

## **INSPECTION REPORT**

### **ARCHIBALD FIRST SCHOOL**

Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne

LEA area: Newcastle upon Tyne

Unique reference number: 108438

Headteacher Miss J Joicey

Reporting inspector: Mr D Hardman  
17794

Dates of inspection: 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> February 2003

Inspection number: 246791

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Archibald Street Gosforth Newcastle upon Tyne
Postcode:	NE3 1EB
Telephone number:	0191 2851957
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C Bell
Date of previous inspection:	9 <sup>th</sup> February 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17794	Mr D Hardman	Registered inspector	Religious education Information and communication technology Art and design English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements. How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19443	Mrs N Walker	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?
30934	Mrs A Lowson	Team inspector	English Design and technology Foundation Stage	
22058	Mrs C Richardson	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education Music Special educational needs	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
23922	Mr D Horlock	Team inspector	Science Geography History Equal opportunities	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Archibald First School is an average sized school serving a mixed residential area in the north of the city of Newcastle upon Tyne. There is a broad social mix in the school and the full range of ability is represented. The school's initial assessments of children's attainment when they start school show that many children are above the levels expected for their age. There are 112 boys and 113 girls currently on roll and a further 42 children attend the nursery on a part time basis. There are 28 pupils who are taught English as an additional language and there are 32 pupils from ethnic minority groups. Fourteen pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. There are nine pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs, a figure which is well below the national average and one pupil has a statement of special educational need, which is below the national average. Most pupils with special educational needs have moderate learning difficulties.

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

This is a good school. Good leadership and management by the headteacher and deputy headteacher provide clear direction for future developments. Governors provide good support for the school and carry out their duties effectively. Teaching is good and often very good. This leads to good learning and in the current Year 4, pupils' attainment is well above the level expected for their age in mathematics, it is above the level expected for English and science. Pupils are responsible and relationships in school are very good. Pupils' achievement is good and they achieve well in relation to their previous attainment. Although it costs slightly more than the national average to educate each pupil, the school still gives good value for money.

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

- The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and deputy headteacher, and the quality of teamwork by staff and governors, are good.
- The quality of education for children in the Foundation Stage is very good.
- Teaching is good and often very good. This leads to good learning and well above average standards in mathematics and above average standards in English, science, information and communication technology, religious education, history, music and physical education.
- Pupils' attitudes are very good and their behaviour is very good. Relationships and opportunities for personal development are very good.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is good and they make good progress.

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

- Pupils' writing, including handwriting and the presentation of their work.
- The opportunities for co-ordinators to observe the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects.
- The school's implementation of formal, written procedures for risk assessment and child protection.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION**

There has been good progress in dealing with the issues identified in the previous inspection in 1998. The school has established, and uses well, a clear system for planning the curriculum that identifies the knowledge, skills and understanding that should be taught in each year group. As a result, teaching and learning are good. There has been very good progress in refining the school's assessment and recording procedures, which are now used well by teachers to guide their planning of lessons or series of lessons. This means that pupils are set targets and their work is better matched to their abilities and previous knowledge and understanding.

The headteacher and governors fulfil their roles well. There is a clear educational direction for the school and some subject co-ordinators have had the opportunity to observe teaching and learning in their subjects. However, partly due to the recent building work and the changes to the teaching staff, not all subject co-ordinators have been able to fulfil their management role well. However, the school does

have plans to review the allocation and roles of the co-ordinators now that it is well established in the new building. The headteacher and governors have taken steps to deal with virtually all the key issues identified in the last inspection and they play a full part in discussions to develop the curriculum and check on the progress being made in the school's improvement plan. The school is well set to meet its challenging targets and maintain its high standards.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
Reading	A	A	B	C
Writing	A	A	A	A
Mathematics	A	A*	A	B

Key	
Very high	A*
Well above average	A
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

The table shows the high results achieved by the school in National Curriculum tests. The trend of pupils' attainment over time is in line with the improving national trend. The larger than usual number of pupils with special educational needs last year significantly affected the results, especially in reading. In addition, almost thirty per cent of pupils in that year group moved into the school after the reception year. They were therefore not able to benefit from the very good quality of education experienced by others in the Foundation Stage. Also, fourteen percent of pupils were learning English as an additional language and whilst they made rapid progress, this factor, added to the number of pupils who entered the school later than the reception year, lead to an overall dip in standards. Children in the nursery and reception classes receive a good start to their education and achieve well. In the present Year 2, pupils' attainment is above the level expected for their age in English and science and well above the level expected in mathematics. The school's implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies continues to have a positive impact on pupils' attainment. In Year 4, pupils' standards are above the level expected for 9 year olds in English and science and well above the level expected for mathematics. Standards in information and communication technology, religious education, history, music and physical education are above the levels typical for 9 year olds. The school is well set to maintain its high standards and implement any future changes in the curriculum.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to the school and their work. They enjoy coming to school and their enthusiasm for school life improves their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils show good levels of self-discipline, they know what is expected of them and their behaviour is very good. Pupils are very polite and courteous towards one another and adults. There have been no exclusions from the school in the last year.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development and relationships are very good. They respond very well to the school's encouragement to take responsibility for their actions.
Attendance	Attendance is well above the national average. Pupils arrive at school promptly, settle into class quickly and lessons start on time.

Pupils' very good attitudes result from their response to the caring, family atmosphere. This is a particular strength of the school. Pupils have very good relationships with each other and with staff.

They are considerate of others when they move around the building, use the dining hall and play at break times. They respond very well to the trust and respect they are shown, for example, when setting up equipment or helping younger pupils at lunch times. For example, in discussions with the monitors in the corridor at lunch time they showed pride in the fact that they were entrusted to help others if necessary.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good and often very good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching seen during the inspection. Good and very good teaching was seen throughout the school, especially in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The head teacher, deputy headteacher and some co-ordinators have observed teaching and learning. Observations of good practice are shared and are having a positive impact on the quality of teaching throughout the school. The school is aware of the need to extend this good practice to include all subject co-ordinators. The teaching for children in the nursery and reception classes is consistently good or very good, which is a major factor in their improving attainment and learning.

Standards are high in the school and the use of assessment data, both to set challenging but achievable targets and to guide teachers' planning for the next stage of learning, is having a significant impact on pupils' attainment. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language are well supported by good teaching that provides challenging activities. As a result, these pupils make good progress throughout the school.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a wide range of learning opportunities for all pupils. The school has adopted the most recent national guidelines and teachers are following them in their planning to ensure that all pupils have a varied and interesting curriculum. The provision of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory and about the same as similar schools.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There are good procedures and provision for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers know the pupils very well and provide challenging activities that make a positive contribution to their attainment and learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Most pupils for whom English is an additional language have a good grasp of English and staff work with them to make sure they join in all the activities available.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The quality of relationships is very positive and makes a significant contribution to the very good behaviour in the school. This provision contributes very well in promoting the school aims.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection are satisfactory. The school has not yet implemented the formal written procedures for child protection and risk assessment. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress.

The curriculum meets statutory requirements and goes beyond them to include several features that enrich it. For example, a good number of visits and visitors provide pupils with wider experiences and help them learn. The school has formed a good partnership with parents which makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning both at home and in school.



## 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 provide good leadership and management which give a clear educational direction for the school. The quality of teamwork by all staff is good and fosters a positive family atmosphere in which all pupils are valued and their efforts well supported.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body is committed to helping the school move forward. Governors make a very effective contribution to the running of the school and are committed to maintaining high standards.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school has faced considerable changes in recent times and has adapted well in many areas. It is now in a position to review and assess how effective the new procedures and systems are working. The headteacher and staff are rightly proud of the social development of all pupils and they are clearly identifying other areas for improvement. For example, the key focus this year is to improve pupils' language, writing and presentation.
The strategic use of resources	The school has sufficient staff who are well deployed. Support staff play an important role in the life of the school and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. The accommodation is good and very well maintained. Resources to support pupils' learning are satisfactory and used effectively. The school does not have a library and so pupils do not have the opportunity to develop their library skills. The school's finances and administration procedures are good.

The good leadership and management provided by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors are major factors in the quality of teamwork and positive family atmosphere in the school.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school and make good progress.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• Behaviour in the school is good.</li> <li>• The school expects children to work hard.</li> <li>• The school helps children to become more mature and responsible.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of information about their child's progress and how closely the school works with parents.</li> <li>• The amount of homework provided.</li> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

Parents consider that they have a very good partnership with the school and express satisfaction with many areas of its life and work. Inspection findings confirm the positive views expressed by parents about the school. Some parents are not satisfied with the range of activities outside lessons and with the amount of homework set for their children. However, inspectors disagree and judge both these areas to be satisfactory. Parents are kept well informed about school events through regular, informative newsletters, open nights and good annual reports on pupils' progress. Nevertheless, the inspection team agrees with parents that they do not get enough information about the curriculum. The positive aspects of the school's links with parents make a significant contribution to the partnership with parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1 In this school the Foundation Stage is made up of a nursery and two reception classes. The provision is very good and a strength of the school. The school's assessments of children's attainment show that many enter the Foundation Stage with levels of attainment that are above those of most other children of the same age. They make good progress through the Foundation Stage and most of the children are on course to achieve above the standards expected by the end of the reception year, particularly in language, literacy, communication, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world.

2 For pupils in the present Year 2, attainment is above the level expected for their age in English, mathematics and science. In the National Curriculum tests for 7 year olds in 2002, the school's results were above national averages in reading and well above average in writing and mathematics. When compared to similar schools, the results in 2002 were average in reading, well above average in writing and above average in mathematics. The proportion of 7 year olds reaching the higher levels in reading was above the national average, very high in writing and well above average in mathematics. In teacher assessments of science, pupils' attainment was above the national average and the number of pupils reaching the higher levels was well above the national average. In the present Year 4, pupils' attainment in English, science, information and communication technology, religious education, history, music and physical education is above the level expected for their age. It is well above the level expected in mathematics. In all other subjects, pupils' attainment is in line with the level expected for their age. Since the previous inspection, pupils' attainment has improved in most subjects.

3 The school has gone through significant changes recently because of a number of staff changes and the extensive building work undertaken. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and all staff, very well supported by the governors, have managed these changes very well. As a result, the school is well set to continue to maintain high standards, meet the realistic targets and implement any further changes to the curriculum. During the inspection, no significant variation was noted in the attainment of boys and girls in any subject. The analysis of assessment information means the school has evidence of the good progress made by pupils during their time in school. Teachers use pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects well; for example, in the recording of experiments and making graphs in science and in written descriptions of events in the past in history. The school has identified a group of pupils who are particularly talented or gifted and is providing them with a good range of learning opportunities to match their abilities.

