

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **CRAMLINGTON HARESIDE FIRST SCHOOL**

Hareside, Cramlington

LEA area: Northumberland

Unique reference number: 122268

Headteacher: Mrs K. Chetwynd

Reporting inspector: Mr P. Edwards  
21069

Dates of inspection: 28<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> January 2002

Inspection number: 238476

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Whitelea Glade Cramlington Northumberland
Postcode:	NE23 6BL
Telephone number:	01670 712440
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D. Lloyd
Date of previous inspection:	29 <sup>th</sup> September 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21060	Mr P. Edwards	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Design and technology	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
11437	Mr T. Anderson	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes and values How well does the school care for its pupils or students How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
29989	Mrs P. Goodsell	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Mathematics History	
30398	Mr C. Scola	Team inspector	English Geography Physical education Special educational needs	
23686	Mrs P. White	Team inspector	Science Art and design Music Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>12</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>28</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Hareside First School is situated in the middle of a large housing estate in the town of Cramlington. The majority of children are from the local area, although a significant minority travel from further afield. There are currently 281 pupils on roll, 140 boys and 141 girls. There are three part-time Nursery classes with 75 children and two full time Reception Classes. Most pupils are of white ethnic origin and there is one of mixed race origin. None are learning English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (17 per cent) is in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs (12.2 per cent) is below the national average, although the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational need (1.8 per cent) is average. The attainment of the pupils on entry, although varying from year to year, is broadly average.

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

This is a very effective school. In the National Curriculum tests at age seven, the pupils achieve standards that are well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. All of the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the school. This is due to the good quality of teaching that is provided by the hardworking and committed staff. The pupils have very positive attitudes towards school and behave well. The headteacher provides strong, effective leadership and is well supported by senior staff. The staff work well together and there is a commitment to raising standards further. The school provides very good value for money.

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

- The pupils achieve well above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave the school. They make good progress throughout the school.
- Standards in religious education and art and design are good.
- The quality of teaching is good overall. The teachers are hardworking and committed.
- The pupils behave very well, enjoy coming to school and have positive attitudes towards lessons.
- There is very good provision for the pupils' moral and social development. The care the school provides for the pupils is a particular strength.
- The parents have positive views of the school and their support and involvement is very good.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and is well supported by senior staff.
- The governors know the school well, are supportive and work effectively with the senior staff to improve the quality of education provided by the school.

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

- Opportunities for pupils to carry investigative work in science.
- The quality of the teachers' marking in some classes.
- The state and safety of the external fabric of the building.

*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 very good progress since the last inspection. The pupils' performance in the National Curriculum tests has improved significantly with considerably more pupils achieving at the higher levels. All of the key issues from the last inspection have been addressed. The co-ordinators are now more effective in managing their subjects and standards in information and communication technology have improved. The observation of teaching has significantly raised the quality of teaching and learning in the school. In the Reception classes the curriculum is planned more effectively and is better suited to the needs of the children.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
reading	A	A	A	A
writing	A*	A	A	A*
mathematics	A	A	A	A

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

When the children enter the Nursery, their attainment is broadly average. Most make good progress and are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1.

At the end of Key Stage 1, the 2001 National Curriculum test results show attainment in reading, writing and mathematics to be well above the national average, and the average for similar schools. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 3) in reading, writing and mathematics is also well above the national average. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected level in the National Curriculum teacher assessments for science is well above average. Inspection evidence confirms this picture of high achievement and standards that are well above average in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1, and by the time the pupils leave the school. Although the pupils achieve above average standards in science, they do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their investigative skills and, because of this, they do not achieve the standards of which they are capable.

The pupils achieve good standards in religious education and art and design in both key stages. Standards in all other subjects are in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The pupils behave well in lessons. Playtimes and lunchtimes are enjoyable occasions with the pupils participating in a good range of activities provided for them.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The pupils are willing and respond well to opportunities to take on responsibility. The very good relationships between staff and pupils are a strength of the school.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 4
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. This represents a very good improvement since the last inspection when over 20 per cent of the teaching was unsatisfactory. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is consistently good or better. A particular strength of the teaching in the Foundation Stage is the way in which the teachers and support staff work together, ensuring a consistent approach to the children's learning. English and mathematics are taught well throughout the school and the effectiveness of the teaching is seen in the standards achieved by the pupils. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are well taught and the national strategies have been implemented effectively. In the best lessons, the teachers are enthusiastic, question the pupils effectively and use the discussion sessions at the end of lessons well to assess how well the pupils understand what has been taught. The teachers' planning is good, as is the way in which they manage the pupils. The quality of teaching results in the pupils maintaining their enthusiasm for learning and they work hard to improve their knowledge and understanding. They are keen to complete tasks and the good practice of teachers providing the pupils with targets for improvement effectively challenges the pupils to do even better. In some classes the quality of marking of the pupils' work is inconsistent and does not always challenge the pupils to improve. In a small number of lessons there was an occasional lack of pace and this resulted in the pupils not achieving the standards of which they were capable. In science the teachers do not provide the pupils with sufficient opportunities for them to carry out their own investigative activities, but the teaching of science is otherwise good. The good teaching in art

and design results in the pupils producing high quality work, particularly their observational drawings. Standards in religious education are also above average due to the high quality of the teaching.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The children in the Foundation Stage are provided with a good range of activities. The school gives a high priority to teaching literacy and numeracy and this is helping to raise standards. A good range of visits and visitors adds significantly to the quality of provision. The pupils are provided with a satisfactory range of out of school activities
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. There is early identification of pupils with special educational needs and the school provides an appropriate level of support to ensure they make the progress of which they are capable.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is very good provision for the pupils' moral and social development and good provision for their spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are good procedures in place for child protection and for looking after the pupils. There are very good procedures in place for monitoring the pupils' progress and for monitoring and improving behaviour. This is a factor in the pupils' positive attitudes and is helping to raise standards.

There are good links with the parents who demonstrate a keen interest in their children's work and are supportive of the school.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides the school with strong, effective leadership and is well supported by the senior management team. Some of the coordinators are new to their posts and have not had time to make a significant impact on monitoring the quality of learning. However, they are committed, hard working and keen to raise standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors know how well the school is performing and have a very clear understanding of what needs to be done to improve further. They fulfil all of their statutory duties effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school regularly compares itself with other, similar schools to gauge how effective it is. There is no complacency, and through these evaluations, the school recognises that further improvements can be made.

The strategic use of resources	The school makes very good use of staff, learning resources and the accommodation. There are very clear links between the school improvement plan and the budget. The school applies the principles of best value by seeking quotations for services and selecting the most cost effective options. Effective use is made of specific grants, especially funding for pupils with special educational needs.
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**PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• The children make good progress.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• The school looks after the children well and expects them to work hard.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• There are good links with the parents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agree with the parents' positive views of the school. The range of out of school activities is satisfactory for the size of school and for the age of the pupils.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The assessment of the children on entry to the Nursery classes shows a broad range of attainment but the majority of children are of average attainment. By the end of the Reception year most children will have achieved the Early Learning Goals in language, literacy and communication, mathematical development, personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. The good teaching ensures that the children all make good progress and by the time they enter Year 1, the majority are working within the National Curriculum.
2. The 2001, National Curriculum test results were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared with similar schools, the results were well above average in reading and mathematics and very high in writing. These good standards have been maintained over the last three years and are better than at the time of the last inspection. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level (Level 3) is well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The teacher assessments in science at the end of Key Stage 1 show attainment to be above average. The inspection findings confirm the results of the National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments.
3. At seven years old, the pupils' speaking and listening skills in English lessons and in other subjects are above the expected level. The pupils listen attentively and talk with confidence. Their skills are developed as they move into Key Stage 2 and by the end of Year 4 their confident speaking skills enable them to talk enthusiastically about their lessons and about their favourite books and authors. They demonstrate good listening skills through the relevant responses that they give to each other and to the teachers' questions.
4. The inspection found high standards in the pupils' reading and writing. Literacy hours are, overall, taught very well, and the pupils are encouraged to read for information and to express their written ideas in a range of different styles. Literacy is developed effectively across the curriculum with the teachers making good use of opportunities to develop specific vocabulary in subjects such as science. They provide the pupils with ample opportunities to develop writing skills, a good example being the 'class novel' whereby teachers provide the pupils with good information on how to structure a story. These skills are developed very effectively as the pupils move into Key Stage 2, and by the end of Year 4 most pupils demonstrate a very good grasp of writing for different purposes. For example, they write an historical account of the Great Fire of London based on Samuel Pepys's diary and a set of instructions on how to dance the 'Galopede'. The pupils read a wide variety of books and are confident readers by the end of Year 2. They use the library to search for information and enjoy reading for pleasure, making good use of the school's good range of books. By the time they leave school in Year 4 the pupils' reading skills are well above average.
5. In mathematics, at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4, the pupils' attainment is well above average. Lessons follow the National Numeracy Strategy with plenty of pace and a variety

of activities. As a result, the pupils develop a good understanding of numbers and they are taught at the beginning of each lesson how to work out sums in their heads. Seven year olds understand how to add, subtract, multiply and share simple numbers. They count up to and back from 1000, in 100s. They confidently estimate numbers and tell the time accurately. By the time the pupils leave the school they work with larger numbers using all four numerical operations and are learning to subtract using decomposition. They learn to collect data, display and interpret their findings. They measure the perimeter of shapes accurately, and have begun to use a formula to calculate the perimeter and area of regular shapes. The pupils' understanding of data handling is developed and supported effectively by using computers and, as a result, standards in this aspect of mathematics element is above what is normally expected.

