

INSPECTION REPORT

HYLTON CASTLE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sunderland

LEA area: Sunderland

Unique reference number: 108832

Head teacher: Mr M Wooler

Reporting inspector: Mrs A Pullan
30839

Dates of inspection: 20th – 23rd January 2003

Inspection number: 246829

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Community
School category:	Primary
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Cramlington Road Sunderland Tyne and Wear
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Bilton
Date of previous inspection:	February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
30839	Mrs A Pullan	Registered inspector	Science	What sort of school is it?
			Information and communication technology	The school's results and achievements
				How well are pupils taught?
				How well is the school led and managed?
				What should the school do to improve further?
9572	Mrs K Anderson	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?
20568	Mr M Rothwell	Team inspector	English	
			Design and technology	
1554	Mr A Lumsden	Team inspector	Mathematics	
			Religious education	
			Physical education	
30346	Mrs P Lowrie	Team inspector	Foundation stage	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Art and design	
			Music	
19582	Mr J Lomas	Team inspector	Geography	
			History	
			Special educational needs	

			English as an additional language	
			Citizenship	
			Educational inclusion	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Hylton Castle Primary School is situated on the outskirts of Sunderland. The majority of housing is rented accommodation and there are high levels of unemployment. There are 378 pupils and 43 children attend the nursery on a part time basis, making it larger than most primary schools. The school has a similar number of pupils (61) identified as having special educational needs as most schools, with three having a statement that describes their particular need - this is less than most other schools. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. There is only one pupil for whom English is an additional language and less than 1 per cent of pupils are from minority ethnic groups. There are 41 per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals, which is more than most schools. When children first start in the nursery their attainment is well below what is expected of three and four year olds. By the time they transfer into reception, most children are working at levels below that of most five year olds. The school is involved in many initiatives. They are part of an Education Action Zone (EAZ) and the Sure Start initiatives. Funding from the 'Space for Sport and Arts Initiative' has been used to extend the building and provide extra classrooms for music and art, design and technology as well as providing additional sports facilities. The school has been awarded the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark; two successive achievement awards for raising standards and has also been awarded Investors in People status.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school that successfully educates pupils both academically and personally. The quality of teaching is good and pupils make good progress to reach standards that are in line with national expectations. The school encourages pupils to develop personally with the result that they have very good attitudes, behave very well and develop excellent relationships with each other. The school is led and managed very well to give good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school is led and managed very well through the strong partnership between the head teacher, deputy head and governors.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and there are excellent relationships in the school.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- This is an outward looking school. There are very effective links with parents, the community and other schools, which add an extra dimension to its work. This gives pupils a rich and interesting range of experiences.

What could be improved

- The quality of marking is not as effective as it could be.
- The school improvement plan doesn't identify the school's key priorities precisely enough.

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 has made good progress since then. Standards in English and mathematics have continued to rise at a similar rate to most other schools and the school has successfully increased the proportion of 11-year-olds reaching the higher levels in the tests in both

these subjects. Assessment is now used effectively to guide teachers' planning and there is good provision for those pupils who have special educational needs. Good classroom monitoring now ensures good teaching in most classes. There have been significant improvements in other areas of the school, such as the development of new classrooms for music, art and design and design and technology, the establishment of two computer suites with updated equipment and the provision of outdoor play areas for children in the nursery and reception classes.

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	D	C	E	B
mathematics	D	E	D	B
science	C	D	D	B

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Children start in the nursery with attainment that is well below what is expected of three and four year olds. By the time children have finished their foundation stage of learning, and are ready to leave the reception classes, they have made good progress but are still working below the levels expected, particularly in communication, language and literacy.

By the end of Year 2, pupils are working at levels similar to what is expected for typical seven year olds in reading, writing and mathematics. In recent tests they attained slightly below most schools nationally in reading and writing but well above what similar schools attained (comparison based on schools with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals). In mathematics they attained well below most schools but only slightly below similar schools.

The school's performance is improving steadily in English, mathematics and science, and at a similar rate to the national trend of improvement. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and who have English as an additional language, make good progress in both the infant and junior departments and, by the end of Year 6, standards in these subjects, for most pupils, are in line with national expectations. In the 2002 tests pupils' results were only just below most schools nationally in mathematics and science but well below most schools in English. However, when compared to similar schools, attainment is higher than these schools in all these subjects. In addition, the school had identified that 25 per cent of the pupils who sat the recent tests had special educational needs, particularly in English, and this affected the school's results.

The school sets very challenging targets and works hard with pupils to try and reach them. They did not reach their targets last year and are unlikely to meet the 2003 targets.

Standards in information and communication technology (ICT), religious education and all other subjects, match the levels expected for 11-year-olds by the time pupils leave the school. Standards in art and design are better than would be expected for their age.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils love being at school and thoroughly enjoy it.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils enjoy break times and are lively and playful but recognise the need to be quiet, listen and show respect when in class.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are proud of their school and value being given roles of responsibility, which they carry out well. They work and play very well together and relationships with adults are excellent.
Attendance	Poor. Despite the best efforts of the school, attendance is well below the national average.

Pupils' very good attitudes to their work are a key factor in their effective learning. They try hard, want to do well and are really proud of what they achieve.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good and the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. This is why pupils make good progress in English and mathematics and reach the standards they do. At the start of each lesson, teachers clearly explain to pupils exactly what they are doing and why they are doing it, so that pupils know precisely what they are trying to achieve. This is an effective way of setting high levels of challenge that also involves the pupils in checking their own progress in lessons. Teachers use questions well to check that pupils fully understand what they are doing and also to give them the opportunity to explain their work. This ensures that the lessons meet the needs of all pupils, from those with special educational needs who may require some extra help and support to the higher attaining pupils who work well independently. Teachers establish excellent relationships with pupils. They, personally, know their pupils' needs very well. They take a keen interest in all pupils and try to provide activities that will interest and motivate them. Teachers and support staff work well together. They plan work carefully to make sure that lessons are interesting and move at a fast pace to hold pupils' attention. In this way pupils become involved in their lessons, work hard and try their best. They are keen to do well and are interested in improving their work. However, teachers' marking of pupils' work is not as effective as it could be and could be improved. It does not always sufficiently inform pupils about what they have done well and what they need to do to improve further. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to improve work in light of teachers' comments. In English and mathematics pupils are tested regularly to check how they are getting on. Teachers use the results of testing and assessment well to match work to pupils' needs and abilities.

Pupils with special educational needs are taught well and make good progress. The pupil who has English as an additional language receives specialist teaching and is making very good progress. All pupils are set individual targets and given clear information about what they need to do to reach their

targets. This gives pupils good information about their learning and prompts them to try and improve their work. In all classes there is a quiet working atmosphere.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Pupils get an interesting range of experiences and have plenty of opportunities to take part in a very good range of extra-curricular clubs. The curriculum is strengthened by links with other schools and support from parents and the local community.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils have clear and specific targets matched to their individual needs and they receive well-focused support.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. Additional support is provided and pupils make very good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Spiritual development is promoted well. Pupils are encouraged to share their thoughts and reflect on their personal feelings. Provision for moral and social development is very good. The school's curriculum soundly supports pupils' understanding of different cultures around the world.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. This is a caring school where pupils know that they are valued and appreciated.

The school works very well with parents. Many parents help in school and the school provides opportunities for parents to develop their own knowledge and understanding. Very good information is provided to parents about their children's progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Very good. The senior managers work very well together to lead and manage the school effectively. There are very good relationships among staff that have developed a strong team ethos.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. Governors are very supportive and rightly proud of the school. They fulfil their responsibilities very well and take a keen interest and involvement in the school. They are fully involved in deciding the educational direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Test data is analysed thoroughly to identify areas for development and appropriate action is taken.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The head teacher successfully attracts funds for the school from a range of sources and this money is used well to improve the provision and experiences offered to pupils. The principles of best value are firmly embedded and followed.

The school is very well staffed with teachers who have appropriate qualifications and a broad range of experience. They are very well supported by many non-teaching staff, who make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and to school life generally. Accommodation is very good. The school presents an extremely welcoming and attractive environment. The school improvement plan is a useful document but it does not clearly identify what the schools' main priorities are. Staff in the school have a clear idea about what is being developed, but this is not sufficiently clear in the plan to help the school evaluate the progress made.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The school has high expectations, the teaching is good and their children do well. • The school is well led and managed. • There are very good links with parents and they are kept well informed • The school is welcoming and they are happy to voice their ideas, opinions or concerns. 	<p>Parents raised no significant issues.</p>

Parents think very highly of the school and are right to do so. Inspectors agree with all their positive views and comments.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 When children start in the nursery their attainment is well below what is expected of three and four year olds. They make good progress in all the areas of learning in nursery and reception classes but attainment is still below what is typical of five year olds when they start in Year 1. This is particularly the case in communication, language and literacy. However, children make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and standards by the end of the foundation stage in this area are in line with what would be expected for their age. The school is improving results in the national tests at a rate that is similar to most schools nationally. Pupils make good progress in English in the infants and in the national tests for seven year olds in 2002 pupils attainment was very close to what most pupils attained nationally. They did not do as well in mathematics where attainment was well below most other schools. However, when these results are compared to similar schools, based on the number of pupils eligible for free school meals, attainment in reading and writing was well above other schools but mathematics was below similar schools. Pupils continue to make good progress in the juniors. In the national tests for 11-year-olds in 2002, attainment in mathematics and science was slightly below what most schools attained nationally but well below other schools in English. When this is compared to similar schools, pupils in this school attained better than pupils in similar schools in all these subjects. The school sets very challenging targets for all pupils. They did not reach their targets last year, however, 25 per cent of the pupils who sat the national tests had been identified as having special educational needs. The school has set very challenging targets for this year and is unlikely to meet them despite having plans for providing additional help and support for specific groups of pupils.

