

INSPECTION REPORT

REDBY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sunderland

LEA area: Sunderland

Unique reference number: 108831

Headteacher: Brenda Ainslie

Reporting inspector: Andrew Clark
21596

Dates of inspection: 24th – 27th June 2002

Inspection number: 245925

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Redby Primary School Fulwell Road Sunderland
Postcode:	SR6 9QP
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr A Winlow
Date of previous inspection:	23 rd February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21596	A Clark	Registered inspector	Equal opportunities; English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
8943	M Manning	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
25623	T Cox	Team inspector	English; Art and design; History	
21585	AS Kingston	Team inspector	Information and communication technology; Geography; Religious Education	
24031	I Idle	Team inspector	Foundation stage; Design and technology; Music	
4350	C Whittington	Team inspector	Mathematics; Physical education	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
22881	G Halliday	Team inspector	Science	
4048	G McKeever	Team inspector	Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Redby Primary is a larger than average school for boys and girls aged from three to 11. There are 478 pupils on roll and a further 52 children who attend the nursery part-time. The school is in the Roker area of Sunderland and serves a mixture of owner-occupied property and rented accommodation. It was built in 1994 but many families are well established in the area. Approximately 11 per cent of pupils are eligible for a free school meal, which is broadly average. The majority of pupils are of white United Kingdom origin, and very few speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is below average at 16 per cent. Attainment on entry to the school is average overall, although speaking and listening is often below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school. The school is very well led and managed resulting in highly motivated staff and pupils. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good because of the good teaching and learning. Standards are above average and the school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school is very well led and managed and this creates an excellent ethos for learning.
- Standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology are above average.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- The behaviour, values and attitudes of the pupils are very good.
- The provision for social and moral development is very good.

What could be improved

- The pupils' use of information and communication technology in other subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement since the previous inspection in February 1998. There were no significant areas of weakness at the time. That situation has been maintained, despite almost a half of the school being affected by staff changes, largely through promotion. Standards are at least as good in most subjects as they were last time, and they have improved by Year 2. The provision for special educational needs has improved and the pupils needs are now well catered for. The recording of pupils' achievement is good, particularly in English, mathematics and science and this is being developed in other subjects. Work is now challenging for the more able pupils and this is helped by the school's identification of and support for pupils considered gifted and talented.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	B	A	D	D
mathematics	B	A	B	B
science	B	B	B	B

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

Standards in English, mathematics and science are above average overall and pupils of all abilities make good progress through the school. The improvement in standards over time is as good as it is nationally, despite the dip in English in 2001. The lower standard in 2001 in English was due to a combination of features relating to the particular group of pupils and staff changes. It was marked by fewer pupils attaining the higher levels and more pupils at the lower levels. The school predicted this. The standards of work seen for the current pupils indicate that they are rising again. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels in all three subjects is generally above average. By Year 2, standards are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics, and there is a good trend of improvement. This has been a focus for the school as a strategy towards raising attainment even further by Year 6.

The children in nursery and reception classes make good progress. By the time they enter Year 1 they exceed the expected levels for communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and personal and social development. Standards are similar to those normally expected in knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development.

In the work seen in the rest of the school, standards of speaking and listening, reading and writing are good. In particular, pupils develop good handwriting and spelling skills. All areas of mathematical skills are better than average. Attainment in science is good and the pupils carry out investigations in a knowledgeable and scientific way. By Year 6, standards in information and communication are above those normally found. However, pupils do not make enough use of their skills for learning in other subjects. Standards in all other subjects are at least as good as those normally found.

There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls and the school monitors this carefully. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs achieve well.

The school is well placed to continue to improve these standards.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils enjoy school and are enthusiastic about learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	This is very good. Pupils are polite and thoughtful. The few pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are managed well by teachers and lunchtime staff.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. There are many opportunities for pupils to take responsibilities in lessons and through the school council. There are very good relationships between staff and pupils.
Attendance	Good; pupils are punctual so lessons start promptly.

The ethos of the school is such that pupils feel valued and they respond through very good attitudes and behaviour. A small proportion of pupils have problems in behaving well but this is managed effectively, so there is little disruption to others, and the pupils concerned learn to be better behaved.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
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.

Teaching and learning is good throughout the school. The teaching of English and mathematics is good and often better. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are also taught well. There are few significant weaknesses in the teaching. All teachers taught some good lessons. The satisfactory lessons were taught mainly by teachers who were in school for a short, temporary period. The particular strengths in teaching are:

- Very good planning. Teachers work in teams and are very thorough;
- A good match of work to the needs of the pupils, including those with special educational needs and the highest attainers;
- Good questioning to help pupils to think and remember;
- Good relationships and management of pupils;

The result is that pupils become good learners. In particular, they are very good at working hard for long periods and are very productive. They take a pride in their work so most work is presented well. They enjoy a challenge, particularly the high attainers, and this helps in the investigative work in mathematics and science.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Literacy and numeracy is well developed, although there is not enough use of information and communication technology. Extra-curricular activities are very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Individual learning plans provide challenging but attainable targets for pupils. Support staff are well prepared.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	This is very good for the few pupils who have little or no English. Work is matched well to their needs, so they develop the language to allow them to learn in all subjects.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Social and moral development is very good because of the many well-planned opportunities for pupils to interact and learn from others. Spiritual and cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are very good procedures to ensure the pupils are safe and well cared for. Procedures to record pupils' progress are good, although they do not always show precisely enough the skills learned in some subjects.

There is a good partnership with parents based on good information and a welcoming ethos. The promotion of pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. There is scope for continued improvements to the assessment and recording of pupils' learning in some subjects.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and deputy headteacher work extremely well together to provide an excellent direction for continued improvement. They are very well supported by key staff, such as team and subject leaders.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their duties very well. They are well informed and meet frequently to plan how most effectively to support the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This is very good. There are efficient systems for monitoring standards and progress in many areas and good comparisons made with other schools.
The strategic use of resources	The procedures are very strong and effective for involving all staff in managing, purchasing and improving resources. Good use is made of learning resources.

The teaching staff are deployed well. Support staff and lunchtime supervisors are trained well and make a good contribution to the school's ethos. The accommodation is very good and provides a stimulating place to learn. Resources for learning are good. The school seeks best value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comfortable approaching the school with problems• Teaching is good• The school is very welcoming• It is well led	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The amount of homework• Activities out of school time• Information on pupils' progress

The inspection team fully agrees with the positive views of parents. They disagree with the most of the concerns expressed by a minority of parents. Homework makes a good contribution to learning throughout the school. The range of extra-curricular activities is very much higher than that provided by most schools and managed well to try to give opportunities to as many pupils as possible. The reports for parents are satisfactory but could provide more information on what pupils need to do to improve.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 Children's attainment on entry to the nursery is broadly average for their age. However, a significant number of children have poor speaking skills when they start school. Children get a good start in the Foundation Stage and make good progress. By the time they enter Year 1, the majority of children exceed expectations for their age in communication, language and literacy, mathematical and in their personal, social and emotional development. Children make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world, their physical and their creative development and achieve the expected levels in these areas.
- 2 At the end of Year 6, standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils of all abilities achieve well. There are also many good features to standards in other subjects. The good standards and progress made are a direct result of good teaching and very good leadership creating a strong ethos for learning. Standards are generally improving well, particularly in the infants where they were very high by the end of Year 2 in 2001. Although pupils had taken the tests for 2002 at the time of the inspection there were no results returned for Year 6 and no comparative data.
- 3 Standards in English in Year 6 took a dip in 2001 when the test results fell slightly below the national average and that of similar schools. This was largely expected as there were significantly more lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. However, the lower results were compounded by staff changes. There were slightly more pupils who attained the lower levels than usual and fewer working at the upper level. These results follow a good period of improvement, so that results have consistently been above the national average and that for similar schools since the last report. Until last year the results have improved faster than they have nationally.
- 4 The standards for pupils in reading and writing in Year 2 have shown a marked improvement since the last inspection, and were very high in 2001. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels is also well above average in reading and above average in writing. There are very few low attaining pupils. The very good standards are a direct reflection of the efforts that the school has put into raising standards of literacy and improving the quality of teaching and learning in the infants.
- 5 The current pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are working at standards that are at least above average in English. Progress is good throughout the school. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are high. This is particularly good progress because many pupils enter the school with speech problems. Pupils speak with clarity and listen intently. They participate in lively debates. Teachers pay particular attention to these skills and devote extra sessions to developing these skills. As a result, standards of reading are good for all pupils. They read with increasing fluency and good accuracy. They have good techniques to understand new words and comprehension is good. Pupils remember stories well and enjoy them. Standards of writing are also higher than average. By Year 6, pupils' writing is lively and interesting. Higher attaining pupils use a very rich and well-chosen vocabulary. Pupils' handwriting, spelling and punctuation is good throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress towards challenging targets

set for them. Those who arrive in school with very little English often make very marked progress in developing their speaking skills.

- 6 Standards in mathematics were above average in 2001 by Year 6 and the trend of improvement is positive overall. Results were well above average by (the end of Year 2. The results in Year 6 suffered a slight fall for reasons similar to those in English. A good percentage of pupils attain the highest levels in both the infants and the juniors. The good standards are a direct result of good teaching and learning, and development of the curriculum. Standards seen for pupils in the current year are above average in both Year 2 and Year 6. There are no significant weaknesses to any areas of the subject, although there is not enough use of information and communication technology. The pupils develop a good understanding of mathematical processes by discussing the strategies they use to solve problems and complete sums. Their mathematical thinking is well developed so pupils conduct their own investigations well. Work is accurate. Pupils with special educational needs make progress that is at least as good as their peers.
- 7 Standards in science are above average and have been maintained since the last inspection at the end of Year 6, and improved at the end of Year 2. Pupils of all abilities make good progress, with a high proportion of pupils working at higher than expected levels. The teaching places a strong emphasis on providing opportunities for pupils to investigate and experiment, and this results in good levels of understanding and high motivation. Pupils make accurate and critical observations in their work and record the outcomes well. Pupils use their initiative, based on sound research. This helps pupils of all abilities to make progress, particularly the high attainers.
- 8 Standards of work in ICT are average by Year 2 and above average by Year 6. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils have good basic skills in word processing and data handling. By Year 6, they program instructions into a computer to control sequences of lights with good understanding and skill. They present ideas through multi-media packages. Despite the good skills they are developing, they are not yet using them significantly in other subjects.
- 9 Standards in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music, religious education and physical education are at least as good as those expected nationally. The strengths are in the thoroughness in all subjects in which pupils are building up skills across the full curriculum and display enthusiasm and knowledge in all areas. There is often a good percentage of pupils working at higher than nationally expected levels. Art and design and music have suffered because of the loss of highly skilled staff but this has been generally addressed well by raising the expectations and knowledge and understanding of teachers.
- 10 There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls in any subjects. The curriculum provides interesting opportunities that challenge all pupils. There are very good procedures to produce realistic and challenging targets for pupils' attainment by Year 2 and Year 6. Effective support is provided where it is felt necessary. This is one reason why there are few pupils whose attainment is low. The developing opportunities for gifted and talented pupils indicate further high attainment. Overall the school is well placed to continue to improve.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 11 Pupils have very good attitudes to school. They are very proud of their school and happy to talk about it and tell people what they do. They very much enjoy coming, taking part in lessons and activities and playing with their friends. They turn out well for the extra-curricular activities that, in the summer term are mainly sporting, such as the Year 2 football. For example, a large group of boys and girls enjoyed an activity after school with a coach from Sunderland Football Club. They enjoy their lessons. In response to some very good teaching in a Year 4 mathematics lesson on fractions and decimals, one pupil at the end said, "Oh, can't we carry on?"
- 12 Children in the nursery and reception classes develop very good attitudes. Children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. They get on well together and are beginning to work in pairs and co-operate successfully when working. They build good relationships with adults in school and are confident to talk to visitors. They are independent and stay on task for extended periods of time.
- 13 Pupils and children behave very well at school. This finding agrees with parents' opinions. Pupils behave particularly well around school and are naturally very polite to visitors. They respect school property. There is no sign whatsoever of litter or damage. They play very well together at break-times and older pupils enjoy looking after younger ones. Pupils generally behave well in lessons, although there is a small amount of disruption in some lessons in the juniors and, because of the open-plan design of the teaching bays, the levels of noise can intrude on other lessons nearby. When Year 1 pupils were kept sitting on the carpet too long in a mathematics lesson, they chattered and were not sufficiently involved in the lesson. Behaviour is generally better, and often being very good, where there is the best teaching and pupils are more highly motivated. In a Year 3 music lesson, all the pupils enjoyed it and were very attentive and enthusiastic. The school very rarely has had to exclude pupils from school, and then only for a short time. There is a small amount of bullying and name-calling but the school deals with these very well and pupils spoken to are confident that this is so.
- 14 As they move up the school, pupils show very good levels of maturity. They respond very well to the opportunities they are given to take responsibility. This year's outgoing school council members were very eager to talk about what they have done over the year for the benefit of the school. They evidently co-operate very well together and value the roles they have held on the council. Similarly, the 'Buddies' in Years 5 and 6 show a lot of commitment in carrying out the duties for which they have volunteered for. Relationships among pupils are very good. This is shown in the way they organise their own games in large groups at break times, skipping and playing football.
- 15 Attendance at school is good, being just above the national average, although it has fallen in the last few years. On the whole, pupils arrive punctually and registration is taken very promptly at 9.00am, so that lessons can get off to a good start. The main reason for absence is because some parents take their children on holiday in school time, although the school does not encourage this practice

