year 2 use the contents and index pages to find information accurately. Older pupils explain how a library system works but are not able to practise their skills at this time.

55 Standards in writing are unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory by the end of Year 5. There are isolated examples of good writing practice as in a Year 3/4 lesson where the teacher read out a detailed reply from the head teacher to a class letter written to him about improving the school environment. The pupils were clearly delighted that their letter was being treated seriously and that their writing had a purpose. Writing was established as a weakness during a review by the local education authority over a year ago but the school has not yet developed a coherent and agreed system to improve it. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils begin to develop their ideas but writing is usually restricted to simple, short answers on worksheets. Where pupils are given the chance to respond in some depth their writing reflects careful observation and thought. For example, one Year 2 pupil wrote, "He's been in that cocoon for ages. He's coming out. Now he's a butterfly".

56 Handwriting standards are unsatisfactory. Although there is a clear and detailed policy, handwriting is not given sufficient emphasis in most classes. An exception is in a Year 1 class where all pupils have target cards and earn ticks and stars for their handwriting. This teacher ensures that standards of writing and presentation are good and, as a result, the pupils show obvious pride in their work. Throughout the school pupils' handwriting and presentation skills are unsatisfactory and so work is untidy and, at times, illegible. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 write in stick print using pencil and much of the writing is not well formed or consistent. Standards do not improve sufficiently in Key Stage 2 because teachers do not place emphasis on this important skill. Very few samples of pupils' writing are on display in classrooms and shared areas and this tends to reinforce the message that writing is not important. An exception is some well-displayed, good, extended, imaginative writing in Year 5 on "Billy and Beauty's Wedding" where a pupil wrote, "The fleas in his tangled hair were dancing with excitement". These demonstrate that pupils respond well when given the opportunity to explore ideas and language in an extended piece of work.

57 English is taught well and sometimes very well in the Literacy Hour. However, teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to use their skills, particularly writing, in other subjects. In Literacy, teachers plan their lessons well and make suitable provision for pupils of different abilities, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Most teachers use time at the end of lessons to celebrate and share pupils' work and reinforce learning. For example, at the end of a Year 2 lesson the teacher focused on the few good examples of writing such as, "I like the brown houses with shiny, black roofs" to encourage pupils to express themselves in sentences. Teachers choose books and materials carefully to capture the attention of pupils and maintain their interest. For example, pupils in a Year 5 lesson used a "rap" poem to emphasise the use of prepositions, they enjoyed the humour and developed a clear awareness of how punctuation is used to show emphasis and speed. A good example of cross curricular work supporting English was in a Year 5 science lesson on pollination where pupils used their reading, speaking and listening skills effectively when reading the play "Buzz's Adventure". The results of National Curriculum tests and non-statutory tests are carefully recorded and evaluated to make sure that pupils make good progress in literacy lessons and to check their attainment.

58 Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are well provided for and make good progress. Individual education plans are well written and have clear targets and areas for development. Consequently, work is well focused and matched to their needs. Teachers and support staff work well together and this ensures that pupils receive good levels of support throughout the school.

59 The subject is managed satisfactorily and the role of the co-ordinator has been improved and enhanced since the last inspection. Nevertheless, monitoring of standards and liaison with teachers at Key Stage 1 needs further improvement so that the co-ordinator is more aware of pupils' attainment at the end of the key stage. The school is aware that there is still much to be done to maintain standards in reading and improve standards of writing, handwriting and presentation. It is particularly important that, where clear policies such as that for handwriting exist, all staff follow them systematically and conscientiously.

MATHEMATICS

60 The school's Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests in 2000 show that pupils' attainment in Year 2 was below the national average. It was above the average when compared with similar schools. The current Year 2 pupils achieve standards that meet the expectations for their age. This level of achievement continues through into Year 5. These standards are similar to those found in the previous inspection. Pupils' attainment represents good progress from a low base. It is a direct result of the high quality of teaching and the effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. The very thorough and careful procedures and use of assessment to plan future work and set challenging targets make a positive contribution to improvement in the subject. The key issue from the previous inspection about analysing data to identify areas for improvement and raise standards has been addressed. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and they make at least satisfactory and often good progress in both key stages. As a result, there is a good capacity for further improvement. During the inspection, there was no significant variation noted in the attainment of boys and girls.

61 All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve well. This means that the pupils' performance is above average in comparison with pupils from similar schools. Most pupils make good progress in learning, understanding and using mathematical skills and concepts. This reflects the good teaching. No teaching is less than satisfactory in mathematics. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. There is a considerable improvement in the pupils' recognition of mathematical patterns and in their ability to use mathematics to investigate and solve problems. Most pupils have a good understanding of mathematical language and facts. They use these skills well to solve a suitable range of numerical problems in quick mental recall. Some pupils in Year 2 are less confident in their ability to identify the properties of three-dimensional shapes.