4 The school makes good use of the analysis of pupils' performance in National Curriculum tests and the optional tests that has resulted in the setting of clear, realistic class targets to focus on improving the weaker areas of knowledge. As a result, pupils in the present Year 2 achieve standards that are at least above the level expected for their age. The improving standards reflect the positive impact of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and good teaching.

5 In Years 2 and 4, pupils' speaking, listening, reading and writing skills are above those expected for their age. Pupils concentrate for longer periods and they listen to others while waiting for their turn to speak. Some retell stories and describe the characters. Pupils express their opinions about stories and they use a wide range of strategies when reading. Pupils write complete sentences with the most common words spelt correctly and with basic punctuation used accurately. The strategies now being used by teachers place greater emphasis on writing skills which is paying dividends. This means that pupils get more

sustained practice. Pupils' attainment is well above the level expected for their age in mathematics, pupils make good progress in lessons. This is because teaching is good and the National Numeracy Strategy is well implemented. In science, pupils' attainment is above what is expected for their age and they make good progress because the curriculum is well planned and taught around science led topics. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language are supported well and make good progress.

6 By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is in line with the level expected for their age. By the end of Year 4, pupils' attainment is above the level expected and they make good progress in their information and communication technology skills. There have been improvements since the last inspection which have raised standards. The school has set up a computer suite that contains sufficient modern equipment to allow full classes to be taught together. Pupils are regularly timetabled to have good access to the suite. This is having a positive impact on their attainment. Throughout the school, computers in the classrooms are used to develop learning in other subjects such as English and mathematics.

7 In history and physical education in Year 2 and Year 4, pupils' attainment is above the level expected for their age. In all other subjects it is in line with the level expected for their age in Year 2 and above the level in religious education and music in Year 4. Other subjects of the National Curriculum make a good contribution to pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, for example, through discussions in history and geography, recording their visits to places of interest, producing graphs in science and explaining their designs when working in design and technology. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language make good progress, especially in literacy skills. These pupils work at levels that are well matched to their abilities and their previous experiences. Teachers set work that pays particular attention to the targets identified in the pupils' individual education plans. Extra support is provided for these pupils and teachers assess their work regularly and review their individual educational plans accordingly. All pupils are included in as many activities as possible which makes a positive contribution to their all round education.

8 Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans, and in the development of self-esteem and confidence. This is due to the good teaching they receive and the suitability of their targets. The school makes very good use of assessment information to identify pupils' needs at an early stage in their learning and for target setting in individual education plans. Teachers use information from assessments very well when working out suitable groupings in the classroom which ensures pupils reach their maximum potential.

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

9 Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection and are very good.

10 Pupils have very good attitudes towards school life. They are very happy to come to school. Parents confirm this and so do the well above average attendance figures. Pupils are very punctual at the start of the day, after recreation and lunch breaks and settle very quickly. In lessons, pupils are very keen to play a full part in discussions, thinking carefully and making sensible contributions. They listen very carefully and are clearly interested in what is being taught. They concentrate for long periods, try their best and enjoy what they achieve. Pupils' very good attitudes enable them to take full advantage of what is on offer to them, which helps them to make good and very good progress in all areas of their development.

11 The school encourages pupils to be responsible for their own actions. They respond very well to this, develop very high levels of self-discipline and form very good relationships

with each other and with staff. Pupils behave very well in lessons and in other settings such as assemblies. There has not been any exclusions. Although pupils move around in quite a lively and unregimented manner, they are not unruly in any way within the building. They are polite and well mannered to everyone. In the playground, pupils are very happy in each other's company regardless of ethnicity or social background and they play and socialise well. However, a few pupils sometimes engage in unsuitable activities, such as wrestling on the ground or running around the entire area, unaware that their actions may be dangerous to themselves or others. Nevertheless, in the absence of ground markings to separate energetic activities from sedate ones or play equipment, the majority of pupils are remarkably sensible in their choice of play.

12 Pupils develop very well as individuals, show high levels of confidence and self-esteem and so play a full part in activities. For example, pupils in their second term of Nursery education were impressive in their illustration through movement of an imaginary story of a dragon hunt, which took them through forests and caves, fields of long grass and across rivers. Pupils work very well individually as well as in pairs and small groups, sharing ideas and each playing their part. They cope very well with responsibility. For example, they organise their belongings and classroom equipment very well and older pupils look after younger ones in the dining room in a very mature and sensible manner and they see it as a privilege not a chore. Parents recognise and are extremely appreciative of the part the school plays in achieving these very high standards in pupils' personal development.

13 The attitudes and behaviour of pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language in lessons and around the school are very good. All groups of pupils mix and work well together. Relationships are very good. All pupils work well collaboratively, for example in planning science experiments.

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

14 During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better in all lessons. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when a small percentage of lessons was unsatisfactory. Discussion with teachers and analysis of pupils' work show that the quality of teaching is being maintained, especially in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.

15 A significant amount of this improvement has resulted from the observations undertaken by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. They observe colleagues teaching and check to ensure that all pupils are learning effectively. They provide feedback in order to improve the quality of teaching. The school is aware of the need to extend this good practice so that all co-ordinators have the opportunity to observe teaching and learning in their subjects and share good practice with their colleagues. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented and pupils' standards are improving in virtually all subjects as they move through the school. Teachers regularly use a range of tests, including statutory and optional National Curriculum tests. The information available from these tests is used well to identify pupils' weaknesses and to guide teachers' planning, for example, by setting class targets to improve pupils' attainment. This process now needs to be refined so that teachers' marking of pupils' work is incorporated more fully into the assessment process and so provide information to pupils on how well they are achieving and what they must do next to improve.

16 The quality of teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. Teachers plan their lessons very well and take account of the national guidelines that lead to children making good progress. There is a very good balance between direct teaching and opportunities for structured play activities. All staff, teachers and nursery nurses know the children very well and are sensitive to their needs. Staff have high expectations and manage behaviour firmly, calmly and kindly. All adults are examples for children to follow because

they treat everyone with care, courtesy and respect. They make sure that all children have access to all activities and children know that they are being treated equally and fairly. For example, children's speaking and listening skills develop particularly well because of the very good emphasis placed by all staff on extending and developing correct vocabulary as part of every activity.

17 The teaching of basic skills in English and mathematics is very good. Teachers' planning is clearly linked to the requirements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The pace of most lessons is good and teachers use the techniques of the literacy and numeracy strategies to best effect. Pupils have very good relationships with teachers and adults in the classroom, which has helped to improve the quality of pupils' learning. Teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour and effort are very high and pupils are expected to do their best. This was seen in a Year 4 mathematics lesson when pupils improved their knowledge and skills of mental recall when working out answers to problems of doubling and halving different numbers. They listened attentively to others' answers. The brisk pace of the lesson and the mature attitude of pupils led to very good learning and pupils' improving skills in the use of multiplication tables to solve problems. Teachers use the literacy strategy effectively and plan lessons that are challenging and interesting. For example, in a Year 3 English lesson, pupils joined in enthusiastically with the shared discussion about "The Three Pigs" story. Pupils extended their understanding of emotions as they pretended to interview a pig and the wolf to explore how the characters viewed the events in the story.

18 Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects of the National Curriculum. For example, the school recognised that teachers' skills needed to be improved, especially for older pupils, in information and communication technology and training courses have been undertaken. As a result, teachers are using the computer suite well and pupils' attainment is improving. Teachers use the correct language to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the particular subject. This was particularly evident in English and mathematics where specific technical language was used well. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, pupils understood the concept of "higher" and "lower" when sequencing three-digit numbers. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the teaching of English and mathematics and they use good observational assessment of pupils to build upon the areas that pupils need to develop. For example, in an English lesson in Year 1, pupils responded well to the teacher's request to explain the use of the contents page in a book. The work was extended very well using very good questions to check their understanding of the difference between fiction and non fiction books.

19 Teachers know and manage their pupils very well and provide good support for different activities. The very good relationships between staff and pupils create a secure climate in which to learn. Teachers use their daily observations of pupils' work to set challenging tasks but this is not done consistently throughout the school. For example, although most teachers include positive comments when marking they do not consistently provide precise comments on what pupils need to do in order to improve. This makes it more difficult for pupils to know how to improve. The school has an established system to encourage pupils to read and learn spellings at home and it has a positive effect on their learning. The school has a good policy for the recent initiative on inclusion. Teachers follow it well and ensure the all pupils, whatever their abilities, are included in all activities, which makes a positive contribution to their learning.

20 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. It is a similar picture for pupils who are taught English as an additional language. Teachers make early identification of pupils with special educational needs or who have English as an additional language. Teachers and teaching assistants plan very thoughtfully for pupils with special educational needs and for those with higher prior attainment. Targets in individual education plans are clear and achievable and are taken into account in the planning of lessons. Pupils

are grouped according to their prior attainment in literacy and numeracy. This ensures that tasks are matched well to pupils' abilities and always have some level of challenge. Teachers maintain good records and there is regular sharing of information with the special needs co-ordinator. The provision for special educational needs is well organised throughout the school. All adults working with pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language are enthusiastic in their approach and keen to recognise and praise success. This effectively encourages pupils and helps them develop confidence.

21 There is a coherent, planned programme for personal and social education, taught as separate lessons, this provides a good basis for pupils' understanding and appreciation of the values of citizenship. Themes such as the importance of friendship, safety, care for the environment and relationships are fully explored. The theme of the community and people who help us is fully examined, emphasising the importance of working together and the interdependence of different groups within the wider community. In history the themes of citizenship and democracy are explored by teachers, for example when studying Ancient Greece. Pupils appreciate these have changed and developed and, until relatively recently, different groups were not allowed to be participating citizens. The values taught in these lessons are put into practice by pupils. For example, older pupils take responsibilities for the care and support of younger pupils at lunchtime and around the school.

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

22 The whole curriculum supports the school's aim to be an integral part of the community very well. This is reflected in the very good links with other schools and colleges and the good provision for personal, health and social education. These aspects make a valuable contribution to the learning of pupils. The curriculum provides good learning opportunities for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who attain at a higher level in most subjects. It makes good provision for pupils who learn English as an additional language. Since the last inspection, there has been a good improvement in the curriculum. There are now guidelines for all subjects that are used to ensure that pupils build systematically on their skills, knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. Subject co-ordinators check planning and note how teachers have amended their plans after evaluation of lessons. The alterations to the building have improved the facilities for physical education. The literacy strategy has been implemented effectively and the numeracy strategy has been very influential in the raising of standards for all pupils. The result of these improvements is that teachers' careful planning is of good quality and effective use is made of day-to-day assessment.