2 Since the last inspection, standards in English have improved year on year, and now match what is expected of seven and 11-year-olds. Pupils make very good progress in their listening skills and listen very well in lessons. Their speaking skills are satisfactory. Pupils are enthusiastic about reading and by the end of Years 2 and 6 standards are satisfactory. Pupils learn the sounds that different combinations of letters make and this helps them to read new words. By the end of Year 6, standards in writing are satisfactory with pupils writing for different purposes and audiences. Pupils soundly use their writing skills in some other subjects, for example, religious education.

3 Standards in mathematics have also improved year on year since the last inspection. As a result, by the end of Years 2 and 6 standards in mathematics match the level expected for pupils' ages. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a sound grasp of the basic skills in mathematics such as addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Pupils are enthusiastic about mathematics and numeracy skills are used well in other subjects.

4 Standards in science are satisfactory. Pupils acquire a sound range of knowledge and information. They answer scientific questions using the correct vocabulary. However, their ability to apply the knowledge gained to carry out experiments and investigations is not as well developed. As a result, their skills in this area could be improved.

5 By the end of Year 6, standards in ICT are in line those expected for the pupils' age. The school has made considerable improvements in ICT provision since the last inspection and all areas of the curriculum are in place. Standards are improving rapidly. Pupils have sound word processing skills and skills in other areas such as using the Internet and sending electronic mail, are developing well.

6 Standards of attainment in religious education match the requirements of the syllabus taught in the local authority's schools. Most pupils develop a sound understanding of the major faiths of the world, including Islam, Judaism and Buddhism as well as Christianity.

7 Standards in art and design are better than would be expected for pupils' ages. Infant pupils show a good understanding of dimension and shading when working on observational drawings. All pupils have a good knowledge of the works of famous artists.

8 Standards in all other subjects are satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they are well supported and provision is good. The pupil who has English as an additional language is also well supported and is making very good progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9 All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are very enthusiastic about their school. From the time they start in nursery they develop impressive attitudes to learning and respond extremely well to teachers and other adults. Pupils say that they like coming to school. The vast majority arrive on time and are well turned out in the school uniform. Pupils thoroughly enjoy both the work and the out of school visits; a large number are involved in the wide range of extra curricular activities. They talk enthusiastically about what they have been doing. Pupils particularly enjoyed making flags for display at the opening of the new building. During the inspection pupils 'glowed' with pride as they showed an inspector round their classroom explaining their work and displays.

10 Behaviour around the school is very good and has improved since the last inspection, when it was judged to be good. Movement between lessons and at break times is extremely orderly. Pupils are friendly and polite to visitors and hold doors open for adults and their friends. Entry to and exit from assemblies are very orderly. Pupils queue quietly at the end of lessons and when waiting to enter school at the start of day and end of break times.

11 Behaviour in classes is very good. Many examples were observed in lessons. Particularly impressive was a Year 3 mathematics lesson where pupils were consolidating their knowledge of British coins. They showed high levels of interest, counting together and making helpful suggestions. Pupils are very keen to be involved in lessons and answer teachers' questions with enthusiasm. Most maintain concentration very well.

12 Behaviour at mealtimes is very good. Pupils queue up in an orderly manner, collect their food from the serving counter and then sit well at tables. They are friendly to others and welcome the opportunity to talk to visitors. Behaviour in the yards, although lively, is good. Pupils play games such as 'hula-hoops' sensibly.

13 One of the things pupils enjoy most is receiving rewards for good behaviour and attitudes. When asked what it felt like to get an award one pupil answered 'It blows my mind'. Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong. Those whose behaviour falls below the standard expected know the consequences. They are handled effectively and their conduct is closely monitored. There have been no exclusions in recent years.

14 Pupils work very well, both in groups and on their own. For example, in a Year 6 ICT lesson where pupils were using spreadsheets to solve simple formula, those sharing a computer worked well collaborating over the formula and taking turns. Through group activities and paired work pupils learn to share and support others.

15 Through religious education and history lessons, pupils are encouraged to consider the values and beliefs of others. Classes have studied a range of religious festivals. During the inspection a Muslim parent came into school to speak to children about his faith, which greatly enhanced pupils' understanding of other people's faiths. From their start in nursery pupils are beginning to appreciate the impact of their actions on others. For example, nursery children walked to the dining hall for a lesson. They were extremely quiet and knew that they must not disturb the older pupils when working.

16 Pupils willingly take on responsibilities in class such as giving out books and taking the register to the office each morning and afternoon. They carry out these tasks with diligence and pride. All pupils in Year 6 take responsibility for a wide range of duties within the school. For example, they operate the overhead projector in assembly; help with office duties at lunchtime and man doors at break. They take their job seriously and are very proud of their role. A school council has recently been formed. This enables class representatives to bring comments, suggestions or concerns to a whole school forum. Through these jobs, pupils' initiative and personal responsibility are effectively developed. When given the opportunity, pupils take responsibility for their own learning and access their own equipment in lessons. However, these opportunities are less well established and so their progress as independent learners is restricted.

17 Relationships with each other and between pupils and staff are excellent. No incidents of harassment were observed. Pupils from ethnic minorities are very well integrated into the school.

18 Attendance is well below the national average although revised systems for following up absences have resulted in a steady improvement in attendance figures over the last few terms. Some parents take advantage of low season travel costs and take their children on holiday during term time. This has an adverse effect upon attendance figures. A few pupils arrive late but the school day starts on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19 The quality of teaching is good. It has improved since the last inspection with no unsatisfactory lessons and a higher proportion of lessons judged to be very good. There have been significant developments since the last inspection that have improved the quality of teaching. For example, both senior staff and subject leaders monitor teaching systematically. Written and verbal feedback is given to teachers about the quality of their teaching. As a result, teachers know which aspects of their teaching are good and what they need to do in order to develop. The purpose of each lesson is clearly identified and shared with pupils. This means that pupils have a clear understanding about what they will be doing but also have a measure by which they can determine how well they have done at the end of lessons. However, the quality of marking is not as effective as it could be. Teachers are not specific enough in the comments they write on pupils' work. As a result, pupils do not sufficiently know what they need to do to improve and opportunities are not given for pupils to revisit their work and improve it in light of the teachers' comments. This results in some pupils repeating the same mistakes instead of understanding what they have done wrong and correcting it. This slows their progress.

20 The school has good assessment procedures and this is a significant improvement since the last inspection. These are now being used by teachers to match the content of work to pupils' abilities. This means that all pupils make good progress. In particular, pupils with special educational needs make good progress and pupils who have English as an additional language make very good progress. This is because not only is work well matched to their needs but classroom assistants also support

them very well both in class and in withdrawal groups. Additional teaching is provided for pupils who have English as an additional language by the local education authority.

21 The quality and deployment of classroom assistants adds significantly to the quality of teaching. Classroom assistants know pupils well and are involved in the planning of lessons. As a result, they work collaboratively with teachers and have responsibility for the teaching of particular groups or individual pupils. They monitor the achievements of pupils with whom they work and use this as a basis for discussion with the teacher about what the pupil has achieved and what work they will do next.

22 The school has successfully introduced the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Pupils are put into 'sets' for these subjects so that they learn alongside pupils of a similar ability. This means that teachers can give extra support to those pupils requiring it and can give more demanding activities to those pupils capable of higher attainment in order to challenge them. Teachers teach the basic skills of English and mathematics well and, as a consequence, these strategies are raising standards. For example, in a Year 6 lesson whilst writing a mystery story, pupils had to concentrate on character development. The teacher-led activity of attributing characteristics to a particular person provided the pupils with a good plan and basis for future development of that person in their stories.

23 Teachers are confident in the teaching of English and the implementation of the Literacy Strategy. This results in lessons where pace is brisk and content interests pupils. For example, when learning about how to read expressively Year 2 pupils listened intently whilst the teacher, very expressively, read the beginning of 'Little Red Riding Hood'. Teaching in the Numeracy Strategy is also good. For example, in a Year 4 lesson the teacher's good use of questioning ensured pupils worked at a pace that was brisk and challenging. However, in science and geography teachers do not sufficiently cover all the areas of the national curriculum in these subjects. For example, in science, pupils are given insufficient opportunities to develop their experimental and investigational skills.

24 Most teachers select content for their lessons that motivates and interests pupils. As a result, pupils listen very well and are keen to be involved in the lesson and this promotes good learning. For example, in an ICT lesson in Year 2, the use of a program that 'talked back' to the pupils what they had written delighted and motivated the pupils to write more. They also listened carefully to the teacher to ensure they knew how to operate the program effectively.

25 Teachers not only make lessons interesting but fun. This is because excellent relationships have been developed between pupils and teachers. Teachers have very good control of their classes and take every opportunity to reward pupils for good work or effort. Equally, pupils show very good respect for their teachers and respond quickly to instruction or direction. As a result, teachers can provide activities in which pupils freely enjoy themselves whilst learning. For example, in a music lesson in Year 3, pupils composed their own music for 'The Spooky House'. The stimulus the teacher provided with the initial music 'American in Paris', the range of untuned instruments available that the pupils had made themselves, and the enthusiasm of the teacher resulted in an excellent lesson in which both teacher and pupils had fun.

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

26 The curricular and other opportunities offered are good, and all pupils have access to a wide range of learning experiences. The school is very inclusive. All pupils, including those with additional needs and for whom English is an additional language, are fully involved in all aspects of the school's curriculum and extra-curricular activities. Pupils who represent the school, and who are given roles

and responsibilities around the school, are drawn from the full range of abilities found in the school. The curriculum is broad, well balanced and relevant, covering all subjects of the National Curriculum. However, too little time is allocated to history and geography for pupils to develop their skills in these areas to any great depth. All statutory requirements are met, as is the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Provision for personal and social education is very good. The very effective learning environment that has been created in the Foundation Stage of learning leads to good academic and personal progress for all children in the areas of learning for this age range. There is a strong emphasis on providing a variety of well-structured opportunities for children to develop their communication and language skills, as these are often very under developed on entry to school.