62 Many children enter the school with a below average range of skills in number. They develop and increase these effectively in the reception classes. By the time they begin work at Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum most pupils are working at levels expected for their age. They build well on their early work. They develop the use of accurate mathematical language very effectively and work practically to solve problems. The majority of pupils are confident in explaining the reasons for their answers. By Year 2, most pupils add and subtract involving numbers up to 100 accurately. They sequence numbers accurately, understand the language of positional number and work out number patterns correctly. Most pupils have a secure understanding of the principle of multiplication. Many pupils present collected data accurately in the form of block graphs. They name common two and three-dimensional shapes and most use a correct mathematical vocabulary such as edge and corner.

63 By Year 5, the high quality of teaching ensures that most pupils have very secure skills in their ability to use and apply mathematics. They use a suitable mathematical vocabulary, for example; when using co-ordinates they understand what an axis is and use "horizontal" and "vertical" accurately. Most pupils are confident in deciding how to solve problems independently. They discuss their ideas and findings and explain their thinking logically. Pupils who have English as an additional language receive effective support that enables them to make good progress. The majority of pupils are confident and competent in dealing with numbers mentally and in writing. Most pupils reach the

standards expected from pupils of similar age in their number skills. The more able pupils reach above average standards in their ability to convert fractions into percentages. The analysis of work shows that many pupils understand the concept of working with decimals. Most pupils have a secure level of understanding in using metric weights and measures. Many pupils find the perimeters of simple shapes accurately. The higher attaining pupils make accurate use of bar charts to represent collected data. However, there is little evidence of pupils using line graphs or computers to record their findings. Work in Year 5 builds very effectively on pupils' previous work.

64 Teaching and learning are consistently good for pupils in Key Stage 2. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. A direct result of the good teaching shows in the speed with which pupils acquire new skills and their ability to consolidate previous skills. They relate these skills to their current tasks and to other areas of the curriculum. All pupils make great strides in their ability to give logical reasons for the problem solving strategies they use. This development is particularly noticeable as they progress through Year 4 into Year 5. The ability grouping for the older pupils has a positive effect on learning and standards. Pupils respect each other's contributions. This is in direct response to the value that all the teachers place on pupils' efforts. Pupils of below and above average ability, and those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, receive an effective level of support from teachers and classroom assistants. This level of help enables them to make good progress towards the targets set for them.

65 All teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject. They plan work carefully, employ a variety of methods and strategies and use questions effectively to challenge pupils' thinking. The teachers make very effective use of formal and informal opportunities for pupils to practise their number skills, for example using action rhymes and songs. They teach the basic skills of computation well. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning and achievements. However, in Year 2, there are sometimes difficulties with class management. This reduces the effectiveness of teaching and learning in this class. Where teaching is of high quality the teachers have high expectations of pupils' achievements and behaviour. Lessons have a clear and effective structure and teachers plan work on the basis of pupils' previous attainment. This enables pupils to learn and achieve well and most make good progress. The lessons move briskly and the high quality of class management and control ensures that pupils work hard. In these lessons the skilful use of questioning provides a good challenge for all pupils. All teachers use their assessments of pupils' previous work to plan and organise new work and activities. They take into account the range of abilities within their classes and are well aware of the different levels of maturity. The teachers ensure that pupils clearly understand what they are to learn. They make mathematics relevant to the pupils' needs and interests.

66 Pupils' attitudes to their work in mathematics are good. Most pupils show a high level of sustained concentration and perseverance. A minority of pupils in Year 2 do not settle quickly to work when they move from class to group work. Pupils of all abilities enjoy the challenge in their lessons. They participate enthusiastically and with much interest and determination to succeed. All pupils have confidence to ask for help when they need it and show positive attitudes towards their work. They enjoy their involvement in discussion and develop a suitably high level of maturity when discussing mathematical issues. This is particularly evident in the Year 5 classes. Pupils work independently when exploring ideas, behave sensibly and act on their own initiative. They handle resources sensibly and, where necessary, work happily together in pairs and small groups. All pupils persevere to complete work within set time limits, work purposefully and pay attention to accuracy. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection.

67 The mathematics curriculum is broadly based, well balanced and relevant to the needs of the pupils. The very effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy provides a clear structure for the teaching of mathematics. All lessons begin with a short mental arithmetic session and

end with a structured discussion on the learning during the lesson. This enables pupils to understand what they have learnt. It means that teachers have a good knowledge of what the pupils understand. They use this knowledge very effectively to reinforce their teaching and improve pupils' standards. The school is constantly seeking ways to increase further pupils' confidence and ability in decision making, mathematical investigation and problem solving. This awareness of the importance of these areas is an improvement since the previous inspection.