6. The results of tests and assessments are used in English and mathematics to set targets for individual pupils. The pupils' progress towards their targets is tracked well through the school. These targets are shared with the pupils and parents, ensuring the information is used effectively as a means of raising attainment.
7. The pupils' attainment in science is above what might be expected at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4. By the age of seven, the pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of scientific facts. They have a secure knowledge of forces and make predictions about how far a car might travel when the height of the ramp is varied. The higher attaining pupils begin to explain how the ramp's surface might affect the distance travelled. The Year 3 pupils show a good understanding of a fair test when they test materials to see which would be the most suitable for making an anorak. The school works very closely with a local nature group in maintaining and developing an attractive garden area. Year 4 pupils take the main responsibility and the project has a positive impact on the pupils' learning in environmental science. Evidence from lesson observations, discussions with the pupils and a scrutiny of their work indicates that there are too few opportunities for them to carry out their own investigations and consequently, standards in this aspect whilst average, could be higher.
8. Due to the good quality teaching and strong emphasis placed on the subject, standards in art and design are above those normally expected at the end of Key Stage 1 and the end of Year 4. Standards in observational drawing are particularly good with the pupils demonstrating a good eye for detail. Standards are also above average in religious education throughout the school. As with art and design, the good teaching and clear planning have resulted in good improvements since the last inspection. Standards are in line with national expectations in all other areas of the curriculum.

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

9. The children behave very well in the Early Years' classes. They come into school happily and confidently, they know the routines of the classroom, for example organising their fruit for snack time and taking part in the activities during registration time with enthusiasm. They enjoy learning, concentrate very well and persevere to complete a task before they move to a new activity. They play and learn well, both alongside one another and together.

10. The pupils' behaviour, attitudes and personal development are very good. The pupils' attendance is in line with the national average. The overall attitudes and behaviour of pupils is very good. Children in the Nursery respond well to the teacher's direction and in one lesson in the hall, the children were very enthusiastic about acting the parts of animals chosen by the teacher. There have been no recent exclusions from the school.
11. During the inspection there were many examples of pupils displaying very positive responses to the teachers' instructions. For example, in a very good Year 4 mathematics lesson, the pupils worked very hard to develop their mental arithmetic skills in response to the teacher's questioning and prompting. Very good behaviour was observed in school assemblies and in one assembly, the pupils showed their amusement when a visiting minister produced a large floppy sheep (Shaun) out of a plastic bin liner. The sheep was very well used by the minister to deliver an important moral message to the children. Most pupils displayed very good and consistent behaviour when walking around the school and during lunchtimes and play times.
12. The day-to-day relationships between pupils and staff and between pupils is very good. The school provides a range of opportunities for the pupils to develop their social and moral skills through speaking, listening and taking responsibility for undertaking tasks around the school. These include the distribution and collection of school registers, tidying up classrooms and helping out in the school library. The older pupils are additionally given the responsibility of visiting the nursery to work and play with the very young children. Project work is also used to enhance the pupils' personal development and many pupils have been involved in the transformation of parts of the school grounds into an attractive wildlife and garden area.
13. The overall attendance at the school is satisfactory and is broadly in line with the national average. There is little evidence of regular lateness and punctuality between lessons is good. School registers are correctly marked both a.m. and p.m.
14. The consistently positive attitudes and behaviour of the pupils at the school has a significant impact on their enhanced learning and contributes effectively to their personal development.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

15. During the inspection, one of the 62 lessons seen was excellent, 21 were very good, 28 were good and 12 were satisfactory. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. This represents a very good improvement since the last inspection when over 20 per cent of the teaching was unsatisfactory and there was less teaching that was very good or better.
16. The teaching is good in the Nursery and Reception Classes with a significant amount of very good teaching. All the teaching seen was good or better. A particular strength is the very good support given by the teaching assistants in the Nursery. This contributes to the good learning that takes place in these classes. A key issue from the last inspection was to improve the quality of teaching in the Reception class. This has been very well addressed by alterations in the personnel, improvements to teachers' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and how it should be planned and by improving the quality and use of assessment.

The measures have resulted in a very good improvement in the quality of teaching, which is now strong in all of the classes in the Foundation Stage. The teachers carefully plan the learning activities and make good use of the national guidance and the Frameworks for literacy and numeracy. The children make good progress in the basic skills of reading and writing because they are very well taught in the literacy sessions and many other opportunities are provided for them to talk, listen, read and write. Similarly, they make good progress in learning basic numeracy skills. All of the lessons use questions very effectively to promote the pupils' thinking and communication skills. The children have access to a good range of learning activities that are very well organised and this together with the very good management of the children enables them to make good progress in all the areas of learning. The teaching assistants support individual and group activities very effectively. On a very few occasions, however, opportunities to develop the pupils' creative learning are missed.

17. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall in Years 1 and 2. The teachers plan lessons well and they have a good understanding of the subjects to be taught. They assess the pupils very carefully and make good use of this information to plan work that meets their needs. This is particularly so for English and mathematics where improved teaching is helping to raise standards. The teachers are good at sharing the learning objectives with the pupils. The pupils respond very well to the good teaching. They concentrate very well, work hard and learn quickly.
18. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is generally good throughout the school. The work is challenging and matched closely to the pupils' needs. The arrangements for setting the pupils according to their prior attainment in numeracy are successful in helping the pupils to achieve their potential. In the best lessons, the teachers make good use of the warm up session to develop the pupils' mental arithmetic skills. The pupils enjoy these sessions and respond enthusiastically. Very occasionally, in some Year 3 lessons, this part of the lesson lacks pace and the pupils do not learn as quickly as they should. In the best literacy lessons the pupils make rapid gains in their learning. In an excellent Year 2 lesson, the pupils' writing techniques – use of adjectives, understanding of alliteration, how to begin and end a story effectively – improved rapidly due to the teachers' excellent subject knowledge and her ability to engage the pupils in the lesson. Most teachers make very effective use of the classroom assistants who have a significant impact on the progress made by the pupils. Very occasionally, however, these assistants' skills are under-utilised by the teachers. The teachers make very effective use of assessments to ensure the work is planned at the appropriate level. As a consequence, the pupils are continually challenged to improve. The teachers also share individual literacy and numeracy targets with them and this enables them to have an even greater understanding of what they need to do to improve.
19. The teaching of science is good throughout the school. Apart from the good planning and clear learning objectives, a particular strength is the way in which the teachers question the pupils to determine their understanding and to stimulate their interest, resulting in good progress by the pupils. Although the pupils are given some opportunities to plan their own investigations they are insufficient to ensure the pupils make satisfactory progress in this aspect of their work. The school acknowledges that this is an area for development. The teaching of art and design and religious education has improved since the last inspection.

Better subject knowledge, clearer planning and a greater awareness of what the pupils are expected to achieve is ensuring the pupils improve their rate of learning.

20. The school aims to identify pupils with special educational needs as soon as possible. The quality of their individual education plans is good overall, with targets that are clear and measurable. In lessons, the pupils with special educational needs are well supported both by teachers, support assistants and volunteer helpers.

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

21. The children in the Foundation Stage have access to a well planned curriculum that takes into account the Early Learning Goals and the Frameworks for teaching literacy and numeracy to children under the age of six. The key issues from the last inspection have been very well addressed. There is a comprehensive Early Years' Policy in place and better physical and outdoor play facilities. The school now has a very good number of wheeled vehicles and other play equipment for outdoors, and in the larger Nursery classroom, a good soft play area has. Regular opportunities for the children to explore learning outdoors are planned and the new facilities have extended the opportunities for physical development of the children.
22. For the pupils in Years 1 to 4 the school provides a good range of learning opportunities that includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The curriculum meets statutory requirements for all subjects.
23. A key issue of the last inspection was to develop the English curriculum by producing a scheme of work and by developing literacy in other subjects. This has been achieved very successfully. The school uses the national literacy framework well and the teachers' planning for both literacy and numeracy is good. The school gives a high priority to the teaching of the core subjects of English, mathematics and science but it also plans well for the other curriculum subjects so as to provide rich and interesting learning experiences for all of the pupils. A particular strength of the curriculum is the links that the teachers make between different subjects and this has a positive impact on the pupils' learning and particularly on their standards of written and spoken language. For example, through skilful links and good teaching, the Year 4 pupils gain a good understanding of the language and techniques used by writers, artists and composers to create a particular setting or mood. The pupils are then able to apply this to some of their own writing and musical and artistic compositions.
24. The curriculum is enriched through a sound range of extra-curricular activities, which includes some sports and physical activities for the older pupils. The Year 3 and 4 pupils also have the chance to learn to play the guitar and the keyboard. Recent educational visits have been to a local centre for a Victorian day and a visit to the coast to support the Year 2 work in geography and science. Visitors to the school include ministers and Christian groups to take assembly as well as a visiting artist and an environmentalist who provides regular support and input with the school garden project. A further issue from the previous inspection was to improve the planning and teaching of information and communication technology and this has been addressed effectively.