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 16 Teaching and learning is good throughout the school. Teaching is very good in over a quarter of lessons. Good teaching has been maintained since the last inspection and there have been many improvements, particularly in English and mathematics. A high percentage of teachers were relatively new to the school at the time of the inspection or in temporary posts. The good guidance given and close teamwork meant that, by and large, teaching was of a consistent quality.
- 17 There are many strengths to the teaching, which are common throughout the school. These include:
- Very good lesson plans. The team of teachers in a year group devise these from detailed schemes of work. They are particularly effective because they clearly identify what pupils of different ability are expected to know, do and understand and the teaching methods use to achieve these. The plans also identify the vocabulary they want pupils to learn. The subject leaders regularly monitor the curriculum plans and this increases their effectiveness.
 - Good introductions. The purpose of lessons is clearly explained to the pupils, who are involved from the start. The teachers grab the pupils attention by a range of techniques. For example, in mathematics in Year 6, the teacher set the pupils straight off with a game to improve their knowledge of decimals and fractions.
 - The good use of guidance from the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy to structure lessons and make effective use of time.
 - Teachers' question pupils closely and explain ideas well to them. This is very effective in science. Pupils develop a good understanding of how to conduct experiments and initiate ideas themselves.
 - The majority of lessons are well paced to keep the pupils interested and motivated but also allow time for them to practise what they have learned and retain information.
 - Teachers' expectations for pupils to work hard and achieve high standards are generally high, but realistic. As a result, pupils work enthusiastically and diligently. They usually present their work well.
- 18 The quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics are good. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well in many subjects. For instance, there are many good examples of different types of written work in history and religious education, such as note taking and précising. Spelling, handwriting and punctuation are well taught. This helps pupils to work with increasing speed and accuracy in many lessons. Occasionally, teachers concentrate too much on literacy skills in subjects other than English, for example with work marked for its English rather than historical or geographical content.
- 19 Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is good. Teaching is currently better in the reception classes than it is in the Nursery. This is because it is not always clear to the pupils what they are expected to learn from the different activities. In the best lessons, teachers' enthusiasm is transferred to the children because the resources are bright and stimulating and there is good adult intervention to help them think. Relationships are very good and teachers and other staff work well together. In the role-play activities adults are not always sufficiently involved to challenge the children.
- 20 The needs of different pupils are well met in the majority of lessons. Teachers identify pupils who are particularly able and provide them with work that is more challenging,

rather than more laborious. This results in well-motivated pupils who are eager to learn. This is very evident in mathematics and science lessons, when there is often opportunity for pupils to experiment and investigate.

- 21 Pupils with special educational needs are taught well. There is generally very good liaison between teachers and support staff who work with particular pupils or groups of pupils. This means that support staff are well informed about the lesson and give those in their care every opportunity to experience a full curriculum. The management of pupils with identified behavioural difficulties is good. However, some temporary teachers use inappropriate techniques to gain pupils attention, such as tapping the desk loudly, which exaggerates rather than limits disturbance.
- 22 The few pupils with English as an additional language are very well taught and they make very good progress in learning English, which helps them to make similar progress to their friends in most subjects. They are supported well in class and fully involved. The specialist teaching for these pupils is very good. The teacher uses the pupil's own background as a springboard for learning through the use of photographs and discussions. Lessons are closely related to class activities.
- 23 The teaching of ICT skills is good. Pupils are effectively introduced to new ideas and given time and opportunity to build on their skills. The teachers are confident in the use of computers. However, the subject is not yet fully integrated into teaching and learning in other subjects.
- 24 There are strengths in the marking of pupils' work, particularly in English, because targets are set for improvement and achievement is fully recognised. However, marking is not consistently used through the school. At present, the marking policy relates mainly to literacy and there is not always enough guidance for teachers on what to mark for in other subjects. Homework is used well. For example, even when no formal work is set pupils are given special things to think about and then asked about them the next day.
- 25 The progress the school has made in improving teaching further has been hindered by staff changes. New appointments have been made for the start of the next academic year. With the high quality of teamwork and good role models in many teachers, the school is well placed to raise the quality of teaching still further.

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

- 26 The school meets all statutory requirements, including those for the Foundation Stage, sex and drugs education and religious education. The implementation of the National Curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant throughout the school and the range of learning opportunities is good. The deputy head teacher has overall responsibility for the curriculum, and she works very conscientiously to ensure its overall quality.
- 27 The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are raising standards effectively. Planning for these lessons is specific and focuses directly on teaching and learning objectives. The plans are purposeful and all pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs and the 'gifted and talented'.
- 28 The pupils are given good opportunities to develop their skills in ICT through the use of the ICT suite and well-planned lessons. However, the use of ICT to improve pupils'

learning in other subjects, such as mathematics and science, is not as well developed.

- 29 A wide range of extra-curricular activities is offered to pupils to enhance the quality of their education, and these are co-ordinated well by an enthusiastic member of staff. These activities include opportunities to take part in a variety of sports (such as football, netball, cricket, 'fit kids' and 'high five'), art and design, keyboards and choir, 'Young Engineers' and a 'Euro Club', which promotes European awareness. They are supported well by staff and pupils, who have opportunities to give their views on what is offered and how the activities are organised. Visitors to the school include local clergy, sports clubs and theatre groups.
- 30 Provision for personal, social and health education is very good, with the school placing a strong emphasis on this area of the curriculum, encouraged by a very enthusiastic subject leader. The school has achieved the Healthy School and No Smoking awards as a result of this. Equality of access and opportunity is very good, ensuring inclusion for all pupils including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. The community makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning, with a wide range of links made within the locality. Relationships with other schools are good.
- 31 The school has improved its provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development since the previous inspection and maintained its provision for their cultural development. Overall, the school's provision is very good.
- 32 The school's provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. The main reason for the improvement is a development that provides pupils with very good opportunities to discuss their inner feelings in lessons designed to promote their personal development. In lessons, teachers seek continually to help pupils to develop insights into values and beliefs of others by setting an environment where pupils understand that their own ideas are valued by the teacher and other pupils. By the time they are eleven, they reflect on fundamental questions of life. For instance, in a religious education lesson pupils discussed with maturity the issue of life after death. However, in assemblies teachers do not make best use of music, themes or the school's symbolic lighted candle to create spiritually reflective opportunities.
- 33 Provision for pupils' moral development is very good and is underpinned by a positive approach that has been carefully thought out. Staff serve as very good role models and work continuously to teach pupils the differences between right and wrong. Their developmental handling of behaviour guides pupils towards learning to deal with personal issues for themselves. The code of behaviour is designed to promote their self-esteem. Staff show they care for pupils and take time to reason sensitively with those who infringe rules. They teach pupils by example the benefits of values such as reason, fairness and honesty. Teachers use assemblies well to promote moral and social values.
- 34 There is very good provision for pupils' social development and it is closely linked with how it promotes pupils' moral development. Staff encourage pupils to work together responsibly and sensitively, especially in lessons such as science investigations, where groupwork depends on the pupils' ability to work as a team. The school's personal, social and health education programme makes a very good contribution to the development of pupils' social skills. In these lessons, teachers give pupils many opportunities to discuss issues, such as what makes a friend *special*. The school places great emphasis on positive social behaviour and attitudes. It rewards pupils

with recognition in special weekly assemblies. Pupils are expected to undertake class monitorial duties from an early age and to take on greater responsibilities as they get older. For instance, from Year 2 onwards pupils are elected from each class to serve on the school council. In Year 6, they act as *buddies* to help others.

- 35 The school's provision for pupils' cultural development remains good. It is promoted through numerous visits and visitors, as well as in lessons and assemblies. A significant strength is the European Awareness studies when pupils work with a foreign language assistant each year. Visits are made locally to places of interest and culture to extend pupils' learning in many subjects. For instance, pupils in Year 6 worked with an artist to produce work of artistic and historical interest at Warkworth Castle. Similarly, visitors introduce pupils to new learning, such as when the Royal Shakespeare Company ran a theatre workshop for pupils. The multi-cultural aspect of the school's provision is not as well developed as others, because it is not given enough priority. This is an area for development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 36 The school makes sure that its pupils are very well cared for. It provides a calm and safe environment in which they can learn and play together well. Pupils are very well supervised at lunchtimes, breaks and when attending after school activities. Staff are well trained and know who to contact if they have any concerns. There is a quiet area for pupils to be looked after by a trained first aider at lunchtime if they are not feeling well and very good arrangements are made for the administration of medicines. The procedures for child protection are very good. All areas that the school is required to take care of are covered by the comprehensive health and safety policy and these requirements are carried out in practice, such as risk assessment. Parents are contacted promptly if children need to be taken home and the school looks after them very well in the meantime.
- 37 The school's monitoring and promoting of attendance are good. Registers are properly completed, are checked by the school and reviewed during weekly visits by the educational welfare officer. Good records are kept of any pupils who arrive late and, if necessary, home visits are made if there are problems. Most parents let the school know if their children are away for a good reason and the school follows up unexplained absence with a standard letter although the school does not normally ring home. The school is very clear to parents that their children should not lose too much of their education by going on holiday during term time, particularly when they are working for their national standard assessment tests in Years 2 and 6.
- 38 There are very good arrangements in school for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating anything that is unacceptable. In particular, alleged incidents of bullying are carefully recorded. Pupils who feel they are victims are supported very well, whether they approach teachers directly with their concerns or if they use the school's post box to pass on a message. Pupils whose behaviour is unacceptable may be given 'time out' or be put on report, in which case parents are informed. The school reserves the right to exclude pupils but rarely has to do this. Pupils know that the good efforts and behaviour of classes and individuals will be rewarded. They look forward to be chosen as the class that wins a special trip at the end of the year. Year 5 and 6 pupils are trained to support others through the 'buddy' scheme and are available at lunchtime when they are on duty to look out for each other. Lunchtime supervisors also play a large part in making sure that lunchtimes are peaceful and happy occasions.