23 The National Curriculum is taught in an interesting and stimulating way so that pupils achieve well in most subjects. The innovative "Thinking skills" programme, for which two teachers have already had training from the "University of the First Age", enhances the teaching of other subjects. All aspects of subjects are taught across the school which ensures that the school meets statutory requirements, including the arrangements for collective worship. Religious education is taught according to locally agreed guidelines. In addition, all pupils in Year 3 go swimming each week and more than half meet National Curriculum requirements before they leave the school. There are good links between many subjects, especially through aspects of information and communication technology, literacy and art. For example, the use of a mathematics program on the "interactive whiteboards" provides pupils with very good visual reinforcement of aspects of numeracy and a study of India is very well linked with work in art.

24 Provision for special educational needs is good because of its relevance for all pupils with special educational needs and the level of inclusion in lessons and the life of the school. Pupils receive specific help in literacy and numeracy. Teachers prepare and review individual education plans regularly and discuss programmes and targets with parents and

pupils. There are suitable extension activities for more able pupils in most lessons. The school has identified a small number of pupils with particular talents and makes good provision to meet their needs.

25 The provision for extra-curricular activities, both after school and through visits, is sound. There is an interesting range of clubs over the year and the school is planning to introduce more clubs later this year to cover a wider age range. Pupils of all ages benefit from a curriculum that meets their personal and social needs well. The content and organisation of the curriculum ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities to experience all that the school offers. Pupils with special educational needs work and play well with others in the classroom and in the playground.

26 Good provision is made for personal, social, health education and citizenship, based on the recently introduced guidelines and the school's own programme for teaching good health topics. Some topics are covered within science and others in separate personal and social education lessons. There is a sensitive approach to sex education. Teachers deal thoughtfully with any issues that arise at a level of understanding suitable for pupils. Several teachers have attended courses about drugs awareness, including staff from the Foundation Stage. The personal development of pupils is considered very important. Pupils have many opportunities to consider difficult issues, such as their fears or friendships, at special times when they sit quietly in a circle to discuss them. Specific "thinking skills" lessons and club provide valuable opportunities for pupils to order their thinking and develop understanding of how easy it is to make assumptions about people and situations.

27 There are good arrangements for the transfer of pupils to the middle schools and admission to nursery. Curricular links with other schools are very good and support the development of the curriculum well. Purposeful links with the community make a good contribution to pupils' learning. For example, pupils raise funds for a local hospice and sing at a local store. A small group sing with other schools at the Civic Centre and a choir goes to a nearby home to share their music with the older residents. All of these contacts enable the school to play a full part in the community.

28 The provision for pupils' personal development is very good. Provision for spiritual development is good and for moral, social and cultural development it is very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. In assemblies, pupils reflect upon the need for courage to face unpleasant situations. Teachers make a powerful link between courage and God's presence and help. Pupils cheer when David defeats Goliath and appreciate the courage he showed. They consider the beauty of the world through art, music and literature. Their curiosity and interest are stimulated in geography as they construct a branch of their "mind map" (a collection of separate ideas) about different types of houses in India and in information and communication technology when their fingers magically move pictures and words across the whiteboard. Teachers question pupils thoughtfully and encourage them to think about people's feelings and actions. Displays around the school make a good contribution to the supportive climate in the school in which pupils are encouraged to grow and flourish, respect others and be respected.

29 There is a clear code of behaviour in classes and throughout the school. It is used very effectively to promote moral and social development and provides a very good framework in which pupils grow. Pupils value the rewards they earn and the presentation of certificates in special assemblies. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and take on responsibilities seriously and cheerfully. Year 4 pupils enjoy looking after reception children at lunchtime. They carry their trays, cut up their food and check that they can manage, like concerned friends. Relationships in the school are very good and provide pupils with good examples on which to model their own social and moral behaviour.

30 The school has a positive ethos and supportive learning environment in which provision for pupils' social development is very good. Pupils show a respect for the feelings and contributions of others. There is a coherent programme of personal and social education in which pupils are encouraged to take responsibilities for their actions and to make choices in mature and responsible ways. Pupils work well with partners and groups in most lessons. For example, they work in groups in science discussing how to ensure a test is fair and produce a stylish group dance in physical education. They support each other as needed and enjoy the responsibility of making the school a better place in which to work and play. Visitors to the school and visits to museums and churches provide positive links with a wider community. Pupils are proud of their school and able to make a positive contribution to their own learning and development.

31 There is very good provision for pupils' cultural development. Stories, music, art and literature from many countries and diverse cultures are used well to extend pupils' knowledge and use of cultural imagery and language. Pupils show great interest in displays about other faiths and cultures. They reflect upon the qualities shown by famous people and celebrate Chinese New Year, Diwali and Harvest. Pupils are involved in celebrations of their own cultural heritage through country dancing and singing traditional songs from the region in which they live. Pupils learn about the "Angel of the North" and make delightful models of it in art and design.

32 All pupils have full and equal access to all aspects of the curriculum and to extra-curricular activities. Care is taken to challenge stereotypes, such as those relating to race and gender, to ensure that the curriculum supports an understanding of equal opportunities. In religious education and geography and across the whole curriculum there is an appreciation of the faiths, culture, traditions and celebrations in different religions. Through history, pupils appreciate how expectations for and experiences of different groups have changed.

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

33 The headteacher, governors and staff provide a satisfactory level of care for pupils. There are some very good features within that care, but some of the policies and procedures are not sufficiently detailed or established in a written form.

34 Teachers know their pupils very well and notice at once if they are not quite themselves and are quick to comfort and support them in a very sensitive way. However, the school is not adhering to the requirement to ensure staff receive up to date training in the signs of child abuse and maintain accurate records of concerns, this is unsatisfactory.

35 There is a very good level of first aid and medical knowledge amongst staff and whenever a pupil is ill or injured they receive very good care. However, staff sometimes allow pupils to engage in unsuitable play outside and do not intervene quickly enough and so injuries occur. The school has very good procedures to ensure that staff carry out a risk assessment prior to taking pupils on visits out of school and records show that staff have been very thorough in their observations and action taken. However, staff are not as observant of potential dangers within school on a day to day basis and because regular risk assessments of school practices are not formally carried out, a number of hazards are present.

36 The educational and personal support and guidance which pupils receive is very good and parents are particularly pleased about this. Staff take a real interest in pupils and build very good relationships with them. As a result, they gain in confidence and self esteem, they are very keen and happy to come to school and are prepared to "have a go" in lessons and other activities. Teachers are patient with pupils and are skilled at involving them and they ensure that they get equal and good individual attention to help them to learn. All staff have



very high expectations of behaviour and they present very good examples of how to behave. Even the slightest misdemeanour is dealt with immediately and with sensitivity and fairness and so situations do not escalate or become prolonged. There is an emphasis on self-discipline and of entrusting pupils and so they learn to take on responsibility and grow into sensible and thoughtful young people.

37 The school has very good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress that are applied consistently. Requirements for assessment are fully met and, together with the school's own additional assessment procedures, provide reliable evidence of pupils' attainment and progress as their learning develops. Assessment has been improved effectively since the last inspection when aspects of assessment were identified as a key issue for improvement.

38 The school establishes what children know, understand and can do when they enter the school and uses this data as the starting point to determine how much progress they make. Thereafter, assessment is regular and thorough, using data from National Curriculum tests and standardised tests as well as its own procedures. Each half-term and in each year group, samples of work in targeted aspects of English, mathematics and science are gathered and assessed in relation to nationally expected levels of attainment. The results of pupils' assessments are carefully analysed to help the school track progress and set appropriately challenging targets for groups and individuals as well as whole school priorities. Teachers meet regularly to discuss trends in pupils' progress and to adjust plans to meet their needs. Detailed records of pupils' attainment are kept and teachers have detailed knowledge of pupils' gains in knowledge and understanding.

39 The school makes good use of the information that assessments provide. There is detailed analysis of every aspect of national and standardised tests in order to identify areas of shortcoming and for further action. This is complemented by teachers' day to day assessment that is used to guide planning in subjects such as history and physical education as well as in English, mathematics and science. Such data is used to form ability groups in different subjects to more effectively match the level of difficulty of tasks to the ability of the pupils. Besides targets for these ability groups, individual targets are set for pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language and for any pupils who do not achieve the levels expected by teachers. However, individual targets are not set for gifted or more able pupils. In science for example, assessment data is not consistently used to ensure that such pupils are effectively challenged. The school has a purposeful marking policy, but this is not implemented effectively. Teachers' marking is encouraging and shows a consistent use of praise. However, the marking does not consistently identify pupils' strengths, nor does it identify areas for individual pupils to improve.

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

40 Parents continue to hold Archibald First School in high regard. They are particularly pleased with what the school does to help their children to become mature and responsible and with the progress their children make. They are very pleased with the quality of teaching and with what teachers do to make school life enjoyable and so their children are very happy to come to school. Some parents are not satisfied with the range of activities outside lessons and with the amount of homework set for their children. However, inspectors disagree and judge both these areas to be satisfactory. A similar small number of parents are not satisfied with how closely the school works with parents or with the information the school provides, and inspectors agree in part with these views.

41 The quality of information provided for parents is good overall. There are regular and informative newsletters that keep parents well informed of the general life and events of the school. Letters about visits and visitors clearly state the purpose and so parents can glean information about what their child is learning. Information on what is being taught in many subjects is provided at the start of each year but not in English and mathematics and so

parents cannot support the work of the teachers to the best of their ability. Each pupil has a home/school reading record but teachers are not using these to guide parents in how best to help their child with reading at home, for example, what words or techniques to focus on. Information on pupils' progress is good. There are three opportunities for parents to speak confidentially to teachers throughout the year and the school is very accommodating in timings of appointments so that one hundred per cent of parents attend. End of year reports have improved and now include good information on what each pupil has learned and understands in all subjects and they set individual targets, although these are sometimes too general.

