

# INSPECTION REPORT

## WITHERWACK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Winslow Close, Witherwack, Sunderland. SR5  
5RZ

LEA area: Sunderland

Unique reference number: 108783

Headteacher: Mrs. L. Anderson

Reporting inspector: Mr. R.B. Higgs  
1608

Dates of inspection: 20<sup>th</sup> June to 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2003

Inspection number: 246822

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior School

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Winslow Close,  
Wetherwack,  
Sunderland.

Postcode: ST5 5RZ

Telephone number: 0191 5535365

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Councillor M. Higgins

Date of previous inspection: 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1608	Mr. R.B. Higgs	Registered inspector	Geography History Educational inclusion	Summary of the report The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
11358	Mrs. V.A. Lamb	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?
30499	Mrs. T. Woods	Team inspector	Science Foundation Stage Special educational needs English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
22667	Mrs. A. Firth	Team inspector	English Art Music	
32830	Mrs. B. Roberts	Team inspector	Information technology Design and technology	
32130	Mrs. L. Halliday	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education Religious education	How well is the school led and managed?

The inspection contractor was:

Durham Local Education Authority

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Wetherwack Primary School is situated in an inner suburb of the City of Sunderland in a large estate of former municipal housing. The school occupies a modern building and has 162 pupils on roll between the ages of 4 and 11 years so is smaller than average. There are 21 pupils in the nursery who attend part time. The school is considerably smaller than at its last inspection, mainly as a result of a falling birth rate. Pupils are almost wholly of white British descent and only two do not speak English as their first language. Over half are entitled to a free school meal, which is well above average, indicating that the area has considerable social and economic disadvantage. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs (SEN) is below average but the proportion requiring additional SEN support is well above average. Attainment on entry is low and, in aspects of language and number skills, very low. The school is a member of Sunderland Education Action Zone (EAZ) and receives additional support from the Local Education Authority (LEA) due to its challenging circumstances.

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

Wetherwack Primary School provides a sound education for its pupils and satisfactory value for money. It is a welcoming school and has strengths in pupils' personal development and their care and welfare. Due to the hard work of its teachers and support staff, pupils' achievement is generally satisfactory. However, standards in English are low and less than should be achieved, primarily due to weaknesses in teaching in Key Stage 2. Though the school is soundly led and improving steadily, several management weaknesses have held back necessary change.

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

- Providing for pupils' personal development – attitudes and relationships are very good
- Helps pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 due to good teaching
- Boosting pupils' skills in speaking and listening
- The school cares well for its pupils
- Managing and supporting behavioural, emotional and attitudinal problems
- All staff show commitment to the values of the school
- Welcoming parents and the community to work together
- Making good use of external support and initiatives to help pupils learn

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

- Attainment and achievement in English, particularly in reading and writing at Key Stage 2
- Provision for the most able pupils
- Systems for monitoring pupils' progress to enable more effective intervention for improvement
- School development planning and aspects of financial management
- Pupils' attendance

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

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

The school was last inspected in February 1998 and improvement since has been satisfactory. Teaching and learning has strengthened in Key Stages 1 and 2, now having a higher proportion of good teaching. Standards are higher in mathematics, science, information and communications technology (ICT) and art and design. However, standards in English have not risen as quickly as they should and attendance remains well below average. The school now has a good library and good provision of computers that are helping to improve pupils' skills of independent learning. The school has introduced performance management procedures for teachers that now meet requirements.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	E*	E*	E*	E
mathematics	E	E	E	C
science	E	E	E	C

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

Attainment in national tests for 11 year olds in 2002 was well below average overall, though there was a big rise in the percentage reaching Level 4 (the standard most 11 year olds are expected to reach) in mathematics. Standards in English were in the bottom five percent of schools nationally. Compared with similar schools, standards were average in mathematics and science but well below average in English. Test results have been slowly improving in recent years. The school met its target for mathematics in 2002 but fell well short of its target in English. Targets for 2003 are challenging but that for English is more realistic.

Children begin nursery with below average attainment but with some aspects of language and number skills that are well below average. They make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage but enter Year 1 still below expected standards except in their personal and social development. In Key Stage 1, they build well on this sound start. However, despite good achievement overall, pupils' attainment in Year 2 is below average in English and broadly average in other subjects, with the exception of physical education (PE) which is above average.

Standards seen in Year 6 are well below average in English, and below in mathematics and science. Pupils' skills in reading and writing are weak. Some staffing difficulties and transfers of pupils out of the school have held back progress and overall standards in recent years. However, pupils do not make expected progress in English, as teaching is not always good enough. There is better progress in speaking and listening due to fresh approaches to teaching these skills. This is having an upward effect on standards in other areas of the curriculum. In all other subjects, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and the standards reached by the majority are broadly in line with national expectations. There is little difference in standards between boys and girls. Pupils with SEN achieve satisfactorily in relation to their targets.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very Good. Pupils like their school and are keen to take part in clubs and activities. They work hard in lessons and concentrate well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils follow instructions and school rules well on the whole. They move between rooms sensibly and play well together. There are very few exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils learn to manage their feelings and are helpful to one another. They grow in confidence and relationships are very good.
Attendance	Well below the national average and unauthorised absence is high.





## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Good	Satisfactory

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

Teaching is satisfactory overall but is consistently good in Key Stage 1. A high proportion is good in Year 4 and very good in Year 6. The only 3 unsatisfactory lessons were in Key Stage 2. The high quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 and Years 4 and 6 are major reasons for the good and satisfactory achievement respectively. During the inspection, a temporary supply teacher in Year 6 built on the good progress achieved beforehand in that class by the deputy headteacher.

A good feature of teaching is the development of speaking and listening skills to boost standards of literacy. Pupils are learning well using these skills, working together to improve their understanding and grasp of language. However, the teaching of English and, to a lesser extent, mathematics is inconsistent in Key Stage 2. There is not enough emphasis on the teaching of grammar and progress in reading is not tracked well enough to make improvements. Consequently, standards in English are lower than expected because the improvement in Year 6 is not enough to make up for some unsatisfactory teaching and progress earlier. Mathematics teaching is satisfactory and numeracy skills soundly taught, though progress is slower in Years 3 and 5. Teachers generally have good classroom management so behaviour and attitudes to work are good and support productive learning. The use of teaching assistants and nursery nurses ensures pupils with SEN are included well in activities. However, teachers do not consistently stretch the most able pupils to get the very best from them and marking generally does not indicate to pupils how to improve to reach their targets.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. It is broad and suitably enriched to provide experiences supportive of good learning. A very good range of out-of-hours activities is offered.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils with learning and other difficulties are identified early and well supported.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is very good. The high priority on personal, social and emotional development provides a good basis for academic learning. Pupils' cultural and spiritual development is enriched in a variety of ways.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Well. The health and safety of children has high priority but there are weaknesses in systems used for assessment and tracking progress. Despite hard work, attendance remains low.

Equality of opportunity and access is good. The school's open door policy strengthens the involvement of parents who, as a result, hold the school in high regard. The school also successfully promotes inclusion through extra provision such as a breakfast club and homework club.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. In the absence of the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, well supported by subject leaders and staff, has kept the school running smoothly. The staff team has a strong commitment to the values of the school. Weaknesses in management systems reduce the school's ability to get the best out of pupils.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors have a range of expertise that they use well to support the school. However, they are too reliant on the headteacher to set the school's direction, evaluate outcomes and monitor spending.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory on balance. External partnerships with the LEA and EAZ are used well to evaluate the impact of initiatives. There is a secure performance management system. However, the management cycle and improvement plan are not robust and assessment information is not used effectively enough.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school has used major sources of funding securely for relevant and important improvements and generated extra support through external partnerships. However, spending decisions are not prioritised clearly through the school development plan and budget monitoring has not been undertaken systematically or in enough detail by the governing body.

The school is well staffed with sufficient teachers and a good ratio of support staff. Good use is made of the available accommodation to extend learning and strengthen community partnerships. There are no major shortages of resources. Principles of best value are soundly applied.

## 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>Teaching is good</li> <li>The school expects children to work hard and do their best</li> <li>They feel comfortable about approaching the school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The range of activities outside lessons</li> </ul>

The inspection team agree on the whole with the positive views of parents. There is a considerable amount of good teaching at the school but there is room for improvement. Pupils try hard in lessons as a rule and keep up their interest. The school is welcoming and encourages dialogue with parents. For its size, the school provides a very good range of activities outside of school hours.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. When children enter nursery their attainment is mainly below average for their age other than in their physical skills, which are average. Aspects of language and number skills are poor. As the result of a generally rich curriculum and satisfactory teaching, their achievement is as expected. Learning in areas of the curriculum such as knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development is held back due to weaknesses in children's language skills. This is because, although they learn to listen well, they have difficulty in expressing their thoughts. However, good progress is made in personal, social and emotional skills as teachers give this high priority and so children settle well to learn and form secure relationships. Despite this, by the time they enter Key Stage 1, their attainment remains below the standard expected in most areas of learning other than in physical and personal development, which are both average.
2. In Key Stage 1 results in 2002, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 (the standard expected for pupils of this age) was very close to average in mathematics in the test and average in science in teacher assessments. English test results were well below average in reading and in the bottom five per cent nationally in writing. These results continued a modest upward trend in writing but there was a downturn in reading after several years of improvement. Mathematics continued on an upward trend. In comparison with similar schools, standards in reading were below and in writing well below average. Pupils' achievement in reaching Level 2 was very good in both mathematics and in science in comparison with similar schools. A very small proportion reached the higher Level 3 but this represented satisfactory achievement in English and good achievement in mathematics and science.
3. Consistently good teaching in the current Year 1 and Year 2 classes is maintaining the good progress in mathematics and science seen in recent test results. In English, progress is satisfactory but better in speaking and listening than in reading and writing, due to the increased emphasis placed on using 'pupil talk' as a general learning strategy in the course of this year. However, standards remain below average by the end of the key stage. In mathematics, science, the foundation subjects and religious education (RE), standards are average. Only in PE are standards above average.
4. Results in last year's national tests for Year 6 were well below average overall, though there was a big rise in the percentage reaching Level 4 in mathematics to just below average. Standards in English were in the bottom five per cent nationally and well below average in science. The school reached its target for mathematics in 2002 but not for English. Pupils' achievement was better, taking account of their low attainment on entry and the challenging circumstances facing the school due to the high degree of social and economic disadvantage in the area. Compared with similar schools, standards were above average in mathematics, average in science but well below average in English.