- 39 The good procedures that the school had at the previous inspection for assessing pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science are still in place now. There is particularly good moderation of the levels that teachers judge their pupils to have attained in these subjects to ensure that all teachers are using the same standards. The school now has more formal procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in the foundation subjects, each term, than it had at the last inspection, although these do not show precisely the skills pupils need to learn. Teachers in each year group get together at the end of the year to compile a record of these assessments for the whole year group. The school uses the full range of standard and non-standard tests from when the pupils enter school up to the standard assessments tests in Year 6. Well kept individual pupil's files containing the results of these tests are passed on to teachers as the pupils move up the school. The school uses assessments well to put pupils in appropriate groups so that they can be taught with other pupils of similar ability. Annual reports to parents about their children are satisfactory, though very general in their comments. Pupils are well supported in their personal development and assessments are made of their progress, along with the academic assessments.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 40 Parents are happy with what the school does for their children and their views are favourable. In particular, they feel that they are comfortable approaching the school with any problems, confirming that the school indeed has an open-door policy. A significant proportion of parents who answered the questionnaire are less satisfied about certain areas. Some are not happy with the amount of homework their children receive. Some do not feel that the school provides an interesting range of activities out of school and some do not feel that they are well informed about how their children are getting on. Inspection evidence shows that parents' negative views are unfounded, except that reports to parents do not tell them much about how their children could improve. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting were quite happy about the information they receive and had few concerns.
- 41 The school sends out good quality information to parents. Some is particularly good, such as the formal documentation in the prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents. Parents receive weekly newsletters that provide them with regular reminders of dates and events and anything else that the school wishes to bring to their attention. There are plenty of formal opportunities for parents to come into school to find out how their children are doing and pupils' annual reports to parents are satisfactory. The school has experimented with using homework diaries as a form of home/school communication but, although parents have signed these, teachers do not encourage the pupils to make sufficient use of them for them to be useful. Parents are made very welcome in school. The school has provided a comfortable room in which they can meet and where they can find a full range of information about the school. The school involves the parents of pupils with special educational needs well in their annual reviews.
- 42 The involvement of parents in the work of the school is good. Parents like to come in to special assemblies when their children are involved and support the school through a range of learning activities. The parent/teacher association raises funds that are used well by the school. The association has some good ideas for enjoyable events to involve parents and children, such as the "Teddy Bears' Picnic". One imaginative use of the money raised from events such as the summer fair has been to bring in people to train the pupils in traditional games at lunchtime. Too many parents take

their children away from school on holiday during term time and this means that they do not receive the full education they are entitled to.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 43 The headteacher and deputy headteacher are an excellent team providing a clear direction for improvement with enthusiasm and careful strategic planning. The overall leadership and management is very good. As a result, the school has many very good features and has made good improvement since the last inspection despite significant staff changes. They receive very good support from the subject leaders and other senior staff, who fulfil their roles with enthusiasm. The governing body fulfils its role very well.
- 44 The headteacher leads through careful planning, very good management systems and strong financial procedures. She has very high expectations of all staff and provides strong structures to enable them to fulfil their roles. She knows staff and pupils well through a good range of monitoring procedures. This enables her to manage this large school effectively. The deputy headteacher contributes significantly to the success of the school through full involvement in strategic planning, monitoring and enthusiastic and very good teaching. There is very good delegation of responsibilities to subject leaders and for temporary development posts. This is achieved by clear job descriptions supported by systems for monitoring and evaluating achievement. Staff are given significant responsibility for financial management of their area and reasonable time is allocated to manage this. As a result, the professional development of staff is very good and has led to many promotions to senior posts in other schools. The excellent staff handbook provides a framework for developing and improving all aspects of the schools' work.
- 45 The subject leaders for English, mathematics and science fulfil their responsibilities very well. The priority given to these subjects is very high and the subject leaders respond with enthusiasm. For example, they use time and funds well to evaluate the teaching and learning in their subjects thoroughly through direct observations and analysis of work. They produce detailed reports suggesting areas for improvement, such as the development of procedures to assess pupils' progress in English. They make sure that the teachers have good quality resources for teaching and give good guidance on their use. The subject leaders respond quickly to weaknesses that are identified in the monitoring. For example, a significant strength of teaching in science is the consistency of high quality planning for pupils' investigation and recording skills, which turned round weaknesses in these areas. Other subject leaders are also effective. For example, the loss of a music specialist on the staff meant that the school needed to improve the knowledge and understanding of all staff, and this has been achieved well.
- 46 The governing body is very involved in the school and shaping the direction it takes. Commitment to improvement is very high. There are two full governing body meetings a term, which is more than is normally expected. These are well-structured meetings allowing time to be focused on the school's identified needs as well as initiatives and communications from external sources, such as the local education authority. The headteacher provides a very detailed report on all aspects of the school's work. This includes regular reports from subject leaders and detailed analysis of tests and other monitoring procedures. The governors react quickly to any concerns and devote energy to their resolution. For example, the staff changes over the last two years meant that the personnel committee met almost every month. The governors discuss issues in depth and make useful suggestions for improvement.

This provides good support to the headteacher in her management of staff. The finance committee meets on a monthly basis and receives good information on the school's current financial situation. They are guided extremely well in financial issues by the headteacher. This enables the governors to manage the finances well and to assign funds where they are needed most. Individual governors are linked to different subject areas and they take these responsibilities seriously. They meet twice a term with subject leaders to discuss the progress in their subjects or areas. The governors linked to special educational needs and other issues for inclusion are very well informed. They actively seek improvements to the provision, such as dedicated space for pupils with emotional or behavioural difficulties to withdraw to if necessary.

- 47 The school's self evaluation and analysis and use of information is very good. There is a wide range of assessments and tests used for English and mathematics. Subject leaders evaluate them in detail and the headteacher monitors closely the overall patterns of progress. She produces graphs and charts to show the strengths and weaknesses in the progress made by each year group in these areas. This is translated into steps for action and targets for improvements for each year group. These are used well in the school improvement plan so that, in all practical cases, the criteria for success are accurately measurable. The headteacher also gathers the views of all members of the school community, such as parents and pupils through questionnaires and regular discussions.
- 48 There is good management of special educational needs. Teachers are fully involved in assessing pupils' abilities and planning for their needs. The funds available for pupils with a statement of special educational needs are used well to ensure that there are good levels of trained adult support. The needs of the pupils are more effectively met than they were at the last inspection because staff understanding is much greater and there has been a good concentration on improving this aspect. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides good support, particularly in ways of managing challenging behaviour. However, time available has not yet been used for systematic monitoring to make sure practice is of the highest standard. Resources are very good and support staff make a significant contribution to the achievement of these pupils.
- 49 The management of pupils who are gifted and talented is good. Pupils are clearly identified in teachers' planning and work is prepared for them. The co-ordinator is closely monitoring the development of this area and identifying further opportunities for pupils. The school was selected to make a visit to China to research gifted and talented pupils because of their good work in these areas.
- 50 There is a co-ordinator for out-of-school activities who not only manages the administration so that there is effective use of staff and accommodation, but also actively seeks involvement from the wider community. As a result, staff feel valued and the school is able to provide rich opportunities for pupils.
- 51 The induction of new teachers and other staff is very well managed. The co-ordinator monitors progress and provides very good support. She sets realistic targets for newly qualified teachers to meet and ensures the resources and time are available for them to succeed.
- 52 Staff are deployed well. There is a very strong team structure and team leaders are part of the management system. They play a significant role in ensuring continuity in planning and the development of teaching and learning. As with subject leaders they have significant financial responsibilities and ensure the school is giving good value.

As a result of this teamwork the expectations on pupils are uniformly high and basic skills in almost all subjects are very well taught. There are many opportunities for staff to take initiative and contribute to improvement. This has been a significant factor in minimising the negative impact of staff changes, which have effected almost all year groups teams. Resources are good and maintained well. The accommodation makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning. The school has specialist areas such as music and ICT areas, a very good and well used library and a parents' room. There are spacious grounds, which are very well used at lunch-time and play times as well as for physical education.

- 53 The school has very clearly defined aims that are based on the development of the whole child. Through skilful management and enthusiastic leadership these are effectively achieved. As a result of the very good leadership and management, the school gives good value for money and is very effective.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 54 In order to further improve the standards and quality of education the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- plan opportunities for pupils in all subjects to further extend the regular use of information and communication technology in their learning.¹
(Paragraphs: 8; 23; 28; 45; 80; 97; 114; 131 & 140)

In addition to the above key issue the school should consider the following for inclusion in its action plan:

- refine assessment in the foundation subjects; (paragraph 39)
- improve the consistency of marking. (Paragraphs: 24; 80 & 118)

¹ This has been identified by the school as an area for improvement

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	97
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	38

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	24	40	31	1	0	0
Percentage	1	25	41	32	1	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	474
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	54

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	95

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	24
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	23

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2

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	41	29	70

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	39	39	39
	Girls	27	28	27
	Total	66	67	66
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (90)	96 (94)	94 (94)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	39	39	41
	Girls	28	27	27
	Total	67	66	68
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (93)	94 (94)	97 (93)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	34	36	70

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	24	34
	Girls	30	27	33
	Total	54	51	67
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (87)	73 (85)	96 (96)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	27	26	33
	Girls	32	29	34
	Total	59	55	67
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (86)	79 (87)	96 (96)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	-
Black – African heritage	-
Black – other	-
Indian	-
Pakistani	-
Bangladeshi	-
Chinese	2
White	416
Any other minority ethnic group	-

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	-	-
Black – African heritage	-	-
Black – other	-	-
Indian	-	-
Pakistani	-	-
Bangladeshi	-	-
Chinese	-	-
White	2	-
Other minority ethnic groups	2	-

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	19.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.3
Average class size	26.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	221

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	26

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	960,932
Total expenditure	983,558
Expenditure per pupil	1,964
Balance brought forward from previous year	50,037
Balance carried forward to next year	27,411

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	4
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	525
Number of questionnaires returned	184

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	47	41	7	5	0
My child is making good progress in school.	41	49	5	4	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	28	60	5	2	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	51	15	7	6
The teaching is good.	37	53	4	2	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	31	48	17	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	33	2	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	45	3	1	3
The school works closely with parents.	22	63	10	1	4
The school is well led and managed.	36	50	4	2	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	53	4	2	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	40	17	5	18

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

- 55 Children attend the Nursery on a part-time basis until they enter the reception classes, when they attend full-time. When they start school, their attainment is broadly in line with that expected for their age. However, a significant number of children have poor speaking skills on entry to the school. Children make good progress overall and the majority achieve the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. They exceed the Early Learning Goals in the mathematical, communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional areas of learning. Progress is currently better in the reception classes than it is in the Nursery.
- 56 Provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is good. Teachers plan activities that give the children experiences in all the areas of learning recommended for children of this age. Children with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets and those with English as an additional language make very good progress in gaining English language skills. The quality of teaching is good overall. The very good teaching seen in the Nursery at the time of the last inspection has not been maintained. Two of the three teachers in the Foundation Stage have been absent for six months this year and this has affected the progress younger children make. The Foundation Stage is appropriately led. Teachers and teaching assistants plan and work very well together as a team. The teaching assistants support children's learning very well and work effectively in all three classes. Planning clearly focuses on the Early Learning Goals, although some activities in the Nursery do not have a clearly defined purpose. Assessment records are in place. These link closely to the Early Learning goals but there is little evidence to show how these are used to inform planning and to move children's learning on. Much of the written assessment lists what children have experienced in their learning rather than identifying the difficulties children experience. This does not make a significant contribution to children's learning and progress.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 57 The level of personal, social and emotional development of the majority of children when they start school is satisfactory. Teaching in this area is good and their very good relationships with adults enable them to make good progress. By the time they reach Year 1, they exceed the Early Learning Goals in this area of their development.
- 58 Children are very settled in their nursery group and have the confidence to talk to adults and visitors. They understand the need to take turns when they enthusiastically play simple team games on the outside play area, very well supported by the nursery teaching assistant. They co-operate and relate well to one another. The teacher and teaching assistants relate well to children and encourage talk and discussion. Children move independently from one activity to another. In reception, they share their experiences with others and really enjoy the moment when they find shapes in the slime tray, and successfully describe them for their partner to guess the name of the shape. During shared time, activities, such as making play dough, mental mathematics and circle time, give opportunities for participation in a group setting. However, in all three classes, often the groups are too large. Less confident children find it quite threatening, particularly when asked to contribute a sentence about people who help them. There are sufficient adults for children to be given more

opportunities to work in smaller groups, to enable them to feel secure and be able to contribute their ideas. Children's behaviour is good. They get on well together and are beginning to work well in their construction activities and in their physical education lessons. They concentrate and listen carefully when the midwife comes to talk to them about her job but do not understand the need to put up their hands when answering teachers, and need many reminders not to call out. Younger children show high levels of co-operation when they work and play together in the 'doctor's surgery' role play area. They stay in role well as the 'patient and doctor' and are very keen, particularly in the reception classes, to involve visitors in their role-play. All reception children stay on task for extended periods of time. They confidently access their own materials, know where everything is and clear away well.