42 Parents contribute very well indeed to pupils' learning at school and at home. They support the school's high expectations of attendance, punctuality, behaviour, uniform and many others. They listen to their children read at home on a regular basis which is helping pupils to achieve high standards in English. A good number of parents often help in school and others help with specific tasks, such as making costumes for concerts. There is an extremely successful Parent, Teacher and Friends Association whose efforts raise large sums of money every year which has been used to provide some high quality equipment, for example, computers and other technology equipment, which is helping to achieve high standards in pupils' learning.

43 Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed and have good opportunities to discuss targets and reviews with the school. They, and their children, contribute to the discussion about the progress they have made and what they need to do to improve further. As a result of what the school does for all pupils and of the very good support which parents give, a good partnership exists and pupils are benefiting in many areas of their learning and personal development.

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

44 The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide good leadership and management. Together with the strong support of all staff they have maintained the family atmosphere during a difficult time of considerable staff changes and extensive building work. The qualities of leadership and management have been maintained since the last inspection in 1998 and there has been good progress in dealing with the issues identified. Governors make a good contribution to the effective running of the school and are committed to maintaining and raising standards further. The observation of teaching and learning by the headteacher and deputy headteacher is regularly discussed with governors who are well aware of the school's strengths and areas for development. As a result, the school is well placed to maintain the strengths and build effectively upon them. The headteacher and key staff give a clear educational direction for the school which is raising pupils' standards. For example, the school has used the analysis of pupils' results in National Curriculum tests to explain the latest results. This information is being used by staff to target particular areas of the curriculum in English, mathematics and science, this is successfully raising pupils' attainment. The information shows clearly that pupils with special educational needs perform well when compared to their previous attainment and many reach the lower levels of national expectations by Year 4.

45 The governing body has a good committee structure that works effectively to support the school. The roles and responsibilities of all staff are under constant review and evaluation because of the recent changes of staff. The roles of the subject co-ordinators are clearly defined and co-ordinators regularly check teachers' planning in their subjects but they have not yet had sufficient opportunities to observe and evaluate teaching and learning in their subjects. This has been recognised by the headteacher and plans are in place to develop their roles more fully. Subject co-ordinators are well placed to develop their roles because of the example set by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and information and communication technology co-ordinator in the good monitoring which has been instrumental

in raising standards and expectations since the last inspection. A governor with responsibility for special educational needs works effectively with the very able and experienced special needs co-ordinator. They ensure that all important matters are discussed at governing body meetings. The school uses additional funding for special educational needs, and money from the general budget, to finance costs of additional staffing and for providing good resources. The co-ordinator for special educational needs gives good support to staff. The co-ordinator also plays an important part in assessing pupils' difficulties when they are first identified as needing additional help. The school policy is detailed and reflects the school's current practice taking into account the new national guidance for pupils with special educational needs.

46 The headteacher and governors work together closely and are managing the issues brought about by the building changes very well. There is clear direction for the work of the school, ensuring that strategic decisions determine the financial and educational development of the school. The headteacher and governors work together to ensure that all decisions relating to the budget are closely linked to the development plan, are manageable and that the principles of "best value for money" are applied rigorously. A good example of the quality of the management of finances is the way the school has developed a good computer suite and provided the time and resources to improve pupils' attainment in information and communication technology. The good strategic management of the school is evident in the way that the partnership with the community has provided extra funds for the school. The school uses funds designated for particular purposes well. The staff meet regularly, both formally and informally, to discuss curriculum matters and to evaluate the progress being made in all aspects of school life.

47 The headteacher, staff and governors are all involved in preparing the school development plan. This working document is fully discussed before being adopted as the action plan for future years. It is a very effective document, which clearly identifies the priorities and targets to be tackled and guides the work of the school. It takes into account the changes to the school building and educational priorities are closely linked to financial planning. The larger than average carry over figure in the budget last year has been used to provide improved resources for the school. Money has also been allocated for the development of more time for the co-ordinators to check on the quality of teaching and learning across the school. The school knows its strengths and areas for development and has a good grasp on how to improve. All staff work hard to improve their own performance and the educational opportunities presented to pupils. The school has clear targets for improvements. For example, the school is aware that pupils' attainment and skills in writing are not as high as they could be and that, following an analysis of the test results last year, activities that have a time limit are being used more often to improve this aspect of English.

48 The school has sufficient staff who are well deployed. Teaching and support assistants play an important role in the life of the school and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. The school has a designated senior management team with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. For example, all curriculum subjects have a subject co-ordinator and the development of detailed and informative subject files has been very well undertaken so that co-ordinators have a good overview of the planning for their subjects. Procedures for the induction and support of new teachers are good. Newly qualified teachers are given mentors and are well supported by all members of staff. Staff training is linked to priorities in the school plans for the future, which has focused recently on the development of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. Arrangements for performance management are very good, meet statutory requirements and link staff training to the priorities identified in the school plans for future improvements. The school administrative staff make a valuable contribution to the efficient running of the school.

49 The school is situated in a recently completed building which provides good accommodation, a significant improvement since the previous inspection. There is a separate safe play area for children under the age of five but there are not enough resources, the area lacks interest, as a result this is an area for improvement. Most of the classrooms are of a good size, are bright and airy and have their own integral storage cupboards for resources. The school benefits from a well appointed computer suite. The hall is a good size for physical education lessons and is large enough to accommodate the whole school for assemblies and other collective gatherings. There is an additional small hall. The school does not have a library and, as a result, pupils' library skills are not as well developed as they could be. There is very good disabled access into and throughout the school and very good disabled toilet provision. The school is kept spotlessly clean and very well maintained.

50 School organisation and policies reflect the importance of equal opportunities. Lines and groups of pupils are mixed and registers are in alphabetical order. Recent refurbishment has provided better access into the nursery, a ramp allows wheel chair access and there are toilets suitable for disabled pupils and adults. Resources such as books and pictures are scrutinised in order that stereotypes are challenged and show members of different groups in positive ways. Allocation of responsibilities to pupils, such as looking after younger children and clearing up, are allocated equally between girls and boys. The overall quality and quantity of the school's learning resources are satisfactory and resources are used well. Resources are good in English, mathematics, physical education and for special educational needs. Money is spent wisely and is linked to the school's priorities for development. The headteacher and governors apply the principles of "best value" rigorously. There is good leadership and management and very good relationships in school. Expenditure is just above the national average and the good quality of education provided in classes means that the school gives good value for money.

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

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

- A. Improve pupils' writing, including handwriting and the presentation of their work by:
- ensuring that teachers' marking of pupils' work shows how well they have achieved and what they need to do to improve;
  - displaying good examples of writing from a range of sources, including pupils' writing, as a stimulus to other pupils.
- (Paragraphs 4, 15, 19, 40, 69)
- B. Provide more opportunities for co-ordinators to check the quality of teaching and learning in their subject and share good practice with all teachers.
- (Paragraphs 46, 78, 90, 97)
- C. Ensure that the school's implementation of formal, written procedures for risk assessment and child protection is undertaken by:
- ensuring that all staff are aware of the principles and guidelines in the policies;
  - providing appropriate training for all staff;
  - keeping accurate records of incidents or concerns.
- (Paragraphs 34, 35, 36)

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

Improve pupils' library skills.

(Paragraphs 74, 79)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	60
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	23	30	6	0	0	0
Percentage	2	38	50	10	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	21	225
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		14

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	9

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	28

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.8
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

**Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	22	22	44

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	21	22
	Girls	21	21	21
	Total	41	42	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (98)	95 (100)	98 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	22	22
	Girls	21	21	21
	Total	41	43	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (100)	98 (100)	98 (100)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

**Ethnic background of pupils**

**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

No of pupils on roll
187
1
4
0
0
2
0
9
3
2
0
0
2
0
2
13
4

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.6
Average class size	22.4

**Education support staff: YR – Y4**

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	107

**Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	36
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10.5

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Financial information**

Financial year	2001 - 2002
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	£
Total income	496,295
Total expenditure	472,879
Expenditure per pupil	1,987
Balance brought forward from previous year	21,212
Balance carried forward to next year	44,628



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

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out  
 Number of questionnaires returned

267
135

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	77	21	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	36	0	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	61	36	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	36	13	4	10
The teaching is good.	67	30	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	31	50	13	4	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	25	11	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	39	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	28	51	10	8	3
The school is well led and managed.	50	40	6	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	44	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	23	24	14	19

## **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**

52 Children in the Foundation Stage get a very good start to their education. The very good teaching in both the nursery and two reception classes has a positive effect on children's learning. Consequently, children make very good progress and achieve well by the end of the reception year. Assessment tasks taken at the beginning of the current reception year indicate that children's skills in language, literacy and mathematics are above those seen in most schools and similar to most schools in the personal, social and emotional development of children. Tests show that children have weaker knowledge of the sounds of words (phonics) when they enter school, so this has been a focus for teaching in both the nursery and reception classes. Regular assessments indicate that the teaching is successful and children are learning the sound of letters rapidly.

53 The standards achieved and the quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Whilst teaching was considered "particularly good" in the nursery and reception classes and the attainment of most children was in line with expectations, apart from in language and literacy where it was above expectations, there have been staff changes and a new Foundation Stage curriculum introduced. The school has met these new challenges very well. As a result, the quality of teaching is now very good and by the end of the reception year children are on course to match the expectations for their age in personal, social and emotional development, creative development and physical development. Most children are on course to achieve above expectations in language, literacy and communication, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Outdoor learning resources are not as good as those found at the previous inspection. This is because the school has recently undergone extensive building work and many of the old outdoor resources have gone. There is now a spacious and safe outdoor area, but currently there are not enough resources, the area lacks interest which is an area for improvement.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

54 Personal, social and emotional development are taught very well. By the time the children leave the reception class, most children meet the expectations in this area of learning and are well prepared to enter Year 1.

55 Relationships are very good and all adults provide good examples, being calm, patient and caring as children learn new skills. Children enter the nursery happily and leave their parents and carers without any fuss. The organisation of learning activities in the nursery is very good. As a consequence, children find their own coat peg confidently when they come into the nursery, recognising their own symbol on the peg. Relationships with other children are very good. Children play with others, share resources, work happily with learning support staff or parent helpers and show good levels of concentration. Children show very good attitudes to learning new skills and facing new challenges because all staff support them very well and introduce new activities with enthusiasm.