68 The school places, correctly, a strong emphasis on the development of investigative skills. All teachers seek opportunities for pupils to consolidate and use their number skills in other subjects. An example of this is when pupils measure accurately in design and technology work. Teachers ensure that all pupils investigate, explore and solve mathematical problems. This is a strong area of the curriculum throughout the school. The significant amount of good teaching is having a positive impact on pupils' performance. This reflects the quality of learning and progress in lessons. The subject leader has a very clear sense of direction for the future of mathematics and is fully committed to raising standards even further. There is very careful monitoring and evaluation of teaching, learning and trends in attainment. This ensures that pupils are given work that meets their identified needs and abilities. It is a very marked improvement since the previous inspection.

SCIENCE

69 The school's Key Stage 1 National Curriculum teacher assessments in 2000 show that pupils' attainment in Year 2, was well below the national average. It was in line with the average when compared with similar schools. The present Year 2 pupils achieve well when compared to their previous attainment and their attainment is in line with that expected for their age verbally, although their skills are less well developed in the written aspects of science. This is mainly because of the widespread use of prepared worksheets that limits the opportunities pupils have to record their own results. Pupils' attainment in the present Year 5 is in line with the level expected for their age. This is a similar picture to that found in the previous inspection. Pupils' attainment is improving in the present Year 5 because of the focus the school has placed on improving the investigative and experimental aspects of science and the good teaching of the subject. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and they make at least satisfactory and often good progress in both key stages. As a result, there is a good capacity for further improvement. During the inspection, there was no significant variation noted in the attainment of boys and girls.

70 In Key Stage 1, pupils experiment with different materials and have a sound knowledge of the requirements of growth in plants. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, a range of plants were provided and pupils sorted them into different groups, first by colour or shape and then by which parts could be eaten. Pupils discussed how to look after plants, described the different parts of them and how to handle them carefully, because they were aware of how fragile plants are. The lesson was particularly effective because of the wide choice of vegetables offered to the pupils and these stimulated pupils' interest and contributed very well to the discussion on the parts that make up plants, such as the roots, stem and leaves. Pupils understand that plants need sun and water to grow and their work shows that they have a good understanding of the requirements for life. In Year 2, this work is developed well as pupils' knowledge is extended to the human life style and they recognise that a balanced diet is important for healthy growth. Pupils' understanding of the differences between humans and animals is developed in their work and ways of distinguishing people from each other formed the focus of one lesson. In this lesson pupils looked at photographs of classmates and wrote a short pen picture by describing eye and hair colour. Good, real life resources made a good contribution to improving pupils' learning. Pupils' work shows a few examples of how to record the results of their experiments, but often it is only the completion of a given sentence on a worksheet.

71 In response to good teaching, in both key stages, learning and progress in science are

improving for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. For example, in a Year 3/4 lesson on healthy eating a classroom assistant used a computer program with a small group of pupils that showed various objects labelled in their own language and they were associating them with the English equivalent. This imaginative use of computers to help pupils learn English at the same time as improving their scientific knowledge is very effective. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, know how to care for plants and link their work well to art when they create observational drawings of flowers. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils were set a challenging task when they had to recreate a paper skeleton from the assorted cut out parts. They worked hard and, by the end of the lesson, pupils confidently identified many different bones in the body. Pupils in Year 5 developed their scientific knowledge when they conducted an experiment to show how different substances dissolved in water. Pupils understand the concept of a fair test and explain that only one element in an experiment is changed to make the test fair. For example, the development of the dissolving experiment was discussed and pupils described how they could recover a dissolved substance by filtration or evaporation.

72 The good science teaching, in both key stages, and the range of stimulating scientific activities contribute well to the improving quality of pupils' learning. The school has maintained these good elements since the last inspection. In most lessons, pupils' attitudes and their behaviour are prime reasons why their learning is improving. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject contribute to the well planned provision for pupils, such as the improving use of investigations to encourage pupils to use scientific skills in a practical way. In Key Stage 2, good use is made of the basic skills of measuring in experiments on evaporation and filtration. However, a great deal of pupils' work is on prepared worksheets and this limits the opportunities for pupils to devise their own methods to record the results of their experiments. Teachers' management and control of individual or paired activities are good and pupils become involved in their work, for example, identifying the importance of healthy eating in our daily lives. In good lessons the quality of teaching and learning are closely matched. For example, Year 5 pupils study the life cycle of plants and the teacher linked it well to design and technology when they had to design and make "seeds" that imitate the dispersal characteristics of real seeds. One group made seeds that stuck to material when thrown from a metre away and another group made parachutes similar to the system that dandelions use to spread the seeds over a wide area. Pupils' understanding of the way seeds are dispersed improved during their experiments. Most teachers include positive comments when marking but do not consistently provide precise guidance on what pupils need to do to improve.