Communication, language and literacy

- 59 On entry, a significant number of children have below average skills in speaking. The good teaching overall means that they make good progress and this enables them to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. Children have good opportunities to develop their speaking skills through role-play in the 'doctor's surgery' in all three classes. They use appropriate language, for example, "Is that better? The bandage will stop it hurting" and "You are the patient and have to read a magazine until it's your turn." However, opportunities are missed in the Nursery to introduce children to new vocabulary, when talking about the midwife's visit. Children in circle time explain clearly what makes them happy and some more able children confidently extend their explanations. In circle time, they clearly understand that they only speak when they hold Lenny the puppet and listen carefully to the contributions of others.
- 60 The Nursery environment is not particularly stimulating in relation to literacy development. The majority of children recognise their own name when it is written and identify correctly the first letter sound and name. Some children write their name without the help of their name card. Provision is made for children to develop the early stages of emerging writing but there is little evidence to show that the more able children have opportunities to extend their writing skills. In reception classes, children form their letters well when writing. They write simple sentences to describe animals. The more able children find information in non-fiction books about people who help them and write, in sentences, about what they have found. A teaching assistant supports this work very well. This writing shows good letter formation and the majority of words are spelt correctly. These children are beginning to use capital letters and full stops with some degree of accuracy. The more able children also identify and write accurately the middle sound in words such as 'mug', 'cup' and 'hat.' They also successfully write on the computer their own versions of the stories of 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' and 'The Bear Hunt'.
- 61 When children listen to stories, they know the stories well, are keen to contribute their own ideas. Children in the reception classes all read aloud well together. Appropriate storybooks are selected in reception classes to support phonic work. For example, 'Polar Bear, polar bear, what do you see?' was used well to encourage children to think about the sounds made by the animals. They suggested appropriate sounds and the majority of children could sound these out correctly. The less able children also succeeded, in a small group, with good support from the teaching assistant. Most children recognise the first and last sounds of high frequency words and are beginning to identify the middle sound in a three-letter word. Good practical activities support this learning well. For example, all children have cards and objects when working in a circle. The teacher identifies the sound 'e' and children hold up their

cards if they have this sound in the middle of their word. The majority of children are successful and others achieve this with good support from teacher assistants.

- 62 Children in nursery and reception classes enjoy looking at books. They turn the pages from right to left and enjoy sharing books with adults. The majority of children in Reception read individually with increasing confidence. The more able children are confident, fluent readers. There is little hesitation in their reading and they read easily words such as 'pointed', 'couldn't', 'scarecrow' and 'glowed'. They use punctuation and context well to read with expression, for example, "Oh! No you can't!" and clearly show their pleasure when sharing books. These children show a good understanding of phonics and use these well, where necessary, to support their reading. They understand the meaning of author and illustrator and that these names are on the front cover of the book. The less able children are enthusiastic about reading, and enjoy books. Their phonic knowledge is developing but they still find it difficult to build three- and four-letter words. In their library time, all the children in Reception look at non-fiction books. They know that a non-fiction book 'doesn't tell a story' and that it has a contents page. Children explain accurately that the index 'is in alphabetical order and at the back of the book'. A small group of children help to put the books away. With good support from a teaching assistant, they are learning how books are organised by the colour on the spine and how to find different books,

Mathematical development

- 63 Children make good progress in this area of their learning and exceed the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. Teaching is satisfactory in the Nursery and children make satisfactory progress. All the children count numbers from 1 to 5 and a small number understand 'one more than' and 'one less than'. Children thread beads, ordering these correctly by shape, colour and size. They work in small groups with the teacher to match the correct number to six sets of objects on their number cards. They select a number card and count the objects in each section of their card to find if the number matches the objects. These children are not grouped by ability and one child found the activity very easy to achieve. The more able children are not challenged sufficiently to enable them to successfully extend their mathematical skills. Opportunities for further developing their understanding of number are not maximised in the range of activities provided. Number is not reinforced through exciting displays or by using number cards to show children how many can work in each of the activity areas.
- 64 In the reception classes, the teaching is good, often very good, and children make good progress as they develop a wider mathematical vocabulary. They follow a more formal lesson structure to prepare them for the numeracy hour in Year 1. In the mental starter, the majority count in twos to 20 and beyond. They understand the pattern of counting in twos and identify this on their number square. In the main mathematics activity, children discuss ideas relating to sorting objects and children put them into different sets. They explain clearly what is wrong when the teacher puts a shape in the wrong set, and express clearly why they put their own shapes in a particular set. Children show a good understanding of 'tall', 'short', 'largest', 'biggest', 'the same' and 'different'. They know that two 1p coins are worth the same as a 2p coin and that 20x1p coins make 20p. Less able children match coins but are not able to work out the equivalent value. They find it difficult to identify 'longer' and 'shorter' objects. As a result of good children in both reception classes sort squares, triangles, rectangles and squares quickly by colour and shape. They watch very carefully the practical work in whole class groups. They listen carefully and contribute well, the majority working quickly and accurately. They know two-dimensional shapes well and

are developing an understanding of three-dimensional shapes, such as a cylinder, sphere and cube. The more able children sort three-dimensional shapes by colour and shape correctly and add the numbers in each set. They record this well, showing a good understanding of numbers to twenty. Good use is made of the slime tray to encourage children to find a shape and describe it carefully to their partner, so that they can recognise it correctly. Time is used well to challenge children to work quickly, and they respond appropriately. They sort themselves by the colour of their eyes and hair and count accurately the numbers of children in each set.

- 65 Teachers differentiate carefully the work children do to ensure that the needs of all children are met. This ensures that all children have equal opportunities and achieve success.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 66 Children make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world and, by the time they reach Year 1, achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area of their development. The theme throughout the Foundation Stage, during the inspection, was 'People who help us'. Good use is made of visitors to give children first-hand experience of the work of the health visitor and the midwife. They extend their understanding and knowledge of caring for a new baby when a mum brings her baby into the Nursery. Children sit very quietly and are spellbound as they watch the mother change the baby's nappy. They begin to understand the difference between tap and boiled water. They ask intelligent questions, for example, "How do you wind a baby?" Good links are made across all the areas of learning. Children have sound opportunities to use their knowledge of babies as they wash dolls in the water tray. In the Nursery, they observe a model of a skeleton and know the names of many parts of the body, including the skull. Good explanations by the nursery teacher extend their understanding of the jaw and spine, and children are encouraged to feel their back and find their own spine. Their speaking and listening skills are developed well when they talk about their work in the construction area. For example, children make tunnels and bridges for their cars and explain, "That's not a bridge. They're guns to shoot the spaceship down. I've got a gun on my car as well". The 'children's ward' role-play area offers sound opportunities for children to be 'doctors' and 'patients'. They use pretend scissors, to cut bandages, and a stethoscope, showing a developing awareness of the appropriate use of equipment.
- 67 Reception children also have good opportunities to develop their understanding of 'People who help us'. Foundation Stage assemblies are linked closely to this theme and good links are made to Jesus and how he healed the blind man. The teacher explained clearly how children can help each other and their teachers by sharing toys, being friends and working hard. Careful thought was given to the words of the prayers to reinforce these ideas. Children know that when the candle is lit 'they are in a place of worship.' Role-play is extended in Reception and children clearly enjoy being 'the doctor or 'the patient'. They stay in role for considerable periods of time and keenly involve any adults and visitors who are around. Magazines are provided for patients while they wait to see the doctor but adults are advised to 'sit on the larger chairs to wait, as the little plastic chairs are too small and not strong enough!' Children find information about 'People who help us' from a good selection of books and write sentences about what they have found. Very good questioning by teachers and teaching assistants enables them to identify similarities and differences in their 'Now and Then' books, and when looking at photographs of themselves as babies and as they are now.

Physical development

- 68 Children make satisfactory progress in their physical development and achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area of their development by the time they reach Year 1. The secure, nursery outdoor play area provides children with a range of opportunities to develop their physical skills. The children make satisfactory use of a very good range of small and large play apparatus. However, learning opportunities are lost because of little interaction between the teacher and the children to help them to explore different uses of the equipment. Much more effective interaction takes place when the teaching assistant plays simple team games with half of the children and they begin to understand the simple rules of team games. They really enjoy balancing beans bags successfully on a bat and balancing quoits on their heads when they run to the marker and back. Children are beginning to understand that they go to the back of the line after they have had their turn. In the hall, they develop their climbing skills well when they climb a ladder, and climb up, across and down the climbing frame. Children show good balancing skills when they use different ways to travel across a bench and think of good ways to move across the mats. Good demonstrations by the nursery teacher enable children to vary their movements. They are still not using space with confidence and bunch together in the centre of the hall. This restricts the movements they can make. They work very quietly and listen carefully to the teacher's instruction.
- 69 Children in the reception classes also have very good opportunities to play in a secure outdoor area. They take turns to use the nursery area with its wide range of equipment. When children work in the hall, the focus is to develop their jumping and hopping skills. They work well in pairs, using skipping ropes to identify their space, and move round them successfully in different directions. They jump over them with their feet together, bending their knees. The class teacher uses children well to demonstrate ideas to others. Other children watch carefully and try hard to achieve good jumps. They know well the routines in the hall and fold their ropes in four when putting them away. They remember that they were learning to roll balls accurately in the previous lesson and demonstrate this well. A good demonstration by the class teacher enables them to hold the ball correctly, swing their arms and bend their knees as they release the ball to their partner. There is a very quiet atmosphere during their lesson. Children concentrate hard and successfully roll the ball in a straight line. The teaching assistant works very well with the teacher and contributes significantly to the progress children make. The development of children's personal and social development skills are an integral part of the lesson as they work in pairs and fours, and are encouraged to work well together.
- 70 Children's fine motor skills are developed through a range of activities. They use rolling pins and cutters when working with play dough. They show good pencil and chalk control when creating white skeletons on black paper and sketching bowls of fruit. Children have opportunities to use scissors and are developing sound skills in using the mouse and keyboard when working at the computer.

Creative development

- 71 Children make satisfactory progress in this area of their development and achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. Although provision is made for them to use crayons, pencils, glue and paint on a regular basis, the Nursery learning environment does not always stimulate them to want to express their own ideas in their creative work. Specific tasks are set for children to develop their observational skills. For example, they look carefully at a model of a skeleton and draw their own

skeleton using white chalk. These drawings are of good quality and the children take care in their work. Skills of painting and brush control are encouraged, but the painting activity offers little scope for discovery or use of paint or colour. Children using play dough have good concentration and manipulate, cut, roll and shape the material successfully. They use these skills well to create a meal for someone who is ill in the role-play 'children's ward'.