56 This very effective teaching of personal, social and emotional skills continues in the two reception classes. Teachers place emphasis on the further development of personal and social skills, as children are encouraged to work in pairs or small groups to achieve tasks. Activities are planned very carefully, showing a very good knowledge of how young children learn and develop. Good social skills develop as children are given tasks to do in groups. This is difficult for some children with special educational needs, but they are given effective support and soon learn to work in collaboration with others.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

57 Teaching in this area of learning is very good and, as a result, the majority of children achieve above the standards expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1. In both the nursery and the reception classes, speaking and listening skills are taught very effectively, with the teachers and classroom support assistants constantly engaging children in conversation as they work. Those children who are learning English as an additional language are given good support and make rapid progress in their ability to use and understand new vocabulary. In a very good lesson in the nursery, the class teacher worked in the “Nursery Café” with a group of children to extend their vocabulary. She asked specific questions to encourage conversation and used new words such as “utensil” and “portion”. In the same lesson, the nursery nurse gave very effective teaching of language skills during a session cooking noodles and using chopsticks. In the reception classes, the emphasis placed on extending the knowledge of the sound of words ensures that children learn their correct pronunciation at the outset, this is of special importance to those who are in the initial stages of learning English as an additional language.

58 In the reception classes, early reading skills are taught very well and, as a result, by the end of the reception year, most children have made very good progress and have good skills in word recognition and how to use simple punctuation to add expression when reading aloud. Teachers’ use of assessment to make an accurate picture of what individual children know, understand and can do is used very well to place children into ability groups in order that they are given learning activities that match their abilities. Those children who have special educational needs are therefore supported very well in smaller teaching groups, those children who are higher attainers are given more challenging work. Analysis of previous assessments at the end of the reception year show that children have consistently made very good progress in their reading. This is linked to very good teaching, the quality of learning support they receive from well trained support staff and the very effective use of on going assessment. As a result, children are confident readers, show great enjoyment when listening to stories and are learning how to read for different purposes to prepare them well for entry into Year 1.

59 Early writing skills are developed well because teachers plan and organise an interesting range of real writing activities. Children’s attempts at writing are legible and neat, with well formed letters. Teachers work with parents very effectively, for example, homework books give helpful tips to develop early writing techniques. Most children make good attempts at copy writing simple sentences, with higher attaining children making a start on writing independently. From the outset, children are taught how to use their own wordbooks and dictionaries and do so with confidence.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

60 The teaching in this area of learning is very good and most children achieve above expectations by the end of the reception year. In the nursery, activities are very well organised to introduce children to number and the language of number. In reception, very good links are made with the class story about Goldilocks and the Three Bears. Teachers use correct mathematical vocabulary and constantly check that children understand the terminology and symbols being used. For example, in a mathematics lesson in reception, higher attaining children worked in a small group independently and found out that a common system for measuring “would be more sensible”. Lower attaining children and those who have special educational needs, worked well in a small group with effective learning support to compare the size of the bears’ chairs. They used correct language such as “smallest”, “biggest”, “larger than”, as they completed their task. Children learning English as an additional language received well focused support in this lesson to develop their knowledge and understanding of “less than” and “more than” and by the end of the lesson were able to show their new understanding to the teacher.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

61 This area of learning is taught very well in both the nursery and the reception classes. Teachers have very good knowledge of the requirements of the Foundation Stage curriculum. They use skilful and detailed planning and rich learning experiences to extend the children's knowledge, skills and understanding. Most children achieve standards above those expected in this area of learning, make very good progress and achieve well. In the nursery, the class teacher used a good selection of exotic fruits and vegetables to encourage the children to look, feel, smell and taste the fruit. She engaged their interest initially by reading the multi cultural story of "Handa's Surprise", which she used to very good effect by then producing a basket full of passion fruit, mangoes, kiwis, pineapple and avocados. Children were taught how to hold and use a sharp fruit knife correctly to cut into the fruit. One child, when trying to cut into the avocado and encountering the large stone said, "Look, this has got a big pip in the middle!" Another child gazed in wonder at this and asked, "If you plant that pip, will it grow into a pear?" The teacher used the children's natural curiosity to good effect, encouraging their deepening knowledge by asking questions and extending their personal development as they were taught how to use a knife correctly and wash their hands before handling food.

62 In the reception classes, children are taught information and communication technology skills in the school's new computer suite. Teachers' confident use of the interactive whiteboard as a learning tool was very effective. Children quickly learnt new skills, which they were then immediately able to practise using individual computers. Previous skilful assessment of what children can do independently meant that the teachers changed the way that children work when in the computer suite. Children were initially given activities to complete working in pairs, and whilst this is still done occasionally, children were seen to be more effective learners when working on their own, having to solve their own problems. This not only increased their personal computer skills, but also had a positive effect on their ability to work independently and make decisions on their own.

63 Children learn about new cultures and beliefs in stimulating and interesting ways, for example, in the nursery, Chinese New Year is celebrated in dance, music, art and food tasting. In reception, children learn to investigate and explore; for example, children wondered at the size of the beanstalk in the story of Jack and the Beanstalk, so it was decided to plant some beans and observe and record how quickly they grow. They use large and small construction kits to make imaginative objects and show good levels of concentration when making models.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

64 Physical development is taught well. Children make good progress in the development of their physical skills and most reach the expected levels in this area of learning by the end of the reception year. The recent building work has had some effect on the teachers' ability to plan outdoor learning activities and the school currently has no large outdoor climbing and balancing apparatus. However, teachers use the resources they have well and children learn a good range of balancing, climbing and sliding skills. Indoors, younger children in the nursery enjoy dancing to Chinese Dragon music, as they stretch high and low, then go on tiptoe to stretch higher. They have fun joining together under the large Chinese Dragon they have made in the class and move around the hall pretending to be the dragon. In another lesson, the teacher used her very good subject knowledge to take children on an "imaginative journey" to develop their thinking skills as well as their physical skills. Children moved through "squelching mud, slimy walls, hard, sharp rocks and waving long grass" as they went to find the hiding dragon. A very positive effect was made on extending the vocabulary of the children during this lesson. Reception children use large apparatus in the hall to climb, slide and balance, with most showing good control of their movements.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

65 The teaching of creative development is very good. Activities are well planned and linked very effectively to topics and themes, such as Traditional Fairy Tales or Chinese New Year. Resources and learning support staff are used to good effect, for example, children work in small groups so that they all have the opportunity to use a good range of tools and equipment and their knowledge and skills are developed thoroughly. Consequently, all children make good progress and most achieve expectations in this area of learning by the end of their reception year. Children are taught to evaluate their own work and the work of others in a positive way. In a reception class, they look carefully at the differences and similarities between the materials they will use to dress Red Riding Hood puppets and ask the teacher; "Is this fur?" The teacher answers, "No, it is called felt". The child thought about this and then asked, "Is it the same as a felt tip pen then...does it smell funny?" Teachers use the natural curiosity of the children to good effect to extend their knowledge of materials as the lesson progresses.

66 Accommodation in the nursery is good. Accommodation in the two reception classes is satisfactory, but the classrooms are small, meaning some activities take place in rather cramped conditions. Resources are satisfactory overall, although staff have correctly identified outdoor resources as a priority for future development. The resources for role play activities are barely satisfactory.

## **ENGLISH**

67 Standards in Year 2 are above national expectations in speaking and listening and writing and are well above expectations in reading. This represents good achievement for this group of pupils, particularly in reading, from when they first entered Year 1. This good achievement continues through Years 3 and 4 and the attainment of the majority of pupils currently in Year 4 is above national expectations in speaking and listening, writing and well above expectations in reading. Pupils who have special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language make equally good progress. The school tracks the attainment of different groups of pupils and additional support is targeted if it is deemed necessary. As a result, these pupils achieve standards in line with the other pupils at the end of Years 2 and 4.

68 Standards in English are good because of the good and often very good quality of teaching. Particular strengths are in teachers' good subject knowledge, their teaching of basic skills, particularly in reading and their very good use of assessment to track the progress made by individual pupils and year groups. For example, the information from assessments is used to challenge higher attaining pupils and to support those who are not achieving as well. Learning support staff are used very effectively to work with pupils with special educational needs or those who are learning English as an additional language. All teachers use very good behaviour management strategies to ensure that pupils are well behaved and attentive in class. This is effective and most pupils show very good attitudes to learning and behave very well. However, the quality of marking throughout the school is inconsistent and could be improved, particularly when marking handwriting, because it is not rigorous enough. The good standards in English have been maintained since the previous inspection, although standards in handwriting, and the overall presentation of work, are not as good.

69 The slight dip in reading standards in the 2002 National Curriculum tests for 7 year olds were caused by almost thirty per cent of pupils in that year group moving into the school after the reception year. They were therefore not able to benefit from the very good quality of education experienced by others in the Foundation Stage. Also, fourteen percent of pupils were learning English as an additional language and whilst they made rapid progress, this

factor, added to the number of pupils who entered the school later than the reception year, lead to an overall dip in standards.

70 Standards in speaking and listening are above those normally found in Years 2 and 4. The teaching of speaking and listening skills is consistently good and often very good. The initial part of each lesson is used well to extend the vocabulary of pupils and to give them the opportunity to explain their thoughts. Teachers use questioning well to encourage pupils to use new vocabulary and they are given time to answer questions in depth. In a Year 1 class, the teacher used a new book to introduce the pupils to vocabulary related to building houses. Most pupils responded very well to her rigorous questions and asked further questions of their own, such as, "What is a quarry?" "Will a brick house last as long as a house made of stone?" and "Is that big machine used for cutting the stone into big blocks?". The quality of the questions generated much interest and ensured that all pupils learnt new words quickly. Those pupils who are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language were given very good support in this lesson.

71 Older pupils in a Year 4 class show good listening skills as they listen attentively to the class story and answer questions thoughtfully. They take part in whole class discussions about the story, "The Moon's Revenge", and their discussions are lively and engaging. When working together on group activities, pupils chat amiably to each other and show respect when listening to others.

72 Standards in reading are well above those normally found in Years 2 and 4 and have improved since the previous inspection. This represents good progress for those pupils currently in Year 2, as analysis of the tests taken as they left their reception year indicates that they achieved better results in mathematics than they did in reading. Pupils achieve well throughout the school because they are taught basic reading skills thoroughly. Very good assessment procedures are used in Year 2 to test pupils in their knowledge of sounds and their skills in comprehension. The results of these tests are then used to match work to the needs of individuals, or to groups of pupils which helps them to make good progress. Resources in classrooms are used well and pupils show a growing interest in books and a secure understanding of how books are organised. For example, most pupils in Year 2 identify where to find the contents and index page in a non-fiction book and use them selectively to find information about brick houses to help them with their work.