73 The school has responded to the latest changes in the National Curriculum and introduced new guidance for teachers. The science co-ordinator undertakes a regular audit of the subject and checks teachers' planning and pupils' work to ensure that all aspects of the subject are covered. This is done in a supportive atmosphere because of the good subject management by an enthusiastic and committed co-ordinator, who has established good liaison with staff. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and used well to improve pupils' learning, for example, when testing simple electrical circuits, making a magnetic compass using a needle, piece of cork and water. The gardening club made a very good contribution to pupils' knowledge and skills when they learned more about plants as they pruned some trees and bushes round school and talked about the flower beds they helped to create. The curriculum for science covers all the required aspects. The good use of practical, experimental science ensures that pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good gains in learning as they move through the school. The good attention to the use of appropriate scientific language and the use of charts and graphs ensures that the work makes a positive contribution to the development of basic literacy and numeracy skills.

ART AND DESIGN

74 By the age of seven, pupils' attainment in art and design is in line with that expected for their age. By the time pupils are 10, their attainment is in line with the level expected for their age. Pupils' progress and learning are good and the quality of some art work on display is good. The satisfactory standards found in the last inspection have been maintained. Pupils in Key Stage 1 demonstrate a good knowledge of colour and understand the difference between primary and secondary colours. They work well using families of colours, building up samples of new colours which they use effectively in their displays of paintings. For example, Year 1 complete observational paintings of flowers to link with their work in science. They paint portraits of Mr Men and good use is made of lines to show expression, such as, sadness or happiness through laughter. All classes contribute to the effective displays of work in classrooms and corridors. This work is developed well in Year 2, when pupils create a collage of faces using a variety of natural and man made materials. They extend their studies of art and design to include famous painters by painting attractive pictures in the style of Mondrian.

75 Pupils continue to develop their skills and understanding of art and design well in Key Stage 2 as they explore an ever increasing range of media. Drawing skills are developed as they explore the effects that can be obtained when using different pencils and crayons. For example, in Year 4, pupils created a good display, well linked to history with Egyptian masks and necklaces. Teachers ensure that pupils' studies include looking at the work of famous artists. For example, Year 5 pupils study Monet and create pictures of a bridge, fields and lakes in the same style. They create interesting sculptures using paper. Following a visit to the science museum they made bridges and chairs using twisted paper. In Year 3/4, pupils create imaginative portraits using charcoal and pencil in the style of Van Gogh.

76 All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language enjoy their art and design and take pride in their work. They work with care and are willing to try new ideas in order to achieve the best results. Pupils in Year 5 were keen to explain how they made their self portraits in the style of the Tudors, culminating in a large, impressive picture of Henry VIII. This subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' cultural and spiritual development, as they learn about art in different societies and appreciate the range of feelings they experience in creating their own art works. Only one lesson was observed in art and design but teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and teachers show they have a good knowledge of the subject and understand how to help pupils develop the wide range of skills needed to master a range of media. Teachers base their planning on a scheme of work and the progress of both knowledge and skills is informally monitored by the subject co-ordinator. Lessons are well organised and resources used effectively to encourage pupils to experiment and enjoy finding new ways of creating works of art. Display is linked to art and teachers create a colourful environment that celebrates pupils' work. For example, in Year 5 pupils create "City Scapes" in the style of Paul Klee and produce displays from their studies in religious education on Hinduism.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

77 The school has maintained the satisfactory standards and provision identified at the previous inspection. Pupils' attainment, by the age of seven, is in line with that expected for their age. They make labelled plans for products. They give clear and accurately sequenced instructions for making models and make effective links with other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 2 give careful instructions for making a Succa. This links closely with their work on Judaism and improves their learning. By the age of 10, the vast majority of pupils achieve standards that meet those expected from pupils of similar age. They have well-developed skills in planning, designing and evaluating their work. It is not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching because it was not possible to see direct teaching during the inspection.

78 By Year 5, pupils make clearly labelled plans to design playground equipment. They build effectively on previous knowledge and skills as they evaluate their plans and consider whether they meet the requirements of the younger children they are considering. Pupils select suitable materials carefully, explore their properties with regard to use, and cut and shape carefully. An example of this is seen when they make working parachutes to illustrate the flight of seeds. This links effectively with science. Work on structures, around the school, indicates that pupils test and amend their designs as they work and refer to their original designs. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make at least good progress in learning how to use and apply their knowledge of structures. This makes effective links with previous work in science. The quality of pupils' work in designing, testing and evaluating their designs and finished products shows a good level of improvement since the previous inspection.