5. In the 2002 results, only a very small proportion of pupils got a higher level and a high proportion attained lower levels. This is to be expected to some extent as this school has a high proportion of pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties. Also, the school roll has been falling rapidly in recent years, mainly due to a falling birth rate but partly to a high number of transfers to other schools in Key Stage 2. Some uncertainty about the future of the school has contributed to this mobility. These pupils tend to be average or above, and their transfer has had the effect of lowering the school's overall attainment. Against this background of falling rolls, the trend in test results at the end of Key Stage 2 has been below that nationally. Results fell after the 1998 inspection in English and mathematics but there has been gradual recovery in the last few years.
6. Standards of work seen in Year 6 are well below average in English, and below average in mathematics and science. This is slightly better in English compared to the results in 2002 and similar in the other two subjects. There is little difference in standards reached by boys and girls. The school has set realistic targets for 2003 taking account of the previous progress of this class. In all other subjects, standards are broadly average as the majority of pupils are working at the national expectation. Very few pupils are working at an above average level in any subject. Teaching is not as strong overall at Key Stage 2 as it is at Key Stage 1 but achievement is mainly as expected as the teaching is satisfactory overall. However, in English, progress in reading and writing is unsatisfactory. Pupils in Year 6 make up a lot of ground due to good teaching but not enough to catch up to the standard expected. Records of work show that progress for this year group, when they were in previous Year 4 and 5, classes has been too slow. Recent staffing changes have resulted in more settled arrangements and progress is steadier across the key stage. However, weaknesses in the teaching of English in several classes remain. One area of improvement is that progress in speaking and listening is good, though pupils are still below average. Teachers have responded well to a new initiative this year to develop and practise these skills across the curriculum.
7. Attainment in mathematics in Year 6 is below average but pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Teachers are effectively using the National Numeracy Strategy and the new teaching and learning initiative to get pupils to talk about mathematics and acquire and use technical vocabulary.
8. In science, pupils make satisfactory progress but their attainment is below average by the end of the key stage. They have a sound grasp of subject content and can record the results of investigations accurately. Higher attaining pupils can draw conclusions from their findings. Pupils show a satisfactory degree of independence when carrying out practical investigations and this is an improvement on the last inspection.
9. Standards have improved in ICT and in art and design since the last inspection and are now broadly in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Provision of computers for ICT is much better. In common with art, the curriculum is better planned and teachers have more confident subject knowledge.
10. Pupils with SEN make satisfactory progress. The very small number who require statements of SEN, or the larger number who are on the upper reaches of the SEN register, are included well in classroom activities and achieve soundly in relation to their significant learning difficulties. The school is also good at keeping pupils with emotional and behaviour difficulties on board and helping them sustain satisfactory progress in face of their difficulties.

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

11. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are a strength of the school. In particular, relationships are of very high quality. Pupils like school and respond very well to the values it promotes. They mostly work hard in lessons. Parents are very satisfied that their children are learning to be mature and responsible. However, attendance levels are very low when compared to primary schools nationally.
12. In the vast majority of lessons, pupils' attitudes to their learning are very positive and show that they are enthusiastic and very willing to learn. They are calm and listen attentively so that they are clear about what they have to do. They concentrate on their work and enjoy challenges, trying their best when work is difficult. Pupils are co-operative and confident in making suggestions. They are keen to ask and answer questions when appropriate and share their ideas willingly. When given the opportunity to work independently, pupils apply themselves conscientiously. They happily talk about their work and try hard to improve and succeed.
13. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school is good. They understand what is expected of them and keep to established routines without fussing. Pupils move about the school in a quiet and orderly way and are polite and helpful towards visitors. For example, pupils open doors without being prompted and wait their turn patiently when queuing for dinner and to enter school after breaks. In the playgrounds, pupils make very good use of the space available to them and are all happily occupied. During class discussions and circle time, most pupils take turns and listen carefully to each other. Pupils show that they respect each other's views and those of their teachers and support staff. On the whole, pupils settle quickly to their tasks without wasting time or disturbing others. They pay attention and work well together in pairs and groups, quietly discussing topics when appropriate. Sometimes behaviour is exemplary. In an RE lesson in Year 6 for example, pupils responded very well to their teacher's guidelines, that "there are no wrong answers", when they listened with great respect to each other's descriptions of areas of the natural world that they find wonderful. In nursery, pupils behave excellently when they clearly enjoy the interesting activities provided for them. In the few lessons in Key Stage 2 where unacceptable behaviour was seen, class routines were less secure and interruptions and time wasting occurred.
14. Pupils clearly understand the consequences of unacceptable behaviour and respond very well to the school's high expectations and system of rewards. Occasionally, some pupils find it difficult to maintain the high standards of behaviour expected but the vast majority respond very well to the guidance provided by staff. Consequently, the school rarely needs to resort to its ultimate sanction of exclusion from school. Very few pupils were excluded during the last school year.

15. Pupils respond very well to the systems in the school for promoting personal development. Relationships are very good and make a very significant contribution to pupils' personal development and academic progress. Pupils respect their teachers and assistants and learn very well from their good example. Pupils of all ages are able to approach teachers and support staff confidently and respectfully and are pleased to receive recognition for their successes. During assemblies, pupils respect the nature of the occasion and join in the activities in a mature way. During the inspection, Year 6 pupils led an assembly that required them to sing and sign using Makaton, which they had been successfully taught by a teaching assistant. They all tried very hard and successfully created an atmosphere of inspiration and enjoyment. The whole community of pupils of all ages, staff and parents clearly enjoyed the presentation and many visibly moved by the sentiments expressed. Pupils enjoy the clubs on offer and are well motivated to take part in a wide range of activities that broaden their experiences. They talk with pleasure about visitors who come into school.
16. Pupils of all ages willingly accept responsibility and help with the smooth running of the school. For instance, pupils have the opportunity to volunteer to be monitors and those selected carry out their duties conscientiously, acting responsibly and with maturity, such as in setting up and clearing away equipment for assembly and lunchtime or when they take messages in the office. Some older pupils volunteer to befriend any pupil who feels lonely or upset. Members of the school council act as 'playground friends'. Pupils make sensible suggestions that the school acts upon when possible and are becoming good young citizens.
17. Pupils' attendance is very low in comparison to other primary schools nationally. In addition to high levels of absence through illness, some children are taken on holiday during term time, sometimes twice, and a few parents do not ensure that their children get to school regularly. Many parents respond positively to the intervention of school staff and education social workers, especially in notifying the school of the reasons for absence and so reducing truancy, but a few continue to be unco-operative and this has an extremely detrimental effect on their child's learning and social development. Most pupils arrive in good time each morning and are keen to start the day but punctuality has been identified as an area for improvement. Consequently, classes that achieve the best rate are rewarded with the privilege of taking care of a special cuddly toy for a week. Pupils are very enthusiastic about this. Registration procedures are conducted efficiently and lessons begin promptly.
18. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils' attitudes, values and personal development were described very positively and this remains so. In particular, relationships are still very strong and behaviour continues to be mainly good. However, attendance levels have dropped to well below those in other schools.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection with more good teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2. Almost all lessons seen were at least satisfactory and the majority good or better. Examples of good quality teaching were seen in all year groups and most subjects. Unsatisfactory teaching was confined to three lessons in Key Stage 2. Teaching is satisfactory in the foundation stage and good in Key Stage 1, due to high quality teaching in both year groups, and satisfactory overall in Key Stage 2, with some inconsistency between classes which slows the pace of learning.
20. Teaching throughout the school has a number of good features but there is also room for improvement in a number of areas. The strengths lie in the common methods used by teachers to structure their lessons, the techniques used to engage pupils in talking, the maintenance of good behaviour and very good relationships and in the often lively teaching. However, teachers do not consistently expect enough of higher attaining pupils. Marking, though done conscientiously, does not indicate to pupils how to improve, and there are times when classroom assistants could be directed to provide more specific help to pupils.
21. In the Foundation Stage, children learn at a sound pace due to teaching which is never less than satisfactory and sometimes good. Teachers establish good relationships and settled patterns of working. Good collaboration between teachers and nursery nurses ensures that activities are well planned to provide an interesting range of learning opportunities. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught soundly but opportunities are sometimes missed to extend language in both areas. Also, teachers do not use assessment information consistently to cater for the learning needs of higher attainers or sometimes for those with SEN.
22. In both classes at Key Stage 1, the teaching of literacy and numeracy is good and mainly good in other subjects. Lessons as a rule have many good features. Teachers have a lively approach and use methods that capture interest. They focus clearly on a small number of learning objectives, keeping these in the mind of pupils throughout the lesson. Class size is small in Year 2 and the Year 1 class is split into two smaller groups for afternoon activities. In both cases, teachers make good use of the opportunity for more intensive work with pupils to promote good learning. There are times, however, when the most able pupils are not stretched by activities set for the whole class to do with only some variation for pupils with SEN.
23. In recent years, pupils' progress at Key Stage 2 has been very dependent on the teaching in Year 6. For example, most Year 6 pupils caught up by about a level in English and mathematics last year. The school has responded by making staff changes that have created more stability so that overall progress below Year 6 is steadier now. Though there is some good teaching in each class, the pace of learning picks up in Years 4 and 6. Teaching in Year 6 by a temporary teacher was very good, building well on the previous good teaching. However, there is still inconsistency in teaching, particularly of literacy but also of numeracy in Years 3 and 5. Two of the three unsatisfactory lessons were in English and the other in mathematics. There is some commonality across these lessons. The lessons lack pace as the teacher talks too much, needing to re-explain tasks which are not matched well to learning needs; activities lack interest and time is wasted as pupils become distracted. Taking account of other evidence, the teaching of literacy is unsatisfactory overall in Key Stage 2 but the teaching of numeracy is satisfactory. This holds back progress in English to such an extent that pupils do less well than expected.