- 72 In Reception, children look carefully at individual pieces of fruit and use ready-mixed paint well to create pictures of these, showing the correct size and colour of the fruits. They study a fruit painting by Cezanne in order to see how an artist paints fruit. They look carefully at a bowl filled with fruit and discuss whether they can see the whole fruit or whether some of it is hidden by other pieces. They know that 'the banana is behind the pear' and that the apple 'is in front of the pear.' This is a difficult concept for young children to understand but, in their pencil sketches, they try hard to achieve this, with pleasing results. Teaching assistants support the children very well in this activity. They extend their drawing skills in other areas of the curriculum. For example, they use pencils in their literacy lessons to sketch objects before they identify the correct middle phoneme to complete their word. They use sketch books to record some of their work but the work in these is limited.
- 73 The children in Reception enjoy singing 'The Elephant' song. They stand straight and are keen to do their best when the teacher has a singing contest to find out which reception class sings best. Both classes sing with enthusiasm, with the nursery children supporting them. They have some difficulty with pitch but make up for this by their enthusiasm and the way in which they really enjoy their singing! They all take part, know the words and add stamping and trunk movements in the appropriate place as they sing. No music making using instruments was seen during the inspection.

ENGLISH

- 74 Standards are above average in reading, writing and speaking and listening for Year 2 and Year 6. This represents an improvement in standards in speaking for seven year olds since the previous inspection, and mirrors the situation in the other areas. The dip in standards in English in national tests in 2001 at the end of Year 6 has been corrected. The school's results are improving at a similar rate to the national trend but, apart from 2001, have been consistently above the national average.
- 75 Speaking and listening skills are above average for both seven and 11 year olds. As many pupils enter school with below average speaking skills, this represents good progress. This is because pupils are given many opportunities to join in discussions and are often expected to explain to other members of their class what they have been doing during lessons. Teachers pay good attention to developing listening and speaking skills. Year 2 pupils, for example, responded well to the challenge of reading different parts of the nonsense poem, '*Ning, Nang, Nong*' by Spike Milligan. They listened very carefully for their turn to speak and tried very hard to say the correct words as the title changed to '*Nong, Ning, Nang!*' then '*Nang, Nong Ning*' as it was repeated. Teachers take care that pupils pronounce letters such as '*h*' correctly and do not speak while resting their chins on their hands. Time is set aside in the timetable for teachers to develop pupils' listening skills. Teachers present good role models when reading the stories of Dick King-Smith and poems about recycling rubbish, showing how the reader can build up excitement in the way they read, keep the attention of the audience and make their meaning clear. This approach is built on

in later years so that a higher attaining nine-year-old pupil was able to work out the meaning of 'sarcastic', saying that it meant the person was 'stating the obvious'. Pupils with special educational needs in the same age group learn to answer in complete sentences without being reminded to do so by the teacher. All these strategies combine to give pupils confidence so that, by the age of ten, pupils join in a vigorous debate to decide if sentences contain non-standard English. Good speaking and listening skills are promoted in other subjects, such as music lessons, where pupils are trained to listen carefully to notes and rhythms. By the age of eleven, pupils explain very effectively the strategies for working out place value in mathematics.

- 76 Since the previous inspection, standards in reading have remained above those normally expected for pupils aged seven and eleven. Pupils make good progress with their reading. By the age of eleven, higher attaining and some average attaining pupils read fluently. Some pupils stumble over words when they try to read too quickly but most take note of punctuation to help them make sense of the writing. Most pupils know a large number of words. They use good strategies to work out how to pronounce difficult words, splitting words into short syllables, identifying shorter words within the unknown word and using their knowledge of the sounds of letters. This enables them to read and pronounce words such as 'chlorofluorocarbons'. By the age of seven, the most proficient readers show many of the skills of older pupils, reading expressively and using punctuation to help their reading flow. Average attaining readers sometimes lack confidence when faced with unfamiliar words but try to split them into syllables or to work out the word from the context of the story. Sometimes these pupils do not pause in the correct place and this means that their reading is disjointed. Some lower attaining pupils do not show much enjoyment in reading and say they have few books at home. Pupils of all ages enjoy the work of a wide range of authors. Pupils in Year 2 are particularly keen on Dick King-Smith, one of whose books they have recently studied closely, but they also enjoy reading books by Colin McNaughton, Mick Butterworth and Mick Inkpen. Roald Dahl, Jacqueline Wilson and JK Rowling are favourites with pupils in the juniors but their tastes run to books by authors as varied as Enid Blyton, Charles Dickens, CS Lewis and Belle Mooney. They remember many of the stories they have read and describe in detail their favourite parts. One 11-year-old pupil likes fairy stories and 'more serious books', where he can lose himself in the mystery of the story. Many pupils are members of the local library and a significant number make good use of the fiction section in the school library. Good teaching through the National Literacy Strategy means that pupils understand terms such as 'author', 'illustrator' and 'glossary'. Lessons taken in the library mean that, by the time they leave school, most pupils can find books using the simplified library classification system. They search for information in the glossary, and the contents and index pages. Pupils learn techniques such as skimming and scanning to help them find information quickly and some pupils refer to titles and sub-titles to speed up their searches. Teachers reinforce reading techniques during literacy lessons on the theme of global warming when they ask pupils to explain the implications of what they have read. Year 2 pupils learn to categorise books in information and communication technology lessons when they sort them in a database by author, genre, publisher and title. Pupils use their research skills to find out information for history topics.
- 77 Standards in writing are above average by the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils write for a range of purposes and teachers ensure that they practise their writing skills in other subjects, particularly in history. By the time they leave school at the age of eleven, pupils make good progress with their writing. They plan their work well, revising what they write before producing a finished piece of work. Higher attaining pupils write well. Both they and average attaining pupils plan their work in paragraphs

and use punctuation skilfully. They use commas to separate the clauses in complex sentences and punctuate direct and reported speech correctly. Pupils build on lessons in earlier classes to choose words carefully for effect and to set the scene. In Year 3, they begin to use interesting words such as *determined* and *commotion*. By Year 6, a higher attaining pupil wrote, "*He groped his way along, his eyes adjusting to the faint light filtering through the tiles*", while a lower attaining pupil wrote, "*My heart was pounding and my legs felt like jelly*". Pupils write in a variety of styles. They write poetry, including Japanese *haiku*. Pupils compose persuasive letters about the destruction of rain forests, and include strategies such as bias and rhetorical questions in their letters. Following a visit to the open-air museum at Beamish, pupils put together short booklets about their visit. In so doing, they benefit greatly from lessons when they are taught the meaning of subordinate clauses, connectives and embedded sentences, and how to use them. By the age of seven, pupils work at higher levels than expected for their age. Higher attaining pupils produce well-constructed letters, separated into paragraphs. They develop the theme of their letters and the plots of stories well. Average attaining pupils put sentences together well but sometimes find it difficult to keep the plot of stories going to the end. Lower attaining pupils are less proficient, often writing short sentences, many of which start with 'It', 'Then', 'The' and 'I'. Very good teaching ensures that pupils match pronouns and verbs and learn unusual plurals such as *person/people*. Pupils try to make their writing interesting. An example was seen of an average attaining pupil ending sentences early with a series of dots, to build suspense. They use words in capital letters to emphasise feelings and introduce alliteration, such as '*one sensational, sizzling summer's day...*' to add interest.

- 78 The standard of handwriting is good throughout the school. Most pupils take care with the way they present their work. They regularly practise forming their letters and, by the age of seven, pupils start to join letters. Many pupils develop this into a fluent and legible style of handwriting by the time they leave the school. Spelling is good throughout the school. Pupils are taught to build words using individual letter sounds and the sound made by groups of letters.
- 79 Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress. They are provided with work that matches their needs and are encouraged to join in lessons. Teachers use classroom assistants well to help these pupils with work that they find difficult. Similarly, pupils who find it hard to settle to work and are easily distracted are encouraged in their efforts by the assistants. All pupils, whatever their ability, are given equal opportunities to join in lessons.
- 80 Teaching is good throughout the school and there is some very good teaching. The quality of teaching results in pupils making good progress and, with the exception of the results in 2001 for Year 6 pupils, has maintained the high standards in national test results. Teachers make very good use of the introduction to lessons to ensure that pupils know what they have to do. By the end of one introduction, for example, Year 2 pupils had shown how much they knew about using commas to separate lists, and understood how they were going to develop their knowledge. A feature of lessons is the good way teachers use questions to find out what pupils know, how well they are learning and to extend their understanding. In a very good lesson in Year 5, the teacher's questions made pupils look very carefully at an extract from a book, 'The Borrowers Afield', so that they could turn it into a play for younger pupils. In the best lessons, teachers show they have high expectations of pupils. In a class of seven year olds, pupils who were not paying full attention were kept alert when the teacher said, "I bet X knows the answer to this one." However, teachers are sensitive to the needs of individual pupils. In a class of ten year olds, the teacher made sure that less

confident pupils were given the opportunity to join in the lesson. Teachers plan lessons well and take account of the needs of pupils of different abilities. They assess the success of what they have taught. This led one Year 6 teacher to amend her planning to provide harder work for higher attaining pupils. Pupils use their good word processing skills in English and more ways are being explored to raise standards through the use of ICT. The marking of work is inconsistent. It is better towards the ends of the infants and juniors when teachers tell pupils what they have done well and how they can improve their work.

- 81 The management of English is very good. The subject manager has put good strategies in place to check planning and learning. She makes good use of funds available to her in order to spend time in lessons in other classes, to see how well the subject is taught. As well as national tests at the end of years 2 and 6, pupils take other tests at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5. The results of these are used to set targets for individual pupils. The analysis of national tests carried out by the local authority enables the school to identify areas of the curriculum where pupils are having difficulties, and the school uses this information to plan work. The subject manager checks pupils' books and teachers' planning each term, and produces a report. A recent report highlighted weaknesses in the assessment of pupils' work because teachers' were not building on pupils' skills and knowledge. Because of this finding, teachers are now expected to grade each piece of pupil's writing against National Curriculum levels. Teachers are helped in this because the school has produced a marking guideline, which gives examples of the National Curriculum levels. However, teachers have no guidance in the type of comments they should make on pupils' work or how they should approach the correction of spelling errors and handwriting. This contributes to the inconsistencies seen in marking, particularly when supply teachers are employed. The school has good resources to support work during the literacy hour. The library is a well-furnished and comfortable room and is well stocked with both fiction and non-fiction books. Until recently, a part-time librarian was employed and the school is still benefiting from the organisation she put in place. Arrangements are made for a range of activities to support the English curriculum. Pupils visit local theatres and cinemas, and companies of actors perform in school. Visiting authors, storytellers and staff from the local library talk to pupils. During the annual book week, pupils dress as their favourite characters from stories and local people, including the police, firemen and nurses, read stories to them. The local newspaper, the Sunderland Echo, organises activities based around newspapers. Given the enthusiasm of the subject manager and the emphasis the school places on raising standards, the school is in a good position to maintain and improve standards in English.

MATHEMATICS

- 82 Pupils enter the school with standards in mathematics that are generally average for five year olds. By the time they are seven, and when they leave the school at eleven, standards are above the levels expected for these ages, with a good percentage of pupils who achieve highly. Although this is similar to the standards found during the time of the previous inspection, the breadth and balance of the curriculum and the quality of teaching have improved.
- 83 The high standards are a direct result of good, and often very good, teaching, and of pupils who enjoy their lessons and are keen to learn. This is very noticeable in the effective use of the National Numeracy Strategy, which gives pupils a carefully structured session of mental and written mathematics each day. The school groups most pupils according to their ability and ensures that those with special educational

needs (sometimes with specific support) make good progress towards their mathematical targets. This setting is effective. Work in most classes is matched effectively to the pupils' identified abilities and extends the learning of all, including the higher-attaining pupils. In a number of lessons observed, pupils were able to think mathematically, handling number problems in a natural, confident manner. The great strength in mathematics is this confidence which, coupled with the lively enthusiasm observed, builds very successfully on what the pupils already know. There is no noticeable difference over time in attainment between boys and girls.