27 The successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies enables pupils to achieve well in English and mathematics. There are many opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills to enhance their work in other subjects. There is a strong commitment to developing pupils' creativity through opportunities in music, and art and design. The school has benefited from additional resources through 'Space for Sports and Arts' funding and these areas of the curriculum are developing rapidly. The pupils are able to join a high quality choir and take part in a range of musical performances for parents and members of the community. The curriculum is further enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular opportunities, which include recorder groups, keyboard lessons and a guitar group. Other opportunities such as sports clubs and the French Club also add to this provision. The school is involved in an Education Action Zone and Sure Start Project, which help to extend the learning opportunities offered to the pupils in school and pre-school children.

28 The school takes full advantage of every opportunity available in the wider community in order to enhance its work. The 'Space for Sports and Art' initiative is at the core of this school's links with the community. This initiative has enabled the school to undertake major building works. In the autumn, designated areas for teaching music and art activities, as well as an impressive all weather sports pitch were opened. These facilities are not only used for lessons but also extra curricular activities. Currently clubs are mostly for pupils within the school but it is planned to make them increasingly available for the use of the wider community. The 'Sports and Art' initiative has also enabled the school to share facilities with nearby Castlegreen School. Pupils now attend cricket coaching in Castlegreen's sports hall. Involvement in various programmes, such as the Castle View Cluster EAZ and Nissan 'Activity Days', are effective in raising pupils' awareness of the link between what they learn at school and the world of work.

29 The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum in citizenship for all pupils. Pupils develop confidence and take responsibility. They learn to make the most of themselves as individuals as they learn about good citizenship and how to live as part of the school and wider community. They are taught to tolerate differences in others and how to keep themselves safe and lead a healthy lifestyle. Sex education and drugs education are also offered to older pupils.

30 Local businesses support the work of the school in a variety of ways. A nearby restaurant donates meal vouchers, which are awarded to the 'Pupil of the Week', Sunderland Football Club offer reduced rates on tickets and the local radio station has worked with pupils in Year 6.

31 This school makes very good use of the facilities within the area to extend pupils' learning and widen their experiences. Visits out are planned to link in with lessons; pupils have recently visited Fountains Abbey and Hylton Castle with older pupils making residential visits to Derwent Hill and London. Visitors to the school share their lifestyles and skills with pupils and so make very good contributions to pupils learning. Ballet dancers have held workshops in school and pupils visit Sunderland Empire Theatre. During the inspection, an Elder from the nearby mission church helped to hold a mock wedding ceremony in school. This was linked to a lesson where pupils were learning

about religious traditions. As part of 'City Community Teams', two police officers have recently become regular visitors. They often attend the breakfast club, present the Endeavour Award to a chosen pupil and have talked to the children about firework safety.

32 The links with schools in the same cluster are impressive. As a result of the Castle View Cluster this school enjoys very good relationships with partner institutions. The staff meet together on a very regular basis and pupils compete in sporting events such as the Cluster Sports Day. Swimming lessons are held in the Castle View pool. Another impressive example of mutual support is the regular meeting of Cluster Parental Liaison Officers. They share ideas and jointly explore ways in which parents can become more closely involved in the life of their school. In Year 6 pupils make a number of visits to the receiver comprehensive school. This enables them to become familiar with some of the school routines and meet with those from other primaries before transfer.

33 Provision for the personal development of pupils is very good. Assemblies reflect the values of the school well and play a significant role in educating pupils about other cultures in addition to appropriate multi-faith spirituality. The ethos of the school is one in which all pupils, irrespective of their ability, religion or culture, can grow and flourish.

34 Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and for the pupils who have English as an additional language it is very good. The individual education plans for these pupils and pupils with special educational needs are good. They clearly identify the pupil's needs and set clear and measurable targets for development. Progress towards these targets is monitored well by the special educational needs co-ordinators. Reviews are held regularly to which parents are invited. If parents do not attend then they are informed about the new targets that have been set and how they can help their child reach them. The school works very well with outside agencies and teachers know the areas for development for pupils so that they are well provided for in class.

35 Provision for spiritual development is good. Teaching promotes spirituality by valuing questions and encouraging curiosity. Pupils are keen to respond in class and teachers deal sensitively with incorrect responses and use praise well. The school engenders appropriate beliefs, attitudes and values. Pupils are taught to deal with feelings and emotions in a way that enables them to respect and tolerate differences in others. The school develops well the sense of identity, self-worth, meaning and purpose for all pupils. They feel valued as individuals. The school's daily act of collective worship makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual development. The achievements of pupils are celebrated in the good display work around the school.

36 The provision for the moral and social development of pupils is very good. There is a strong and effective moral theme that runs through all of the work of the school. Pupils are taught right from wrong. Most older pupils are aware of the consequences of their own behaviour and the impact of their behaviour on others. The school's behaviour policy makes it clear to all pupils as to what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. The ethos of the school promotes and encourages honesty, fairness and a respect for truth. Pupils learn to share and appreciate the views of others. In a religious education lesson, Year 6 pupils showed a mature attitude when debating a range of issues including the influence of films and television on behaviour, parental responsibilities and the Qu'ran. They listened sensibly to the opinions of others, reflected on what they had heard and justified their own views. There are opportunities for pupils to attend residential visits that make a significant contribution to their social development.

37 Provision for personal and social development is very good. There is a range of opportunities planned for pupils to take responsibility including a recently developed school council elected by the pupils. This council has members from across the ability range of the school and is not just made up of

the most able or articulate. Pupils, particularly those in the juniors, are eager to take on responsibility and play an active part in the life of the school. Where pupils are aware of a need for them to help they readily volunteer and effectively carry out tasks without significant adult supervision or instruction. There is a well-established system of helpers, monitors and prefects. A small group of older pupils regularly take responsibility for the distribution of information around classes and do so effectively. Pupils use their own initiative well, although opportunities to do so are limited

38 Pupils understand the school rules and respect them. They are constantly reminded of the rules and these are consistently applied and maintained by all staff. The attitude of staff to the pupils provides an excellent example for pupils to follow and there is a real sense of teamwork and mutual respect between adults and pupils. The school is inclusive and seeks to educate all pupils in the community, irrespective of their additional needs, religion or cultural and ethnic roots. The pupils respect and value their environment and, rightly, express concern about the amount of litter on the school site by presenting their views through the school council and project work linked to geography, and personal, social and health education. The school building is free of any form of vandalism. It is a pleasant, tidy and well maintained building.

39 Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. The school addresses cultural issues through aspects of the curriculum such as history, geography, art, literacy, music, religious education and personal, social and health education. However, there is insufficient time allocated to the study of the cultural traditions of the local area or the diversity of cultural and ethnic origins of people in British society. The achievements and richness of other cultures are insufficiently celebrated as part of the school's curriculum. The very good range of after-school activities adds additional value to the curriculum and addresses cultural issues through art, music and foreign languages. Recently the father of a Muslim pupil gave a talk to a group of older pupils. Such visitors from other cultures and religions and visits to places of worship add significantly to pupils' cultural awareness but these visits and visitors are infrequent.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40 As found in the last inspection, the ethos of this school has a positive impact upon pupils' learning. All members of the community live up to the motto of 'caring and sharing'. They all play a part in creating a friendly, happy and welcoming environment where each child can develop. There is an impressive atmosphere of mutual respect and support.

41 Staff and governors make every effort to ensure that pupils are safe and well cared for. Parents feel that their children are very well looked after. Procedures for health and safety, and for child protection are well documented and implemented well. All relevant health and safety checks are carried out, for example, fire drills and annual equipment checks are done regularly. Risk assessments are carried out. Several members of staff and support staff are trained in the administration of first aid. As a result, pupils receive very good attention if an accident does occur. Staff are aware of specific medical needs of pupils. Pupils are well looked after by staff or lunchtime supervisors at all times. The visitor's book enables the school to keep track of adults present in the building. Through the personal, social and health education programme pupils learn about healthy and safe life styles.

42 The personal support given to pupils is of a high standard and has a major impact on their progress. The school acknowledges the importance of involving parents and carers in their child's education. Parents find staff extremely approachable and feel they can voice concerns and pass on relevant information. Class teachers take primary responsibility for the pastoral care of pupils. They know their pupils well, and are sensitive to their differing needs. As a result, informal monitoring of pupils' personal progress is continuously taking place. Their needs are very well supported. Every

effort is made to reward successes both in class and during assemblies. Stars, stickers, merits, house points and certificates are all used to good effect to celebrate good work, behaviour and attendance. Poor behaviour is handled quickly and monitored closely. This is a 'Telling School' where pupils are encouraged to communicate any concerns they may have in order that staff can deal with potential problems before they become an issue. The staff are alert to any signs of bullying or harassment and when instances do occur they are identified quickly and handled effectively. The development of personal skills is well provided for. Pupils are expected to take on jobs within school, for example acting as monitors in class. All pupils in Year 6 are given some responsibility; they act as prefects, help the office and fill up water bottles. A school council is currently being established. This gives pupils valuable experience in the way meetings run and in understanding the process of democracy. Opportunities for independent learning are less well established. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to select their own resources. Pupils are involved in keeping their own records of progress and achievement and setting their own targets. As a result they know how well they are doing. All pupils are included in every activity and so none are disadvantaged by their gender, race or ability.