25. The headteacher and the co-ordinators guide and oversee the long and medium term plans based on the literacy and numeracy frameworks and teachers then plan thoroughly using an agreed format. In other subjects, the school has successfully adopted and adapted many elements of the nationally published schemes of work. Year groups use these schemes well, frequently collaborating in their weekly plans. In most subjects, the co-ordinators collect work samples and hold informal discussions with staff to review the work covered and the standards achieved. However, although there is a rolling programme of subject review, there is occasionally a long time lapse between subjects becoming a focus of the school development plan. This means that whole school assessment and target setting procedures in the non-core subjects are not yet implemented.
26. The school provides well for the pupils who have special educational needs. They have access to the full curriculum and are helped to benefit from it through careful planning and the good use that is made of the learning support assistants. They work and plan closely with class teachers to ensure the pupils' learning needs are met and they provide good support either to individuals or small groups. The pupils have individual education plans that contain small, achievable targets for improvement and these are reviewed regularly to ensure that the pupils are making good progress. The special needs Code of Practice is fully implemented.
27. The school's arrangements for personal, social and health education are very good, due mainly to the fact that this has been a recent whole school priority. Citizenship, environmental awareness and social issues are all taught as part of the school's programme and a particular success is the school's participation in the Dansi project. (Drugs Awareness in Nursery Schools Initiative) The school has also been awarded three categories towards a national Healthy School Award.
28. Another key issue from the last inspection was to strengthen the school's links with the local community. This has been addressed very effectively. For example, there are good links with the local home for the elderly with visits by the pupils who sing and perform, and with the residents invited to school for coffee afternoons. The school has good links with its partner middle and high schools with some joint training taking place. Staff also meet with the middle school to discuss planning for the progression in learning for the pupils in Years 3 to 6. The school receives support from businesses in the area through donations for resources or through the use of their environmental facilities.
29. Overall, the provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good. This good provision makes a significant contribution to the pupils' positive attitudes and their very good behaviour and personal relationships.
30. There is good provision for the pupils' spiritual development. Each day the pupils share an act of collective worship that provides them with opportunities to think about the world around them and the consequences of the things they do. The pupils are positively encouraged to contribute to discussions in class and in assemblies. For example, they consider their own actions with regard to litter and waste and the contribution they can make in caring for our environment. They consider the wonders of life through their learning in

subjects such as literature, science, art and music. In a science lesson the Year 4 pupils express excitement and wonder when the results of a melting experiment are not as they initially predicted. The Year 1 and 2 pupils are inspired and motivated by the success of their instrumental accompaniment to a song. The pupils regularly experience the joy of singing together which they do both in class and in assemblies

31. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The school achieves high standards in this area due in no small part to the success of the school's provision for personal, social and health education. There is a supportive atmosphere in the school where mutual respect between the adults and pupils is well cultivated. Those in the school community value honesty and fairness; the pupils are taught to distinguish right from wrong and to consider others less fortunate than themselves. In lessons, the school fosters self-awareness and open-mindedness by offering the pupils many opportunities for moral and social responsibility. There are high expectations of the Year 4 pupils who are 'top of the school' and they rise to the challenge very well. The older pupils help and support the younger ones and almost all of the pupils appreciate the need to share. Whole school and classroom rules reinforce the values laid down in the school's aims and make the pupils aware of the importance of a calm, orderly environment where everyone is valued.
32. The provision for the pupils' social development is very good. They are encouraged to work together purposefully and to be responsible. For example, they act as bell monitors, take registers to the office and help in the nursery during break times. They behave responsibly when working away from the classroom at the computer or when working as part of a small group supervised by a parent helper. Their social awareness is further developed through visits to the local home for the elderly and the positive way in which they respond to visitors to the school.
33. The provision for the pupils' cultural development is good. The school nurtures their aesthetic development through the appreciation of literature, music and art. The range of art in the school's art gallery as well as the good quality displays of the pupils' work makes a significant contribution to their cultural development. Similarly, their learning of national and Northumbrian folk songs adds to their awareness of aspects of their own culture. Work in history and geography, along with the depth and breadth of the religious education curriculum, provides numerous opportunities for the pupils to compare customs, traditions and beliefs from different cultures and religions as well as opportunities to begin to appreciate the cultural diversity of the society in which we all live.

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

34. The procedures for child protection and welfare are good. Child protection procedures are in place and are effective. The school teaching staff are well supported by a range of both internal and external support staff and provide a high degree of welfare support to individual pupils. The day-to-day pastoral and welfare provision for the pupils at the school is particularly strong and is well co-ordinated by the Headteacher. In the classroom, teachers and classroom assistants are alert to any observed difficulties. The school carries out regular Health & Safety audits of the site and full records are maintained. Fire drills are completed

and appropriate records are kept. The school maintains an accident book and has introduced a very effective system to assist teachers in the observation of pupils who have had an injury to the head during the school day

35. The school is proactive in the monitoring of individual levels of pupil absence and lateness. However, there is some evidence of inconsistency in the interpretation of the difference between authorised and unauthorised absence. The promotion and improvement of higher attendance levels is satisfactory. Good reward systems are in place to encourage good behaviour and work at school. There is also an effective sanctions system in place. The pupils' academic performance and personal development is monitored both formally and informally by the school and steps are taken to identify individual problems with a range of strategies which may include the preparation of Individual Education Plans as appropriate. The pupils are also provided with many opportunities to make progress with their own personal development and these are particularly effective with older pupils.
36. The high level of child protection and welfare support for the pupils has a significant impact on their learning and personal development and it is a strength of the school.
37. The procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment and academic progress, and the ways in which the information gained is used, are very good throughout the school. This is a strength of the school and makes a significant contribution to the high standards attained by the pupils in English and mathematics. As well as the statutory tests, the school makes very good use of a range of non-statutory tests to track the pupils' learning and progress. The information is used to ensure that the teachers are aware of what the pupils know and can do in English, mathematics and science. They then plan future work closely matched to the pupils' needs. The school makes sure that the receiving teachers are fully involved in setting the targets for the pupils in their class. It monitors the progress of the pupils in attaining the targets set and addresses the individual needs of the pupils throughout the school year. As part of the schools' annual reports to parents it is made clear what the pupils will be tackling in the next year. A particular strength is the way in which the pupils use individual target cards in their writing lessons to remind them of the ways in which they can improve their work. However, although the parents receive clear leaflets which explain the learning targets in mathematics, these are not made explicit to the pupils in the same way as the writing targets are. Throughout the school there is an inconsistency in the way work is marked and the ways in which the pupils are helped to understand what they need to do to improve, on occasions this causes their progress to slow. The school makes good use of assessment outcomes to inform curricular planning particularly in English, mathematics and science. The managers of these subjects monitor assessments and use the information to guide the teachers' long term planning of what should be taught to the pupils and how it will be taught. At present assessment in the other subjects is limited, but the school is aware of the need to develop this area.
38. The children come into school happily and there are good arrangements in place for day-to-day exchange of information between parents, carers and the school staff. Arrangements are in place for the children to leave school safely in the care of a known adult. The teachers and their assistants know the children well and establish a very good rapport with the children,

this encourages the children to work hard and to behave well. Soon after entry into the Nursery Classes an assessment is carried out with the children. Baseline assessment is carried out as the children enter and leave the Reception Classes. The information is used to target areas for development with individual children. In addition, the teachers have good arrangements to check how well the children are learning on a day-to-day basis and whether they are making enough progress. They use the information to plan further work for the children enabling them to learn progressively. The children with special educational needs are identified at an early stage and good support is given to enable them to fully participate in all the activities planned and for them to make good progress. There is very close liaison between the school and the Learning Support Service. This relationship has a very positive impact on the provision for the pupils. There is regular assessment and reviewing of the pupils' needs. The pupils with special educational needs are well supported by other services such as the Speech and Language Therapy Service, Behaviour Support Team and School Medical Service.

39. A good range of procedures is in place to monitor and support the pupils' personal development. The policy for personal development is effective in practice and a planned programme of activities for each year group ensures good provision. Through personal, social and health education and citizenship lessons the school meets many of the pupils' needs and enables the teachers to monitor the pupils' development. In the Nursery and Reception classes the school keeps detailed records of the pupils' personal, social and behavioural development, which enables the teachers to support the children well as they settle into school life and learn to be more independent, consider others' needs and work well together. The school keeps comprehensive records on the pupils with special educational needs as they progress through the school. It provides additional support to the pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties and this helps them to become more effective learners.

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

40. Parents' views of the school are good, as are the school's links with parents. The findings from the parents' questionnaire show the majority of parents are very supportive of the school and of its aims and objectives. The parents state that their children like school and that they are making good progress. Parents also feel that the teachers are good and that the school is well managed. The information provided by the school through the prospectus and the governors' report to parents is good. Information provided to parents via regular newsletters is of a good standard and the annual academic reports cover the areas which a pupil has been studying together with detailed target areas for development in literacy and numeracy. These reports also include significant detail on each pupils' progress in the foundation subjects and their personal development.
41. All parents have been invited to enter into a home/school agreement which is designed to promote improved relationships between the school, parents and children. The school operates an open door policy and the Headteacher is proactive in her endeavours to further develop the already good relationship between parents and the school. This development of home/school relationships takes many different forms but the most significant is the way in

which the Headteacher and her staff offer a wide range of pastoral support and care to both children and their parents. Childcare support is available to parents via the 'Little Angels Company' which utilises spare accommodation on the site and provides childcare facilities and safe passage to and from school. Parents are additionally encouraged to attend a family literacy action group known as 'FLAG', and this is a very effective additional provision. The school has also arranged a number of meetings for parents to explain the recently introduced literacy and numeracy hours. Parents are active in their fundraising work for the school. The majority of parents also help with their children's education at home by listening to them read and by helping them with occasional project work.