24. Each class has a high proportion of pupils with SEN so teachers give emphasis to ensuring materials are appropriate and plan tasks that have suitably small learning steps. This tends to mean that the most able pupils are not stretched consistently and some teachers do not pick this up. In a number of lessons and examples of work, these pupils and sometimes SEN pupils were doing the same written work as other groups.
25. Pupils with SEN have individual plans that set out targets for them to achieve. Targets are practical and easy for pupils to understand. They are also useful for teachers to refer to when they do not have support staff in their classrooms. Support staff are generally deployed well to help pupils who are experiencing difficulties with their learning. They provide sensitive and patient support when they are working with individuals or with a small group of pupils. However, sometimes their support is not as effective as it could be. This is usually during whole sessions when the teacher is directing the class and support staff have not been given a specific task that will help pupils to learn more or practise their skills. Pupils with SEN are integrated well into classroom activities and into the life of the school. The implementation of the nurturing project in particular is helping these pupils to be confident in themselves and in their ability to improve and relate well to others.
26. Teachers are currently using methods intended to boost progress beyond that which has been typical in the school in recent years. Training by Lancaster Educational Development Unit has helped teachers implement strategies for speaking and listening that promote better use of language and understanding of ideas. Pupils have become very familiar with these new ways of learning. Consequently, standards are beginning to improve, not only in the skills of speaking and listening but particularly in the grasp and retention of subject knowledge. However, teachers do not use questioning as effectively as they might and some opportunities are missed to stretch more able pupils. Also, greater emphasis needs to be placed on developing grammar to help pupils convey meaning more accurately in spoken responses and overcome the conventions of local dialect.
27. There are pupils in most classes whose behaviour is sometimes difficult and teachers have good and, some, very good techniques for dealing with them showing clear understanding of their problems. Consequently, pupils mostly concentrate well, completing tasks set. Teaching assistants and nursery nurses provide good support generally for small groups, contributing well to the good climate for learning in all year groups.
28. Teachers try to use interesting activities to motivate pupils. In the best examples, these can be very effective. For example, the Year 4 teacher and her nursery nurse dressed 'in-role' as a nineteenth century landowner and a railway navvy to help pupils understand attitudes towards the early railways. This was a hugely enjoyable lesson and pupils were swept along in their eagerness to question their two witnesses from the past. An excellent Year 6 RE lesson brought spontaneous responses from pupils in a quite special way as they shared thoughts about wonderful places whilst listening to a Michael Jackson song.
29. Teachers set and mark homework regularly in line with the school's policy, using it appropriately to consolidate and extend learning. Day-to-day marking is satisfactory overall, though it varies from precise, helpful comments directed at what to do next to more general comments. It rarely focuses on the extent to which progress is being made against the individual targets for improvement that have been identified.

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

30. The curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced and fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and locally Agreed Syllabus for RE. The school fulfils its stated curriculum aims in fostering attitudes and a setting that will preserve self-esteem, instil self-confidence and create a sense of personal achievement for all pupils. Since the last inspection, the school has provided more opportunities for independent study through establishing a well-stocked library, a well-resourced ICT suite and improved levels of investigative work in science. By working closely with the LEA, the school has successfully implemented the Foundation Stage curriculum in the nursery and reception class so children are adequately prepared for later learning.
31. The school has a good framework for planning the curriculum but it is not always used sufficiently well by teachers to plan lessons that consistently meet the learning needs of all pupils, particularly those who are higher attainers and sometimes for those who have SEN. The national strategy for literacy has been implemented satisfactorily, although some lessons are too long. When this happens it makes it difficult for pupils to sustain their levels of concentration and give their best. More use could be made of planned programmes of work to help pupils reach the average level of attainment in mathematics. However, the effectiveness of the school's implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is good overall and has had a positive impact on raising standards in mathematics.
32. The quality and range of extra-curricular activities is very good. Activities take place both at lunchtimes and after school. Pupils have the opportunity to enjoy a range of sporting activities including football and basketball. They learn to play the ocarina or recorder or practise their artistic skills in the art club. Pupils can work alongside their parents to learn more about computers. The school makes a great effort to use out of school hours to support pupils' learning and provides a range of well-attended activities that include a breakfast club and homework club.
33. The curriculum is enriched with a good range of educational visits and visitors. For example, pupils in the nursery visit the school kitchen to find out how biscuits are made. Reception pupils visit a farm to learn about life in the countryside. In Year 1, pupils visit The Angel of the North to support their work in art and geography and in Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to stay away from home to experience new and exciting outdoor activities. Visits are also made to the coast and to the city museum, winter gardens and library so that pupils can improve their knowledge of their locality. Visitors are invited from the local community to help pupils understand more about safety issues and to broaden experiences in art, history, music and dance.
34. The provision the school makes for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is very good and clearly part of the school's ethos. The school places a high priority on health education. For example, a health awareness week is a regular event and a range of visitors give talks to pupils. The school effectively teaches sex and relationships education and has been working with the LEA drugs adviser to develop its teaching. All staff have had training to implement a new nurturing programme which helps pupils develop emotionally and establish positive relationships.

35. Arrangements for SEN comply with the inclusive principles evident throughout the curriculum as well as those given prominence in the revised SEN code of practice. These arrangements clearly meet the requirements of the code. For example, the needs of pupils on the SEN register are conscientiously reviewed and link directly to targets in the clearly written individual education plans.
36. The school has good links with the local community and other schools as it actively pursues partnerships. Its links with the local secondary school to which most pupils transfer are well thought through and well established. The school and the families it serves benefit from this outward looking stance. A number of family learning opportunities have been offered and are developing. Through the auspices of the EAZ, pupils enjoy a range of further community-based learning opportunities.
37. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is a strong feature of the school. Provision for spiritual and cultural development have improved since the last inspection and, like moral development, are good. Provision for social development has improved to very good. The school promotes citizenship well and the school council plays an active part in encouraging pupil participation.
38. Spiritual development is good. Statutory requirements for collective worship are met. Frequent whole school assemblies make a considerable contribution to pupils' understanding of human feelings and appreciation of others. Pupils respect the special nature of assemblies and play an active part in responding to issues raised about values and beliefs. In response to the question, 'Can you help Dan (a large puppet) feel good about himself today?', pupils readily turned to one another to share positive comments. An assembly that involved Year 6 using sign language to accompany songs from 'Whistle Down the Wind' was a moving experience for children, staff and parents present. An RE lesson with the same class created a strong sense of awe and wonder when pupils shared their visions of wonderful places. Teachers often expect pupils to reflect on their learning in thoughtful ways through the use of talk partners or at the end of lessons. There is a range of good efforts, linked to religious festivals, to put beliefs into practice, for example, the donation of fruit and vegetables to members of the local community at Harvest Festival.
39. Moral education is good. The school has a clear code of conduct as a basis for good behaviour both in class and around school. These are prominently displayed in the playground and in the school. Adults act as good role models for pupils and these expectations are carried through into practice as teachers work hard to include all pupils and sustain good behaviour. The school maintains a high profile on rewarding good behaviour using weekly celebration assemblies. A good feature is the school council's involvement in promoting good behaviour and fostering amicable relationships. Each week, school council representatives choose a pupil from their class to be awarded recognition in the 'Gold Book'. Pupils enjoy opportunities to support charities such as Save the Children.

40. Social development is very good. Many parents remark how well the school helps their children gain confidence and become more mature. The programme for PSHE and citizenship is an effective component of this. The new nurturing programme provides fresh impetus to this area and uses techniques such as circle-time to foster good relationships. The school promotes health strongly in a variety of ways including the breakfast club and by being a no smoking school. The school council is proud of its achievements and acts as an effective vehicle for pupil participation. Many lessons give pupils opportunities to work together productively and successfully. Year 6 has recently had the use of a spare classroom as a social area and have responded well to the greater independence. There is also a very good range of out-of-hours clubs and activities, which develop social skills in different contexts.
41. Cultural development is good. Pupils have a range of opportunities to take part in cultural activities. Through a good programme of visits and visitors, pupils learn about the local and regional culture of the present and the past. A number of school celebrations extend participation in music and appreciation of drama. Many subjects offer good opportunities to learn about cultural diversity through the study of other places and people and through literature, art and the study of worship.

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

42. The school is conscious of its duty of care towards pupils and has developed effective procedures to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety. Staff know pupils very well and develop very high quality relationships with them. The school has a good range of measures to promote attendance and opportunities are provided for pupils to take on added responsibilities. Very good procedures are established for promoting high standards of behaviour and pupils know what is expected of them.
43. Parents are satisfied with day-to-day arrangements and feel comfortable about approaching the school with any concerns. They are also satisfied with teaching and that staff expect children to work hard, achieve their best and help children to become mature and responsible. Parents are satisfied that their child likes going to school.
44. The school provides a safe and well-maintained learning environment. Procedures to assess possible hazards are carried out appropriately but a few easily remedied, low-level hazards were notified to the school during the inspection. Appropriate procedures are established for administering medication and pupils who are hurt or become ill are cared for considerately. The school is careful to record accidents and first aid and inform parents of anything that may need further attention.
45. The school has very good procedures to manage arrangements for child protection in line with those laid down by the LEA in conjunction with other support agencies. Key staff have received training and are aware of appropriate responses should they have concerns about a child's welfare. There is a very good programme for PSHE to help pupils learn to express their views and feelings. Participation in events supported by outside agencies help children to learn how to look after themselves.

46. Procedures to monitor pupils' attendance are very good and fully implemented to provide support for pupils who develop erratic or infrequent attendance. These are not always successful for some supported pupils, despite intensive and creative interventions. Again, the school works closely with outside agencies providing additional support. Punctuality is expected and the school has a system in place to reward the class that achieves best each week. Good attendance is well promoted by attention to what is expected and by providing rewards for pupils who attain a very high rate but, nevertheless, attendance is low.
47. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour mean that pupils are expected, and encouraged, to be well behaved at all times. No incidents of bullying were seen during the inspection but discussions with pupils, parents and staff indicate that the few incidents that have occurred are dealt with effectively. Bullying and other forms of oppressive behaviour are actively discouraged by the school. Pupils know who to turn to for help if they need it and do not feel under threat in school. Parents are satisfied that behaviour is well managed. Staff provide very good role models and set high standards for behaviour during lessons, based on a system that makes expectations clear and acknowledges successes. The school's general approach to discipline is shared with parents and support is requested from home should a child have difficulty in achieving an expected standard. Non-teaching staff, including lunchtime supervisors, make a significant contribution to good behaviour and standards during breaks. Arrangements for pupils to eat breakfast and lunch ensure a calm and friendly atmosphere and very positive social occasions. Supervision is good and outdoor areas enable pupils to spend their leisure time in enjoyable activities.
48. The school supports pupils' personal development very well through providing a clear framework for conduct, both in respect of behaviour and attitude to work. Staff are conscientious in establishing and maintaining very good relationships with pupils. A new nurturing programme is effective in promoting very good relationships and equipping pupils with skills to respond in a safe and constructive way to a range of challenging situations. Pupils' personal development is also supported by opportunities to help in class and generally around school. For example, older pupils volunteer to become peer buddies to make friends with other pupils who may be feeling anxious or have no-one to play with. Pupils take part in an election to choose representatives to make up the school council and this helps pupils take an active part in various aspects of school life. The school welcomes pupils' suggestions and takes their contributions seriously. Elected councillors also choose a Child of the Week to receive acknowledgment at the weekly celebration assembly. This is valuable in highlighting and endorsing the aims and rules of the school by pupils as well as by staff.
49. The school takes part in fundraising events and projects that help pupils to develop responsible attitudes towards the needs of others and become good citizens. A good range of clubs take place outside lessons that adds an extra dimension to pupils' experiences. Arrangements for transfer to the next school are good and help lessen anxieties. Significant aspects of pupils' personal development are included in annual reports for their parents. These provide a very good means of acknowledging pupils' good points and boosting their self-esteem.
50. At the time of the last inspection the school was judged to be providing a healthy, safe, secure and happy environment and continues to do so.
51. The school has developed a range of strategies in order to assess pupils' attainment and progress, however, all staff do not always consistently implement the agreed

procedures. In this respect, the outcomes of assessment are not yet being fully used to improve teaching and learning. Marking of pupils' work is conscientious but not yet fully linked to the target setting process, so the assessment of pupils' work and feedback to them is weak. Marking is inconsistent across the school and developmental comments are not used frequently in all classes.