73 Older pupils in Year 4 are skilled readers and tackle new or unfamiliar words with confidence when they read independently. They achieve well and reach standards well above those found in most schools. However, the school does not have a library, which affects the ability of pupils to develop secure library skills. As a result, pupils' library skills are not as good as those found at the previous inspection, when pupils were seen to use the library well. In the past, pupils in Years 3 and 4 made regular visits to a local library, where they were taught the skill of using reference books and how to use the library classification system. Since they no longer make library visits, pupils are not so well prepared for their next stage of learning. Reading records are thorough, in that they give teachers sound knowledge of what pupils have read, but they are currently not used well enough to set individual reading targets. For example, when asked, older pupils do not know how well they read, or what they need to do to further improve their skills

74 Standards in writing are above those normally found in Years 2 and 4 and pupils make good progress. The good standards found in the previous inspection have been maintained, but the quality of handwriting throughout the school is not good enough. The scrutiny of work in books shows that whilst pupils are taught to write in a joined script, the size, positioning and shape of their letters are often incorrect. Because the marking is not rigorous it fails to correct the errors and consequently, by Year 4, there are still common errors to be found. The quality of handwriting affects the overall presentation of pupils' finished work. Teachers provide pupils with a good range of writing experiences and pupils

in Year 2 make good progress in writing clear instructions, for example, instructions for making gingerbread men are well organised.

75 The school has used a range of tests to monitor the progress of writing skills throughout the school. Tests taken at the end of Year 3 in 2002 showed that pupils were much better at reading and consequently achieving significantly higher test results than they were at writing. The school has acted very quickly on this evidence and made the improvement of pupils' writing a school priority. Teachers in Year 4 plan very clear writing activities matched to individual needs. Pupils are taught in ability groups, with higher attaining pupils, including those identified as gifted pupils, receiving work to extend their writing capabilities. Pupils who have special educational needs are well supported by being taught in much smaller groups with well trained learning support staff and consequently they make good progress against the targets set for them. Assessments of what pupils know, understand and can do are used effectively to monitor progress and make adjustments to planned activities. As a result, all pupils make good progress. By Year 4, pupils write stories in a clear sequence, with effective use of adjectives to add interest, for example, "The girl spotted a beautiful carpet with lots of colourful paintings on it and decided to buy it for her mother". Throughout the school, punctuation skills are taught very well and most pupils use a good range of punctuation correctly. Spellings are usually accurate, indicating that pupils benefit from the very good teaching of initial sounds and letter blends in the Foundation Stage.

76 All teachers are skilful in developing good literacy skills through other subjects which is seen particularly well in the writing of reports and accounts in history and geography. The use of information and communication technology skills to support learning in English is good. Most teachers are confident in their own computer skills and use new resources well to engage the interest of pupils. Classrooms are well organised for the teaching of literacy skills, with classrooms having a good supply of dictionaries to support learning, but throughout the school there are very few examples of pupils' written work on classroom walls. This means that pupils do not have good models of writing to act as a stimulus to improve their own work.

77 The leadership and management of the subject are just satisfactory. Two teachers who are experienced, have good subject knowledge, are hard working and committed to improving standards, currently share the subject co-ordinator's role. However, they work part time and do not have a formal, structured programme to check and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. Whilst they have collected samples of pupils' work to give them a clear view of standards, they have only had the opportunity to observe teaching in Year 2. They do not have control of the budget to order and buy resources and are therefore not able to plan ahead to maintain the quality and quantity of resources. Resources for English are satisfactory overall, although more guided reading books are needed for the younger age groups. The quantity of fiction and non-fiction books is satisfactory, but they are not well organised. For example, the school does not have a library and the books that are available are contained in bookcases that are not labelled, colour coded or numbered. This lessens the ability of pupils to develop independent skills when finding the books they need to research topics.

## **MATHEMATICS**

78 Pupils' attainment in Years 2 and 4 in mathematics is well above the level expected for their ages. The school provides well for learning in mathematics. A higher than average number achieve at the higher levels. Pupils in Year 4 achieve well above average levels in their end of year tests. Results have been at a consistently well above average level which is an improvement since the last inspection. The high standards are due to very good implementation of the numeracy strategy, consistently good, and frequently very good teaching, very good use of information from school and national tests to check pupils'

attainment and progress and the thoughtful use of the assessment information to form groups to help pupils raise their level of attainment. Pupils understand the targets set for them in numeracy because consistent marking of pupils' work usually informs pupils of what they need to do to improve and there is a good emphasis on problem solving activities

79 Achievement in mathematics is good and pupils make good progress. There are no significant differences between the achievements of boys and girls. Less able children, those with special educational needs or who learn English as an additional language, make good progress because of the teaching and carefully planned work. Where they have additional support with practical tasks that are matched well to their abilities and needs, pupils work hard and gain confidence. More able pupils are given challenging work. Teachers enable them to achieve at a higher level and extend their thinking skills.

80 Pupils in Year 1 have a good understanding of doubles and halves of numbers up to 30. They know the names of a range of three-dimensional shapes, confidently selecting and dragging names of shapes with their fingers on the interactive whiteboard. They make a repeating pattern by building up a sequence of shapes. Pupils create patterns with three or four shapes and colours, more able pupils commenting that, "It gets very complicated when you have a four by four grid". Pupils in Year 2 add nine and eleven to a number up to 100. They show their answers on number fans with increasing confidence. They have a good understanding of which of three two digit numbers is more or less than two others and add these up with increasing accuracy. Pupils work on money problems with confidence and understand where to place numbers on a scale. More able pupils create interesting problems of their own. Less able pupils usually need some support with written problems.

81 Pupils in Year 3 know how many degrees in half a right angle and understand the difference between clockwise and anti-clockwise. They indicate accurately how many right angled turns they make to face different places on a compass. Pupils know that any important words for their lesson are on the walls and use this information sensibly. They read problems involving distances with ease but are sometimes overwhelmed by the words in the problems. Other pupils have the same difficulty with problems involving weight. They know they can do the calculations involving numbers over one thousand, but have to read very carefully to highlight the words they need to decide which calculation to do. They have a good understanding of fractions, shapes, angles, long and short division and multiplication. Pupils transfer information from surveys to graphs well.

82 Teaching and learning are good. Pupils enjoy mathematical learning because teachers are enthusiastic and make learning fun. For example, many lessons involve practical activities in which pupils are actively involved in their own learning. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace and questioning extends pupils' answers and thinking. "Brain gym" activities help pupils to maintain their interest and focus after a period of intense concentration. Planning is good so there are activities to match the wide range of abilities in the groups. Teachers plan more advanced activities for more able pupils so that they do not spend time on repetitive exercises. Less able pupils are given work that helps them consolidate their learning. Work is marked regularly and teachers' comments usually inform pupils of what they need to do next to improve. There are very good relationships between pupils and adults because teachers make their expectations of behaviour clear. Teachers involve pupils well in discussion of what has been achieved in the lesson so that pupils are clear about any new learning. Assessment is used very well to ensure that teachers see quickly where pupils have found aspects of the lesson difficult. This enables them to amend their planning for future lessons and consolidate new work.

83 Pupils enjoy numeracy because teachers plan and prepare interesting lessons well. They are keen to contribute and settle well to work because they know teachers expect them to organise themselves quickly. Pupils learn to work for most of the lesson without direct supervision because they want to succeed. Work is usually presented well. The structure of



the daily mathematics lesson is used very effectively. The initial mental mathematics sessions are used well to sharpen pupils' thinking and prepare them for the main activities of the lesson. Teachers use mathematical terms precisely and challenge pupils' thinking. For example, pupils in Year 2 explain how they added three numbers together clearly and Year 4 pupils talk about the different operations that may be used in their problems.

84 The subject is led and managed well. As a result, the numeracy strategy has been implemented very well and numeracy is used effectively across the curriculum. The use of the computer suite and the whiteboard has stimulated interest and is managed thoughtfully. Mathematics makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development because pupils learn to think and work together in a friendly, stimulating environment.

## **SCIENCE**

85 Pupils' attainment in Years 2 and 4 in science is above the levels expected for their ages. This is consistent with the results of teacher assessments and represents continued progress since the last inspection.

86 Pupils make good progress in developing their scientific knowledge and skills. Pupils in Year 1 have accurate knowledge of the external parts of the body and accurately identify foods that constitute a healthy and balanced diet. They distinguish between natural and manufactured materials, developing confidence in using key vocabulary such as "fabric", "leather" and "graphite". They realise the importance of observation in science work, using the different senses to investigate the differences between living organisms and things that have never lived and classifying materials according to specific criteria such as hardness and flexibility. Their knowledge and understanding are extended in Year 2. Pupils predict and measure the effects of exercise on the heartbeat and pulse. They distinguish between gases, solids and liquids and appreciate that some everyday materials alter when heated or cooled. In this work, pupils develop an awareness of the importance of a fair test. For example, when investigating the impact of water of different temperatures on ice, pupils appreciated that an identical amount of ice was needed for each test. All pupils distinguish between battery and mains sources of electricity and most pupils know that a complete circuit is needed for a bulb to light up.

87 Work on forces is developed well in Year 3. A good investigative activity improved pupils' skills when comparing the strengths of different shaped magnets. The teacher encouraged the pupils to make simple predictions as to which magnet was likely to be the strongest and devise a fair test to investigate these predictions and record findings with accurate measurements. Some pupils related their knowledge of materials to that of teeth in an activity that included the design of "braces". This work enhanced pupils' vocabulary with the use of words such as "misalignment", "cavity" and "discomfort". This investigative approach is further developed in Year 4. In an investigation of objects falling, pupils develop knowledge of air resistance. They have a good understanding of water resistance in investigating shapes that move easily through water. This work results in pupils coming to conclusions about the ideal shape for a boat or submarine. They distinguish accurately between thermal insulation and conduction. Pupils have a good understanding of filtration for separating materials and identify suitable materials to act as filters.

88 The quality of teaching in science is good and sometimes very good and is having a positive effect on pupils' progress. There are good relationships between staff and pupils and therefore pupils feel confident when offering suggestions and answering questions in class. Teachers have secure knowledge of the subject content and also have clear targets for lessons that are shared with pupils. For example, in Year 1 the lesson was well paced and started with skilful and challenging questioning by the teacher. This reinforced previous learning and made clear what pupils had to investigate with regard to forces. Provision of

excellent resources ensured that pupils' interest and attention were secured so that they approached tasks with enthusiasm and good quality learning resulted. Pupils understood that forces can be artificially generated which can move and change the direction of an object. In a Year 3 class investigating the absorbency qualities of different papers, skilful questioning demonstrated pupils' understanding of the importance of a fair test. The lesson was well structured, with planning adjusted after assessment of previous work because of the difficulties pupils found in making accurate measurements. Pupils considered any variables that might affect the reliability of results and discussed the different papers in terms of their suitability for different purposes.