42. The school's links with parents provides a good contribution to the pupils' learning and it is a strength of the school. The school has good arrangements in place for the introduction of the children to school, this includes visits to the classes and meetings for parents. The teachers are readily available to the parents and carers to discuss any day-to-day problems and regular evenings are arranged to discuss the progress made by the children. The Parents' Association is supportive in assisting the school to improve the facilities for the Nursery and Reception Classes, for example providing some good quality wheeled vehicles for the children to use outdoors. Parents help in the classrooms on a regular basis.
43. The teachers inform parents at an early stage if there are problems with a child's learning. They are fully involved in procedures for the formal assessment of special educational needs and in the annual review procedures.

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

44. The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher is committed and enthusiastic and has worked hard, together with staff, governors and parents, to address the issues outlined in the previous report. The very good progress the school has made since the last inspection is a testimony to the headteacher's sense of purpose. There has been a very clear focus on raising and maintaining standards, particularly in English and mathematics and in improving the quality of teaching. Significant improvements have been made in the quality of education provided for pupils in the Foundation Stage and information and communication technology is now being used more effectively. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented effectively, and subject policies and schemes of work introduced. The role of subject leaders has become clearer and curriculum planning has improved considerably, but in a way that is not over-burdensome to the staff. The assessment procedures for English and mathematics are very effective and enable the staff to monitor very accurately the progress made by the pupils. The headteacher knows the staff well and the effective monitoring of teaching and learning has eradicated the unsatisfactory teaching and improved the quality elsewhere.
45. The governors are regular visitors to the school and have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are effective in fulfilling their responsibilities and work hard to support the school. Individual governors have responsibility for special educational needs and for curriculum subjects and they are effective in monitoring what is taking place. The governors appraise the work of the headteacher and have set targets for

- improvement. They fulfil their role in holding the school to account for the quality of education it provides very effectively.
46. The school improvement plan is a good document that takes account of the previous report and demonstrates a clear vision for raising standards. Achievable goals have been set, timescales are realistic and methods of monitoring progress towards the goals are clear. Specific grants awarded to the school are used well and linked to expenditure outlined in the school improvement plan.
  47. The co-ordinator for the Early Years' classes is experienced, well informed and enthusiastic. Working with the senior management team she has contributed to the clear direction and the shared vision for the improvement of the curriculum for the children following the last inspection. She leads and monitors planning and assessment and is a good leader. The classrooms provide a very good range of practical activities, the furnishing and decoration and displays are lively and colourful, and there is a good range of resources to use both indoors and outdoors.
  48. The management of special educational needs is jointly shared by the headteacher and the nursery teacher and this ensures that the whole age range is well covered. They perform the role very effectively and follow the recommendations of the Code of Practice for special educational needs very carefully. The team of educational support assistants is always very well briefed, has received suitable training and plays a key role in ensuring that the pupils of below average ability make good progress in their learning. A group of parents has also received special training and is very effective in supporting groups of lower attaining pupils.
  49. There are very good financial planning practices in place, that involve staff, and ensure the school's educational priorities are fully addressed towards providing a good learning environment for the pupils. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. Specific grants are well used to improve the pupils' learning and raise standards. Good examples are the use of the National Grid For Learning (NGFL) grants to develop and extend the information and communication technology resources, and the infant class size monies, to ensure sufficient teacher assistants are available to support the pupils' learning in the classroom.
  50. The provision of teaching and support staff is well matched to the requirements of the curriculum. The school accommodation is very good and enables the curriculum to be taught in a pleasant environment. Subject resources are satisfactory.
  51. The staff work effectively as a team and they are well supported by a good number of classroom assistants, some of whom are also able to provide welfare and first aid. In most classrooms, the support assistants are well deployed and used effectively to support children, although on a few occasions they are under-utilised. The nursery nurses are particularly well deployed. The staff and pupils are well supported by visiting special educational needs specialists.

52. The majority of classrooms are of a reasonable size for the number of pupils being taught and storage space for resources is adequate. Space in the nursery is tight but adequate. The external space and outdoor facilities at the school are very good. The school also has the advantage of two separate halls and these are well used. There are two attractive and interesting library areas and these are used well to teach children the key elements and objectives of library use. There is a sufficient range and number of resources for all curriculum areas.
53. External aspects of the building need attention. During the week of the inspection, tiles attached to walls of the buildings became detached and create a significant danger to the pupils. Although it was a particularly windy week, there is evidence that it is not unusual for these tiles to fall, and the proximity of walkways necessitate urgent attention.

### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

54. The headteacher, staff and governors should now;-
- (1) raise standards in science by providing the pupils with more opportunities to plan and carry out their own investigations;  
(Paragraphs 7, 19, 77 – 81)
  - (2) ensure there is greater consistency in the quality of the teachers' marking;  
(Paragraphs 67, 80, 118)
  - (3) as a matter of urgency, consider how the danger created by the tiles can be eliminated.  
(Paragraph 53)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

62

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

27

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	21	28	12	0	0	0
Percentage	2	34	45	19	0	0	0

*The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.*

### *Information about the school's pupils*

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	36.5	281
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		43

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	29

#### **English as an additional language**

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

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	18
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	6.3

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.0



National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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*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 2)***

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	21	39	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	20	21
	Girls	38	37	37
	Total	58	57	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (94)	95 (95)	97 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	20	20
	Girls	37	33	37
	Total	57	53	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (91)	88 (93)	95 (98)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	227
Any other minority ethnic group	1

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.5
Average class size	28.1

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y4**

Total number of education support staff	5.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	131

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.7
Total number of education support staff	2.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	75
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9.3

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

### ***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.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	638,368
Total expenditure	644,438
Expenditure per pupil	1,918
Balance brought forward from previous year	44,131
Balance carried forward to next year	38,061

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	280
Number of questionnaires returned	47

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	28	0	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	74	21	2	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	60	38	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	57	2	0	0
The teaching is good.	74	26	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	51	2	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	30	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	30	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	43	55	2	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	55	43	0	2	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	30	2	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	42	18	4	11

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

#### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

55. The children make good progress and are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the age of five. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good. The teachers ensure that the children become confident and develop a clear understanding of what is expected of them. The children settle quickly and happily when they come into school. They have positive attitudes to learning, persevere with tasks and behave well. When dressing and undressing, and in taking care of their personal hygiene, the children are confident and independent. The children's personal and social skills are developed well throughout the Nursery and Reception Classes. They are provided with good opportunities to work and play together and reflect on the effect of their actions on others. There are very good relationships between adults and children. The children speak confidently and respond well to questions from their teachers and other adults who work with them. They move confidently between the activities and the teachers provide a good balance of directed tasks and of children-chosen activities. Good links between the children's home lives and school are made through activities such as taking turns to take the 'Bear in the Bag' home. Parents and carers write about the child's everyday life and integrate the Bear into the story. The children listen with concentration and interest to the happenings in each other's lives. The children have good opportunities to consider issues such as caring for themselves and making friends through the Dansi project (Drug Awareness in Nursery Schools Initiative).

#### **Communication, Language and Literacy**

56. The children make good progress and by the age of five most have achieved the Early Learning Goals and are working within the National Curriculum. Teaching in this area is good. The teachers develop the children's early reading and writing skills through the sharing of books, stories and rhymes and good teaching of phonic skills. This is built in the Reception Classes and the children have a good introduction to the Literacy Hour. For example, in a lesson on the book 'Baboom', the teacher extends the children's understanding of the development of a story and develops their strategies for reading words using the context of the sentence. All of the teachers encourage the children to join in the reading of the words that they know. The children enjoy listening to and reading stories and they pay close attention to the teachers; they respond well to events in the stories and they are often keen to add their comments. They take home reading books and other work to share with parents and carers and this makes a positive contribution to their achievement. The children listen to and talk to their teachers and other adults in individual and group discussions such as how pets need caring for. They recognise and read and write their names and the majority know individual letters of the alphabet by name and sound and can sound out the letters of simple words. They recognise many words by sight and use their knowledge of letter sounds to help them read and write unfamiliar words. All of the classrooms have alphabet charts, captions and labels that encourage the children to link letters and sounds and read words themselves.

Throughout the Foundation Stage the children acquire a good understanding of the writing process, they hold pencils correctly and are taught the correct way to form letters. There are good opportunities planned for the children to encourage them to write for a variety of purposes, for example all the children were engaged in writing birthday card messages for a classroom character from the reading scheme. On a few occasions the worksheets provide too little challenge or the work was over directed by an adult.

### **Mathematical development**

57. The children make good progress in gaining mathematical understanding and skills. By the end of the reception year most of the children have achieved the Early Learning Goals and are working within the National Curriculum in mathematics. Teaching is good and in the Reception Classes the children are given a good introduction to number work through the Numeracy Strategy. The children make good progress because the teachers know what they have learnt and plan the next stage of work carefully to challenge them and extend their knowledge of, and skills of working with, numbers. The teachers frequently provide good opportunities for the children to count and use numbers, and this enables them to develop their understanding of the number system. They all recognise numbers one to ten in digits and most of the children can count to at least 20 and many confidently beyond. They understand the concept of simple addition, and most can add to ten. The more able can count money in one pence pieces, add different amounts of money together and subtract using single digit numbers. The children can identify which three-dimensional shapes will roll. They make pictograms of their favourite fruit and block graphs of their pets.