52. In addition to national tests, the school administers additional formal assessments and the results are beginning to be used to identify pupil targets and forecasts of attainment levels and to track progress. Although targets are shared with pupils and their parents, only the older pupils could remember what their targets were. Some younger pupils could point to their targets on the wall and read them, but others were unable to say what they were. Although targets are identified during the autumn term and entered on a tracking sheet, there is no systematic and regular review of progress. The existing system for assessment, reporting and recording needs modification to enable accurate tracking of progress. The school is aware of this issue and is to introduce an LEA scheme for assessing, reporting and recording pupil progress.
53. The monitoring and promotion of pupils' personal development is generally good. Although systems for monitoring are in the early stage of development, this is compensated by teachers' detailed knowledge of pupils in their classes. Individual personal development targets are identified for pupils requiring extra support. Systems are in place to involve outside agencies should this be necessary. Documentation including annual reports, pupil profiles and records is used regularly by teachers and this supports transfer from class to class. However, annual reports to parents are not always specific to each child, with many of the comments for foundation subjects being the same. This is not helpful to parents or to teachers.
54. There is good analysis of attainment in national and optional tests and the outcomes have recently been used to set curricular targets for pupils in both mathematics and English. This good practice is in the early stages of development and has yet to impact on raising levels of achievement. There is opportunity for teachers to make evaluations of lessons and assessment of pupil progress in their planning, but all teachers do not systematically take this. As a result, assessment of pupil progress against key objectives is not yet used fully to amend future planning, therefore, work is not always sufficiently matched to pupils' different learning needs.
55. Assessment information is used to identify pupils requiring additional specialist support and to prepare appropriate targets. Literacy screening information is analysed to identify groups of pupils for inclusion into intervention programmes. This good feature has not yet been adopted into the mathematics curriculum. The quality of individual education plans (IEPs) is good and all staff use them to help pupils progress. The school does not have in place systems to monitor the achievements of different groups of pupils, either by ability or gender.
56. The assessment co-ordinator does not monitor all aspects of the assessment system to ensure that they are embedded into practice or in line with current practice. Hence, the outcomes of assessment are not being used well enough to diagnose what the school should do to raise achievement.

57. The school lacks a policy that states how it will meet the needs of pupils who are gifted and talented. Teachers do not use assessment information to identify these pupils or higher attainers. The result is that teachers do not always build on what these pupils in particular do well, and so their progress is variable though satisfactory overall.

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

58. The school has good links in place to enable parents to be actively involved in their child's education. Parents hold the school in very high esteem. They value the way in which the school sets high expectations for pupils' work and are satisfied that teaching is good and children make good progress. Parents are satisfied that behaviour is good and that their children are helped to become mature and responsible. Parents find the school approachable about any suggestions or concerns, feel well informed by staff and are confident that their children like school. A few parents would like to see improvements in homework and to the range of activities outside school.
59. Parents are provided with good quality information about school. The prospectus is very clear about the attitudes and values that the school promotes and includes clear information about school life as well as an outline of the day-to-day procedures. Teachers are available to parents on an informal basis day-to-day and provide useful information during formal consultation appointments. However, written reports on progress are not sufficiently focussed on each child as an individual, except within the comments on personal development and suggestions for how they could make more progress. The school invites parents' comments about their child's progress and provides an opportunity for them to discuss reports with class teachers. In addition, parent and teacher consultations are held twice a year and are well attended. Parents receive frequent newsletters providing a good range of additional information to keep them up-to-date about activities in school and the wider community. The vast majority of parents feel that they are kept well informed about how their child is getting on.
60. The school actively encourages parents into school to work in partnership with staff. Parents are consulted if problems arise with a view to home and school working closely together to help the child. Parents are frequently invited to see the school in action, for example, to work alongside their children and find out about the various subjects of the curriculum. Opportunities are provided for parents to develop their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills or learn new ones, such as aerobics and dance. A few parents help in classrooms on a regular basis and more help with supervision during trips. Parents, as well as teachers and friends of the school, make a very significant contribution to pupils' experiences in school through supporting special events and fundraising activities. For instance, the PTFA organises the end of year celebrations, which include links with the local comprehensive school, and help with arrangements for sports day and school trips. Support from parents and other family members for special events, such as assemblies, concerts and sports days, is very high.
61. Most parents take up the opportunities to work with the school by attending the consultation evenings with class teachers and are very well involved through attending fairs, concerts, some assemblies and in supporting fundraising. However, active support through opportunities provided by homework and attendance at curriculum information sessions are not so well taken up. Nonetheless, the effective links between home and school that were reported at the last inspection are continuing to contribute positively to pupils' learning and personal development.

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

62. The leadership of the school is satisfactory as the school has improved in a number of respects since the last inspection and it provides a sound education overall. Governors and staff have a clear commitment to improvement and the acting head teacher currently provides sound leadership and direction for the school.
63. The existing school improvement plan, which includes developments since 2001, is a collection of plans produced by school teams and subject leaders. It details recent initiatives introduced to raise standards but does not provide a clear overview of priorities. The plan does not include detailed financial information and planned actions are not clearly costed. Nor does it effectively project a plan of action linked to the budget. These weaknesses lead to a lack of cohesion that prevents the plan supporting strategic direction over time. The result is a lack of clarity for all concerned which holds back the action taken to improve. The school has experienced some uncertainty during the past year as an LEA review was undertaken regarding possible amalgamation or closure of schools in the area. This has now been resolved and the school can plan its future development with confidence. To do so effectively, the school improvement plan and review process needs to be more robust.
64. The very capable deputy head teacher has undertaken the duties of the head teacher in her absence, since March 2003. She has provided good support for staff and, together with the other members of the senior management team (SMT), ensured a clear, positive direction for the work of the school. In turn, she is supported by team leaders who are committed to school improvement and who, in recent months, have effectively discharged their role within the management team. This has ensured sound management of the school in the short term and smooth running day-to-day. An open and collegiate approach to school improvement planning is currently developing. The phase teams, which have been established for some time, are useful in providing support for staff. Good relationships and teamwork are evident and have ensured that there are consistent approaches to the implementation of recent initiatives. This is a good feature and the sharing of good practice could be further developed to benefit greater consistency in those areas identified in this report.
65. Staff are clear about the main strengths and weaknesses of the school. Co-ordinators of mathematics and English have been involved in the monitoring of teaching and learning and subject co-ordinators have had some involvement in the monitoring of planning and work samples. However, the cycle of school review is not firmly established and the key role of the subject leader with regard to school improvement planning has not been effectively developed. The identification of subject specific areas for improvement beyond the new initiatives is not sufficiently rigorous. There is a lack of systematic evaluation of actions taken that affects the identification of the next steps to be taken, leading to a lack of sharpness with regard to the core function of the school. This has impeded the progress of the school over time.
66. The use of data to analyse the performance of different groups of pupils is at an early stage and further developments are required in order that pupil progress is closely tracked and, in addition to English, action taken with relevant intervention. Recent initiatives, arising from a positive partnership with the LEA and EAZ, have been willingly taken on board by the school and have a clear focus upon the development of teaching and learning. These are good and beginning to upwardly influence standards and achievement. The LEA and EAZ have worked closely with the school to monitor their implementation.



67. Performance management has been established well for both staff and head teacher. This is linked firmly to staff development which, for the core and some foundation subjects, has been effective and has involved a good range of strategies such as whole school training, coaching, demonstration lessons and assistance with planning. These are strengthening teaching in the school.
68. The co-ordinator for SEN provides satisfactory leadership that is beginning to improve procedures and practice. All reviews are up-to-date and children with statements receive their full entitlement to support. The school does all it can to involve parents in supporting their children's education and provides opportunities for them to discuss progress at regular intervals.
69. The governors have between them considerable expertise. They know the local community well and are very supportive of the school. They share the acting head teacher's and staff's commitment to school improvement. The governors have some understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, supported by clear links with key subject leaders. This enables individual governors to have an oversight of the curriculum and some knowledge of literacy and numeracy and SEN provision. However, this information is not yet formally shared with the governing body as a whole. Whilst the governing body clearly has a number of strengths, there are some weaknesses with regard to their monitoring of the school. They do not yet rigorously interrogate comparative data regarding school performance against other schools. There is also a lack of systematic procedures for monitoring internal finance, though this is recognised in a determination to take action in response to a recent auditor's report. This restricts the capacity of the governing body to be appropriately involved in determining priorities in the school development plan and also their knowledge of the school's progress over time.
70. Although there have been some changes to staff over recent years, a core group has been with the school for some time and has helped to maintain continuity. The deputy head teacher was appointed eighteen months ago following her appointment to the staff some months before as a senior teacher. There has been a demonstrable willingness by the senior management to tackle issues of quality with regard to staffing in the recent past and this is bringing about steadier progress in Key Stage 2 now..
71. School accommodation is good. Reduction in school numbers has released classrooms for other purposes and these are being used well. Improvements over the last year in the learning environment have been very effective. This has been a focus for the school related to the initiatives introduced to develop teaching and learning. The new library facility is very good. The ICT suite is being used effectively to improve standards. The external learning environment has been attended to recently and new playground markings support active play.
72. Resources are generally sufficient to meet the requirements of the curriculum, although the position of new whiteboards for ICT creates problems in some rooms and there are software needs that affect provision. More recently, several subject leaders have been involved in the identification and acquisition of key resources, including through making external bids. This is a good feature and needs to be further extended.

73. The school makes effective use of its funding overall. A large carry forward figure in recent years has been partly due to reduction in the teaching staff, as the school contracted in size, and unwillingness to spend on major building repairs if the school was to close. The large existing balance has now been earmarked for necessary improvements to the exterior fabric. The governing body has been appropriately involved in setting the annual school budget but otherwise financial monitoring has been ad hoc and reliant on data provided as part of the head teacher's report. Following a recent auditor's report, this should be corrected and other aspects of governance brought into line with best practice. The principles of best value are soundly applied overall. The governors make good use of service level agreements (SLAs) and follow advice on taking estimates. More rigorous use of comparative data on school performance is needed to support a strategic approach to improvement.