- 84 Most pupils enter Year 1 having achieved their early learning goals in mathematical development. All teachers ensure that pupils build well on their early work. Pupils develop effectively the use of accurate mathematical language and work practically to solve problems. The high value placed on different strategies is a priority throughout the school and, as a result, the majority of pupils confidently explain the reasons for their answers. In one lively lesson at Year 2, pupils were reminded that, 'an investigation means that there may be more than one way to do it'.
- 85 All aspects of the mathematics curriculum are taught effectively. There was less work seen that involved the use of information and communication technology, and the subject manager has highlighted this as an area for development.
- 86 All rooms display key words for the class, and many of these displays value and extend work done by pupils. These include shapes around the classroom and pictograms of favourite things in Year 2, pentominoes in Year 5 and, in Year 6, different methods used to calculate long multiplication and division. Mathematics is used effectively across the curriculum. Examples include geography in Year 2, where pupils use Venn diagrams to compare animals in Britain and Africa; Year 3, where pupils construct symmetrical patterns in art and measure in science; and Year 6, where graphs are used to show the rates at which different substances dissolve.
- 87 The effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy provides a clear structure for the teaching of mathematics. All lessons begin with a short mental arithmetic session and end with a structured summing-up session. This enables pupils to understand what they have learned and gives teachers a good knowledge of what the pupils understand. They use this knowledge very effectively to reinforce their teaching and to improve standards.
- 88 Pupils identified as 'gifted' are generally given work that extends their learning very successfully and, in one excellent lesson in Year 6, these pupils worked enthusiastically on a very challenging task. Ongoing assessment is used effectively during lessons to evaluate progress and planning is generally adapted when necessary. However, the quality of marking is inconsistent and, although teachers' comments recognise what pupils know and understand, some pupils' books contain insufficient comments to help the pupils to improve further. Presentation of work is usually good.
- 89 The quality of learning and achievement in mathematics reflects the high quality of the teaching. This is generally good throughout the infants and very good in the juniors, with the quality of teaching ranging from satisfactory to excellent. This reflects the high quality of provision for pupils across the whole ability range. Teachers use a variety of methods to reinforce and consolidate previous skills. All teachers use questions carefully to ensure that pupils give logical reasons for the problem-solving strategies they use. This was a strength in all lessons seen. A number of lessons seen during the inspection illustrate how this effective questioning helps to ensure

good progress. Questions such as 'Why?', 'How can we check?', 'What strategies have we been using?', 'Has anyone done anything differently?' and, at the end of a lesson, 'Do you feel we've met our objectives for today,' reinforce both the different methods pupils use to reach an answer and what they have actually learned.

- 90 All teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject. They plan work carefully and use questions effectively to extend pupils' thinking. All teachers make good use of formal and informal opportunities for pupils to practise their number skills. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning and achievement. Homework is set regularly, is marked and provides reinforcement and extension to the work covered in class.
- 91 Teachers are good role models in the way they value pupils' contributions, and relationships are very good. This increases the pupils' self-respect, their respect for each other's contributions and their co-operation skills. It ensures that they behave well in lessons, concentrate hard and enjoy their work. The consequence of this high quality teaching is that the pupils' attitude to mathematics is invariably very good. Most pupils enjoy the subject, and many are keen to succeed. In most lessons seen all the pupils worked hard, and many lessons buzzed with their enthusiasm.
- 92 The very effective subject management helps to ensure that teachers are confident and that all parts of the subject are covered successfully. All staff work closely, sharing and developing together, and teachers of the same age groups plan together. Lesson planning and outcomes are monitored, and some lessons have been observed. This helps to ensure high standards. The quality and quantity of resources are very good. These are used very effectively during lessons and pupils treat them with respect.

SCIENCE

- 93 Standards in science are high. A greater proportion of pupils than in most schools attain standards which are higher than expected nationally by the end of Years 2 and Year 6. Standards for eleven year olds have been maintained since the previous inspection and improved for seven year olds. The school's good performance is the result of good and thorough teaching, underpinned by very effective leadership and management of the subject.
- 94 The school has developed the subject well since the previous inspection. Teachers have adapted national guidelines for teaching science in a way that lays a firm basis for high quality planning of what pupils learn and do. As a result, pupils receive lots of interesting experiences and respond with very good attitudes to what teachers offer them. Improvements in how the school monitors the effectiveness of teaching and assesses what pupils know enables the subject leader to identify weaknesses and to build on strengths. For instance, when inconsistencies were identified between classes in how well pupils recorded their work, subsequent action raised the overall quality. The high standard of pupils' recorded work in Year 2 and Year 6 reflects their good level of scientific knowledge and skills. By the age of seven, pupils show a good understanding of the need for a *fair test* and use drawings, tables and bar charts well to present results. They make good progress as they move through the school. By the time they are eleven they use line graphs and explain conclusions well in terms of scientific knowledge and understanding.
- 95 Most of the teaching is good and is often very good. A strength of teaching is its firmly rooted experimental and investigative approach to science. As a result, pupils thoroughly enjoy the subject, are very highly motivated and learn quickly. Teachers show them how to plan and carry out investigations and to record their findings in a scientific way. Teaching in Year 2 and Year 6 is particularly thorough and strong. In lessons in Year 2 teachers gave pupils a good challenge, with work closely matched to their level of understanding. Consequently, they all learnt very quickly how to group living things according to their observable similarities and differences. Teachers maintained a scientific approach throughout and emphasised the word *observable* to keep pupils thinking along the right lines towards their objective. The work teachers set enabled higher attainers to go one step further than others, using books to research and *Venn* diagrams to record their findings. This approach throughout the school enables pupils to maintain good progress in learning to become scientists. In lessons in Year 6, pupils recognised the need to repeat observations and measurements when they investigated the effect of air resistance on falling objects. A teacher exemplified the school's approach when she encouraged pupils to record results as they were, without altering them if they appeared improbable: *The first rule of science...stick with your results*. Consequently, the results showed a reasonable reflection of a difficult investigation.
- 96 Because most teachers know the subject well, they explain what is to be done in an interesting and informative way. As a result, pupils know exactly what to do in the subsequent task. Lessons are conducted at a brisk pace, so that by the end of lessons pupils learn all of what teachers set out to teach them. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and this results in good productivity. Teachers have realistic, but high, expectations of what lower attaining pupils can do and this encourages them to do well. Teachers pay particular attention to pupils with special educational needs and, whenever support staff are available, they direct their help towards these pupils. Consequently, they make the same good progress as others. The thoroughness of recorded work in pupils' books is a reflection of the

thoroughness of teaching in most classes. Teachers are good at helping pupils to remember what they have learnt previously, so pupils consolidate their knowledge well. Teachers explain work in clear, scientific language. As a result, pupils quickly acquire new vocabulary and are very keen to use it in discussions. For instance, pupils in Year 5 explained fluently how the formation of the *umbra* and *penumbra* of shadows is affected by the position of an object in relation to the light source.

- 97 The school is aware of areas in need of development and has plans to improve them. For instance, it has correctly identified the need to develop the use of computers in classrooms to extend pupils' learning in science. The very high quality of the school's leadership in the subject gives it the capacity to continue to improve standards.

ART AND DESIGN

- 98 At the previous inspection, standards were good. Since then, standards have fallen so that, by the ages of seven and 11, attainment is in line with what is expected nationally. This is because pupils are not encouraged to observe closely enough the objects they are painting and drawing and teachers do not encourage pupils to make enough use of their sketchbooks to practise techniques and shapes.
- 99 By the end of Year 6, pupils use watercolour paints and pastel crayons to draw plants after studying the work of William Morris in their history topic on The Victorians. They use colour well to give an impression of flowers, such as the iris, but do not look closely enough at leaves. Consequently, their representations of leaf veins and the edges of leaves are immature. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 make pictures of soft drink cans in the style of Andy Warhol. In doing this, they use their sketchbooks to work out how to put the lettering on the cans, and this improves their final pictures. However, pupils do not practise to get the correct shape on the bottom of the can, which most draw as a straight line. They combine art with design and technology when they design a collage to represent a visit to Beamish Museum and use cross-stitch to create complex designs. In Year 3 and Year 4, pupils use a variety of media to produce pictures about clouds. They wrap wool round card to represent the sky, to which they will add clouds, position paper shapes in repeating cloud patterns, mix black and white paint to create different cloud colours and use a painting program on a computer to make symmetrical patterns of cloud shapes. Subtle shapes and colouring effects are achieved when pupils use string to make the outline of clouds and add details in pastel crayons.
- 100 In Years 1 and 2, pupils look carefully at the way artists such as Lowry and Degas drew figures. Year 1 pupils, for example, know that Lowry drew '*dogs with lines for legs*' and that his colours '*were not bright, they're dark*'. They recognise that many of his figures look unhappy. Year 2 pupils respond well when their teacher shows them photographs of pupils playing in the playground. They imagine that Lowry is sitting on the fence looking into the playground and use their sketchbooks well to produce sketches in the style of the artist, illustrating the many playground activities in readiness for painting a picture of the scene in a later lesson. Pupils benefit from trying out techniques in this way. Earlier work, using pencil crayons to draw fruit, suffers in comparison because pupils did not practise using pencils to achieve different shades. Consequently, the shading they produced meant that pupils were not able to represent the textures of the different fruits they studied. Year 2 pupils use a computer program well to produce attractive election posters for the school council.
- 101 Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teaching is good when teachers use questions well to make pupils think from the artist's perspective. For example, in a Year 6 class

preparing to make a collage of a visit to Beamish Museum, pupils were encouraged to look at the 2- and 3-dimensional effects and texture in work produced by a group, following a previous visit. They were challenged to take responsibility for their work. *"They are your decisions, you are in charge of the picture. Why do you think they chose those colours?"* In a good lesson with Year 2, the close observation of pupils in a photograph gave them an insight into what the artist might want to represent in the picture. For example, the teacher drew pupils' attention to a child standing on tiptoes and suggested she might be playing 'follow my leader'. Despite some good work with this class and with older pupils when they study the work of Andy Warhol, teachers do not make enough use of pupils' sketchbooks to practise and improve techniques. Paintings on display, for example the flowers supporting work on William Morris in Year 6, suggest that pupils are not given a wide enough range of paintbrushes to use. Teachers do not introduce pupils to 3-dimensional work and there is no evidence of drawing using pen and ink. However, teachers support well the work of pupils with special educational needs. The individual attention they are given enables these pupils to achieve success and make good progress. As well as linking art with history, teachers use English as the stimulus for lessons when they encourage pupils to draw book covers.

- 102 The subject makes a sound contribution to pupils' social and cultural development. Pupils listen to the ideas of others and work well together in small groups. They share equipment sensibly. Pupils study the work of artists such as Lowry, Degas, Warhol, Matisse and van Gogh, but there is no evidence that they are encouraged to work in the style of artists from non-European or white American groups. Pupils have contributed to local culture by designing plaques displayed at a local marina.
- 103 The leadership of the subject is satisfactory. Visits are arranged to local art galleries. Artists come into school to work with pupils to complete projects such as large banners. Pupils are able to attend an after-school art club. Portfolios of work are being developed that enable teachers to see what different age groups can achieve and the subject manager keeps a photographic record of art work displayed in the school. She has written a scheme of work covering a two-year cycle and produced checklists to show what pupils have studied. Teaching and teachers' planning are checked.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 104 The attainments of pupils by Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with those expected nationally. The standards seen at the last inspection have been maintained. Teaching of the subject is good and pupils make satisfactory progress. The work for design and technology is planned on a two-year cycle, and pupils have the opportunity to develop their designing and making skills through three projects each year. During the inspection no teaching was seen in the infants so the judgement is based on looking at children's work, photographs, sketchbooks and discussion with staff and pupils.
- 105 By Year 2, pupils use manufactured construction kits to make models of vehicles. They look at different vehicles and how wheels are used. Pupils understand the purpose of axles and chassis. They use this knowledge well to make their vehicles using re-cycled boxes. Good design sheets, well labelled, show clearly that pupils understand the various parts of vehicles. When they have completed their models, they evaluate their work and write about how they would change it if they made it again. One pupil commented, "If I made it again, I would make wheels out of rock," because her cardboard wheels buckled! Another suggested that she would use

smooth, plastic wheels because her model did not stand up properly. These pupils also have opportunities to look at healthy eating and, in their food technology work, the benefits of eating fruit and vegetables. They enjoyed making and eating their own selection of fruit salad.