### **Knowledge and Understanding of the World.**

58. By the time they are five, most children are likely to achieve beyond the level expected in knowledge and understanding of the world. The quality of teaching is good in this area and the children make good progress. This is because good activities are planned. For example, those which enable the children to make progress in understanding that water is displaced by putting different objects into it or when they bake orange cake they learn that ingredients change when they are cooked. They are given many opportunities to use the computer, they know how to use the keyboard to write, how to use the paint programs to create pictures and patterns and how to use the mouse. The children have an understanding of how things work and to talk about different materials that objects are made from. They learn about growth and change as they plant bulbs and watch them grow and produce flowers. Using matching cards the children can place names of countries and cities on a large map of the British Isles. There are many adult led activities for the children to learn about the world around them, for example using their senses to investigate different foods. However, there are fewer opportunities for the children to explore and investigate on their own.

### **Physical development**

59. In the Nursery and Reception classes, the children develop their physical skills through the indoor and outdoor sessions where there is a range of resources for climbing, balancing, throwing and catching. They make good progress so that by the age of five, most children

exceed the national expectation in this area of learning. Since the last inspection the planning for the teaching and learning in this area has improved, along with the improvements in the adventure playground and the number and quality of wheeled vehicles. The nursery children now have an indoor soft play area where they are able to jump and climb and play together. The children show a good awareness of space by not bumping into each other as they move and they take care when they are playing not to act in ways that may harm other children. During the inspection the weather was unsuitable for outdoor play sessions but teachers made good use of the hall for playing ring games and other physical activities. For many of the new Nursery children it was their first experience of holding hands in a ring, singing and doing actions. They made good progress during the session because of the very good management by the teacher, the good use of other adults and the positive, fun atmosphere created. The children are provided with many good opportunities to develop fine motor skills using paintbrushes, pencils and scissors, as well as through joining pieces together when making jigsaws and models.

### **Creative development**

60. The children make good progress in creative development and most attain and exceed the early learning goals before they leave the Reception Classes. There is a wide range of activities planned to promote this area of learning. The children learn to mix colours, make colours lighter by the gradual addition of white and to use paint of different thickness. The children can name a good range of colours. They paint a variety of subjects with enjoyment and confidence. They play well together enjoying the feel of modelling materials and use tools to decorate the shapes they have pressed out. On a few occasions, opportunities to develop the pupils' creative areas of learning are over directed. Chances to explore new learning for themselves are missed and this limits the progress in developing ways of expressing themselves through art activities. However a particular strength of the work is the wealth of role-play situations. The children enter imaginatively into these role-play opportunities and they are well supported by adult participation and intervention. They serve and sell items in the coffee shop and restaurant, use the post-office to send letters and birthday cards and learn about the needs of different animals as they treat them for injuries and illnesses in the animal hospitals. The children know a good variety of rhymes and songs, they sing, play percussion instruments and quickly learn to join in with the actions and words of songs competently and enthusiastically.

### **ENGLISH**

61. The results of the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2001 in reading and writing show that the pupils' attainment is well above average. When compared with similar schools, the pupils' attainment is well above average in reading and very high in writing. Nearly half of the pupils attain at the higher level in reading and over one third in writing – well above average. Over the previous four years the school has been achieving very similar results. Standards are equally high when the pupils leave the school in Year 4. In the most recent assessments just over half of the pupils reach standards in reading, and a third in writing, that an average pupil would achieve at the end of Year 6. This is a result of a particular focus on the

teaching of writing and improvements in the breadth of the reading curriculum. There is now a much greater range of reading books and very good communication and support for reading homework. Boys achieve particularly well in writing and this is a direct result of the way in which this subject is taught. Inspection findings indicate that standards in the current Year 2 and Year 4 are well above average.

62. Standards of speaking and listening are very good throughout the school. All of the pupils make good progress in listening to their teachers and each other. Those pupils who have particular difficulty with their learning are well supported by classroom assistants and make good progress. By the age of seven virtually all pupils listen very well to questions and explanations and respond well to the texts they share in whole class sessions in the Literacy Hour. They confidently read out their work in front of the class. The majority of the pupils are able to contribute to discussions and have a good range of vocabulary with which to express themselves. By the time they leave the school in Year 4, the pupils' listening and speaking skills are very well developed. The majority of the pupils are able to explain and justify their answers and opinions. For example, in a good drama lesson, the Year 3 pupils showed good skills in understanding and empathising with the various characters in the Story of King Midas and were able to act out their parts very well.
63. Throughout Key Stage 1, all of the pupils, including those who have difficulty with their learning, make good progress in their reading and by the time they are ready to transfer to Key Stage 2, almost all of the pupils are very confident readers and many are already reading at the higher levels. The wide range of reading books and those based on 'real' books and authors such as Catherine Storr, Ted Hughes and Roald Dahl, interest and motivate the considerable number of the pupils who are already proficient readers. This enables them to reach well above average standards. The pupils understand that authors use plot, character and description to catch and hold the reader's attention. Most of the pupils successfully contribute to group and class discussions about the author's intentions. The younger pupils are taught how different letters make the same sound and how to break words up into parts. This gives them confidence to tackle unknown words. For those pupils who have more difficulty with their reading, the classroom assistants use time very effectively to support these pupils. Nearly all the pupils use information books successfully. Very good use is made of the refurbished library. This addresses a weakness identified in the previous inspection. The pupils know, for example, where to find the contents and index and they make good use of the Dewey system to locate specific interest books. The range of books that the pupils take home, such as information books, story and poetry books, some specifically at the pupil's reading level and others intended to be shared at home, ensures that the pupils read very widely. The detailed reading diaries that go between home and school ensure that parents and teachers work together very effectively.
64. By the time they leave school at the end of Year 4 virtually all pupils are reading at well above average levels and all make good progress. They enjoy reading and talk confidently about their preferences for books and authors such as C. S. Lewis and Roald Dahl. They make good use of dictionaries to help them understand the meanings of words. The school library is used very regularly by all of the pupils, who have good skills in locating different types of information books. Many pupils also belong to the local library. The wide range



and high quality of fiction and non-fiction books available throughout the school supports and increases the pupils' interest in reading. Virtually all pupils take and read these books at home with support from their families. Across the school very detailed records of their reading are kept for each pupil and these include comments by teachers, parents and classroom assistants as well as comments by the pupils themselves. This has a very positive effect on their progress.

65. The standards reached in writing by pupils when they transfer to Key Stage 2 are consistently well above average both nationally and when compared to similar schools. This is because teachers put much more time and emphasis into formally teaching the skills of writing and have very high expectations of their pupils. This was perfectly illustrated in an excellent Year 2 lesson. The pupils had previous experience of the story of 'The Gingerbread Boy and the Runaway Pizza.' The excellent discussion and the very focused teaching ensured that the pupils had a very good understanding of how to compose a coherent and structured plot with realistic characters, who use interesting vocabulary. This was achieved by the whole class, sometimes all together, sometimes in twos and sometimes in groups, discussing and brainstorming each section of the story. The result was a 'Class' story of quality that the pupils used as a framework and model for their own writing. This resulted in the majority of the pupils making very good progress in their writing skills. Almost all of the pupils compose interesting stories that have plot, structure and imaginative and appropriate characterisation. The pupils' spelling, handwriting and presentation of their work are well above average and most pupils write in a fluent joined script as well as confidently using full stops, capital letters, speech marks, exclamation and question marks correctly.
66. By the time they leave the school in Year 4, the majority of the pupils are competent writers, while a third are attaining at well above the level appropriate to their age. All pupils make very good progress in their writing. Spelling homework is taken home regularly. Good use is made of dictionaries. The pupils' work shows a wide range of writing for different purposes and audiences. There are good links to other areas of the curriculum. For example, the pupils write their own diaries based on their knowledge of 'The Great Fire of London' using Samuel Pepys's work as a model. Good links are made with the geography curriculum when the pupils write letters to protest against the proposed development of a local wild life area. Imaginative reports written in appropriate style about 'Aliens at Hareside,' instructional writing about 'How to dance the Galopede' and accounts of experiments in science enable the pupils to develop their writing skills.
67. The overall quality of teaching is good. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. In all lessons seen, the teachers are skilful in ensuring that the pupils understood the main purpose of the lesson and in reviewing what the pupils had learnt at the end. They use good resources such as white boards to involve all of the pupils directly and to check how well the pupils understand. Teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can do and they are becoming higher. They use questions very well to check the pupils' understanding and to demand responses from all pupils at the level of which each pupil is capable. They set challenging targets and lessons are well paced. Planning is very good and the teachers are skilled at providing an accurate match of work to challenge the pupils at the most appropriate level. All of the pupils have short-term individual targets that are very relevant to the

particular stage of their learning and encourage them to improve. In all classes relationships are very good and this adds to the pupils' motivation. The teachers establish very good levels of control because they have very high expectations of the pupils' behaviour. As a result, the pupils waste very little time, and work very sensibly in groups and independently. The teachers provide some very effective learning resources such as lists of high frequency words or charts showing the typical structure of a traditional tale. All teachers make regular and accurate assessments of the pupils' progress. Marking is generally good across the school but there are some inconsistencies especially in Year 3. Learning assistants play a very important role; enabling lower achievers particularly, to take a full and active part in lessons and helping them make good progress.