79 From the scrutiny of pupils' work it is evident that they make good progress in developing the design and evaluation elements of design and technology. Their written evaluations demonstrate a significant increase in their understanding of the importance of accurate design and careful planning. Pupils develop their ability to link their work in other subjects with design and technology effectively. For example, their work makes good links with English, science and religious education. Pupils who have English as an additional language, and those with special educational needs, have equal access to the design and technology curriculum. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. There is a very effective and helpful policy that covers all elements of the new National Curriculum. The school uses a national scheme of work as the basis for design and technology. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The school keeps a helpful and useful portfolio of pupils' work and teachers use this effectively to measure achievement and progress. The school is aware of the need to introduce a structured assessment system, this is planned to be in operation in September.

GEOGRAPHY

80 Standards in geography are at the levels expected for seven and 10 year olds. Pupils in Year 2 draw simple plans of the school and locate different rooms with some accuracy. They use co-ordinates to describe where buildings such as churches and post offices are located. Pupils recognise common symbols used in maps and use a key effectively to identify features on simple maps. They use the four main points of the compass accurately and the more able know that most maps have north at the top. In discussion, pupils show they remember what they have learned even though their actual written work is weak and limited to simple, short responses.

81 Pupils in Years 3 and 4 study the local environment using large-scale Ordnance Survey maps to identify significant features near the school. They are successfully encouraged to think about local features and to form considered opinions about their value and desirability. However, they show weak English skills, for example, when an average pupil writes, "it not A got part of the county size" and "the flowers will not be to grow" when discussing the differences between towns and the countryside. Year 5 pupils develop their map skills when they consider the location of large cities and inter-city transportation in the United Kingdom. There is too much variation between the work covered by parallel Year 5 classes and pupils' responses are often superficial. Pupils do not write at length or reflectively. For example, they are not required to describe and justify their observations and judgements or compare different localities in detail.

82 Teaching is satisfactory except for one lesson in Year 2 which was unsatisfactory because the task was too easy, especially for the pupils capable of higher attainment. A particular problem is that teachers do not emphasise the basic skills of writing enough. As a consequence, pupils do not take pride in their presentation so that much work is undated and handwriting is careless and untidy. Work is marked but pupils do not always complete tasks and show little response to teachers' comments in books. Teachers use worksheets extensively to focus on geographical skills and

knowledge and to cover the curriculum adequately. However, pupils are not given sufficient opportunity to demonstrate their mastery of the subject by writing independent accounts, descriptions, definitions or opinions. Planning is satisfactory for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, they are well supported and make good progress overall.

83 The school makes good use of educational visits to places in the local area like the Rising Sun country park to study geography at first hand. The oldest pupils visit High Borrans in the Lake District to extend their learning in geography, science and history as well as to raise their self-esteem. The school ensures that pupils use the grounds to develop orienteering skills. Opportunities to develop pupils' skills when using computers are limited because the school do not have the programs that link to the geography curriculum materials in use. The subject co-ordinator manages and monitors the subject efficiently.

HISTORY

84 Standards in history for pupils aged seven and 10 are similar to those expected for their age. This is similar to standards reported at the time of the last inspection. Unsatisfactory features of pupils' work throughout the school are the low standards of handwriting and presentation. No lessons were observed in Key Stage 1. Judgements are based on a detailed scrutiny of pupils' work in books and on display and discussions with a representative sample of Year 2 pupils. They demonstrate knowledge of key historical figures such as George Stephenson and Samuel Pepys and know some of the key facts about the quest to put man into space. Pupils develop a sense of chronology and know how things like railway engines develop over time. Teachers ensure that they use information sources such as videos and worksheets and there is some use of books for personal research. This has a positive impact on their learning and pupils begin to show understanding of why people in history behaved as they did.

85 Teaching is satisfactory overall and the curriculum is covered adequately. Pupils in Year 3 are taught about the Vikings by watching a "Zig Zag" video and discussing what they have seen. They are interested in the subject and concentrate hard, showing good concentration. Worksheets are carefully constructed so that pupils have to make a range of responses such as drawing or underlining words. Pupils learn from discussions and make satisfactory progress. However, the standard of written response is often weak as when one pupil writes, "The womens close what they weard Were like Dressers it Was a long Wdiing tunic". Teachers throughout the school do not demonstrate sufficient value of pupils' writing in history, for example, there is little evidence of its use in classroom and general displays.