43 Pupils are very well supported in their transfer into and out of the school. Induction to the nursery is handled carefully and sensitively. In the summer term pupils and parents visit the unit and then the teacher and nursery nurse call at their homes. Over the first few weeks of the autumn term pupils attend shortened sessions, but by half term all are fully involved. The majority of children in reception have attended the nursery so they are already familiar with the building and staff. Most settle quickly and happily. The school enjoys very close links with the main comprehensive school. There are opportunities for the children from the cluster primaries to meet throughout their time at school. In Year 6 pupils make several visits to the comprehensive school and staff meet together to discuss pupils' individual needs. As a result transfer is generally a positive experience.

44 The academic progress of each pupil is monitored carefully through a range of tests. This information is then used effectively to set pupils individual targets for improvement. Pupils are fully involved in the target setting process, which helps them to understand their learning and what they need to do to improve. Targets are also shared with parents so that they fully appreciate what their child has achieved and what they will be doing to progress further. The results of national tests are fully analysed to identify questions that have been answered well and those that a majority of pupils have had difficulty with. The results of this analysis are used well by teachers to inform the planning of future lessons to ensure that pupils have a better knowledge of particular curricular areas. Pupils' achievement is effectively tracked throughout the school. This identifies those pupils who are making steady progress, those that are achieving well and those that are not achieving as well as they should. Staff act on this information to ensure that all pupils make good progress by providing challenging work for those pupils achieving well and providing additional support for those pupils who need it. Lesson plans clearly identify what pupils are to learn and all teachers share this with pupils. This helps pupils assess how well they have done in particular lessons and whether they could have done better. As a result, pupils are developing a good knowledge of their own learning. However, the marking of pupils work is not as effective. Teachers do not link marking with what has been identified as the main purpose of the lesson. They also do not sufficiently identify for pupils what they have done well and what they need to improve. This is limiting pupils knowledge about their learning and does not complement the good target setting that the school does.

45 Arrangements to monitor the personal development and academic performance of pupils with special educational needs and pupils who have English as an additional language are good. The school has two special educational needs co-ordinators, based in the infant and junior departments. They have time allocated to undertake their role and are able to monitor the progress of these pupils against the targets in their individual education plans. These reviews are organised by the pupils' class teachers and parents and pupils are involved appropriately. Reviews of individual education plans

decide the targets of the next individual plan. The school has sound procedures to identify at an early stage when pupils have problems with social and learning problems. These procedures are based on clear assessment criteria and are known to staff. The special needs co-ordinators provide valuable additional support and advice to staff in this process.

46 Extremely thorough procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance were introduced last year. This has had a positive effect upon attendance rates. The majority of parents inform school if their child is absent. The school has instituted a system of first day follow up for absence. Awards are given throughout the year to reward good attendance and even parents receive a certificate. Staff mark registers at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47 The links this school has established with its parents are very good. This is an area of strength and has a major impact on children's progress. Through the questionnaire, pre-inspection meeting and discussions, the majority of parents expressed extremely positive views.

48 The very good work of the Parental Liaison Officer has formalised the systems for parental links and resulted in a number of initiatives to further increase their involvement. They play a very active part in the life of the school. This has a very positive impact on their children's education. A good number of parents and grandparents work in school either as employees, or on a voluntary basis. Many began as volunteers, undertook training in areas such as the 'Listening Skills Programme', and now work in school. Parents' skills are often used to support the curriculum. For example, a parent has supported the health education programme talking about First Aid. Currently there is no 'Friends Association' but parents do support their children in fundraising events in school for instance autumn and Christmas fairs and Halloween Discos. They also help to raise money for good causes such as the National Children's Home.

49 Parents value the welcoming and friendly atmosphere and the school tries to involve and consult parents as much as possible. Parents of Foundation Stage and infant pupils bring their children to school and so they have daily contact with teachers. Most parents say that they feel comfortable to approach the school if they have a concern.

50 Written information such as the prospectus, newsletters, and booklets are helpful in keeping parents and carers up to date with what is going on in school. The school gives parents many opportunities to extend their own learning and help their child progress. Curriculum information is sent to parents each half term. This gives them a good understanding of what their children will be studying. A number of courses and workshops have been held in order to keep parents up to date with developments in the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Initially attendance at these events was poor however numbers are steadily increasing. Parents are invited into school for two parents' meetings to discuss their own child's progress and set targets for improvement. Attendance at most of these events is exceptionally high. Those who do not attend are always followed up. At the start of this academic year parents were invited to visit their child's new classroom and to meet their new teacher. This new initiative further strengthened the link between school and home. Reports, which comply with statutory requirements, contain detailed and helpful information. As a result, parents are kept very well informed about their own child's progress.

51 Parents are well involved in their children's work at home through their commitment to the home-school agreement and homework. The reading diaries provide an effective channel for home/school communication. Parents are asked to sign them each week and to complete comments when necessary. A range of 'learning bags' is available for parents of younger children to take home.

52 The school works well in partnership with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and who have English as an additional language. Copies of individual plans are sent home to parents. These plans are discussed at parent's evenings. Parents are invited into school to discuss provision for pupils. The information given to parents is clear and informative.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53 The school is very well led and managed. The head teacher and deputy head teacher work extremely well together as a complementary team. They set a very clear educational direction for the school that is the product of a thorough analysis of pupils' needs. All the people involved with the school share this vision as it has been developed through discussion and consultation. As a result, the school has made good progress since the last inspection.

54 Standards in the school are monitored very well. The head teacher and deputy head teacher carefully analyse all test results and through consultation with subject leaders, challenging targets for future development are set that are based on pupils' prior attainment. For example, it was identified that ICT was an area for development and this has been a specific focus. The result has been improved provision and standards in this area. Subject leaders regularly examine work in pupils' books to ensure that pupils are making the progress over time that they should be. The head teacher, deputy head teacher, and some subject leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching. From this, areas of strength and for development are identified. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved.

55 Subject leaders have a good understanding of standards in their subject and contribute well to identifying priorities in the school improvement plan. They carry out detailed audits of their subject, which are used to update governors about the subject and also help in deciding the priorities in the school improvement plan. As a result, the school improvement plan is a useful document. However, it identifies all areas of the school that require development and does not sufficiently identify those which are the main priorities. In addition, the success criteria by which progress towards targets is measured, is not sufficiently linked to raising pupils' attainment. As a result, the school improvement plan does not help the senior managers and governors evaluate progress in pupils' attainment against the school's main priorities and ascertain what has been successful and what still needs to be done.

56 The leadership and management of special educational needs are good. There are two special educational needs co-ordinators and both are experienced and well qualified. They each have adequate time to carry out their duties so they are able to assist teachers with assessing and planning for pupils with special educational needs. The senior managers of the school are fully involved in the special educational needs process and are very supportive. The school regularly devotes specific staff development time to special educational needs and as a result teachers are well informed on these issues.

57 The head teacher has developed a strong team ethos in which staff feel appreciated and valued. This motivates them into doing their best and to continually improve standards or maintain high standards in all aspects of school life. Staff, pupils and governors are all very proud of their school and its achievements. The school aims for high quality in everything it does. For example, pupils' work is displayed well to celebrate and value their achievements.

58 Governors are involved, active and well informed about what is going on in the school. Many governors are regularly in school either helping as volunteers or as members of staff. As a result, they are fully involved in setting the educational direction for the school and linking this effectively to any financial decisions. Finances are well managed. Governors carefully monitor all spending. They have

a good understanding of the principles of 'best value' and these are applied conscientiously to spending decisions. Involvement of the governors in special educational needs matters is good. There is a named governor for special educational needs who meets frequently with the special educational needs co-ordinators.

59 The school is very well staffed with teachers who have appropriate qualifications and a broad range of experience. They are very well supported by many non-teaching staff, who make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and school life generally. The deputy head teacher does not have a designated class to teach. This has given her the opportunity to work closely with the EAZ to promote the teaching of basic skills and to develop effective links with parents.

60 Staff development is firmly established, and all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have many opportunities for training. Procedures for performance management are very good. It is a well-structured system, and reflects the needs of the school improvement plan. There are very good arrangements for the induction of staff new to the school.

61 All staff are committed and hard working. There is good collaboration between teachers and non-teaching staff, which particularly benefits lower attaining pupils, and those with special educational needs. Capable and efficient administrative staff effectively supports the senior management of the school.

62 Accommodation is very good. The school presents an extremely welcoming and attractive environment. Appropriate security measures are in place. Classrooms, which are of adequate size for the number of pupils, have sufficient space for group work, practical work and display. The library provides a quiet area, which is well used for small group work and quiet reading. Through the 'Space for Sport and Art' project, the building has been extended to include specialist music and art rooms as well as changing rooms and toilets. These new facilities are having an extremely beneficial effect on the teaching of the curriculum. The school has developed and equipped two computer suites. Displays throughout the school and in the classrooms celebrate pupils' work and achievements as well as providing information for parents, visitors and pupils. Both halls are of adequate size. One is used for assemblies and physical education and the other for meals. The building is well maintained. Both caretaking and cleaning staff work hard to ensure that the school is always in good condition.

63 The extensive grounds are securely fenced. The 'Space for Sport and Arts', project enabled an all weather sports pitch to be installed. This is an extremely valuable and useful facility for the teaching of the sports programme and also for extra-curricular activities. The playing field and two yards provide ample space for outdoor play. A designated outdoor area for the under fives means that the younger pupils play in safety. Children in the nursery unit benefit from playing on a brightly-coloured, safety surface.

64 The stream has long been a cause of concern to the head teacher and governors. It runs through the school grounds and into a drain under the road. In times of heavy rainfall this drain becomes blocked and the stream floods into the infants' playground. There is also a great deal of litter in this area because members of the public tend to throw their paper and cans over the fence. As a result, instead of being a valuable and attractive learning resource the whole area is very scruffy and unsightly.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

65 The school has no major key issues but in order to improve standards further the head teacher, governors and staff of the school should consider the following points:

- (1) Improve the quality of marking to ensure that pupils know what they have done well and what they need to do in order to improve further.