68. The management of the subject is good and has had a very positive impact on raising standards. The subject co-coordinator has an excellent understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the subject. Together with the headteacher, she has conducted formal observations of English teaching and led staff meetings giving points for development. The tracking of pupils, and the individual pupil targets that are set and regularly reviewed, has been a major factor in the raising of standards.

## **MATHEMATICS**

69. The results of the national tests for 7 year olds in 2001 show the school's performance in mathematics was very good both when compared with the national average and with similar schools. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection and over time the trend of the results shows a steady rise. The pupils enter the Year One classes with a range of attainment but most have achieved the Early Learning Goals and are working within the National Curriculum guidelines. On the basis of the work seen during the inspection the pupils' attainment is well above average at the age of seven and when the pupils leave the school. Throughout the school all of the pupils make good progress and the pupils achieve well, although the rate of progress slows slightly as the pupils move through Year 3,
70. In the last report progress in Key Stage 1 was judged to be satisfactory with better progress in Key Stage 2. There were weaknesses in the pupils' ability to think things through for themselves, in the way mathematics was used in other subject areas, and there was little use of homework. These issues have been successfully addressed and good arrangements are in place to provide work that challenges the pupils of all abilities. In the lessons seen the pupils were constantly encouraged to calculate using a range of strategies and to explain how they had reached an answer. Mathematical skills and knowledge are well used across the curriculum. In science the pupils read thermometers to measure the fall in temperature and show their results as line graphs. In a geography topic on recycling they use computers to present their findings as pie charts and block graphs. They can use grid references and scales when reading maps. Cookery lessons provide them with opportunities to use mass and capacity in practical situations. Homework is used well to support and extend work being done in classes.

71. Throughout the school the pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons and are keen to answer questions. They generally concentrate well and try hard and work well both independently and in small groups. The pupils are given opportunities to use skills of estimation and to solve problems using all four numerical operations. They count and calculate accurately and can explain how and why they have reached an answer and in some cases they are able to suggest alternative ways of working out.
72. By the time they are seven, the pupils have a very good understanding of place value, many of them to 1000. Most are able to multiply and divide by 2, 5 and 10 and they work out halves and quarters of three digit numbers. The pupils recognise and extend number sequences and recognise basic three-dimensional shapes and can identify the properties that each one has. They tell the time in intervals of five minutes using digital and analogue clocks. The pupils can complete Venn diagrams to show who has brothers and sisters and display data about silver coins and their shapes using a Carroll diagram. They can complete and recognise rotating and repeating patterns and correctly identify right angles.
73. By the time the pupils leave the school they can work with larger numbers using all four numerical operations. They are learning to subtract using decomposition. They know most of their multiplication tables. The most able can work out problems to do with money and length using two decimal places with confidence. They learn to measure angles accurately and know how to read a variety of scales for measuring. The pupils learn to collect data, display and interpret their findings. The pupils can measure the perimeter of shapes, and have begun to apply a formula to calculate the perimeter and area of regular shapes.
74. The quality of teaching is consistently good with some very good features. Of the nine lessons seen four were very good and three were good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. The teachers plan the work well and teach the basic skills of numeracy very well. They have a good knowledge of the subject and how to teach it. They use appropriate vocabulary and open-ended questions to extend the pupils' understanding of the mathematical topics. In the best lessons, the teachers have high expectations of the pupils' ability to use intellectual effort, to concentrate and explain their answers. Occasionally, as in a Year 3 lesson seen the pace of the introductory part of the lesson slows, and the effectiveness of the learning opportunities for the independent session is then lessened. The work seen in the pupils' books in this class is only satisfactory and the pupils make slower progress than in other classes. In most classes good use is made of the teaching assistants but on occasions they are not well utilised in the mental and oral part of the lesson to assist the teachers in checking the pupils' understanding.
75. The teachers have put in place very good procedures to check how well the pupils are learning and whether they are making enough progress. The teachers match the work well to the needs of different pupils. However, although the parents receive clear information explaining the learning targets in mathematics, these are not always made explicit to the pupils. Throughout the school there is an inconsistency in the way work is marked in mathematics and in the ways in which the pupils are helped to understand what they need to do to improve. On occasions this causes the rate of progress to slow down, particularly in Year 3.

76. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic, well informed and committed to maintaining the good standards achieved by the school. She has good opportunities to monitor teaching and learning and contributes to an ongoing evaluation of the subject, working closely with the senior management team. The school has recognised that when the pupils leave Key Stage 1 there is some slowing down in the pupils' rate of progress and has plans to address this issue. Mathematics is given a high profile in the school and in all the classes there are interesting and interactive displays to support the teaching and learning together with a good range of resources for teaching and learning.

## **SCIENCE**

77. The most recent results of the 2001 teacher assessments at age seven show that standards in science were above average. Over the past three years, the number of pupils assessed as attaining the higher level (level 3) has increased significantly. Inspection evidence supports the view that by the time the pupils are seven and when they leave the school at the end of Year 4, standards in science are above average. This represents a good improvement since the time of the previous inspection in 1997 when standards were judged to be average. Since that time, all the pupils, including those with special educational needs, have continued to make good progress overall and they achieve well. However, evidence from lesson observations, discussions with the pupils and a scrutiny of their work indicates that there are limited opportunities for them to carry out their own investigations and to follow their own lines of enquiry (science Attainment Target 1). Consequently, standards in this aspect remain average and could be higher.
78. By the age of seven, the pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of scientific facts because the range of work is wide and is organised effectively to build on their previous learning. The Year 2 pupils enjoy learning about forces and they are able to make predictions about how far a car might travel when the height of the ramp is varied. The higher attaining pupils are further able to understand and begin to explain how the ramp's surface might affect the distance travelled with comments such as, 'If it's too ridged the car won't go over the bumps.' The Year 3 pupils show their good understanding of a fair test when they test materials to see which would be the most suitable for making an anorak. For example, they can explain why each sample of fabric needs the same number of rubs to test for wear or why the same amount of water must be used when testing the fabric's waterproof properties. By the time they reach Year 4, the pupils' learning about materials is extended as they investigate their properties as insulators. The pupils' good understanding of fabrics as insulators and their development of logical thought was summed up in the comment of one pupil who predicted, 'If the furry fabric keeps things warm, it might also keep things cold.' The school works very closely with a local nature group in maintaining and developing an attractive garden area. This is an on-going project for which the Year 4 pupils take the main responsibility and practical activities in the garden have a positive impact on the pupils' learning in environmental science.
79. Across the school, the pupils can present their work in a variety of ways such as annotated drawings, tables, written accounts and diagrams. However, methods of recording are

directed by the class teacher and these are frequently the same for all pupils in the class whatever their ability. This restricts the pupils' independence and use of initiative and can also slow their rate of progress. There are some opportunities for the pupils to use information and communication technology in science but this is an area that could usefully be further developed.

80. The quality of teaching in science is good throughout the school. Of the five lessons observed, all were at least satisfactory and one was very good. The teachers' planning of lessons is detailed and thorough and clearly identifies what the pupils will learn. The learning objectives are returned to in the discussions at the end of lessons in order to assess how successful the learning has been. A strength of the good and very good lessons is the quality of the teachers' questions which challenge the pupils and make them think more deeply about what they are doing. For example, good questions during the plenary session of a Year 2 lesson helped the pupils to understand and describe why their test was not fair across all the groups due to variations in the type of car, the size of the bricks and the surface of the ramp. Less successful teaching and learning takes place when the task is tightly directed by the teacher and the pupils are not provided with opportunities to devise their own experiments, choose materials independently or decide on their own methods of recording. Across the classes the marking of work in science is. For example, there is scant evidence of oral feedback to the younger pupils and the work of the older pupils does not often contain comments that will help them to improve.
81. The key factors in the raising of standards since the time of the previous inspection have been the improved quality of the teaching and the good use that is made of assessment to track the pupils' progress. The pupils are tested at the end of each topic and the results are analysed and used to plan further work as well as to set targets for improvement. Assessment procedures have recently been refined and further developments are planned for later this year when science becomes the main focus of the school development plan. The co-ordinator has observed and evaluated teaching and learning in some classes and further monitoring is planned in the near future. Planning in science is based on the national guidelines and teaching is well supported by a good range of resources.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

82. From the lessons that were observed during the inspection, together with the scrutiny of work in the pupils' sketchbooks and from the high quality work on display around the school, the inspection findings are that by the age of seven and at the end of Year 4, standards in art are better than those found in most schools. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection.
83. The pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs make good progress. They enjoy art activities; they are proud of their work and talk knowledgeably and enthusiastically about it. Their achievements are celebrated in well-presented displays that enhance the school hall, the corridor areas and the classrooms.