89 A further strength of the teaching is that work in science complements learning in the key skills of literacy and numeracy. The emphasis on using key vocabulary is consistent throughout the school and extends pupils' vocabulary. The investigative approach to science provides opportunities for accurate measurement and the recording of data in graphs and tables and the interpretation of this data. However, sometimes teachers make insufficient use of information and communication technology to support and enhance learning in science lessons. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, they use a good range of teaching strategies and set challenging tasks for pupils of different abilities. In this respect, good use is made of assessment data to provide suitable activities for different ability groups. However, this aspect of teaching is inconsistent, when activities are very similar for different groups, higher attaining pupils are not effectively challenged. For example, pupils are only required to justify their predictions in some classes, or when predictions are not accurate they are not always challenged to explain why this is so. The science co-ordinator is very new to this post, is relatively inexperienced in the subject and has not yet had any opportunities to observe teaching and learning and share good practice.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

90 Standards in art and design are in line with the levels expected for pupils' ages in Years 2 and 4. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching is mostly good. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. They teach new skills confidently. For example, in a lesson in Year 2 there was a good demonstration of how to make use of different materials to create a portrait. As a result, pupils were eager and confident to make a start. Effective support was given throughout the lesson with praise, encouragement and expert advice. Pupils successfully used different coloured paper, card and wool to build up their images of which they were very proud.

91 Teachers use resources well. For example, Year 1 pupils observed American Indian tepees. They looked closely at texture, colour and form. The teacher set a good challenge when pupils had to use their skills to select the size of brush they needed and then mix paints to get the colour they wanted to use on their own tepees. Colours were mixed effectively from a wide colour range. The results were good. Teachers have good subject knowledge of famous artists and use resources well to encourage pupils to appreciate the different styles and techniques used. For example, pupils in Year 3 broadened their cultural knowledge by studying landscapes and seascapes by Turner. Pupils are given the opportunity to study a range of artists, both past and present, with styles as diverse as Van Gogh and William Morris. Art from eastern and western cultures is studied in Year 4 with attractive work in Mehndi patterns that links well with their studies in religious education.

92 Teachers plan lessons well. There is a clear focus on what they want pupils to achieve. Whilst there is no specific planning for pupils of different abilities, extension activities are planned effectively. Teachers know pupils well and support and extend learning during lessons. Teachers have high expectations. For example, the task in Year 4 was very challenging when pupils painstakingly created their intricate Mehndi patterns on paper hands. All pupils used pencils with skill and control and then chose fine brushes to carefully

complete the vivid pattern. Teachers are skilled at linking art to other curriculum areas. For example, Year 4 pupils paint in the style of the Egyptians and use their information and communication technology skills to use the Internet for research into life styles in Egypt and Asia. Year 2 pupils use colour and patterning well to create an autumn picture using printing techniques with leaves. They use the computer to generate interesting pictures and patterns and use the Internet to support independent research about art in Australia. Teachers value and respect pupils' work. It is effectively displayed around the school enriching the learning environment.

93 The co-ordinator manages the subject well. Expertise is regularly shared with colleagues to support and advise. This good leadership includes the creation of the current guidelines, which effectively help teachers' planning week by week. There is a very clear vision for the development of the subject and the co-ordinator has a good knowledge of the strengths and areas for further development. For example, the new guidelines effectively link art and design to other areas of the curriculum and so enhance pupils' understanding and knowledge. Teachers use assessment on a half termly basis to keep an accurate check on progress. This helps teachers plan opportunities for pupils at an even higher level and continue to raise standards. The co-ordinator and colleagues are committed to raising standards and they are well placed to do so.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

94 No design and technology lessons were seen, but sufficient evidence was available elsewhere in the school to enable judgements to be made. By the end of Years 2 and 4, pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, achieve standards expected for their age and they make sound progress in the knowledge, skills and understanding of the design and making process. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection in Years 1 and 2 and they are now more secure by the end of Year 4. This is because the school has adopted new guidelines, enabling tools and materials to be matched to the skills pupils need to learn in each year.

95 No teaching was seen, so no judgement can be made on the quality of teaching, but the evidence from previous work indicates that teachers encourage pupils to plan their work using a good range of strategies. For example, older pupils in Year 4 use their literacy skills to produce a booklet, with a contents page and glossary, as they give written instructions on how to make a mechanism with a lever. Their drawings are clear and detailed. Younger pupils in Year 2 produce clearly labelled designs for a puppet and their list of the materials they require for the task is comprehensive. The written evaluations that older pupils make about their finished product could be more focused upon the improvements they would make. For example, one pupil wrote, "I think my book is quite good and I think I tried hard". This was not as rigorous as the oral evaluations given by Year 3 pupils; for example, "I made my design but then had to change it after I had practised with the syringes. The syringe did not fill up because the balloon let the air go". Teachers have good procedures in place to assess the work that pupils have done at the end of a unit of work and their use of this assessment to identify any problems is thorough and effective. There is little evidence in pupils' work to show that information and communication technology skills are used to support learning in design and technology, but good use is made of a digital camera to record both work in progress and the completed products.

96 The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory, with some good features. There are good formal assessment procedures in place which are used effectively. The co-ordinator has had some opportunity to observe the quality of learning throughout the school. There have been interviews with pupils from each year group and there is a good portfolio of work. The co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to check the quality of teaching through direct observation, although teachers' planning is monitored. The writing of an action plan is not part of the co-ordinator's role which weakens the opportunities

to have overall strategic control of the subject. Resources for the subject are satisfactory, this represents an improvement since the previous inspection.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

97 In Years 2 and 4, pupils' attainment in geography is in line with that expected for their ages. In Year 2, pupils show an awareness of geographical features of the local area and explain the different features of their surroundings, commenting on attractive and unattractive features. This work complements pupils' sense of community and the roles that different people and groups play in that community. Pupils draw simple maps and show, for example, their routes to school. They comment on different types of buildings and land usage. Pupils make comparisons with geographical features of Gosforth and features of a Scottish island. They learn effectively about physical features of landscape, different social and leisure activities and different economic and environmental factors.

98 The knowledge and skills involved in contrasting locations are developed further with older pupils. Pupils in Year 4 investigate detailed contrasts between their locality and that of Chembakolli in India with a particular focus on the impact of different climatic conditions. Pupils have considered differences in flora and fauna and relate the differences to economic activity and the culture and traditions of the areas, with a particular focus on the lives of children. Pupils name key human and physical features of India and the surrounding countries accurately. This work contributes effectively to the development of an important aspect of geographical understanding in that pupils recognise characteristic physical and human features of different types of landscape, including deserts and mountains and use key related vocabulary such as "monsoon" accurately.

99 Pupils make progress in their ability to use secondary sources in their investigations, including books and computers. They use some primary sources such as photographs. However, the use of maps, including Ordnance Survey maps, is not well developed. Similarly, maps drawn by pupils show limited knowledge of the use of keys or grid references, or of key lines of latitude or longitude.

## **HISTORY**

100 In Years 2 and 4, pupils' attainment in history is above that expected for their ages. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection.

101 In Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of differences between the past and present and are aware that living and working conditions were different in the past. They comment on aspects of homes and toys in terms of changes in technology that over time have determined the materials used to manufacture such items and also how they work. In Year 1, pupils observe and handle everyday artefacts from the past, such as kitchen and washing implements. Their direct experience contributes to a good understanding of life in the past. In particular, pupils appreciate the way electricity changed the lives of ordinary people. Teachers in Year 1 ensure that, as a result of this work, pupils develop an understanding of time and chronology which is continued in Year 2 classes. For example, in the study of famous people of the past such as Florence Nightingale and Queen Elizabeth I, key details of their lives are placed in chronological order. Pupils learn about features of the periods in which these people lived. For example, they learn about expectations for women in Victorian times and that William Shakespeare lived and wrote in Elizabethan times. Their studies of Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot emphasise and increase their understanding of the central importance of the religious issues of the time.

102 Pupils in Year 4 describe features of life in Ancient Egypt, appreciating the importance of the flooding of the River Nile for the people of that time. They know about the social structure of the period, the importance of the pharaohs and the significance of religion in

people's lives. In Year 3, pupils have a good understanding and factual knowledge of Ancient Greece. They know that Ancient Greece was made up of city-states, notably Athens and Sparta, and are aware of features of life that characterised these different states. In particular, they compare and contrast the roles and expectations for women and children in the different periods and places. They understand the specific criteria for citizenship in Ancient Greece and know that democracy of that time differs in significant ways from that of modern Britain. Pupils learn that much of our knowledge of ancient periods comes from archaeological evidence.

103 Good teaching contributes to pupils' good progress in historical knowledge and understanding. In one lesson in a Year 3 class, very skilful questioning allowed pupils to demonstrate their knowledge gained from previous lessons and encouraged them to use that knowledge to develop a deeper understanding of the nature of Ancient Greek society. Pupils were imaginatively and skilfully introduced to the institution of slavery and appreciated its importance at the time. Such study is enhanced by pupils' use of information and communication technology. Although contemporary views of slavery, such as that of Plato, were introduced, full opportunities to use primary source evidence to investigate further were not developed, for example, studying the images of society found on remains of pottery. Nevertheless, in considering these issues from the points of view of slaves and masters, the notion of historical interpretation is developed well. Pupils demonstrate their interest and enjoyment by their responses and answers to questions. They were able to formulate and ask focused and perceptive further questions that also contributed to the depth of their learning.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

104 In Year 2, pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is in line with the level expected for their age. Standards for these pupils have been maintained since the last inspection. For pupils in Year 4, information and communication technology skills are rising rapidly and are above the level expected for their age due to the regular planned use of the well equipped computer suite and the whole school guidelines that give teachers a good framework for planning lessons. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology shows a significant improvement since the last inspection. Information and communication technology is valued as an essential part of the curriculum. For example, the class based computers are used by all teachers to support pupils' work in information and communication technology and in other subjects.