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

74. In order to raise standards of attainment and the quality of education further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- i) Improve standards of attainment and achievement in English, particularly in reading and writing by:
    - ensuring more consistent teaching of these skills especially in Key Stage 2
    - placing greater emphasis on developing pupils' spoken and written grammar
    - keeping an accurate check on pupils' reading progress and using this information to diagnose and remedy specific areas of weakness
    - ensuring that learning tasks are pitched at a suitably challenging level for all groups of pupils(Paragraphs 81, 82, 96, 97, 100)
  - ii) Improve provision for the most able pupils throughout the school to challenge them to reach higher standards by:
    - accurately identifying these pupils
    - ensuring they receive teaching which consistently stretches them in class(Paragraphs 24, 26, 57, 76, 100, 104, 112)
  - iii) Improve existing systems for monitoring pupils' progress to ensure more effective intervention for improvement by:
    - more frequently checking the progress of all groups of pupils using test results and teacher assessments
    - using assessment information more fully to plan lessons and to intervene to provide additional support for different groups and individuals
    - improving marking so that pupils receive more feedback on progress towards their targets and know what to do next to improve(Paragraphs 29, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 66)

- iv) Improve school development planning and aspects of financial management by:
  - firmly establishing a school planning cycle
  - creating an improvement plan that looks ahead for more than one year and clearly states overall priorities, costings, targets and responsibilities for action
  - strengthening the role of the subject co-ordinator, especially in the core subjects, with regard to the analysis and use of data and identification of priorities for action
  - involving governors more in determining how well things are going  
(Paragraphs 63, 65, 69, 101, 108, 109, 114)
  
- v) Continue to work to improve attendance by:
  - maintaining the effectiveness of current strategies and exploring other methods such as first day call to close the gap with the national average.  
(Paragraphs 17, 46)
  
- 75. Other issues that should be considered by the school to include in its action plan:
  - i) Revise the timetabling of English lessons and other literacy activities to avoid over-long teaching sessions. (Paragraphs 31, 100)
  
  - ii) Providing more specific information about individual academic progress in school reports to parents. (Paragraphs 53, 59)
  
  - iii) Ensure classroom assistants are effectively deployed in whole-class parts of lessons. (Paragraph 25)
  
  - iv) Making good shortages of resources in ICT and ensuring whiteboards can be used without obstruction. (Paragraphs 32, 138, 139)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	53
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	59

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	7	22	20	3	0	0
Percentage	2	13	42	38	6	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	11	162
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	85

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	42
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	42

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.4

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	14	16	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	7	12
	Girls	10	11	15
	Total	20	18	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67 (77)	60 (71)	90 (81)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	12	12
	Girls	14	14	15
	Total	23	26	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (71)	87 (65)	90 (74)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	19	13	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	15	16
	Girls	7	7	9
	Total	13	22	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	41 (44)	69 (44)	78 (72)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	13	7
	Girls	8	7	8
	Total	15	20	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	47 (n/a)	63 (47)	47 (67)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	162	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	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 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20:1
Average class size	23

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	111

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	11:1
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	24
Number of pupils per FTE adult	6:1

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2002/2003
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	£
Total income	450,896
Total expenditure	442,116
Expenditure per pupil	2,232
Balance brought forward from previous year	56,102
Balance carried forward to next year	64,882



## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	170
Number of questionnaires returned	51

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66.7	33.3	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	74.5	21.6	2	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	64.7	33.3	2	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	64	30	6	0	0
The teaching is good.	88.2	11.8	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	74.5	23.5	0	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	84.3	15.7	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	86.3	11.8	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	64.7	29.4	3.9	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	64.7	31.4	3.9	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	66.7	29.4	3.9	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	58.8	31.4	5.9	0	3.9

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

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

76. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory because the staff plan a curriculum that provides an appropriate and often interesting range of learning opportunities and prepares children for later learning. Although there are some examples of good teaching, the quality of teaching overall is satisfactory. This is because teachers do not always make the best use of information from their early assessments to meet the learning needs of all children, particularly higher attainers and sometimes those with SEN. Similarly, teachers do not always pick up on children's responses sufficiently well to extend learning. Consequently opportunities for children to improve their language skills in particular are sometimes lost, and this often affects the progress that they make across all areas of their learning. Relationships between teachers, support staff and pupils are very good in the nursery and reception class and this creates a welcoming learning environment. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership that is beginning to bring about a more secure team approach and improve teaching and learning in the nursery and reception class.
77. Attainment on entry to the nursery is below the average expected for children of this age. Some aspects of speaking and listening and mathematical development are well below the average. Children find it difficult to talk about and explain their ideas. They also have difficulty in counting and recognising numbers. Although all children including those with SEN make satisfactory progress, the attainment of the majority is still below average by the time they leave the reception class. However, they make good progress in personal and social development and their attainment in this area of learning is broadly in line with expectations for pupils of this age.
78. Overall, resources are good for both indoor and outdoor activities and are used appropriately to promote learning in all areas of the curriculum. The accommodation is good. Teachers and support staff work hard to provide good quality display and a stimulating environment in which to learn

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

79. Provision for personal, social and emotional development is good because staff make this a priority for their teaching. As a result, children make good progress in this area of their learning. Staff welcome children at the start of the day so that they are happy to leave their parents and carers. Children often choose activities for themselves and show that they can take care of equipment when using it or tidying it away. During both indoor and outdoor activities, children play well together and learn more about co-operating with each other by working in small groups where equipment has to be shared. Routines are well established and activities well organised so that children feel secure and confident.

80. Good provision is made in each class to learn about relationships with others. For example, nursery children enjoyed activities planned through the nurturing project that helped them to learn more about sharing their own personal space and helping others to feel part of the group. In reception, the teacher provided time for children to listen and respond to each other as they talked about their weekend experiences. Teachers and nursery nurses in both classes provide very good role models for the children, managing them very well and using praise to celebrate their successes. As a result, all children form very good relationships with teachers and support staff.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

81. Children enter the nursery with low levels of language skills and continue to find communication difficult across the Foundation Stage. They have a limited range of vocabulary and are more comfortable using one-word answers than attempting to speak in sentences. Although children make satisfactory progress, their attainment at the end of the reception year is still below average. Teachers are beginning to make better use of methods that help children to improve but these are not yet fully embedded in every aspect of their day-to-day practice. For example, teachers sometimes accept low levels of responses and higher attainers in particular are not always expected to say or produce more than their classmates. Similarly, assessments are not always used sufficiently to guide planning and so opportunities to extend learning are missed. Although teaching is satisfactory overall, there are examples of good teaching. Where teaching is effective, new vocabulary is repeated and children encouraged to use these words for themselves. For example, in one lesson the teacher emphasised words such as smooth, squashy and raw as children used their sense of smell and touch to describe corn on the cob. Children were praised for using these words in their own answers.
82. In the nursery, there are clearly defined areas where children can practise their early skills in reading and writing. Children choose to use and play with a good range of pencils and crayons and have access to a selection of pictures and storybooks. Teachers introduce them to letter sounds and letter formation. They use songs and rhymes to reinforce use of language, and bring in interesting and unfamiliar objects to introduce new vocabulary. For example, children were shown coral, seaweed and driftwood to stimulate talk about under the sea. There is also a very good range of learning resource bags for children to take home and share with their parents and carers. As some can only be borrowed once a week and others on an occasional basis, they are not being used to their fullest benefit in developing language skills at home.
83. In reception, children continue to practise their writing skills and pencil control so that by the time they leave this class the majority can form a range of recognisable letters. Higher attainers can write words on their own and some can put words together to write a simple sentence. However, they usually write one good sentence but only occasionally write more. By the time children leave the reception class, the majority listen well, carry out instructions and settle quickly to tasks. They enjoy listening to stories and make good attempts to join in. Higher attainers can name the main characters in a reading book but find it difficult to say something about what is happening. These children are beginning to use letter sounds to read unfamiliar words.

## **Mathematical development**

84. All children are developing an awareness of mathematics because teachers provide them with an interesting range of activities. In the nursery, children develop their understanding of numbers to 5 through appropriate activities that help them to count and say the number names. For example, children count the number of animals going into Noah's Ark. They make good attempts to count the ducks in the pond as they sing an action rhyme. Activities like these support the development of social skills but are not always used fully to develop language skills. However, children make good attempts to listen and respond to instructions and are beginning to use some simple mathematical language through their play and whole class or group activities.
85. Despite making satisfactory progress, levels of attainment at the end of the reception year are below those expected. The majority can order numbers to 10 but sometimes have difficulty in counting objects in front of them reliably. Higher attainers can say the number names to 20 and to 100. They learn to count in 2s and become more familiar with a short sequence of odd and even numbers by pegging numbers on a washing line. Evidence in books shows that children are generally accurate with drawing shapes to indicate how many within 5 or 10 objects but higher attainers in particular are not moved on to record work with numbers beyond 10 quickly enough.
86. Teaching is satisfactory. Children behave well and generally have good attitudes to work. However, teachers do not always use their knowledge of what children do well to plan the next step in their learning and make insufficient use of opportunities to further develop language skills.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

87. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory and sometimes good. As a result, children make satisfactory progress but their attainment at the end of the reception year is still below average. This is mainly because they have difficulties in using their language skills to express their ideas and thoughts. Teachers plan activities that provide first hand experience, engage the interest of the children and make good use of both indoor and outdoor areas. For example, during the inspection, children in the nursery investigated water. They washed clothes in a tub of soapy water and painted the outside walls of the nursery with water, seeing them dry quickly in the wind. Children in reception used their five senses to investigate sweetcorn and were helped to make links to their own experiences of food preparation.
88. Children in both classes learn about the properties of a range of materials as they use them in cutting and sticking activities and in their model making. They learn about technology through the use of computers and practise and improve their ability to control the mouse. In the most effective lessons, children are encouraged to listen to and use new vocabulary. However, pupils' learning would be improved if teachers used their knowledge of what children can do well to expect more of higher attainers.

## **Physical development**

89. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall because teachers use a suitable range of resources and plan activities that engage children's interest and support them in improving their skills. Children come into nursery with a satisfactory level of physical skill. However, the majority has difficulty with skills that require fine or precise control such as handling tools and pencil control. By the time they leave reception class, they have made satisfactory progress in both areas of physical development. Although some children continue to have difficulty with the control of pencils and crayons, the level of attainment for the majority is broadly in line with the average.
90. During the inspection, wet weather limited opportunities to use the outdoor space. However, evidence in photographs and in displays shows that all children have access to a range of equipment for pedaling, riding, pushing and pulling. In one lesson, children enjoyed throwing and catching, jumping over obstacles and bouncing on a mini trampet. In another, children ran freely around the hall and improved their ability to use the space without bumping into others. Children have regular opportunities to handle a range of tools to develop their fine physical skills. They use wet sand and clay to mould shapes and persevere with activities that require patience and concentration. For example, children were observed fishing for ducks and frogs, making every effort to control their fishing line so that it did not tangle with others.