84. The Year 2 pupils are taught to mix and blend colours to obtain the desired shade when using the viewfinder technique to reproduce a small section of a print by Kandinsky. They also show good skill in producing colourful pastel and crayon drawings of mini-beasts. The Year 2 pupils make clay coil pots and decorate them with pearl effect paints whilst the Year 4 pupils closely observe peppers to produce detailed drawings which are then skilfully reproduced in clay. The pupils are enthusiastic when discussing their finished product and show great pride in their work on display.
85. Throughout the school, the pupils make good progress as they develop their knowledge, skills and techniques. They are given opportunities to draw what they see using a variety of media and the resulting drawings of flowers, objects and people are very successful. The pupils work carefully using colours effectively and showing good use of shape and perspective. They are encouraged to experiment with colour and texture. For example, the Year 2 pupils reproduce etchings of poppies by 'fanning' the paint for the flowers and then drawing in lines to bring the shape alive. Adding a pastel background completes the pictures. They also work with pastels and in the style of famous artists such as Van Gogh, Paul Klee and William Morris.
86. Throughout the school, great emphasis is placed on observational drawing and consequently there are fewer opportunities for the pupils to work with paints to produce pictures such as landscapes or to work with fabrics.
87. The pupils enjoy expressing their feelings and ideas through their work and do so using a range of good quality media and materials. Almost all of the pupils use their sketchbooks as a valuable resource. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 4, the pupils have acquired good technical skills such as understanding the importance of testing shades when colour mixing, and how to use slip when working with clay. The work of the older pupils also shows a good understanding of the techniques of smudging, shading and pressure to create shadows and outline.
88. From the range of the work seen and from the two lessons observed the quality of teaching in art is judged to be good. The teachers enjoy very good relationships with the pupils and have high expectations of them. This has a significant impact on how the pupils learn and the good standards they achieve. The teachers make good links between art and other subjects and this also has a positive impact on the pupils' learning. For example, the Year 2 pupils use paints and pastels to create pictures of the fire of London as part of their history topic. In Year 4, art, music and literature are linked through close observation of how writers, composers and artists create particular moods and settings for their work. The teachers plan work that provides for the progressive development of knowledge and skills. Almost all of the teachers have good subject knowledge and, as a result, the pupils acquire the skills and techniques needed to make good progress in a range of art activities. Good use is made of information and communication technology to support learning in art when the pupils use programs to create repeating patterns as well as to reproduce illustrations in the style of Jan Pienkowski. A further good feature of the teaching is the very good use made of the artistic talents and support of volunteer parents. Where the teaching is less successful the pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to apply their new skills. For example, when learning how

paper can be torn, scrunched, folded and pleated, no time is planned for the pupils to use these methods in a finished piece of work.

89. At the time of the inspection there was no co-ordinator for art and the headteacher was overseeing planning, teaching and learning in the subject. The scheme of work for art is based on national guidelines and this ensures that the pupils are taught a range of skills and given the opportunity to work with different media. To further stimulate the pupils' interest in art, the school has set up an art gallery. This is a very pleasant area that contains a range of classic and modern prints by artists from around the world. The gallery is well used by groups of pupils and this, together with their work in well-planned art lessons makes a significant contribution to their spiritual and cultural development.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

90. During the period of the inspection, it was only possible to observe a small number of lessons. However, scrutiny of the pupils' work, photographic evidence and the teachers' records of assessment show that by the end of Year 2, and by the time the pupils leave the school, the majority of pupils attain standards that are average for their age. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
91. The teachers' planning documents show that pupils experience all aspects of the statutory curriculum. Throughout the school, lesson plans show that a practical approach is adopted and that due attention is given to designing and evaluating, and not just making. Work is effectively linked to other subjects, for example, science, music, religious education and art and design. As part of their religious education work, the pupils have designed and used a variety of materials to make Joseph's Multicoloured Dreamcoat. Year 1 pupils have produced satisfactory designs for a musical 'shaker' and then used lollipop sticks and other materials to create their design. The teachers effectively enhance the pupils' cultural development through the making of African masks as part of a geography topic.
92. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Classroom management is good and there is a clear focus to the lessons. The pupils enjoy design and technology, particularly the making element. They concentrate well and work hard on the tasks they are given. Occasionally there is an imbalance between the teachers' input and the amount of time the pupils spend on the activity. This evidence shows that pupils are being given the opportunity to use a range of simple tools and are successfully using glue, sticky tape, paper clips, and other means to join materials. However, the pupils need the opportunity to use a wider range of materials to develop their skills further. Almost all pupils, including those with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress in developing the skills necessary to design and make simple models.
93. The school has adopted national guidelines to support teachers' planning. These are being used effectively to ensure that new learning builds upon pupils' previous knowledge and experiences. The co-ordinator gives a satisfactory lead to the subject. She monitors

colleagues' planning and the feedback from this work is promoting discussion of common issues and is leading to further development of the curriculum.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

94. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils have made satisfactory progress in geography and attain average standards. By the time they leave the school in Year 4, the pupils have continued to make satisfactory progress and achieve average standards. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection
95. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils have a good knowledge of the local area and are able to use appropriate vocabulary to make observations of the physical features of their surroundings. For example, in Year 1 they use a large-scale map to identify various local features and are able to plan a route from home to school. Through the travels of Barnaby Bear the pupils learn that other countries such as Spain and Turkey have a different climate to the UK. In Year 2 they compare the similarities and differences of places far away. They understand, for example, why in Tobago houses have to be very differently constructed than in Cramlington. Good links are made with Literacy when the pupils enjoy stories about Katie Morag and learn about life on the Isle of Struay. They use plans of the school and classrooms to develop their understanding of scale and direction. They use atlases to locate the main towns of the United Kingdom as well as some of the major cities and countries of the world.
96. In Year 3 and Year 4 the pupils continue to develop their mapping skills through their study of the local area. Good links are made with history when pupils look at how land use has changed around Cramlington and why mines and railways are now disused. The older pupils in Year 4 investigate land use and develop their environmental awareness when they consider the arguments for and against a large area of residential development near Cramlington. The development of a wildlife area next to the school enables the pupils to study the links between science and geography and develop a good understanding of the interdependence of habitats. The pupils in Key Stage 2 talk enthusiastically about geography and show a great willingness to answer questions and demonstrate their level of learning.
97. The standard of teaching is good. The school has adopted national guidelines, which supports teachers in their planning. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Lessons are well planned and there are good links with other areas of the curriculum. For example older pupils use CD-ROMS such as 'Ollie Recycles' to compare different types of packaging, while younger pupils learn to write the correct address when, for example, writing post cards in a literacy lesson. Good use is made of the local area to develop the pupils' geographical skills such as visits to contrasting habitats on St Mary's Isle and Plessey Wood. The school has established useful links with the Cramlington Organisation for Nature and the Environment and two local companies to support environmental work the pupils are undertaking.

## **HISTORY**



98. Standards at the age of seven and when the pupils leave the school are in line with those expected nationally and all of the pupils make sound progress overall. This is a similar picture to that found at the time of the previous inspection. The school has recently re-organised the teaching of history using the national guidelines together with an emphasis on local historical focal points and this ensures a good breadth of study of historical topics. However, the school should ensure that it also includes details of how the pupils will build on what they have learned before and extend the opportunities for the pupils to develop higher skills of historical enquiry and understanding. The school has not yet begun to check how well the pupils understand historical issues on a regular basis.
99. By the age of 7, the pupils have a sound sense of chronology. They can place different homes correctly on a timeline. They learn about people from history such as Louis Braille and Alexander Graham Bell. They know many facts about the Great Fire of London and have a good understanding that we can learn about the past by looking at pictures, artefacts and eyewitness accounts such as the diary of Samuel Pepys. In Year 3 the pupils consider reasons for the Saxon invasion and settlement of Britain. By the time they leave the school the pupils have a good understanding of the differences between their lives now and those of children in Victorian times. They construct timelines showing important happenings from the nineteenth century until the present day and enter their own life events correctly. Their skills in literacy and information and communication technology are well used and extended by the subject. They research using the Internet and write their own eyewitness accounts of the Great Fire of London in diary form. The pupils are interested in history; they enjoy talking about what they have learned and organising their work to present to others. The pupils can select and link information from a variety of sources but they do not evaluate the sources or have opportunities to select those relevant to specific questions. Their understanding that some changes, events and people have been variously interpreted is limited and they are not yet able to suggest reasons for this.
100. In the lessons seen during the inspection, the quality of the teaching was good and the pupils made good progress. The teachers have a good knowledge of the history they are teaching; they introduce the topics in a lively and interesting way and provide activities that give the pupils opportunities to learn skills of historical investigation. In a Year 3 lesson the pupils enthusiastically and carefully excavated an archaeological site prepared by the teacher. Artefacts had been placed at different levels showing recent deposits, through to shards of pottery and fossils. In the same lesson pupils were using a computer programme that simulated an exploration of a Saxon village. The teachers have very good management of the pupils and ensure that the pupils concentrate and try hard with their work. The pupils' learning in both key stages is extended by visits out of school to relevant and interesting local historical sites and centres.
101. The resources for teaching and learning in history are adequate; they are extended by use of the library and museum loan services. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual and cultural education.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