86 Pupils in Year 5 study similar themes but there is too much variation between the two classes. For example, they both study Ancient Greece but one class writes a brief, mainly geographical piece on modern holiday resorts. Pupils in the other class study sports, Greek Gods, maps of Ancient Greece and neighbouring countries, pottery, art and agriculture. This is particularly important in view of the school's transition to full primary status with the prospect of many parallel classes. In general, too much work is copied from the teachers' examples and there is insufficient emphasis on developing pupils' independent learning. For example, pupils throughout the school are given information through videotapes or on worksheets and do not learn to use artifacts or other sources of evidence sufficiently.

87 The school continues to use educational visits widely to support the curriculum. These visits make a good contribution to pupils' learning and their attainment. For example, Year 1 pupils study the history of toys at the Toy Museum, Year 2 pupils visit Beamish open-air museum and older pupils visit Souter lighthouse. The subject is managed satisfactorily and there are sufficient books, pictures and other resources to support the curriculum.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

88 The satisfactory standards in information and communication technology have been maintained since the last inspection which is a credit to the school bearing in mind the changes in resources over the recent past. Pupils' attainment by the ages of seven and 10 is in line with the expected level for their age. The use of the new computers and very good plans for the development of the subject when the new buildings are complete mean that the school is well placed to raise standards further. The pupils make good progress in their development of computer skills because basic skills are being taught well now that the resources are in place to allow more focused teaching and learning.

89 In Key Stage 1, pupils use basic graphics and word processing programs to produce words and pictures. They save their work and older pupils in Year 2 begin to use the computer to organise and correct text, for example, when correcting spelling and punctuation using a word processor. In Year 1, pupils were observed using a computer program as part of a lesson where they built sentences by clicking on to appropriate phrases and dragging them into place. They had to use capital letters and full stops correctly before the computer read out their effort. In another Year 1 lesson, pupils used a mathematics program to make up different amounts of money. The teacher maintained a brisk pace and pupils' skills in both mathematics and information and communication technology improved. In Year 2, pupils produced a good range of pictures when using a graphics program as part of a lesson that linked well with their art and design topic. Pupils used their knowledge of the work of a famous artist to produce colourful representations, patterns and pictures, in the style of Monet.

90 In Key Stage 2, pupils use a more advanced graphics program to produce imaginative designs as part of their topic to design and produce Christmas cards. The teaching is focused with particularly good support provided by the teacher and the governor who is a computer technician for the school. For example, in a Year 5 session he gave very good support to pupils using a word processing program to produce a newspaper report on the plague as part of their history topic. Pupils used pictures from another program to enhance their work and the finished combination of print and graphics was very effective. An analysis of previous work in Key Stage 2 shows that the pupils undertake surveys and use simple data handling programs to represent information as graphs and charts. For example, pupils in Year 3 produce graphs of their favourite fruits or pets and use the information to compare their results. Pupils in Years 3 and 4, use simple simulation programs to create an imaginary garden. They use the facilities to lay out their gardens with grass, fences, trees, a pond and sheds as a plan and then, by changing the screen display, they view it as a three dimensional picture. Teachers demonstrate the capabilities of the computer very well and make sure that all pupils understand how to use the different keys accurately. This makes a very positive contribution to learning and progress.

91 The teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good because teachers and support staff are becoming more confident and knowledgeable with the new resources with the very good support of the computer technician. Staff are all well motivated, keen to develop their skills and have a desire to improve teaching further and so raise standards. Planning is satisfactory and teachers share the learning objectives with pupils at the beginning of sessions. As a result, computer sessions are more focused for the pupils resulting in effective support, especially in helping the pupils to improve their basic keyboard skills. Pupils respond very positively to their information and communication technology lessons and are increasingly becoming more confident and skilful in managing the technology available. There are plans to expand electronic mailing in order to provide greater access to the recently acquired Internet facilities. The subject is used effectively to support pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Teachers make sure that these pupils

understand the tasks and use programs that are using their own language. This means that their learning of English is improving rapidly.

92 The school has given some thought to the future development of information and communication technology. The co-ordinator and head teacher have rightly focused on setting up the computer suite when the new buildings are completed. There is still a lot to do in order to improve standards further because professional development is ongoing and the school is beginning to realise the potential of the high specification computers it has recently purchased. The support of the governor technician is helping to provide an organised and supportive learning environment for the pupils. The technician effectively supports pupils and staff on a voluntary basis. The co-ordinator manages the subject very well and has very good plans in place to develop the potential of the subject further.