- 106 By Year 6, pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are competent when designing, making and evaluating their models. In Years 3 and 4, pupils investigate a wide selection of breads before choosing the appropriate one to use to make their own sandwiches. They also taste a range of fillings and are surprised to find that they enjoy some they were reluctant to taste! Pupils use their sketch books well to write an evaluation of their sandwiches. A popular monster film was used well as the stimulus to develop their interest in moving monsters. Before they design and make their 'monsters', pupils learn about using air to make things move, and experiment with balloons and syringes. They write good accounts of how these mechanisms work but find it more difficult to identify where to place the mechanism on their designs. Pupils identify the materials they will need and how these materials will be joined. They work well together during their practical work, they share ideas and materials and use scissors carefully when making holes and slots in boxes. They stay on task well and are eager to achieve a successful model. In the lesson seen, there was a heavy demand on the teacher's time because pupils were unsure of how to use the pneumatic mechanism to make the mouth open. Teachers' lack of subject knowledge and confidence, when teaching this subject, meant that pupils did not understand pneumatics clearly and did not know what they had to do. Time is limited for design and technology. Therefore, it is important that the time available is used well and that the skills needed are taught carefully prior to pupils' practical work. This will ensure that pupils do not waste time and feel confident to achieve a working model.
- 107 Pupils in Years 5 and 6 visited Beamish Museum to look at a working merry-go-round. They sketched this whilst they were there and used these sketches, back in school, to design and make their own fairground ride. The three classes used a range of materials to create their models, some working with card while others used manufactured construction kits. They use their knowledge of electric circuits well when they create a circuit and link it to their model to make it go round. They achieve this successfully. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the design, make and evaluate process and explain well what 'evaluate' means. For example, they think that 'evaluation is to find out what will make it better' and 'to look at the good and bad points in the model'. Their written evaluations show a good understanding of this process and pupils give very good reasons for their comments, for example, "The main box trapped the horses so we had to move them further out." They also evaluate very successfully how they worked together in a group, and the successes and difficulties they experienced when sharing a task. In this lesson, the teaching was very good and the lesson was carefully planned. This enabled pupils to achieve a lot of well-focused work in the time available, and their evaluations were of a high standard. Well defined work was planned for less able children in order to help their recording, with very good teacher support and one pupil acting as scribe to record their discussion. The teacher was confident when teaching this subject and very clear about her focus for the lesson.
- 108 All aspects of design and technology are taught. The subject leader has a good overview of the subject across the school and supports less confident colleagues well. She has developed good questionnaires for teachers to use with pupils and has a good collection of reference books to support the units taught. Teacher's planning is monitored during the subject specific week but no opportunities are yet available to

support teachers in the classroom or to observe their teaching. The school uses a nationally agreed scheme that is extended by using units from the local education authority's scheme. Teachers plan as a key stage and work well together in this subject area. Resources are good and stored well. Apprentices from Rolls Royce worked with pupils in school on a packaging project designed to protect a component. Pupils visited the factory and, at the end of the project, were presented with a plaque that is displayed in the school's foyer.

GEOGRAPHY

- 109 Standards of attainment by pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 are in line with national expectations. This is the same as at the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress as they move through the school.
- 110 In Year 1 and Year 2, pupils begin to develop geographical knowledge, skills and understanding, both inside and outside the classroom. They develop skills of observation and recording by, for example, drawing simple maps of the route they would take from the school to the beach. More able pupils provide clear written directions that instruct the reader to, 'cross the road at the zebra crossing'. They carry out further studies into their local environment by studying people who help them, and they receive visits from Sunderland's fire service and ambulance service. They learn to make comparisons between themselves and life in Botswana. This work is particularly exciting and provides a good information base for them to understand different groups of peoples and their cultures. Literacy and numeracy skills are applied well to geographical studies. For example, pupils use Venn diagrams very effectively to categorise animals that are common or specific to England and Botswana.
- 111 In their local study unit, pupils in Year 3 draw detailed maps on which they identify key buildings, and streets for a journey between their homes and the beach. They learn about how people affect the environment in which they live, and have developed an interesting photographic archive, using the school's digital camera, of the litter near to the school. Pupils followed up this investigation by writing and sending letters of complaint to Sunderland's Environmental Department. Year 4 pupils continue to develop the school's involvement in local issues by suggesting ideas for the recycling of school waste. They conducted an interesting investigation into the effects of noise pollution on their own working environment in the school. They conclude that 'students lose their concentration because it distracts them from their work' once noise levels pass acceptable levels. Pupils in Year 5 learn about river formations and the action of a river as it flows on its journey from source to entering the sea. They show a good understanding of the effects of erosion and deposition on this journey. Year 6 pupils compare and contrast different regions of the world. They use atlases to find specific locations, and find out about climates, the minerals and crops specific to those regions.
- 112 Pupils have a positive attitude to geography and play an active part in lessons, listening well, responding to questions and asking questions of their own. They are well motivated and keen to learn about different places. Their behaviour is good and they collaborate well when working in groups.
- 113 The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 use first hand experiences effectively, using the immediate locality as an important resource to develop pupils' early investigational skills. Throughout the school, teachers are well

prepared for lessons, so pupils are able to start promptly and make good use of the time available. They briefly recall earlier work, make lesson objectives clear at the start of each lesson and, after explaining new ideas, use questions well to assess pupils' understanding and challenge their thinking. Consequently, pupils are quickly engaged in the substance of lessons and contribute their ideas because they realise what they should be learning and what is expected of them. Teachers often make links between geography and other subjects, and make effective use of skills learned elsewhere.

- 114 The subject leader is well qualified and enthusiastic to improve the curriculum and raise attainment still further. A good scheme of work has been prepared and is to be supplemented by a programme of study devised by the subject leader to develop pupils' geographical skills more systematically as they move through the school. Resources are satisfactory and are supplemented or updated each year. The school is building on the use of ICT to support learning. There is a file of moderated work, which is in the early stages of development and a recently initiated programme of monitoring to evaluate geography teaching and pupils' learning to help identify areas that could be improved and to celebrate what the school does well.

HISTORY

- 115 Attainment in history is typical of that expected of seven and eleven year olds. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.
- 116 Following a visit to Beamish Museum, pupils in Year 6 show good knowledge of the ways in which schooling differed in Victorian times from now. They express surprise at how strict the teachers were and how left-handed pupils found writing difficult when they were made to use their right hand. Pupils describe the hardships faced by young children, who had to work in coalmines, and begin to understand some of the hardships they faced. Lower attaining pupils show a weak understanding of the facilities available to miners when they write that miners had cars. Higher and average attaining pupils show better understanding of conditions faced by different levels of society. They learn about Victorian attitudes to Sundays, how Victorians behaved on the beach, the games they played and some of the inventions made during the reign of Queen Victoria. Pupils talk and write about the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun. They know that Lord Caernarvon and Howard Carter discovered the tomb and who Tutankhamun was. Pupils understand the significance of the annual flooding of the River Nile to the Ancient Egyptians. They identify the problems and benefits that the flood brought. Pupils gain an insight into the religion of the Ancient Egyptians when they write autobiographies of the god Osiris and learn about the belief that departed souls passed into the Underworld.
- 117 By the age of seven, pupils gain an idea of the passage of time when they study the 1930s and say that they had great grandparents who would have lived then. They understand what is meant by a century. Pupils talk knowledgeably about the Great Fire of London. They know where the fire started, that gunpowder was used to create firebreaks among the closely packed houses and understand that the poor fire-fighting methods of the time hampered Londoners in their efforts to put out the flames. Pupils become aware that we have discovered a great deal about the events of the time from the diaries of Samuel Pepys. When writing about the Great Plague, pupils give reasons why people's life expectancy in those days was much shorter than it is now. As well as gathering information about the Great Fire of London from the writings of Samuel Pepys, pupils carry out research about seaside holidays in the 1930s from

videos and books, to enable them to ask questions of a visitor who was alive in those days.

- 118 Teaching in history is good overall. In a lesson when pupils contrasted what people did at the seaside now and in the past, the teacher used photographs well to compare clothing and seaside entertainments. The use of challenging questions made pupils think hard about their answers and the teacher made sure that all pupils joined in the lesson. The enthusiasm shown in the teacher's voice and her good subject knowledge were communicated to the pupils who, consequently, made good progress during the lesson. In most lessons, teachers plan work that matches the ability of the pupils. They use teaching assistants well to make sure that pupils with special educational needs make good progress. However, in some lessons, teachers do not offer enough challenge for higher attaining, and gifted and talented pupils. Teaching was less successful, but nonetheless satisfactory, in a lesson when pupils learnt about the effects of the Irish Potato Famine. They were given the information instead of being asked to find it for themselves from books, pictures or the Internet. In this case, and in other instances noted when pupils' books were checked, the teacher placed greater emphasis on the English skills shown by pupils in writing a letter of complaint to the British Government than in developing their skills of research and interpretation. Teachers make good use of homework when they ask pupils to find out about diseases common in Victorian times, such as typhus and cholera, and to find photographs of their parents and grandparents at the seaside. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. In some classes, the English skills shown by pupils are given more importance than the historical content of the work. This means that these pupils learning of history is limited while others make better progress. Some teachers give too little emphasis to the need for neat presentation of work. They allow pupils to miss out pages in their work books, that are later filled with work about another period of time. This makes it difficult for pupils to follow what they are doing. Teachers use the Internet to carry out research, and they are exploring more ways for ICT to support pupils' work in history.
- 119 Teachers make good use of the resources the school has built up. Wooden utensils, such as a potato masher, and candle lanterns used on the railway, give pupils an idea of how things have changed with time. Books presented to pupils for good attendance at the old Redby School in the early years of the twentieth century make good links with modern school practices. Teachers make good use of visits to places of historical interest, such as Beamish Open Air Museum, Arbeia in South Shields, the Tudor House and the Glass Museum.
- 120 The management of the subject is sound. The subject manager regularly sees the books of all pupils and checks teachers' planning. She has not yet had the chance to check teaching and learning during lessons. She has recently produced a new scheme of work that contains arrangements for pupils' work to be assessed regularly.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 121 By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations. By the end of Year 6, levels of attainment are above national expectations. This picture is better than at the time of the previous inspection, when attainment was in line with national expectations. This is a direct result of recent and significant improvements such as:
- the development and effective use of a well resourced computer suite;
 - the investment in new computers and software;