## **Creative development**

91. Provision for creative development is satisfactory. Teachers use their subject knowledge to plan activities that capture children's attention and develop their imagination. For example, they paint the animals they have seen during their visit to the farm as well as creatures they imagine living under the sea. Teaching is satisfactory overall but the opportunity to build on what children can already do well is sometimes missed. Despite making satisfactory progress, children's attainment is below the average expected for their age.
92. Displays around classroom and corridor areas show that children paint and draw in their topics. Their work shows that the observation skills of the majority are at an early stage of development. However, children are beginning to paint with more attention to detail, for example, when painting vegetables brought into the classroom. With support and guidance they learn more about mixing suitable colours that represent what they can see. Some children, particularly low attainers and those with SEN, continue to have difficulty in controlling paintbrushes, pencils and crayons.
93. All children practise their skills in cutting and sticking paper shapes. They join materials using glue and sticky tape and make simple models using cardboard and fabric. Children in reception learn more about playing imaginatively in an area set up as Mrs Wishy Washy's farm. They co-operate well for long periods of time and extend their play to other areas of the classroom. Children in the nursery join in the chorus of a familiar rhyme and follow the actions. They explore and investigate the sounds that can be made with simple percussion instruments.

## ENGLISH

94. By the age of seven, attainment in English is below and, at eleven, well below the national average. This a little better than test results in 2002 that were very low. This improvement is due to teachers making much more use of discussion in lessons and applying further training in subject skills. In Key Stage 1, good teaching has resulted in pupils achieving at a satisfactory rate overall, given that poorly developed language skills on entry hold them back. However, in Key Stage 2, there are weaknesses in teaching and in whole school systems which reduce the pace and consistency of learning. Consequently pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory by the end of Year 6, particularly in reading and writing.
95. Overall, standards at Key Stage 2 have not improved since the last inspection. This continuing low attainment is partly due to a larger than average proportion of pupils who enter with limited language skills, a high proportion with SEN and a high proportion of average pupils who transfer to other schools.
96. By the age of seven and eleven, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is below the level expected for their age. Only a minority express themselves confidently and clearly. The majority, although willing to engage in conversation, have a narrow vocabulary and poor expressive language. Their use of technical language is improving as more emphasis is placed on practising new vocabulary. The school has introduced strategies to improve the quality of pupils' speaking and listening skills, with the result that pupils in both key stages are beginning to make good progress. However, many remain hesitant as they struggle to find the words to express themselves and their limited understanding of grammar impedes progress.
97. Attainment in reading is below average for seven year olds and well below for eleven year old pupils. Only the highest attaining pupils in each year group read within expected levels. From a low base on entry to Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress as they begin to develop their phonic knowledge. When reading, most pupils use picture clues suitably. A significant number find using contextual clues difficult because of their poor comprehension and language skills. Only the most able build a comprehensive sight vocabulary and use their understanding of letter sounds to attempt new words. Pupils' progress is slower in Key Stage 2 as the reading process becomes more complex and the motivation to read independently at home decreases. Better readers can read confidently and are able to correct themselves but few have good technical skills. This is because the school does not take steps to assess the reading age of pupils, therefore, diagnosing specific areas of difficulty and identifying strategies to lead to improvement is difficult. However, attitudes to reading books together are positive. Pupils in Year 6 enjoyed reading 'The Suitcase Kid'. With teacher support, they showed that they can recognise significant events and characters' emotions. The school actively encourages pupils to read on a daily basis for short periods. In an effective guided reading session, the teacher introduced new skills. She sensitively encouraged pupils to refer to the text and to the illustrations in order to find the correct answers leading to sound progress.
98. Pupils visit the library on a weekly basis and have the opportunity to take books home. This additional support is helping to promote positive attitudes to reading. The range of books in use is good and the opportunity to use the Internet is helping to develop pupils' research skills. Examination of a sample of reading logs, and discussion with pupils across both key stages, indicates that a large proportion of pupils do not receive regular parental support. This is slowing progress.

99. Attainment in writing is below average for seven year olds and well below for eleven year old pupils. In Year 2, only the most able pupils write in simple sentences using suitable punctuation. Common simple words are spelt incorrectly; this is often linked to poor pronunciation. However, good quality teaching based on national programmes of work now ensures that most pupils write in a range of genres and make satisfactory progress. In a good Year 2 lesson, pupils used whiteboards and marker pens to write simple sentences containing 'should', 'could' and 'have'. This activity fully engaged and challenged pupils. Emphasis on teaching both spelling and handwriting is beginning to improve pupil attainment. Overall, the quality of handwriting is satisfactory throughout the school, as pupils regularly practise using a cursive style. However, some pupils in Key Stage 2 do not always choose to write using joined script, often reverting to printing which slows progress. This is not picked up and dealt with effectively. The rate of progress across Key Stage 2 is too variable; as a result, achievement at the end of Year 6 is unsatisfactory. Punctuation and sentence construction is weak. The majority of pupils do not produce pieces of writing using interesting vocabulary; writing is characterised by short extracts containing simple sentences. Pupils practise writing for a range of audiences and purposes, however, even higher attaining pupils do not write confidently in paragraphs using appropriate grammar and punctuation. In classes where progress is slow, many of the written tasks are the same for all groups of pupils and there is insufficient challenge for the most able.
100. Teaching at Key Stage 1 is good but unsatisfactory overall in Key Stage 2, as pupils do not make expected progress. The National Literacy Strategy has been adopted into practice and resources purchased to support effective implementation. This is beginning to improve standards. Teachers have been trained to deliver speaking and listening teaching programmes to good effect. Teaching assistants help deliver national programmes for pupils needing additional support. This is beginning to raise achievement as pupils gain in confidence. Pupils' attitudes are good in both key stages. Most stay on task and concentrate. Relationships across the school are very good, behaviour is managed well and the climate for learning is positive. Where suggested time allocations and strategies for teaching the literacy hour are followed, learning is good. However, some lessons are too long, which makes it difficult for pupils to give their best. Lessons are not successful when there is too much teacher-directed talk and tasks are not matched well to the learning needs of different groups. This occurred in lessons in Year 3 and Year 5.
101. The subject leader for English has ensured that teachers have access to national training. She has monitored pupils' work in conjunction with members of the LEA. Planning is also monitored and feedback given to teachers. The use of ICT in lessons is beginning to contribute to learning in English. However, marking is not consistent or well linked to what pupils need to do to improve to meet their targets. The co-ordinator has been following agreed procedures for action planning but these are not rigorous and the current plan is out of date. Subject leadership is satisfactory but could be further developed to raise standards of attainment within the school. For example, the information from teacher assessments is not used effectively to track pupil progress and intervene for improvement.

## MATHEMATICS

102. Attainment at Key Stage 1 is in line with national standards and pupils make good progress across the key stage from a below average starting point. Standards rose in 2002 and because of continued good teaching this trend has been maintained. Results for mathematics in the national tests in 2002 show that, although attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was below the national average, achievement was satisfactory when compared to similar schools. Observations of work during the inspection indicate a similar picture this year. Achievement across the key stage is affected by variable teaching but is satisfactory overall. The good teaching seen in Year 4 and Year 6 has a positive impact upon pupils' progress.
103. By the age of seven, pupils understand the operation of division as sharing equally. They demonstrate a sound grasp of multiplication as repeated addition and are able to confidently use  $3 \times 4$  or  $4 \times 3$  as describing an array. They record simple number sentences appropriately. By the age of eleven, pupils make and investigate general statements about familiar numbers by finding examples that satisfy it, for example, a multiple of 10 is also a multiple of 5 and 2. They are, however, unable to further develop their explanation by expressing it as a formula.
104. Overall the quality of teaching across the school is satisfactory. In Key Stage 1 teaching is good but across Key Stage 2 it is variable, ranging from good to unsatisfactory but satisfactory overall. Where teaching is good there are high quality tasks, the lessons are well paced and pupils make good progress in their learning. The pace and consequently the progress of children in Year 3 and Year 5 are slower. Analysis of work for these groups reveals that teachers' expectations are not sufficiently high and demands on children are too low because pupils of different abilities are set the same work. The quality of marking and feedback to pupils is variable across the school and not sharp enough to help pupils move on.
105. The National Numeracy Strategy is implemented well and, together with the strong focus upon developing the quality of teaching and learning through the links with the speaking and listening initiative, is having a good impact upon pupil achievement and helping to raise standards. Good use has been made of LEA consultant support, such as shared observation of lessons. Developments in mathematics have been appropriate, including relevant training and support for staff. Planning is satisfactory and teachers confidently deliver appropriately structured lessons. All teachers share the learning objectives with pupils both visually and orally, thus enabling pupils to clearly understand the purpose of the lesson. Consequently, pupils are attentive and sustain their efforts. Teachers have good classroom management and behaviour in lessons is good. There is a strong focus upon the development of relevant vocabulary across the school and teachers use agreed strategies to help develop pupils' skills in speaking and listening. In lessons where teaching is good, the plenary session is effectively delivered helping to further extend pupils' thinking.
106. The school uses non-statutory test materials and the outcomes of Key Stage 1 tests to track and predict pupil progress. However, data is not sufficiently analysed to identify and monitor the progress of those individuals and groups of pupils who are not making the progress expected from year to year. Intervention strategies and challenge for the most able have not been effectively implemented. Consequently, groups and individual pupils do not always make as much progress as they could.



107. Links with other subject areas are sound. Pupils use their mathematical knowledge when handling data in ICT by confidently using formulae to calculate amounts using spreadsheets. They measure angles using Roma and their knowledge of graphs is used to support scientific enquiry.
108. The recently appointed co-ordinator is committed to raising standards and has been involved in the monitoring of teaching, planning and children's work. As a result she has come to know many of the strengths and weaknesses of provision. However, national data has not been used to consider the school's progress compared with similar schools. Internal data and the outcomes of national tests have been analysed and the findings used to identify curricular targets to help. Teachers adapt planning to address areas of weakness. In Year 6, pupils know their targets and have had them reviewed termly. Parents have had information about their children's targets. However, the target setting process across the school is not yet fully secure as it is not based on a full appreciation of available information.
109. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. Standards have begun to show improvement. However, the role of the subject leader needs to be strengthened, procedures for the identification and targeting of pupils should be further developed and the match of tasks to pupils' learning needs made more consistent.