MUSIC

93 Pupils' attainment by the age of seven is in line with the expected level for their age. By the time the pupils are 10 they exceed the expected standards for their age. Pupils enjoy singing in assemblies and show enthusiasm and interest when learning new tunes. Their singing is tuneful and most can hold a note well. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have detailed music notebooks that add to the music curriculum and develop a better comprehension of basic notation. Pupils record their learning about tempo, musical notation and the lives and works of famous composers such as Strauss and Tchaikovsky. They use their knowledge to compose simple tunes and carefully record which instruments they have played. Pupils make good links with literature when they learn about characters from Dickens who feature in modern musicals such as "Oliver".

94 Throughout the school music is taught using resources, such as videotapes and audiotapes, to provide stimulus and expert support for those teachers who lack confidence in teaching music. As a result, the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. Year 5 pupils benefit from the school's close links with Willington High School and are taught by a specialist music teacher from that school. This very good teaching is having a very positive effect and most Year 5 pupils thoroughly enjoy these lessons and participate well. They hold a rhythm well and sing tunes like "Only You" in two or three parts to produce a harmonious and lively sound. Additionally, the school uses these sessions to provide invaluable in-service training for the Year 5 teachers in preparation for the adoption of a new music scheme.

95 Lessons are well planned and closely linked to pre-purchased materials but pupils do not always know what they will be learning because the lesson objectives are not always shared with them. Pupils learn the technical language of music such as "ostinato" and "pentatonic scale". They develop an understanding of musical notation and use their voices to demonstrate the different sound patterns. Most pupils behave well although there is a small minority in some lessons who fidget and disturb the learning of the majority. Pupils in Year 1 learn to control their voices, instruments and hand clapping to produce loud and quiet sounds to accompany taped music. They learn that music can affect our emotions as when pupils say, "It makes me sad because I think about my Grandad". Year 1 pupils learn how harps make different sounds and one shows good understanding when he says, "It's just like a guitar". Year 2 pupils learn and sing songs like "On the Beach" and clap in time rhythmically. Year 3 and 4 pupils sing melodically and rhythmically with above average control and phrasing. They create successful "sea sounds" using their voices flexibly. Throughout the school, pupils use a wide range of instruments and learn how to use their different sounds effectively and imaginatively.

96 Music continues to be an important part of the curriculum and standards of teaching and attainment are similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection. The subject co-ordinator is

an enthusiastic, experienced music specialist. She is developing the music curriculum well to overcome the problems associated with some lack of teacher expertise and confidence in teaching the subject. Good links are made with science and design and technology when pupils design, make and play their own instruments. Information and communication technology is used well in supporting the music curriculum. For example, when pupils create their own tunes on the computers. Music is an extra-curricular activity and a group of twelve Year 3 pupils learn to play recorders during lunchtimes. This small group also plays in assemblies and at Newcastle Quayside events. The school choir sings at local old people's homes at Christmas and at Alnwick Fair each summer.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

97 By the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time they are 10, pupils' attainment is in line with that expected for their age. The school has maintained the satisfactory standards since the previous inspection. As they move through the school, pupils are given a range of worthwhile experiences in physical education. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils explore basic skills in dance, games and gymnastics. They carry out simple actions with increasing control and co-ordination and develop their understanding of safe exercise and how it affects their bodies. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils explored different ways of warming up before practising gymnastic skills matching their movements to the music well. For example, they swayed in time with the music to show waves and tiptoed tentatively round the room pretending they were in a dark cave. The teacher questioned the pupils to encourage them to think about their work and how they could improve their movements. In Key Stage 1, pupils get out apparatus and put it away safely and they co-operate well together to accomplish this.

98 During Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop their physical education skills. By the time they are 10, they participate in team games with an understanding of tactics and fair play. Pupils apply skills and techniques with accuracy. They use their developing understanding of these skills to improve their performance. Pupils have a clear understanding of the effect of exercise on their bodies, together with ideas of health and fitness. In a very good lesson in Year 3, pupils created their own sequences using different parts of the body for balances well spaced between more vigorous activity. During Key Stage 2 all pupils are given appropriate opportunities to learn to swim and the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. Records show that many pupils achieve more than the minimum requirement in swimming and they obviously enjoy the sessions.

99 The teaching of physical education is good and occasionally very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and present the work in a stimulating way. Pupils of all abilities are well catered for, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, the activities they are given are well matched to their abilities. In a Year 3/4 gymnastic lesson the teacher undertook an energetic warm-up session which involved all pupils. In the main part of the lesson a very interactive approach was used asking pupils questions about their performance and how it could be improved. This promoted a good attitude in the pupils, making them think about what they were doing and how they could do better. Pupils join in activities with enthusiasm. They are keen to discuss all aspects of what they have done. Most share and co-operate well. Behaviour is good and pupils show responsibility appropriate for their ages. Pupils respond well to teachers and this improves their personal development in the way they work together when performing different tasks. For example, in a Year 5 lesson pupils improved their catching, throwing and batting skills during a game of rounders as well as co-operating to make sure everyone joined in and enjoyed the game.