- the development of a well structured programme of work that pupils follow as they move the school;
 - increased teacher knowledge and confidence;
 - that enable pupils across the school to make good progress. As a consequence of these improvements, there is a growing number of pupils who now achieve more highly.
- 122 By the end of Year 2, most pupils use ICT to organise information and present their findings in a limited but interesting way in a range of subjects. Lively programs stimulate pupils' interest so that they learn at a good rate. Pupils write simple text to the screen and save and print their work. They alter the font type, size and colour of print for emphasis and effect. In art, they select appropriate tools to draw and fill shapes, and create colourful pictures with a range of textures. In Year 2, pupils interrogate databases to access and retrieve information to support their work. In English, for example, pupils create their own simple library database and are encouraged to formulate questions that enable them to identify books of their specified choice. The guidance and support they receive is effective in teaching them how to frame questions when seeking information related to a specific enquiry. At the end of sessions on the computer, they close programs and shut down the machines correctly and confidently. Control and monitoring are developing features in the school's provision and pupils are gaining necessary skills through the use of programmable toys. The vast majority of pupils are aware of the use of ICT in everyday life and know that places such as hospitals, schools, police and fire stations store the personal details of people electronically.
- 123 By the end of Year 6, pupils use a wide range of skills in ICT to support their learning across a range of subjects. Year 3 pupils design colourful Christmas wrapping papers as part of their design and technology lessons and use 'Word Art' effectively in the production of their 'colour' poems. As a part of their geography lessons pupils produce a range of graphs to show the average rainfall in England. They evaluate this information and decide which offers the greatest clarity. In Year 4, pupils produce exciting and thoughtfully formatted word pictures by varying the font size to emphasise meaning. They also use LOGO competently to produce a sequence of instructions to create letters of the alphabet. With this activity they show that they are confident when using with a control language. This is developed further in Years 5 and 6, when pupils work with considerable enthusiasm and expertise in other areas of control technology, such as formulating instructions to replicate the sequence of traffic lights. Year 5 pupils use a graphics program to draw accurate plans of their classroom, clearly labelled with arrows showing which way the doors open. By Year 6, pupils have the skills to combine information from different sources. For example, each pupil in one Year 6 class has created a multi-media presentation using 'Microsoft PowerPoint', which incorporates visual images, static and moving text, and is accompanied by music and sounds appropriate to the theme of their topic.
- 124 Pupils enjoy using the computers and they work well together in pairs and groups. They are inquisitive and keen to learn more about the possible operations in programs.
- 125 The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have adapted well to the teaching of ICT as a discrete subject in the computer suite. However, it is not sufficiently planned and integrated into the normal routine of classroom lessons, especially in English, mathematics and science. Consequently, pupils do not have enough opportunities to use their ICT skills across the curriculum in their daily work. Teachers' knowledge is good overall. They advise, support and encourage pupils, so that the subject holds no

fear for them. Planning in the computer suite is good as pupils are introduced to new ideas and are given enough time to practise what they have learned. The school has introduced equipment that helps teachers to teach pupils from a large interactive screen. Teachers use large interactive screens well to explain work to pupils. For example, in a Year 4 class the teacher discussed e-mail and Internet addresses and teased out pupils' knowledge of common features of these. Teachers choose interesting programs that engage pupils' interest and extend their expertise.

- 126 The school's policy for ICT offers appropriate support and guidance. The subject is well managed by the two subject leaders. They are knowledgeable and enthusiastic and have adopted national guidance, which has been adapted to meet the needs of the school and to form a comprehensive and helpful scheme of work. Skills are taught systematically. The subject leaders recognise that the next stage in the development of ICT is to continue to improve pupils' skills in control and monitoring. The school is devising helpful assessment procedures to take into account National Curriculum level descriptors as a way of tracking attainment and progress. To support this, it already has in place the basic structure of what could be an excellent and informative file of moderated work. The subject leaders monitor teachers' plans and pupils' finished work but have only limited opportunities to monitor teaching and see pupils at work in the classrooms. Training and the professional development for staff have been of high quality. It has been provided partly by the local education authority and partly by the school's subject leaders.

MUSIC

- 127 Pupils' attainment by the end of Years 2 and 6 is in line with that expected nationally. Standards are not as high as they were at the last inspection because the specialist music teacher has left the school and class teachers have had to develop their own skills and improve planning. This they have successfully done. The teaching of music is good and pupils make satisfactory progress. Provision for music has improved well overall and the standards are well placed to improve.
- 128 By Year 2, pupils demonstrate happy and sad movements with appropriate facial expressions. They sing a song from Israel, 'Tzena, Tzena', with enthusiasm, though their pitch is not always accurate. Pupils describe the song as being 'happy with people dancing.' They compose their own musical patterns and extend their knowledge of instruments by observing them closely and drawing them in their art lessons. Pupils create their own musical composition about fireworks, using a range of papers well to make the sounds of a crackling bonfire, and identify appropriate instruments to represent a range of fireworks. For example, they use castanets as 'bangers' and finger cymbals as sparklers. Pupils develop good listening skills and listen carefully as small groups demonstrate the different sounds. They watch carefully to make sure they play in the right place when they all play together. The sound they create is good and creates a good impression of a firework display. They hold instruments correctly, know their names and play them in different ways. The teacher makes good links to the firework events for the Queen's Jubilee. Pupils begin to learn about the composer, Handel and how he composed 'The Royal Fireworks' music for King George I. They listen carefully to this and describe it as 'being special' and reminding them of the Queen.
- 129 In Years 3 and 4, pupils have a good knowledge of instruments, the families to which they belong and the sounds they make. They listen well to extracts of music that demonstrate the various instrument families, but did not always understand the teacher's questions because the work presented did not always match the needs of

the pupils. The older pupils listen to Jamaican music. They identify the instruments playing and select their own instruments to blend successfully with this music. They understand how the Jamaicans make their instruments and identify accurately bongo drums, maracas, beaters and the rain making tube. Half the class play instruments to accompany the recorded music while the other half sing and clap the beat. Pupils talk confidently about their music lessons and fully understand that they are playing in the style of the Jamaican musicians.

- 130 By Year 6, pupils develop further their understanding of music from different cultures when they listen to choral music from Africa. Their appreciation of this music is good and they understand the emotions expressed through the music. They find it difficult to sing a scale in tune, and need to listen more carefully in order to maintain pitch. However, they sang a round in two parts successfully. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 sing together each week and do so enthusiastically. They hold their parts well when singing 'Count your Blessings' in three parts, and are well supported by enthusiastic teachers. They maintain both rhythm and pitch well and really enjoy their singing. The older pupils listen to the music of Mussorgsky and give good suggestions as to what the music is describing. For example, they think 'it sounds like a grand entrance' and that it 'changes to more scary music.' The teacher describes well what the music represents and pupils have a second opportunity to listen, picturing the people walking round an art exhibition. They identify accurately the instruments playing and know that an orchestra is playing. Pupils link their work in literacy well when they suggest writing a story to describe the exhibition or to describe the very ugly gnome in the scary part of the music. The teaching and planning of this lesson was good, and pupils developed their understanding of different ways to communicate well. They successfully communicated a nursery rhyme from the back of the team line to the front by carefully tapping the rhythm on the shoulders of the pupil in front of them.
- 131 The subject leader for music is new to her post. There is little opportunity for her to observe colleagues teaching, monitor planning or assess how well pupils learn. A new music scheme is in place and this is supporting non-specialist teachers well. It also helps pupils to progressively develop their musical knowledge, understanding and skills. Resources for music are good. There is a wide range of instruments, including those from other cultures. Year 6 pupils form a school choir and this is taken by visiting musicians from the local music centre. The quality of this provision is very good. Pupils create a good sound, stay in pitch and manage difficult words well, for example when they sing a song in an old language from the Shetland Isles. Peripatetic teachers visit the school regularly to teach pupils to play violins and keyboards. Pupils from local schools join together to perform at the Kite Festival. Pupils do not have opportunities to listen to music as they enter and leave collective worship and there is no evidence of pupils using information and communication technology to extend their musical skills.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 132 Standards of attainment in physical education for pupils at the ages of both seven and 11 are in line with those standards expected nationally. This matches the standards found during the previous inspection. All areas of the curriculum are covered and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning.
- 133 By the time they leave the school, pupils have experienced a wide range of physical education activities. However, no pupils have had swimming lessons this year. They

develop sound co-ordination and recognise the importance of teamwork. Pupils co-operate well with each other. They are confident, encouraging and supportive. They are enthusiastic, enjoy physical education lessons, and generally try hard to improve their work. One lesson showed pupils in Year 5 developing hurdling skills, some becoming fluid and co-ordinated in their movements.

- 134 The overall quality of teaching and learning is good, and half of the lessons observed were very good. Teaching is generally focused well and lessons are paced to maintain motivation and interest. Pupils are identified as exemplars to demonstrate movements and, in some lessons, teachers too take part. Activities are interesting and the pupils are managed effectively. Due attention is drawn to health and safety matters, often reinforced by suitably targeted questions. In some lessons, questions are used very effectively to reinforce and extend learning, for example, 'What was difficult about that?' and 'How have we moved this year?'. Teachers are sensitive to the needs of all pupils. They provide encouragement and praise to boost pupils' confidence and self-esteem, so that all persevere and make good progress. Pupils invariably enjoy their lessons and this motivates them to further their efforts. Appropriate warm-up and cool-down periods are used to reinforce their importance.
- 135 There is a suitable policy and scheme of work. The overall quantity and quality of resources are good. Visitors to the school, for example to coach in football, make a positive contribution to the curriculum. The range of extra-curricular sports activities for the pupils is better than that found in many schools of this size. A residential stay gives opportunities for some pupils to experience more adventurous outdoor activities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 136 Pupils' attainment by the end of Years 2 and 6 is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.
- 137 By the end of Year 2, pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith. They retell some of the stories about Jesus and know why the celebrations of Christmas and Easter are important to Christians. They have a detailed knowledge of the Easter story and have recorded the events accurately in their writing with, for example, one pupil stating that, "Jesus was arrested and sentenced to death. He was hung on a wooden cross and he died on it". In discussion, many children talk of the hurt inflicted upon Christ before he was crucified. They show also a developing understanding of Judaism and Buddhism, and can relate some of the Five Moral Precepts directly to their own lives and the classroom rules, which they devised last September.
- 138 Pupils increase their knowledge and understanding of Christianity, Islam and Sikhism as they move through classes from Year 3 to Year 6. By the end of Year 6, they know many stories from the Old and New Testaments and re-write them in their own words. This work is often of a high standard and includes descriptions that enhance the basic framework of the stories, such as one pupil who, when recounting the story of the creation, wrote, "He made the sun to light the world and the moon and stars to shine in the sky". By learning about famous people, such as William Booth and Mother Theresa, they are given many opportunities to consider how peoples' faith and beliefs can influence their own lives. This is extended well into the study of other faiths. For example, pupils in one Year 4 class were learning about the 5Ks as signs of belonging to the Sikh brotherhood, the Khalsa. This lesson prompted high levels of

discussion and promoted the understanding and tolerance of others who may have beliefs different from their own. The work is often challenging and pupils have to think hard. For example, pupils in one Year 6 class were invited to consider the written responses of two children, one Christian and one Muslim, on life after death. This approach was particularly valuable because they learned to identify similarities whilst comparing differences. This resulted in a better understanding of a different faith to that of their own.

- 139 Pupils have good attitudes to learning throughout the school. They listen well, work hard and at speed and produce work of high quality. They show a solid understanding of what they have learned and relate the aspects they study to their own lives well.
- 140 The quality of teaching was good overall in the lessons observed. Strengths of the teaching are the secure knowledge brought to the subject by the majority of the teachers, and their confident delivery. Teachers gain the interest of their pupils and encourage them to think carefully about the importance of religion in their own and other people's lives. Throughout the school teachers expect pupils to work hard and at a good pace. This is helped by stating exactly what the pupils are expected to learn at the beginning of lessons and reviewing what pupils have learned at the end. By the end of Year 6, pupils handle and discuss complex issues well. The use of ICT does not yet have a significant impact on learning. Teaching is sensitive and enables pupils to express their thoughts and ask questions in a safe and understanding environment in which they feel secure enough to use words such as 'love', 'forgiveness', and 'kindness'.
- 141 The subject is managed well by the subject leader. The curriculum and teachers' planning ensure that the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus are met.