102. Standards in information and communication technology at the age of seven and when the pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4 are in line with expectations, which is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress as a result of the regular and effective teaching.
103. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils are familiar with the basic skills of entering text and simple editing procedures. They know that work can be saved and accessed at a later point and many can carry out these procedures with little adult supervision. They have good keyboard skills and open and close programs with little adult intervention. The pupils make effective use of a variety of programs. Information and communication technology is used effectively to support learning in other subjects. For example, the pupils in Year 2 recognise the painting style of Kandinsky and they make good use of the tools on a painting program to produce a picture in his style. They learn how to make effective use of brush and spray facilities and are confident in selecting appropriate colours.
104. By the end of Year 4 most of the pupils have secure word processing skills and are beginning to understand how computers can be used for handling data. Using a program that holds some of their personal data they learn how to sort records according to specific criteria. They learn the necessity to be very specific when sorting records to avoid anomalies. For example, when sorting according to the largest shoe size, they learn that a child's size 13 appears to be bigger than an adult size one etc. Good links continue with other curriculum areas. In a very good Year 4 geography lesson, the pupils made effective use of a computer program to enhance their understanding of environmental waste and learned how manufacturers might reduce the amount of packaging for certain goods.
105. Information and communication technology is used effectively to develop the pupils' independent learning skills. The pupils take it in turns to access their own literacy and numeracy learning programs on computers that are situated in the libraries. They do so without any adult supervision and demonstrate a high level of independence, working diligently during their allotted time of the computer.
106. The quality of teaching is good overall. Most teachers have good subject knowledge and they use their expertise effectively and make good use of the computers to teach groups and classes. Their planning is good and assessments are beginning to be undertaken to help them determine what the pupils can do. They have high expectations of what can be achieved and this gives good encouragement to the pupils. The teachers plan to use computers to support subjects such as science, history and geography and this systematic approach has helped to develop the use of computers. The teachers make good use of computers to support work in literacy and numeracy. The pupils make good gains in their learning, particularly in those lessons where teachers have high expectations of what they can achieve. The pupils' keyboard skills improve rapidly and they develop a good understanding of how computers can be used to collect data and present it in different formats. For example, in a good science lesson, the pupils recorded the temperature of water contained in different insulators

over a period of time. The data was collated and used to produce a line graph on the computer. The teachers make very good use of the latest technology, for example by projecting the computer screen onto a whiteboard. This engages the pupils' interest very effectively.

107. The co-ordinator has secure subject knowledge, provides appropriate support for her colleagues and leads the subject well. Planning is monitored regularly and discussions are held with colleagues.

## MUSIC

108. By the age of seven and by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 4, the pupils achieve standards in music that are in line with those expected nationally. All of the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and generally attain high standards in singing and in listening and appraising. This is broadly similar to the judgement made at the time of the previous inspection. The school has made satisfactory improvement since that time, although improvement in the area of composing has been limited and work still needs to be done to develop this aspect.
109. By the age of seven, many of the pupils know the names of tuned and untuned percussion instruments and they know that they can be made of wood or metal. Almost all of the pupils can sustain a rhythm and keep to a beat whilst listening and singing. They have good voice control and they know and can sing a range of songs which includes local Northumbrian folk songs. The pupils enjoy singing in assembly as well as in music lessons and this makes a good contribution to their spiritual and cultural development. In Years 1 and 2 the pupils show a good understanding of pitch and can explain it as high and low sounds. They are also able to 'read' the shape of a series of notes and play them accordingly. The higher attaining Year 2 pupils are further able to find specific start notes on glockenspiels and chime bars. The Year 3 pupils understand and can demonstrate ostinato as a sustained rhythm. When listening to recorded music the Year 4 pupils can identify instruments such as a guitar and can describe the style and mood of the music using the appropriate language.
110. The quality of the teaching in music is good overall. In the four lessons observed during the inspection the quality of the teaching ranged from very good to satisfactory. All the lessons were well planned and incorporated the elements of listening, appraising and performing. The teachers built on the pupils' previous learning and used skilful questions to draw out what the pupils already knew so that their learning could be extended. For example, in a very good lesson with the pupils in Year 2, the teacher provided praise and challenge in order to boost confidence and increase learning. 'Who dares have a go?' motivated and encouraged them so that they achieved success. The pace of this lesson was brisk, expectations of success were high and the material was very well chosen. This resulted in very good levels of learning for almost all pupils. In a lesson with the Year 4 pupils, the teacher's questions helped move the pupils' thinking forward so that they could build on their ideas and opinions of the mood of a piece of music. Because the element of composing does not have such a high profile in the music curriculum, many of the pupils in this lesson found the task of composing a piece in

a similar mood very challenging. Nonetheless, the teacher made good use of this and brought the group together to refine and improve their methods of working so that they could achieve success. A less successful aspect of some of the lessons is that the pupils sit for too long whilst they either listen to others or wait their turn to perform. In one of the lessons, a minority of the pupils were noisy and talkative and the teacher was slow to address this.

111. The music co-ordinator is conscientious in providing support and guidance for colleagues. She monitors planning in the subject but has yet to evaluate teaching and learning and there is currently no assessment of the pupils' achievements in music. The school plans for music using the national guidelines and this is supplemented by additional material and a range of good quality instruments. The school is fortunate in having a good level of musical expertise amongst the staff and this, together with the good teaching, makes a significant contribution to the good progress made by the pupils. The pupils have the opportunity to learn to play the keyboard and the guitar from teachers who visit weekly. They also perform songs at the local home for the elderly as well as taking part in joint performances with local schools.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

112. The evidence from the lessons seen during the inspection, a scrutiny of teachers' planning and conversations with the pupils and the physical education co-ordinator show that physical education has a secure place in the curriculum. Standards of attainment are in line with national expectations and all of the pupils, including those with special needs, make satisfactory progress. The curriculum includes gymnastics, dance, games, athletics and swimming.
113. The infant pupils show good levels of co-ordination as they move round safely, stopping and changing direction when instructed by the teacher. They alter the speed, rhythm, level and direction of their movements and make effective use of space. They understand the importance of warming up and have a good bank of warm-up routines. In a good Year 3 dance lesson the pupils interpret music well and compose imaginative sequences of contrasting movements. Infant pupils show good control when catching and throwing large balls and older juniors show precision, control and fluency when hitting a tennis ball in a confined space. In gymnastics, the infant pupils can devise sequences of moving through space on the floor using different parts of the body both individually and with a partner. Records indicate that by the time they leave school most of the pupils are able to swim 25 metres.
114. Overall the teaching is good. The teachers have clear learning objectives and high expectations. They manage lessons well and a high standard of behaviour is maintained. Lessons are planned very thoroughly based on a well-structured scheme of work. Good use is made of the pupils' performance to demonstrate and develop teaching and learning points. This was identified as an area for development in the previous inspection and has now been addressed.

115. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities including netball, football, cricket, tennis and athletics. These are delivered by a member of staff and various coaches. Parents also make a very valuable contribution to the extra-curricular activities. The co-ordinator has introduced a very structured curriculum based on national guidelines. This provides good support for teachers and ensures effective delivery of the curriculum.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

116. The attainment of the pupils by the end of Year 2 and Year 4 is generally above the expectations and recommendations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards have been maintained in Year 4 and have shown a good improvement in Year 2 since the last inspection. The majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs make good progress, especially in the way they are beginning to relate what they have learned to their own lives.
117. By the end of Year 4, the pupils have a good awareness of special occasions in the Christian, Jewish and Hindu calendar and know how important these events are to people of different faiths. They know why Christmas and Easter are celebrated and are able to recall and retell the main elements of the stories. They know a good range of Old and New Testament stories and, as the Year 2 pupils hear the story of Noah, they are beginning to understand why God sent a flood and can articulate this as 'the people were doing bad things'. The Year 4 pupils have a good knowledge of Jewish customs and know that they celebrate their Sabbath with special rituals, prayers and greetings. Work on the Jewish and Christian faiths shows that the higher attaining pupils have a mature understanding of some of the similarities and differences between them and the facts underlying the stories.
118. The quality of teaching in religious education is good. In the four lessons observed during the inspection the teaching was never less than good and in one lesson it was very good. Relationships with the pupils are very good and the teachers have a good knowledge of the subject under discussion. The teaching is well linked to the pupils' own experiences as well as the learning that has gone before. For example, before telling the story of Noah, the teacher questions the Year 2 pupils skilfully about other Old Testament stories. Through careful and sensitive discussion she enables the pupils to provide the link that Moses, Daniel and Abraham, like Noah, all obeyed God without question. The pupils' good learning was developed further when they prepared questions to ask a pupil in the 'hot seat' acting as Noah. In another good lesson with a Year 4 class the teacher used the pupils' different roles within the family unit such as son, daughter, brother, sister and grandchild as a way of introducing them to the difficult concept of the Holy Trinity. Her clear explanations and a very well planned practical task resulted in good levels of learning and understanding for almost all pupils. Less successful elements of the teaching are that all the pupils complete the same task whatever their ability and that marking is frequently cursory with few pointers as to how they might develop or improve their work.
119. Religious education has not been a focus of the school development plan for some time but the co-ordinator has used allocated funding to provide time to evaluate standards in the

subject and to begin a useful photographic record of topics covered. Religious education topics build progressively on the pupils' knowledge and understanding and, due to the good planning and teaching, this is generally very successful. However, the scrutiny of work shows that there are some occasions when work is repeated. Closer monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning to address this would have a beneficial impact and ensure that even better progress could be made by all groups of pupils. The school's own resources for religious education are sparse but the budget is used effectively to ensure that a range of good quality artefacts is borrowed regularly to support work in the subject.