105 By Year 2, pupils use basic graphics and word processing programs to produce words and pictures. They save their work and pupils in Year 2 use the computer to organise and solve mathematics problems on the screen. For example, pupils solved shopping problems by "clicking" on to the correct coins and "dragging" them so that they could work out the total cost of a number of items. In Year 1, pupils were observed using the computer suite. They "log on" and open the appropriate program effectively. They select words and create their own sentences on the screen. In Year 2, pupils work very productively with floor robots. They entered instructions to follow a path around water to reach treasure. They used their mathematic and information and communication technology skills well to estimate how far the robot had to travel before turning to reach the target. There was great delight and pride in their achievements when the robot stopped exactly on the cross that represented the treasure.

106 Older pupils use a more advanced program to produce sounds linked to the opening sentences of a story. For example, in a Year 3 lesson pupils used a keyboard on the screen to play different notes and chords. By selecting appropriate instruments they fitted the sounds to the story very well and one group used the slow beat of a double bass to accompany the heavy sounds an elephant would make. The teaching in the computer suite is good and pupils rapidly improve their skills. For example, in a Year 4 session, the teacher

demonstrated how to use a data-base to find specific information. Pupils experimented with the different ways the data could be shown, for example, providing a list of all cars that were red or those that were hatchbacks. Pupils used pictures from other sources to enhance their work and the finished combination of print and graphics was very effective in their finished work on Egypt. An analysis of previous work shows that the pupils undertake surveys using the Internet to enhance their studies in other subjects. For example, Year 4 pupils produced information for their history topic on the Egyptians and life in the village of Chembakolli. Teachers demonstrate the capabilities of the computer very well and make sure that all pupils understand how to use the interactive whiteboard in the suite. This makes a very positive contribution to learning and progress.

107 The quality of teaching of skills in information and communication technology in the computer suite is good throughout the school. A major strength of the teaching is the very good management of pupils so that behaviour is very good in lessons. All teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge, tasks given to pupils are well thought out and instructions are clear so pupils know exactly what they have to do. Support staff are used well to support small groups or individuals so that pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, get on with their work enthusiastically. This was demonstrated very well in a Year 1 lesson where pupils were learning how to recognise both two and three dimensional shapes. The teacher worked with the class and they all enjoyed the opportunity to select the correct name and, using their fingers, dragged the name to the required box on the screen. Teachers sometimes use other subjects, such as science or art and design, to provide the basis for teaching pupils new skills.

108 Pupils of all ages enjoy learning about and using information and communication technology. They work well together, showing due care and respect for the expensive and fragile equipment as well as for the suggestions and opinions of their classmates. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has completed a good audit of teachers' skills so that future training can be tailored to the needs of the school. The school has given a great deal of thought to the future development of information and communication technology. The co-ordinator and headteacher had rightly focused on setting up the computer suite when the new buildings were completed. The co-ordinator manages the subject very well and has provided good training and support for colleagues. Resources for the subject are good and well used and the school is well set to continue pupils' attainment and progress in the subject.

## **MUSIC**

109 Pupils in Year 2 and Year 4 attain above the expected standards for their age in music. They thoroughly enjoy their music making activities because of the good teaching. Standards have improved since the last inspection and pupils have more planned opportunities to learn about and listen to the music of famous composers. Pupils with special educational needs or who learn English as an additional language achieve well because they are included in lessons and assemblies very effectively.

110 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn to sing a wide range of songs and hymns because they find the words and tunes interesting and challenging. They sing confidently and maintain their rhythm and pitch exceedingly well when singing unaccompanied. They sing short notes very clearly, with very good diction and add percussion to their songs very precisely. Pupils think about when they are to play and keep in time very well. Pupils in Year 2 add an extra dimension to their singing and playing as they learn to sing loudly and softly by responding to cards with the musical signs for these words. One pupil conducts the rest of the group and they respond very well.

111 Pupils in Year 4 build well on their musical skills, reading notes on a chart thoughtfully as they sing new words to an old tune. They realise that they, too, are composers and use their reading skills to help them learn traditional songs from the region. When pupils add percussion to the singing it is extremely effective because of their very good timing and awareness of what each group is doing. A group of pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn to sing to the music of Vivaldi for a school performance in the Civic Centre. The music is complex and their singing sensitive. They learn how to approach high notes and improve their technique well.

112 Pupils of all ages enjoy the fast moving music lessons because they are carried along by the enthusiasm of the teachers. Levels of concentration are very good because there are frequent changes of activities and pupils are prepared to take their turn in playing instruments. They participate in their singing with energy and eagerness so that it is always good to the listener's ear.

113 Teaching is good and the combined groups work hard with the teachers who lead the lessons together very effectively. Teachers work well as teams. The younger classes are supported well by the governor who comes each week to play for their singing lessons and hymn practice. Teachers in Year 4 work together and their combined efforts enable pupils to reach high standards in their singing. They develop an enthusiasm for music and performing well. Lessons are challenging, but fun, so pupils build on skills effectively and securely.

114 The co-ordinator, who has considerable skills and enthusiasm for music, provides good support for other colleagues. A small group of pupils benefit from skilled teaching by a visiting specialist and the co-ordinator hopes to develop instrumental teaching further. Pupils perform in assemblies and productions and are regularly involved in workshops with visiting musicians. Music makes a very good contribution to assemblies. It also makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through experience of working together on a wide range of music from around the world and performances in the community further enhance their development.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

115 Pupils in Years 2 and 4 attain standards that are above those expected for their age in physical education. All pupils, including those with special educational needs or who learn English as an additional language, achieve well and make good progress because of the good teaching.

116 Pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of the need for care when moving apparatus in the hall. They carry mats, move benches and arrange these carefully to match the photographs of the arrangements they need. At the end of the lesson, they are equally sensible. Pupils show good extensions of arms and legs as they practise balancing on various parts of the body. They are imaginative, spurred on by pupil demonstrations to try something more difficult or interesting. As they move around the hall they show good use of space and awareness of each other.

117 Pupils in Year 3 build well on the skills practised in Year 2 as they produce polished sequences of movements as they travel around the hall. They start at one level, stop and balance before moving forward in another direction. Movements are supple and lithe, swift and graceful. Pupils express thoughtful opinions about others' work and improve their own performance after these discussions. They challenge themselves to a higher level of performance and concentration. This attitude is a highlight of work in dance in Year 4. Pupils work in groups of five to develop their ideas for a dance to inspiring classical music. Some pupils make deft, slow movements of their hands and feet, others use quick, darting movements to explore their ideas. They synchronise jumps and swinging arm movements well, whether the music is quick or slow. When they perform to other groups, pupils are

given spontaneous applause for the quality of their work. All pupils share their delight in the dances of each group and make observant, perceptive comments on the performance.

118 The quality of teaching and learning is good and teachers encourage pupils to give thoughtful demonstrations of their work. They take good account of health and safety rules and teach good practice in moving equipment. Teachers challenge pupils to attain high standards and lessons proceed at a very good pace with a good range of contrasting activities during the lesson. Teachers plan lessons very carefully and ensure that pupils build on their skills and understanding systematically. Pupils enjoy physical education lessons and are keen to succeed. They discuss the benefits of doing exercise and the effects on their bodies, sensibly and coherently.

119 The subject is led and managed well. Last year the co-ordinator observed lessons in physical education and arranged further training for staff. Staff feel that this has increased their confidence and the quality of pupils' learning. All aspects of the curriculum are covered and pupils in Year 3 go swimming each week. More able pupils swim up to 800 metres and the majority achieve at least a 5 metre award during the year. All pupils are confident in the water and enjoy the lessons at a local swimming pool. Physical education makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in many ways. Pupils join with other schools in tournaments in, for example, football, rugby and Kwik cricket. They learn dances from many countries and there is a very spiritual content in the quality of their work in dance.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

120 Standards by the end of Year 2 meet those prescribed by the locally agreed syllabus and are in line with those expected for pupils' ages. Pupils' attainment in Year 4 is above the level expected for their age. The quality of the provision has been strengthened since the time of the previous inspection which allows pupils to progress steadily and securely through the rich and interesting learning opportunities planned for them.

121 Teaching has improved since the last inspection and most of it is now good. Under the good direction of the co-ordinator, new guidelines have been written which are used well in teachers' planning of lessons. This is well linked to the locally agreed syllabus and the curriculum is broad and well balanced. As a result, the subject makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

122 Teachers use effective methods to deliver their lessons. They make good use of discussions to introduce new learning or to check on pupils' understanding. In a very good Year 4 lesson, pupils eagerly shared their knowledge and understanding of the life of Jesus. The teacher explained how Jesus chose the disciples and then set the challenging task for pupils to write an account of how they would feel if they had been chosen by Jesus. Phrases such as, "I felt very frightened but was reassured when He said, 'I am God's son'", show how pupils' understanding of others' feelings was enhanced by the work. In Year 2, the teacher used artefacts from the Jewish faith to show the importance of the Torah. Pupils made their own and they know that the Torah is treated with great respect and that a special pointer is used when reading from it. Teachers ensure learning builds on what has previously been taught in a step by step, way this was seen in the way pupils in Year 2 compare the customs of Diwali with Christmas. For example, they noted that both festivals have special patterns, wrapping paper, lights and special food.

123 Teachers plan lessons well. They link the subject effectively to other curriculum areas to support understanding and generate discussion. In a good lesson in Year 1, the teacher used discussion very well to help pupils have a better understanding of the characteristics of a leader. A well chosen selection of questions made pupils think about what made a good leader and comments such as, "You have to be able to do something



really well”, show the improving understanding of a difficult concept. This discussion led into the story of Moses and how he was chosen to lead his people out of Egypt and improved pupils’ knowledge of the Bible.

124 Teachers have good questioning skills. They pitch their questions at the right level to challenge pupils of all abilities. They ask pertinent questions to check that pupils understand what they have been taught. They are very thorough and pupils display a good level of knowledge and understanding of the subject. Pupils share their views confidently with good reasoning skills. Teachers work together well. Teachers who have parallel classes plan lessons together so that all pupils have the same experiences. A real strength of the subject lies in the way that teachers use the personal, social and health education programme to support learning in religious education. Teachers share the targets with pupils at the beginning of the lesson and check at the end of the lesson to make sure that targets have been met. In this way pupils are involved in their own learning. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language are well catered for through more simplified activities and with good support either from the teacher or well briefed classroom assistant.

125 The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. By undertaking an audit of the subject and checking teachers’ planning, the co-ordinator ensures that the full curriculum is covered. Assessment is used well to guide teachers’ planning so that pupils build on their previous learning well.