Paragraphs 19, 86, 97, 117, 121

- (2) Improve the school improvement plan by

- clearly establishing what the school's main areas for development are;
- ensuring that the success criteria, by which targets in the plan are measured, are precise and linked to the improvement in pupils' attainment.

Paragraph 55

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

84

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

42

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	17	40	25	0	0	0
Percentage	1	20	48	30	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	22	378
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	152

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	61

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of The infants (Year 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of The infants for the latest reporting year	2002	21	24	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	19	18
	Girls	20	20	20
	Total	38	39	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84% (79%)	87% (68%)	84% (84%)
	National	84% (84%)	86% (86%)	90% (91%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	19	19
	Girls	20	20	21
	Total	38	39	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84% (74%)	87% (82%)	89% (89%)
	National	85% (85%)	89% (89%)	89% (89%)

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

Attainment at the end of The juniors (Year 6)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of The juniors for the latest reporting year	2002	42	27	69

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	27	31	35
	Girls	15	17	21
	Total	42	48	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60% (79%)	69% (59%)	81% (76%)
	National	75% (75%)	73% (71%)	86% (87%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	29	33	35
	Girls	14	17	22
	Total	43	50	58

Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	61% (65%)	71% (72%)	83% (83%)
	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	266	0	0
White – Irish		0	0
White – any other White background		0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean		0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background		0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian		0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani		0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi		0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background		0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African		0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background		0	0
Chinese		0	0
Any other ethnic group		0	0
No ethnic group recorded	107	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)	19.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.3
Average class size	22.2

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	240

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	51
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.5

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001 - 2002
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	£
Total income	831,106
Total expenditure	885,561
Expenditure per pupil	1,590
Balance brought forward from previous year	39162
Balance carried forward to next year	-15293

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	396
Number of questionnaires returned	265

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	34	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	66	31	2	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	40	2	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	54	36	5	2	2
The teaching is good.	68	30	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	68	28	3	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	23	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	76	23	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	63	32	4	0	2

The school is well led and managed.

The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.

The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

60	37	2	0	1
60	37	1	0	1
52	36	6	1	6

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

66 Provision for children in the nursery and reception classes Foundation Stage continues to be very good, as found at the last inspection. Children are admitted into the nursery in the September after their third birthday and attend part-time, having either a morning or an afternoon place. The overall attainment of children on entry to nursery is well below that found nationally, but varies from child to child. Attainment is particularly low in communication, language and literacy. A very successful induction programme, which involves both home visits by staff, and parents and children in visits to the class, ensures a smooth and happy induction to the routines and systems of school. The children move into the two reception classes the following year and this transition is eased by the support of the nursery nurse who moves with them. There is good liaison between the nursery and reception classes, and the very good planning ensures that learning is continuous throughout this stage. The very good teaching in the nursery and the good teaching in the reception classes ensures that pupils make good progress through the foundation stage in all areas of learning, but by the age of five, they are still below the level of attainment expected for children of their age. Children with special educational needs are not identified formally, but those who have difficulty are very well supported, and make progress as well as other pupils.

67 The quality of teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is good and often very good, in all the areas of learning. The teachers and support staff have a very thorough understanding of these young children's needs and the curriculum for the Foundation Stage. Children's progress is carefully monitored and they move on to harder work as they are ready. Well-focused, teacher-led learning situations are provided, as well as opportunities for pupils to learn from structured, purposeful independent play. The classroom support staff contribute very effectively and are instrumental in supporting the achievements made by the children.

68 Assessment is very good. When children enter the Foundation Stage, a detailed, ongoing record of their progress against the early learning goals identified for this age group is completed. This baseline assessment is used very effectively, recording individual progress in the different aspects of learning and development and gives a clear picture of each individual child's attainment. Well-documented planning supports the delivery of the curriculum and influences learning outcomes.

69 Liaison with parents is very good, with staff and parents having positive open attitudes, which benefit the parent/school partnership. The involvement in the Sure Start project further supports this partnership and the children benefit from the opportunity to borrow 'Listening Bags', 'Story Bags' and educational toys to share at home with their parents. In addition, parents receive detailed reports of their child's progress each term. Accommodation for the Foundation Stage pupils is very good, having large well resourced rooms, as well as outdoor provision of a soft tarmac area for riding bicycles, scooters and other large equipment, grassed and seating areas. The classrooms are attractive, well organised, and make the best use of space in order to allow for a variety of different types of teaching and activity. Due regard is given to health and safety. Resources are good and support the curriculum well.

Personal, social and emotional development

70 Provision for children's personal and social development is good and the staff place great emphasis on this aspect of the children's learning, providing many opportunities for them to develop their personal and social skills. The quality of teaching in this area is good. Constant reinforcement

ensures they make good progress in this important area of learning and by the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage, they have generally achieved this early learning goal. The well-organised classrooms provide a stimulating, exciting environment with a wide range of learning experiences that are accessible to all children and actively encourage independence. Children are learning to tidy up after themselves, supported by clear labelling of equipment and high expectations shown by staff. They use the coloured bands when working in certain areas so that the number of children playing there is regulated. The nursery children played 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' in role-play, collaborating over choice of roles and the correct sequence of the story. In the reception classes they played in the 'shoe shop', demonstrating an awareness of each other's feelings. They undress and dress themselves for physical education lessons and are encouraged to take care of their own needs. Both the nursery and the reception classes have a 'Pet Area', where they have a pet guinea pig. The children enjoy talking about their pets and explain how they are cared for and what they like to eat. The guinea pig in the reception classes is kept in a large open tank, and the children gently stroke it as they talk, demonstrating a developing understanding of the animal's needs. The daily routines in all Foundation Stage classes also help children to develop a sense of order. They listen, take turns, and share. There is planned provision to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children. Circle Time is used to enable children to talk to each other, and at the same time to have respect for each other's contributions. The children's concentration skills are developing, and generally they persevere until tasks are completed. There are excellent relationships between staff and pupils. Children work alongside one another well, and often co-operate with each other in their play. They show appropriate self-respect and some have good self-confidence, demonstrating independence in self-registering when they come into school, selecting activities and equipment, and in their personal hygiene. Overall, their behaviour is good.

Communication, language and literacy

71 The majority of children enter the nursery with very underdeveloped speaking and listening skills. Strong emphasis is placed on encouraging the children to listen carefully and to take turns when answering questions. Teaching is good and teachers are skilful in their use of questioning and consequently, give the children both the confidence to speak and the time to respond. All staff ensure that instructions are clear and precise. Although the children make good progress in this area of learning, the majority are still below the standards expected by the early learning goals by the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage.

72 The children have good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. The teachers are skilled at encouraging children to express their ideas by thoughtful, but persistent questioning, which enables children to extend their vocabulary and communicate more effectively. Imaginative and role-play areas are carefully and thoughtfully planned and are well used by pupils. In the reception classes the children took turns at being the sales assistant in the shoe shop. They asked, "Can I measure your feet?" "What size do you take?", and "Would you like the cheaper ones in the sale?". They benefited from the teachers' careful planning of this role-play and were able to work independently and co-operatively to extend their own learning experiences. Adults provide good support as they interact with the children, often becoming part of the children's play. An example of this was when a support assistant was working with a group of children in the small world area in the nursery. She was successful in extending the children's play through the input of appropriate vocabulary and by becoming part of their 'story'.

73 The children make a good start with reading. They benefit from a good range of suitable, attractive books and comfortable reading areas in which to enjoy them. The children enjoy looking at books. In the nursery, they listened intently when the teacher read the story about 'Mrs Wishy Washy', joining in with the story and using the soft toy animals to sequence the story as each animal

rolled in the mud. The nursery children enjoy listening to stories and are eager to talk about the pictures and give their opinion as to what might happen next. In the reception classes they build upon their previous knowledge, and are beginning to develop a sight vocabulary and knowledge of initial letter sounds. In a guided reading session, the teacher provided opportunities for the children to describe what was happening and identify key features, then focussed on letter sounds and simple sound blends. The children handle books carefully and tell the story from the pictures and the text. Some children talk about the book cover and predict what the story might be about. The teachers use effective strategies to teach letter recognition and the support staff help the children to consolidate their learning by playing letter and word recognition games. Children are making good progress throughout the Foundation Stage because of the good teaching. Most children in the reception classes can identify and read their own names.

74 Writing skills are promoted well in all Foundation Stage classes and the children are encouraged to write in their independent play as well as writing their names and other familiar words. The children develop their writing skills in both formal and informal situations. There are writing areas where children can practise their writing skills, copying letter shapes or do “pretend writing”. Children practise the correct formation of letters in small groups with their teacher and many children can form letters correctly and write their forename. The staff value all children’s efforts and they learn to progress well through the positive reinforcement that is given.

Mathematical development

75 The children make good progress in mathematics because of the good teaching and the majority will come close to meeting the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Teaching is good and sometimes very good, the teachers and support staff use a range of strategies to extend the children’s concept of numbers. On entry to the nursery they are introduced to a wide range of experiences and practical activities that promote an enjoyment of working with numbers. They play number games with the teacher, counting the spots on the dice then matching them to the spots and numerals on their ladybirds. They look at ‘zero’ and talk about how this number represents ‘no spots’. Independently, they thread plastic beads and identify the colours, and some children count accurately to ten. Reception children build on this good foundation; they explore the concept of ‘one more’ using the number line and number fans to show their answers. The teachers use effective strategies to reinforce the children’s learning, they ‘act out’ the sum with the children getting on and off the ‘bus’ as they add and subtract, which effectively focuses their attention and keeps them involved so that learning takes place. They recognise simple shapes such as circle, triangle, rectangle and square, and are learning about cubes, cylinders, spheres, pyramids and cones. They consolidated this learning as they worked with the teacher rolling play dough to make spheres of different sizes. Children are learning to use mathematical language to describe position and size, quantity and time. They explore pattern, taking turns to choose the next coloured shape to continue the pattern the teacher has made, demonstrating a clear understanding of the task. Most children join in and say the days of the week with their teacher and decide which day was yesterday and what day it will be tomorrow. Children develop their mathematical knowledge in imaginative play situations as they count the three bears bowls and spoons in the nursery role-play area, or discuss whether shoes are too big or too small in the shoe shop in the reception role-play area. The children enjoy consolidating their mathematical understanding by singing number rhymes and using appropriate programs on the computer.