## SCIENCE

110. In teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2002, standards were in line with the national average. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards in national tests were well below average but achievement was satisfactory in comparison with similar schools. Pupils enter the nursery with below average levels of attainment. They make satisfactory progress across the Foundation Stage. However, as a result of good teaching, pupils in Key Stage 1 make better progress so that by the end of this key stage they attain standards that are in line with national expectations. In Key Stage 2, standards are similar to last year and progress is satisfactory. This represents a satisfactory level of improvement since the last inspection.
111. At the age of seven, pupils know that different surfaces will affect the speed of a toy car. They test materials to find which ones conduct electricity better than others and make a simple electrical circuit to light a bulb. They sort and group materials according to their properties and record their observations in a simple table. Pupils know that some foods are healthier than others and write about how they can live a healthy lifestyle. Higher attaining pupils can predict accurately that an ice cube placed on a windowsill will melt more quickly than one placed in a cooler area. They give reasons for their predictions in a sentence. By the age of eleven, pupils know about the life cycles of some living things. For example, they carry out simple research to produce an information leaflet about the habitat of ladybirds, snails and spiders. Pupils use tables and diagrams competently to record their observations and measurements. They can explain the process of evaporation and generally use correct scientific vocabulary when writing their reports. Higher attaining pupils produce more detailed reports and can sometimes draw their own conclusions from their results.
112. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory but is better in Key Stage 1. Teachers have sound subject knowledge and use this to plan their lessons thoroughly. However, because teachers do not make the best use of assessment information, they are not always successful in planning the next step in learning, particularly for higher attainers and sometimes for those with SEN. This limits the opportunities for these pupils to practise important skills, to learn something new or do more demanding work. In the most effective lessons, teachers use their questioning skills to check pupils' understanding. They use resources, including the deployment of classroom assistants, to support lower attaining pupils and those with SEN. Most teachers make links between science and other subjects. For example, lessons that focus on the human body are used to improve pupils' understanding of issues such as knowing the difference between drugs and medicines and the benefits of healthy eating and exercise. Since the last inspection, teachers give more time to investigative work and, as a result, pupils are beginning to be more independent in their learning and develop a more questioning approach to science. Opportunities to reinforce the skills that are used in English and mathematics are satisfactory, but the use of ICT is less well developed. Homework and revision time is used effectively in Year 6 to reinforce pupils' learning of important concepts in preparation for national tests.
113. Overall, pupils have good attitudes to their work. They show interest and enthusiasm, particularly in relation to planning and carrying out investigations. New strategies are helping pupils to be more confident speakers and, as a result, they are eager to answer questions and take an active part in lessons.

114. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The subject leader has a sound understanding of what the school does well in science and what needs to be improved. Although there is no formal process for school improvement planning that fully involves subject leaders, priorities for science have been identified. Evidence suggests that progress against identified actions has been made and is beginning to bring about improvements to standards in science.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

115. It was not possible to observe teaching in both key stages. However, observation in two Key Stage 2 classes, analysis of pupils' work, display and teachers' planning provided sufficient evidence on which to base judgements. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment in art and design is broadly at the level expected for their age. This is an improvement on the last inspection. All pupils, including those with SEN, make satisfactory progress as a result of sound teaching and planning which builds effectively on previous skills and experience.
116. Work displayed in the school indicates that pupils can work in Key Stage 1 with a range of media. In Year 1, pupils can print in a range of shapes and colours comparing size, shape and pattern. Also on display were portraits of famous artists. Pupils were able to compare these satisfactorily with their own portraits completed in a range of media, crayon, pencils and paints. Good clay models of The Angel of the North were produced following a visit. In Year 2, pupils have investigated the properties of fabrics and are able to make comparisons between touch and texture.
117. In lower Key Stage 2, pupils are able develop their skills of design by creating their own symbols for a map. Preparation for this lesson was good and the teacher identified clear links between art and geography. As a result, pupils were motivated to learn. The activity was well planned to enable all pupils to participate and an additional adult supported those pupils experiencing difficulties. Higher attaining pupils showed that they could design imaginative symbols. They were carefully drawn and neatly shaded. Lower attaining pupils struggled to produce satisfactory symbols. Poor spatial awareness and co-ordination slowed progress. In Year 5, pupils can draw, copy and trace to a good standard. They recognise the technical terms 'portrait' and 'landscape' in relation to paper size and use them in the correct context. Evidence within drawing books shows that children have developed skills of shading. In a good lesson, pupils learned skills of batik. The teacher demonstration and explanation of the process was clear, highlighting health and safety issues. Additional adults were used to good effect ensuring that, as pupils completed waxing, they were immediately able to begin the dying process. As a result, the pace of the lesson was maintained, behaviour remained positive and all groups of pupils made good progress.
118. The art co-ordinator runs an out of school hours club for pupils in Key Stage 2 and the school has been involved in local art projects. However, although art has not been a high priority for development, the school has addressed the issues raised during the last inspection. Resource provision has been improved to a satisfactory level, as has the teaching of skills needed within the art curriculum.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

119. Due to the school's timetable, only one lesson of design and technology could be observed during the inspection. There was sufficient evidence, however, in the form of pupils' previous work and teachers' records to judge that attainment is in line with expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2 and that achievement is satisfactory.
120. By the end of Year 2, pupils can demonstrate careful observation and drawing skills to match up a missing half of the pattern from a study of carpet and rug patterns. They have also used storyboards to compile a book and designed and made their own glove puppets to a satisfactory standard. Their designs for a car show satisfactory attainment due to the very well differentiated project enabling all pupils of different learning needs to take a full part in the process.

121. Pupils aged eight and nine can design and make moving monsters using wood and card on a wheeled chassis, showing sound understanding of the principles of pneumatics to open and close the monsters' mouths. Pupils of eleven investigated information sources to evaluate the design of slippers of all shapes and sizes. As a result, they designed their own patterns and used stitching and gluing techniques to make 'made to measure' products. They used a variety of materials in the process, showing what they did using flow diagrams. Their finished articles were of a high standard.
122. The only lesson seen, a Year 2 class, successfully used and applied key skills learned in a previous lesson. Planning and organisation were good and contributed towards the effectiveness of pupils' learning. The class teacher guided half the class to make a working model to illustrate a nursery rhyme whilst the teaching assistant taught ICT to the rest of the class in the computer suite. This was excellent use of staff to provide well-planned and focussed teaching to small groups. This very good lesson enabled pupils to make very good progress in planning and evaluating work, as well as skills of measuring, cutting and joining. Pupils could explain how they had used a variety of different construction kits and junk materials to make winches the previous week. The group continually evaluated their work as the project progressed and were excited and enthusiastic about their learning.
123. The new co-ordinator is keen to influence the subject and talks knowledgeably about standards. The curriculum is satisfactorily planned and standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. An up-to-date monitored and reviewed action plan clearly identifies projects for the future.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

124. Standards of attainment are generally in line with national expectations by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. However, few pupils are working above expected levels. Achievement is good by the end of Key Stage 1, taking account of the rather low starting point of many pupils, and satisfactory by the end of Key Stage 2 for all groups of pupils, including those with SEN. This occurs due to the adoption of national guidance for units of work, and clear focus on geographical skills and vocabulary in teaching, particularly at Key Stage 1. Standards are similar to those reported at the last inspection.
125. In Year 1 and Year 2, pupils can correctly identify both physical and human features of localities in other places, either from direct experience on school visits or from secondary sources such as the stories about Barnaby and Jeremy Bear. Pupils are also becoming familiar with maps and can locate some countries on a large atlas. They are beginning to understand how weather and the seasons affect human behaviour and use of locations and are acquiring appropriate language which they use accurately in discussions. This emphasis on language acquisition, and the good progression in planning, results in good achievement across the key stage.

126. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to improve their knowledge and understanding at a sound pace overall. They can contrast aspects of different localities and by the end of Year 6 have acquired a satisfactory knowledge of places. They use developing skills of enquiry to study parts of the local area and express their views on the environment and local services with a sound understanding. Pupils in Year 4 can compare their own area with that of a village in India, recognising some of the factors that account for differences. In Year 6, pupils can relate features of the landscape to the location of a local windmill. They use maps of different scales to compare human features of their local area to features of the city centre observed during a field visit. However, the limited language skills of a large number of pupils hamper how well they put ideas into words and explain links between processes.
127. Teaching is predominantly good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory or better at Key Stage 2. Lessons are well structured and clear objectives shared with pupils to help them understand what to do. Good relationships brought about by firm classroom management result in positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour. Activities are often well focused and pupils moved on at a good pace from one to another to maintain the impetus of the lesson and pupils' interest. This was a particularly good feature of a Year 6 lesson that took pupils through a series of tasks at a brisk pace, looking in turn at aspects of their locality. Pupils of all abilities were challenged by these tasks. Frequent opportunities are given to talk together in pairs to develop understanding and questioning sometimes used well to get pupils to think more deeply about ideas. Learning is not as good when these strategies are not used effectively. A Year 5 lesson did not encourage a fuller understanding of the impact of clear water supply on health, particularly from more able pupils as questioning did not extend them to think about connections deeply enough or justify their answers.
128. The subject is soundly led by a new co-ordinator who has identified relevant areas for curriculum development. The scheme for both key stages is well constructed from national guidance and links well with aspects of history and science in the planning of work. Though teachers record coverage of the curriculum, limited progress has been made in using assessment information to provide guidance on raising standards.

## **HISTORY**

129. Standards of attainment in history are broadly in line with expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils make good progress on the whole in Key Stage 1 from a below average starting point and sustain satisfactory progress during Key Stage 2. Overall, achievement is satisfactory among all groups of pupils taking account of the weak literacy skills of many. Due to good use of teaching strategies for developing speaking and listening skills, pupils are able to demonstrate a sound understanding of topics being studied and of methods of historical enquiry. However, pupils do not communicate their understanding sufficiently through written work of different kinds.
130. Pupils in Key Stage 1 study a range of topics drawn from different periods and experience a good range of historical sources. They learn to understand the passing of time by comparing changes to homes and to seaside holidays, showing this by drawings of familiar objects then and now and by asking precise questions of a visitor talking about memories of beach holidays in the 1930s. They have a satisfactory factual knowledge of events such as the Great Fire of London and are beginning to understand why people acted as they did, for example, by talking about how the fire spread and attempts to contain it.