100 The co-ordination role is carried out effectively and there is a good awareness of how the development of the subject fits with the overall school development plan. Resources are well organised and of satisfactory quality. The school's indoor accommodation in the hall is satisfactory and teachers use the facilities to best advantage to make sure that pupils' physical development is

suitably developed. There is a satisfactory range of extra curricular activities and adventurous activities are undertaken during the school's annual residential visits.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

101 The school is continuing to maintain satisfactory standards similar to those at the previous inspection. The quality of teaching in lessons is consistently good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

102 By the age of seven, pupils' standards meet the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils learn to respect and appreciate the similarities between different religions in their work on special books and special places. Good teaching ensures that pupils identify the similarities and differences between Christianity and Judaism. Pupils know that the Church is a special place for Christians and that the Synagogue is a special place for Jews. Good teaching also ensures that pupils show a suitable level of care and respect for religious artefacts. Most pupils make good links between religion and its impact on people's lives. An example of this is their developing ability to realise that Christians belong to a community and follow a set of rules. Teachers make effective use of visits, for example to the local church, to illustrate this point.

103 By the age of 10, most pupils continue to achieve standards that meet the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The vast majority of pupils have a secure knowledge of Christianity and other major world religions. Their learning of the similarities and differences between Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Sikhs is good. By Year 5, pupils have a good understanding of the different beliefs. For example, they explore similarities between Christianity and Hinduism and recognise that both religions have sacred festivals. Skilful questioning enables the pupils to apply this knowledge to their own lives and realise that different beliefs celebrate similar events. They understand that people worship in different ways, as they explore how Hindus and Christians pray. Most pupils show a mature level of thought and reflection as they consider the meaning of prayer. This is because the teachers build on pupils' understanding as they progress through the school.

104 Pupils make good progress in their learning about religions throughout the school. The school makes very effective use of visiting specialists to develop the understanding and awareness of staff and pupils. This interests pupils and makes them eager to listen and learn. For example, by the age of 10, pupils show an increasingly good ability to use and apply ideas they learn from religious practices. They have a well-developed understanding of the similarities and differences between a range of major world religions. All pupils understand the need to care for others as well as themselves. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language receive effective support in the classroom. This enables them to learn well and make good progress in their work.

105 Pupils enjoy their work in religious education. The teachers make the lessons interesting and ensure they are relevant to pupils' needs. This ensures that the vast majority of pupils work hard and achieve well. The younger pupils have very positive attitudes to their work and think carefully about life in a Christian community. For example, they show a good level of respect for the ideas and opinions of others and are confident in sharing their thoughts. A very few pupils in Year 5 have immature attitudes to their work. The teacher has to spend time dealing with noisy behaviour and this slows progress in learning. However, most of the older pupils are enthusiastic and eager to put forward their own ideas. They discuss feelings and emotions at a mature level, prepare thoughtful questions and co-operate well together. Throughout the school, pupils relate well to their teachers and to each other. The pupils who have English as an additional language receive effective support. This ensures they join in discussions confidently. Pupils enjoy the level of challenge in their work. They respond very well to the opportunities they have for quiet contemplation during lessons. For example,

during a visit to the local church, pupils in Year 1 sat quietly and reflected as they listened to music. This level of response is an improvement since the previous inspection.

106 The teaching of religious education is very good. This is a good level of improvement since the previous inspection. The teachers are confident in the subject and prepare their lessons thoroughly. They give thought to providing a calm and reflective atmosphere in the classroom for the teaching of religious education. This ensures that the pupils have correct information and there is a clear sense of purpose to their work. Planning follows the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education and gives a suitable level of attention to the defined areas of learning. The school provides a relevant and wide range of opportunities that enable pupils to become aware of the religious element in life. This includes the provision of time for reflection in many lessons. The teachers encourage pupils to reflect on their own experiences and to relate them to those of other people. The teachers and pupils are sensitive to sacred religious artefacts and treat them with respect and care.

107 The school's scheme of work gives teachers clear guidance and suggestions to assist their teaching. Teachers keep records of the areas of work that pupils cover, which ensures full coverage of the curriculum. The procedures for assessing pupils' achievements are satisfactory. The school's resources for the teaching of religious education are adequate. There is a suitably wide range of artefacts and a satisfactory supply of quality books. Pupils and teachers make good and effective use of these resources. The subject co-ordinator has good plans to further improve the subject. There has been an improvement in all aspects of religious education since the previous inspection.