Creative development

76 Children make good progress with their creative and aesthetic skills because of the good teaching in the Foundation Stage classes. Work on display indicates that children are given good opportunities to create their own pictures. A wide range of activities including art, craft, music, movement and imaginative play are well planned by the teachers and support staff. Children produce

colourful, explorative paintings; enjoy singing nursery rhymes and songs, and using simple instruments. An example of this was when the nursery children went to the music room to sing songs and learn about simple rhythms. The teacher showed the children a simple clapping rhythm and then asked the children to pat, then tap, the rhythm. Most children managed to do this. They enjoyed performing action songs and listening to music from the CD player. In the reception classes, the children explore the use of colour and pattern in their free paintings and collages. Good provision is made for creative development. As a result, children make good progress and are likely to achieve the early learning goals in this area by the time they are ready to leave the reception classes.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

77 Children make good progress in this area of their development, and many of them will achieve this early learning goal by the end of the Foundation stage. The good teaching enables children to make good progress, often building upon limited knowledge and experience of the world when they first join the nursery. The very good planning incorporates a wide range of exploration and investigative activities. Good use is made of the Foundation Stage outdoor areas, and of the locality. The weather is discussed each day in all classes. The nursery children select appropriate clothes for the 'child' on their weather chart, whilst children in the reception classes record each day's weather on their weather chart, which also helps to reinforce their understanding of the passage of time. All children are developing their knowledge and understanding of the world. They engage in a range of activities and particularly enjoy experimental play in sand and water. They experience changes by filling and emptying containers and noticing when things are wet or dry. Children in the reception classes made biscuits, discussing the ingredients with the nursery nurse, and following the instructions on the recipe. Their understanding was extended as the nursery nurse talked about the changes that happen when something is baked in the hot oven. Most children knew that the biscuits would go 'hard and crunchy'. Another group of children enjoyed working with the teacher to identify suitable things that would be needed for a new baby. They took turns to come out and choose the correct clothes, feeding utensils, and a book for the baby. However, some children found it difficult to explain their choices due to their limited language skills. The children's skills in ICT are developing and they have access to computers and appropriate software. In all classes the children enjoy using a variety of programs to support their learning, and most are very able at using the mouse to 'click and drag' their selection. In the nursery and the reception classes the children use the tape recorder independently to listen to stories and music tapes. A wide range of resources is available so that children can experiment in cutting, sticking and joining.

Physical development

78 Many opportunities are provided for children to develop their fine motor skills using scissors, pencils, crayons and paintbrushes. Most children in the reception classes use scissors, brushes and writing tools effectively. Although attainment remains below expected levels for some children, progress is good because of the good teaching. Children in the Foundation Stage classes assemble construction toys and complete simple jigsaws. Water play and sand play provide further opportunities to develop their physical skills.

79 The nursery has very good outdoor facilities which includes a soft tarmac area, as well as grassed and planted areas. There is a good range of outdoor equipment such as bicycles, scooters, trolleys, large balls and bats. Daily access to this outdoor provision enables children to use skills such as running, pushing, pulling, and catching as well as developing balance. They develop their skills of physical control, mobility, co-ordination, and awareness of space and most children's attainment meets expectations for children of this age. Children in the reception classes also have their own outdoor play area, which includes tarmac, grassed and seating areas. In addition to their daily outdoor play, the

reception children are timetabled to use the hall for more formal physical development lessons. In these lessons they confidently travel around the space and show control as they stop and balance, or show parts of their body in a high or low position. The teachers and support staff are good examples as they join in or demonstrate movements. They use children effectively to demonstrate good practice, and their use of praise successfully builds on the children's self-confidence.

80 An issue from the last inspection was that the accommodation for the Foundation Stage was cramped. The school has extended and re-organised the accommodation to address this. Foundation Stage classes are well resourced. The curriculum is broad, balanced, and very well planned and delivered. The six areas of learning are appropriately covered and effectively linked to the infants' curriculum. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator manages this key stage very well, demonstrating good leadership and management skills, which are effective in ensuring very good learning opportunities for all pupils.

ENGLISH

81 Standards in English, at the age of seven and 11, are in line with expectations for reading, writing and speaking. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Listening skills are better than would be expected for their age by 11. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils enter Year 1 with skills that are below what would be expected in language, literacy and communication and they make good progress.

82 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The school's policy of organising the junior pupils into sets according to ability for literacy teaching has a positive effect on the progress of pupils with special educational needs. These pupils are well supported in English lessons, both by teachers and classroom assistants.

83 Standards in speaking have improved since the last inspection. This is because teachers now use the first part of literacy, and other lessons, to provide pupils with numerous opportunities to answer questions and express their opinions and ideas. This builds their confidence and supports the development of speaking and social skills. Pupils' listening skills are very good, and in almost every lesson seen, they listen with intense concentration and sustained interest. This is reflected in the quality of their oral responses, which are frequently mature and reasoned.

84 Most pupils are very enthusiastic about reading, and use phonics effectively to develop their reading skills. Teachers use literacy lessons effectively and a range of stories, including traditional tales, are explored carefully, with emphasis on expressive reading, understanding and punctuation. In these lessons, teachers provide good examples when reading to pupils. The quality of books in classrooms is good, and these are attractively arranged to encourage interest in reading. Most seven-year-old pupils understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction, and they are familiar with how books are organised with contents, chapters and indexes. Older pupils develop their reading skills well as teachers ensure that pupils meet a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts through their effective organization of the literacy hour. Higher attaining pupils read with expression and fluency, and many are familiar with terms such as glossary and index. Pupils in Year 6 have good Internet research skills; they confidently locate information on the web, and print off appropriate sections. The school has a well-established, home reading scheme, although the associated reading logs are not always consistently completed or monitored by teachers.

85 Pupils make good progress in writing and, by the age of seven, achieve well compared to the below average skills they begin with in Year 1. Since the last inspection, the school has made great efforts to improve standards in writing. Teachers consistently provide good writing examples for pupils, and this has positive results for pupils' progress. Pupils are encouraged to think about using a

range of vocabulary, punctuation, and how to begin sentences with interesting words. In Year 2, most pupils understand the basic structure of stories, and know about beginnings, content and endings. Since the last inspection, in the juniors, the school has expanded the range of writing tasks, and provided more opportunities for pupils to improve their extended writing skills. All pupils plan their work well, and teachers provide good writing examples, particularly when writing mystery and science fiction stories. Most 11-year-old pupils can use a good range of punctuation, including direct speech. Their spelling is generally accurate. They are aware of expressive language, and know how to write in particular styles such as report writing. The attitudes of pupils in English are a strength. In writing they work co-operatively, concentrate for lengthy periods, and display an active interest in the work of their fellow class members. Writing is given a high profile, with many examples of pupils' work displayed around the school. These include detailed weather reports by Year 3 pupils, and atmospheric, winter 'personification' poems written by Year 6 pupils. Handwriting is not so well developed throughout the school, and the lack of a consistent approach means that not enough pupils develop a confident, cursive style by the age of 11.

86 The school has recently introduced a standard marking scheme for English, which identifies both strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work. However, this is inconsistently used by teachers, and is not yet having a significant impact on raising standards.

87 Pupils apply their English skills soundly in other subjects. They listen carefully in lessons such as geography, and speak with confidence when answering questions. They are familiar with non-fiction texts, and competently make notes when researching topics such as Britain since the 1930's.

88 The leadership and management of English are good. Planning is a strength, and the school makes effective use of national schemes and strategies. A formal system of monitoring is in place, and has clear aims such as improving the quality of guided reading in literacy. Detailed analysis of national tests and other assessment data takes place, and this is used to track pupils' progress and identify areas of weakness.

89 Resources are generally good, and well used in literacy lessons. There is a shortfall in dictionaries and thesauri, and this has a negative impact in some writing lessons. Since the last inspection, the library has been re-organised, but the lack of a recognised system of classification inhibits the development of pupils' research skills.

MATHEMATICS

90 When pupils start in Year 1 their attainment in mathematics is below what would be expected for their age. Most pupils make good and sometimes very good progress so that by the time they reach Year 6 the majority of them attain standards in line with national expectations. Standards have steadily improved since the last inspection.

91 By the end of Year 2 pupils know that subtraction requires smaller numbers to be taken from larger, and pupils with special educational needs apply the same concept but with smaller numbers. Pupils with higher attainment in Year 2 count accurately to 20, lower attaining pupils to 10 and all add single to double digits accurately. Pupils supported by classroom assistants make good progress and by the end of the first term in Year 2 most pupils measure to the nearest centimetre, recognise and understand the properties of a cone, pyramid and cylinder and work successfully on common fractions $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$.