131. Pupils continue to develop their knowledge and skills throughout Key Stage 2. They build soundly on their understanding of chronology. For example, in Year 3 they can sequence periods on a timeline giving reasons for their choices. They are also developing satisfactory skills of investigation. In Year 4, they were able to find out about attitudes towards the new railways by asking questions of the teacher playing the part of a nineteenth century landowner. These oral skills were extended in a Year 6 lesson during which pupils were speculating about changes in children's experiences over time. There are several examples of narrative writing in Year 6 about evacuation but otherwise the range of writing is narrow.
132. Teaching is mainly good across the school. Teachers are enthusiastic about the subject and show this in lively lessons. Classroom management is good and relationships very good. This is important, as there are pupils in most groups whose behaviour can be challenging. Most teachers are skilful at finding ways of sustaining the interest of pupils. For example, the Year 3 teacher lined groups of pupils up to create a human timeline. Consequently, pupils are attentive, work hard and behave well in lessons. They show considerable interest in what they doing and respond positively to opportunities to work in pairs to discuss ideas and information. A variety of methods are used to engage pupils in speaking and listening in small and larger groups. This approach results generally in good learning by pupils, a high proportion of whom have restricted literacy skills. For example, pupils in Year 1 were very keen to listen to and talk about the childhood experiences of a visitor. They showed considerable curiosity when handling photographs and asked clear, precise questions to find out more. Whilst these characteristics of teaching lead to satisfactory progress overall by all groups of pupils, there are occasions when opportunities to stretch the most able are missed. For example, the writing task given to pupils in Year 1 was the same for average and higher attaining pupils. However, the role-play of a landowner and navy by the Year 4 teacher and the nursery nurse led to keen and excited enquiry and extended all pupils well.
133. The scheme of work has been well planned, using recent national guidance. Particularly good features are the emphasis on local history, the use of visits and visitors to enrich experience and the links made with the geography curriculum. In these ways, the quality of provision and standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The new co-ordinator supports curriculum development soundly but more emphasis could be placed on giving guidance on standards and extending opportunities for writing.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

134. Standards of attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) are broadly in line with national expectations at the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils' achievement overall is satisfactory. This represents a good improvement from the last inspection. The school has worked hard to address previous key issues by improving its resources, providing training for all staff, and ensuring pupils can access their full entitlement of provision across all age groups.

135. At Key Stage 1, pupils can use a database to enter information and ask some questions about it. Higher attaining pupils use and understand specific terms such as 'field' and 'gender'. Younger Key Stage 2 pupils can investigate how to enter a series of instructions to solve specific problems and how computers can be used to organise and reorganise musical sounds. Pupils use floor and screen turtles to develop mathematical knowledge about angle and direction and a sounds programme to create and change musical tunes. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 can use a computer to draw objects and construct a plan of their classroom, amending their drawings to resize, add labels and colour. They file their unfinished work onto personal floppy discs and print out examples of work to keep in a folder. They have kept a logbook in which they recorded a wide range of learning experiences since September 2002. This is a very useful record and, if related to learning objectives, could become an excellent monitoring and self-assessment tool for pupils.
136. Teaching is satisfactory throughout the school and on one occasion very good. Teaching generally has clear learning objectives that build on prior knowledge and are clearly explained to the pupils. Lessons are satisfactorily planned and move along at a sound pace. Pupils enjoy their ICT experiences and are largely enthusiastic, well behaved and remain on task. They take part in the demonstration of skills through the whiteboard or by responding to specific targeted questions. In a Year 2 lesson, a database was used to ask questions about personal information recorded about the pupils. This lesson was well-planned and organised and resulted in good learning by higher attaining pupils, due to a high level of support from the very computer literate classroom assistant. In a Year 6 lesson, lower attaining pupils were so keen to put what they had learnt into practice, that they cheered spontaneously when asked to work alone. They soon succeeded in designing their own context for a spreadsheet and managed to put a formula in the correct cell to give them a total automatically.
137. ICT is used widely to support other subjects across the curriculum. When this is done well, it effectively moves pupils on in both subjects. For example, the Year 6 teacher showed good subject knowledge to link mathematical formulae and computer skills through very sharp lesson planning. She used an extensive repertoire of technical vocabulary and a problem-solving approach, which enabled pupils to think and make choices about their work. These pupils attained in line with the level expected for their age. Even here, some more able pupils would have been able to access a higher level of attainment had the teacher planned extension activities to help them.
138. The organisation and management of resources sometimes affects the quality of teaching and learning. Some pupils lose their concentration because they are unable to follow essential learning steps due to an obstructed view of the whiteboard screen in classrooms. The lack of a whiteboard in the ICT suite also affects lesson organisation. Some teachers overcome it by doing the key teaching in their classrooms and by preparing extra resources. Other teachers find moving pupils to the suite mid-lesson a distraction to their concentration.



139. Good subject leadership, together with considerable support provided by the EAZ, has contributed to substantial improvements for many areas of the subject. In addition to a new ICT suite and interactive whiteboards in Key Stage 2, there is also regular access to technician support and membership of local networks. The school, with the help of the EAZ, has tried to compensate for lack of access to ICT facilities at home in a number of ways. They lend laptops and run a parent/child computer club after school which has been well attended. The full breadth of the National Curriculum is now in place, although some specific aspects still have limited resources, notably for teaching about simulations, sensors and control for pupils in upper Key Stage 2. The school is aware of this and are planning to identify future needs in a costed plan spanning three years.

## MUSIC

140. It was possible to see only one lesson of music during the inspection. However, discussions with teachers, the co-ordinator and pupils, show that pupils' attainment in music is broadly in line with the level expected for their age by the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards have improved since the last inspection. In assemblies, pupils' singing is tuneful and most pupils thoroughly enjoy the experience. The majority take an active part, singing with energy and pleasure. Teachers participate with enthusiasm, acting as positive role models to the pupils. However, teachers leading assemblies do not always give direction about how the singing, phrasing and modulation might be improved other than through the use of supportive comments and praise. In a good assembly, pupils in Year 6 displayed positive attitudes to singing. They displayed their talents whilst singing along to recorded music from 'Whistle Down the Wind' by signing actions at the same time to create a moving experience for their audience.
141. Pupils in Year 4 had opportunity to learn how to play a rhythm on unpitched instruments. The teacher tunefully sang the first line of a French song and the pupils responded positively trying hard to sing in tune. They showed that they could tap and sing in rhythm as they sang along to a CD of Frere Jacques. Higher attaining pupils show that they can differentiate between beat and rhythm; they know that the beat remains constant and that the rhythm is the tune. Pupils have opportunity to work with a range of instruments, though some are of poor quality. During the lesson, pupils had opportunity to evaluate their performance with a 'talk partner'. Poor language competencies hindered the development of skills of appraising as they struggled to find appropriate vocabulary to express themselves. The timetabled hour-long lesson was too long for lower attaining pupils to sustain concentration. As a result, they struggled to copy simple rhythms clapped by the teacher on her hands.
142. The music co-ordinator takes an active part in developing music across the school. She plays the piano for concerts and assemblies and supports the development of pupils' singing in regular hymn practices. Pupils have opportunity to participate in music clubs. They are able to learn how to play the recorder and ocarina. The school has received funding from the EAZ to purchase additional instruments. Older pupils are able to play a range of instruments at the Hylton Centre. The co-ordinator has not had recent opportunity to monitor the teaching of music across the school, however, given her expertise she is in a sound position to raise standards in the school given the support by senior management to develop her role further.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

143. Standards in PE are above average at Key Stage 1 and average at Key Stage 2. This indicates improvement at Key Stage 1 since the last inspection. Progress is good for the younger children and satisfactory by age eleven.
144. At Key Stage 1, pupils develop their games skills. They engage in simple games, developing attacking and defending tactics. They pass and receive the ball within the game and demonstrate a good understanding of their position and role. Pupils appreciate the benefits to their bodies of being active. At Key Stage 2, skills related to throwing are further developed and pupils engage in challenging athletics activities, which require accuracy and control. Pupils offer suggestions and evaluations, which increase levels of participation and further develop their knowledge and understanding. In a dance lesson, Year 6 pupils demonstrate precision, poise and some fluency in their performance that was enriched through the additional experience of vocals and movements of another culture led by a visiting expert. All staff address issues of health and safety appropriately.
145. Overall, teaching is satisfactory. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is good and pupils make good progress. This is because the teachers' knowledge, planning and organisation of resources are good so that there is very focussed development of skills and techniques enabling pupils to achieve a high standard. In Key Stage 2, teaching is satisfactory. Teachers clearly share the objectives of lessons with pupils and sound planning ensures that lessons are linked to, and build upon, prior experience. Most teachers involve pupils in demonstration, discussion and evaluation of their learning but this is not consistent in all lessons.
146. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has ensured that a sound system of planning is in place, enriched by good resources, which help to support teachers who are less confident in the subject. There is sound use of external experts, a good focus on outdoor and adventurous activities and residential visits, and enrichment through a good range of extra-curricular provision. All of which has helped to ensure breadth and enrich the quality of curricular provision. The good development of the subject is reflected by the recent acquisition of the Activemark and also successful attainment of funds for an initiative aimed at the development of Sports For All. Although the co-ordinator has a determination to encourage the development of the subject area, whole school procedures have not been established to ensure regular review in order to provide strategic direction.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

147. Pupils at the end of both key stages attain in line with the standards expected by the locally Agreed Syllabus. They make satisfactory progress across both key stages.
148. Pupils in Year 2 can reflect upon a previous visit to a church and use information gained from that experience to help them build up a picture of Christian beliefs and practices. They can describe the artefacts found in a church. They have a sound level of knowledge and understanding of the purpose of particular objects such as the altar, tabernacle and font. They can describe their feelings on entering the church and appreciate that the bread and wine reminds people of the body and blood of Jesus.
149. Year 6 pupils can consider and reflect carefully upon suggestions that their classmates make with regard to the natural wonders they would use to construct a paradise. The teacher's choice of relevant music to enhance the atmosphere enriched the experience of the pupils in this lesson. The focus was upon respect for each individual and the value of their contribution. The teacher powerfully modelled this. Her high expectations of the pupils are reflected in the consideration they show both for the staff and other pupils. Discussion related to our place in the world and impact upon it further develops pupils' understanding of their responsibility for the care of the natural world.
150. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection when unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Teaching during this inspection was satisfactory or better and, in one example, excellent. Teaching is characterised by very good relationships and mutual respect. In the best lesson, the teacher carefully developed an atmosphere promoting reflection. Pupils respond very well with considered and effectively worded opinions, demonstrating a growing awe and wonder.
151. The recently appointed co-ordinator has reviewed and updated the policy and planning to ensure that the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus are met. Effective links with an LEA expert teacher has ensured continuity and progression in the planned curriculum. Appropriate use is made of local resources, such as the local church, to support pupils' learning. Although the subject leader has a sound vision for the development of the subject, the role of the subject leader is not yet sufficiently developed within the whole school planning system.