92 Progress is maintained into Year 3 with the majority of pupils counting confidently to 100 in fives. They are familiar with coin values and count in 2's, 10's and 20's making good use of

estimation. By the time pupils are in Year 4 most are able to justify different mental methods in calculating such operations as $80+30-20$ and they have a good awareness of place value and mathematics related vocabulary. Their progress is based on a good recall of previous learning and the acquisition of new concepts, for example, using partitioning or methods such as grid multiplication. As a result, higher attaining pupils use grid multiplication of two-digit numbers by one-digit and calculate three-digit additions with considerable success. Many have acquired a good understanding of common fractions and the inverse operation of numbers, for example, $12+16=28$, $28-12=16$ and understand simple coordinates with higher attaining pupils working effectively on $\frac{1}{3}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$ fractions. By the end of the first term in Year 5, pupils make effective use of factors in calculating two-digit multiplications. For example, 35×18 is $7 \times 5 \times 6 \times 3$, $(42 \times 5 \times 3)$, $210 \times 3 = 630$, with the Year 5 mid set having a good understanding of partitioning and factors such as $15 = 5 \times 3$. Most pupils show that they can create their own problems involving number operations and are able to explain their reasoning when using calculations. Higher attaining pupils have confidently used time and speed graphs. Many have developed a good understanding of the properties of polygons and an understanding of decimal notation linked to a sound knowledge of percentages. In Year 6 continued progress is made with many pupils in mid and upper sets able to make use of brackets to carry out specific operations in a defined order and explain various methods of calculating mentally.

93 Such progress and standards are achieved through very effective teaching, which in almost all cases is at least good in all parts of the school. The best practice in the infants challenges pupils to think quickly and accurately, using carefully structured activities, and there is good deployment of support staff. Teachers intervene with clearly targeted comments and support, and set tasks which challenge their pupils, but which are within the pupils' ability. Similarly in the juniors, teachers make very effective use of correctly matched vocabulary to the pupils. They ensure that referral is made to previous learning and use carefully paced oral and mental strategies and the involvement of pupils in creating their own problems. Pupils are challenged to explain their reasoning and focussed, clear questioning encourages them to respond. All of which is supported by judicious use of praise, recognition of achievement and teachers prompting pupils to produce more.

94 Good class management techniques are employed so that classes are 'split' for additional teaching and independent work, allowing learning at a pace to match the pupils' needs. In a Year 6 class there is a very good technique of using partner discussion and many teachers enable pupils to self-correct previous mistakes, all of which are significant factors in their progress.

95 Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour are a significant factor in their learning with some lessons by the end of the juniors having exemplary behaviour throughout with well-focused pupils who show interest and enthusiasm for mathematics. In the juniors, pupils follow instructions and maintain concentration. They make helpful suggestions and respond with enthusiasm and interest. There is an industrious approach to work, such that in one lesson in a Year 4 set mature attitudes were more like those expected of a Year 6 group. Pupils show sustained concentration and work well with partners; in most classrooms there is a very positive atmosphere, which enhances learning. Throughout the school, presentation in books is very good. Towards the end of the juniors presentation of work is of a high standard with care taken with layout and labelling.

96 Partnering activities in lessons provide good opportunities for pupils' social development and an awareness of the patterns and orderliness of number in mathematics contributes to their spiritual development. Overall the subject makes a sound contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and they respond to these opportunities well.

97 The curriculum for mathematics is planned using the National Numeracy Strategy. The subject leader is an experienced teacher and, with the senior management team, has a well developed

analysis of previous national test results to check for areas needing additional work. The subject is led and managed very well. There are good monitoring processes in place, with time available for the subject leader to check planning, observe lessons and examine pupils' work. The school shows a considerable knowledge of its pupils and has established good systems including the development of yearly assessments in mathematics. However, marking does not sufficiently match this assessment. Pupils are not clearly told what they have done well and what they need to do to improve.

98 Raising standards in mathematics is a clear priority and a detailed plan has been drawn up showing how the school will improve standards in this subject and seek to improve its standards for higher attaining pupils. As a result, standards in mathematics are improving.

SCIENCE

99 Standards in science by ages seven and 11 are as expected for these age groups. Standards have steadily improved since the last inspection. The school follows the nationally recommended scheme of work and also a commercially produced scheme of work from which teachers base their lessons. As a result, pupils make steady progress in developing their scientific knowledge, vocabulary and understanding. For example, pupils in Year 4 develop a good understanding about how electricity works, and describe the effects different forces have on objects. On balance, the teaching of science is satisfactory. Teachers are confident in their knowledge and understanding of science but not all are as confident in developing pupils' practical skills to enable them to carry out experiments independently. This has resulted in some teachers being overly reliant on demonstrating experiments themselves and carefully guiding pupils in the writing up of experiments. This develops their scientific knowledge and vocabulary but there are insufficient opportunities for them find out about scientific principles through independent investigations and experiments.

100 Where teachers are confident, science lessons are interesting and stimulating and pupils experience a range of experiences. For example, in a Year 2 class pupils worked with a wide range of materials but were required to only use either natural or man-made fabrics to complete their collage. Pupils worked collaboratively to decide which materials fitted the correct category and carefully set about completing the task. Often pupils record the results of investigations and experiments on a worksheet. As a result, pupils' ability to independently record their results is not well developed. Pupils are not taught a sufficient range of recording skills. Consequently, the results of experiments tend to be copied from the teacher or exercises in supplying the correct scientific word. There are insufficient opportunities for higher attaining pupils to devise their own experiments or to choose how to record their findings. This has been identified by the co-ordinator and the current science curriculum is under review to see how it can be altered to provide more challenging activities

101 Pupils in Year 6 are well prepared for the national tests in science. They are given a programmed system of preparation that gives them practice in how to answer test questions in the correct style. They also revise the scientific knowledge and vocabulary around which the tests are based. However, when given the opportunity they carry out investigations sensibly, for example, when investigating parallel and series circuits, pupils worked co-operatively sharing equipment but they had to be carefully guided by the teacher in order to carry out the investigation successfully. This was because their skills at independently carrying out experiments and investigations are not well developed.

102 The subject is well managed by the subject leader who has a good understanding of the needs of the subject. The quality of teaching has not yet been monitored and planning does not clearly enough identify how experiments and investigation will be carried out for the subject leader to identify

or comment on method. The subject leader has clearly identified in plans how the subject can be improved.

ART AND DESIGN

103 Good teaching ensures that pupils reach higher standards than would be expected by seven and 11 years of age, which is better than at the time of the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs achieve well. The nationally recommended scheme of work is used across the school and provides a clear teaching focus.

104 Pupils in the infants show a good understanding of dimension and shading when working on observational drawings. Very good teaching in a Year 2 class, successfully promoted the pupils' evaluative skills. The teacher encouraged the children to observe closely and carefully, taking their time to examine colour, pattern and tone, and then reflect upon what they saw. She guided them as they considered the effect of light upon the natural object they were studying, and discussed the appropriate techniques that could be used to represent light and shade. The promotion of literacy skills in this lesson was good. The pupils listened well and gave sensible suggestions and responses to questions. The work produced demonstrated a sound knowledge and understanding of the techniques being taught. Pupils in the juniors build upon their previous skills and work hard to apply them to their work. They study the work of famous artists such as, Monet, Van Gogh, and Picasso and produce their own interpretations, experimenting with techniques the artist may have used. Work is displayed well throughout the school; this work shows a varied range of paintings, drawings, prints and clay work from all age groups. The quality of this work is good and some pupils show particular talent.

105 Teaching is good and includes comprehensive planning. Teachers draw on a range of resources to motivate and interest pupils. The excellent relationships that exist between adults and pupils in the school help to promote sensitive evaluation of pupils' work.

106 The subject leader manages the subject well, and supports colleagues if required. There is a clear action plan in place for this subject, which details areas for development such as involvement with the local community, creating art partnerships, teaching of skills and improved monitoring and assessment systems.

107 Resources for art and design are good and the school benefits from a room designated for these activities. ICT skills are being developed through art and design, for example pupils use a number of programs to support their work in this subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

108 Although only two lessons of design and technology were seen during the inspection, sufficient evidence was available for judgements to be made.

109 Standards of attainment are in line with those expected by the ages of seven and 11. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make steady progress. These standards are similar to those seen in the last inspection.

110 By the age of seven, pupils study an appropriate range of work, sometimes linked to other topics or subjects. They produce useful sketches of their designs, often with lists of materials, and ideas for fixing or joining. For example, pupils in Year 2 designed and effectively made a vehicle combining wooden components and re-used cardboard boxes. They learned about food technology when devising step-by-step recipes for "crispy cakes". Year 1 pupils designed and constructed different types of homes using junk materials.

111 By the age of 11, pupils gain further skills in designing, making and assembling. Although no lessons were seen in Year 6, photographic evidence indicates that they work carefully, paying attention to the quality of finish when manufacturing slippers, for instance. Year 4 pupils work co-operatively together, and follow diagrams accurately. They are aware of the need for a structured approach and soundly apply their measuring and cutting skills when learning how to make 'pop up' books. Pupils' evaluating skills are less secure, and this aspect is inconsistently developed through both key stages. Some tasks are over prescriptive, and this restricts the creativity and imagination of higher attaining pupils.

112 Pupils respond well in design and technology lessons. They listen carefully, and follow instructions well. They discuss, their work in a mature, sensible way, and respect the efforts of each other. This is a strength of the school.

113 Teaching in design and technology is sound. In one of the lessons observed, the teacher's use of ICT and correct use of technical vocabulary resulted in high levels of interest and concentration amongst the pupils. A scheme of work produced by the local education authority is used to teach design and technology, and this helps to support teachers' confidence.

114 The subject leader soundly manages and leads this subject. However, the school has not yet devised a scheme of assessment to identify the levels pupils have achieved. This is a similar picture to that seen in the last inspection. There are satisfactory resources for teaching design and technology, and these are used well. Accommodation for teaching the subject is good, and has been further enhanced by the recent construction of an art and technology room.

GEOGRAPHY

115 Few geography lessons were seen but sufficient evidence was available to allow judgements to be made. Standards in geography are in line with expectations for pupils aged seven and 11. The school has maintained standards since the last inspection.

116 Younger pupils make steady progress. By the end of Year 2 they are able to express views on issues such as recycling and litter. Pupils are beginning to use geographical vocabulary and to use maps. They have studied "islands" and have developed some understanding of the features of an island. A sound knowledge of the location of places in their immediate environment and further afield is being developed and they are able to write about their locality and comment on its main features. They are able to express their likes and dislikes of their environment and how they would like it to be improved. By the age of 11 pupils have built on their previous learning but some still require further development of knowledge of places. Many are able to quickly and accurately find their town on a map of the British Isles and find England on a map of the world. Others, however, have great difficulty in doing so. They study contrasting areas of the world through "What's in the News?" This topic has added value in teaching pupils about current affairs and citizenship issues. Throughout the juniors, pupils are offered the breadth of study required, however, planning requires improvement to further develop pupils' fieldwork skills. Issues regarding National Curriculum coverage and progress of pupils in the juniors noted in the last inspection have not been sufficiently addressed by the school.

117 Teaching and learning are satisfactory. However, in the better lessons teachers have good subject knowledge and planning is a good match to the needs of all pupils. Teaching assistants are deployed well and are aware of the teachers' aims for what will be taught for all groups of pupils. In other lessons time is not well used and teachers attempt to cover too much in a single lesson. This is a direct result of insufficient time being allocated on the timetable to cover all the National Curriculum

requirements. Work in pupils' books is marked inconsistently. There are few encouraging comments or indicators to the pupil as to how work can be improved.

118 Subject leadership is satisfactory and has correctly identified that, throughout the school, there is insufficient focus on geographical enquiry and skills and understanding places. There is insufficient opportunity for the subject leader to sufficiently monitor the quality of teaching in geography, and to help improve teachers' subject knowledge. This results in some teachers not being as confident about the teaching of geography as they should be. Resources are adequate and pupils have access to a range of source material, artefacts and atlases.

HISTORY

119 Standards in history are in line with those expected nationally by the ages of seven and 11. The school has maintained the standards of the last inspection.

120 By the end of Year 2 pupils have made satisfactory progress in history. They have learnt about the lives of famous people from the past such as Florence Nightingale. They are beginning to develop a sense of chronology by comparing household items used "then" and "now. In a Year 1 lesson pupils offered ideas such as "there was no electricity" as a reason for the differences between past and present-day artefacts. In a Year 2 lesson most pupils offered accurate information as to why the Fire of London spread so quickly and how, and when, it started. Steady progress continues through the juniors. The progress of all pupils is limited however by the insufficient time allocated to teach history. As a result lessons are "crowded" with information given by the teacher with little or no opportunity for pupils to consolidate their learning or learn for themselves under the guidance of the teacher. The higher attaining pupils learn facts but have little time to learn historical interpretation or develop skills of historical enquiry. Pupils generally have an understanding of changes in life styles over the last 50 years but have little knowledge of significant events and dates and the effect these have had on our present-day lives. Most pupils, however, develop a sound sense of chronology, appropriate factual knowledge and an understanding of some aspects of the past and their effect on the present.

121 Teaching is satisfactory. In the better lessons teachers plan in a way that enables pupils to have time to consolidate their learning and to learn at their own pace. In one such lesson pupils worked in mixed ability groups making items associated with life on a Tudor sailing ship. Good classroom management enabled pupils to learn from each other and to work at a pace appropriate to their ability. In other lessons however, teachers plan too much content for the time available and there is little recognition in planning of the different needs and abilities of pupils. All do the same work at the same pace and, as a result, the higher attaining pupils make less progress than they were capable of and lower attaining pupils found the work too challenging. Pupils made most progress in those lessons where there is some opportunity for them to explore information sources themselves. The curriculum is enriched by visits to places of historical significance, such as Fountains Abbey, Beamish Museum and a Roman fort. Pupils were able to recall the visit to Fountains Abbey in particular, as they had to dress up, take part in role-play and meet characters from the past. Pupils are reminded of such visits by good displays around the school. However, the work in pupils' books relies too heavily on copying and worksheets. Work is sometimes not well marked and there is an absence of encouraging comments or indicators for improvement in some classes

122 Subject leadership and management in history is good. The subject leader is enthusiastic and knowledgeable but has little opportunity to monitor teaching and learning across the school. Resources are satisfactory and well organised.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

123 Standards are at the expected levels by the time pupils are seven and 11 years of age, with a significant number of pupils who attain above average standards. This shows an improvement on standards reported in the last inspection. Since then the school has improved provision by establishing two well-resourced computer suites and equipping all classes with computers and obtaining a wide range of software. This, together with well-planned training has ensured that teachers are more confident and teaching is mainly good and sometimes very good. These factors have enabled the school to raise standards and to ensure that all strands of the ICT curriculum such as controlling devices and modelling are now taught. The school now uses sensing equipment to monitor experiments in science since there is up-to-date equipment. However, there is limited independent use of the equipment by pupils as experiments in science are, predominantly, teacher led.

124 The school uses the two computer suites very effectively. One suite is used for the development of ICT-specific skills and the other is used for opportunities for ICT to be used in other subjects. Pupils in Year 1 show standards above expectations for their age. They are confident in their use of the mouse and effectively use the keyboard to write simple sentences. They are familiar with other functions of the computer and confidently access a program that allows them to listen to the words they have written. By the end of Year 2, pupils confidently 'log on and off' and independently retrieve information stored from a previous lesson. They maximise the screen and use the backspace or delete keys to edit their work. They then confidently use the computer to print their completed tasks.

125 Pupils of all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning of basic skills and develop confidence particularly in using a computer for word-processing when they use different fonts and colours to enhance their work. As pupils move through the school they become even more confident in their use of computers. Year 3 pupils import pictures from a Clip Art program adding text, and they use these skills to make Christmas cards linked to their studies about Egypt. By the end of Year 6, pupils have good keyboard skills. They know how to enter, save and edit text effectively. They combine text and graphics with images from the Internet or Clip Art to produce, for example, attractive and interesting brochures.

126 Pupils' attitudes towards the subject are very good. The youngest pupils are confident when using computers and other technology such as listening centres. Pupils of all ages collaborate well and are helpful to each other. Whilst working in pairs and small groups, they share ideas and show confidence and independence. They take good care of software and hardware and can be trusted to work independently and in pairs. Behaviour in the computer suites is very good. There, pupils listen carefully and watch while teachers demonstrate on the interactive whiteboard the skills they are to learn. The subject leader holds a weekly computer club. Here pupils develop their skills to high levels.

127 The effective training undertaken means that teachers and support staff now have greater confidence in promoting a wider range of learning opportunities. They are beginning to actively plan opportunities for using ICT across the curriculum and to identify a range of opportunities for all abilities. Programs that enable pupils to gain skills in literacy and numeracy are often used to support those pupils with special educational needs. Teachers regularly plan for ICT to be a regular feature in English and mathematics lessons.

128 The leadership and management of the subject are very good. Under the direction of the knowledgeable and enthusiastic subject leader, the whole staff is working hard and their commitment to high achievement is beginning to improve standards. Resources and facilities have improved significantly since the last inspection and there are plans to enhance them further. Portfolios of pupils'

work are collected, but although there is a system of recording what pupils do, the subject leader is aware of the need to improve it further to give clearer information about pupils can do and understand related to national curriculum expectations to help teachers improve standards further.

MUSIC

129 Since the last inspection standards have been maintained and pupils reach the standards expected by seven and 11 years of age. Pupils make good progress in their learning in response to the good teaching in this subject. They receive a broad and balanced musical education and are very enthusiastic about the subject. Music has a prominent place in this school and is highly valued.

130 The use of a published scheme of work is very effective in supporting teachers in their teaching of the music curriculum. The quality of teaching and learning is good and effective planning ensures that the work is interesting and challenging. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into lessons and achieve as well as their classmates.

131 Pupils in the infants learn about the dynamics of a piece of music. They learn the symbol to indicate dynamics and discuss the meaning of 'p' (piano) and 'f' (forte) when seen written on a piece of music. In the juniors children build effectively on what they have already learned. They listen for 'texture' in a piece of music, identify mood and discuss 'timbre'. There are good cross-curricular links. An example of this was when children in a Year 3 class participated enthusiastically as they listened to two pieces of music and compared them, trying to identify the type of environment they may represent. They then used the untuned percussion instruments they had made from 'junk' during a design and technology lesson, to compose a piece of music, record it, and then play it from their score. In whole school assemblies and key stage singing practices, the children are constantly taught the correct musical vocabulary, and no learning opportunities are missed. The quality of singing is very good throughout the school and children demonstrate good understanding of pitch, tone and melody. They sing rounds confidently and enthusiastically, and many children are given the opportunity to sing solo. The music curriculum is enhanced by extra-curricular activities such as the choir, school productions, keyboard, recorder and guitar clubs. Music makes a positive contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. The published scheme that is followed incorporates a variety of cultural activities in the suggestions for lesson plans, and these are used effectively.

132 The subject leader provides very good leadership and management; supports staff effectively and monitors the subject well. A satisfactory system of assessment, which is part of the published scheme, is in place, and there are plans to improve the monitoring of pupils' progress and attainment further. Resources for music are very good and the school benefits from a room designated for music activities. ICT skills are being developed through music; for example, pupils use a program to support the learning of composing skills.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

133 Pupils make steady progress and by the ages of seven and 11 standards are in line with expectations, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Pupils in the infants are able to work in small groups travelling on different body parts, large and small, using apparatus as well as floor work.

134 Progress is maintained into the juniors so that by the time pupils are in Year 4, movements in dance show precision and control, fluency and sensitivity to the pace and style of accompanying music. Pupils develop a sequence of movements and work well with a partner in these activities. As expected within the National Curriculum pupils have gained an understanding of the importance of exercise and what physical activity does to the body and by Year 6, they recognise the need for cooling down activities, which they carry out in an effective way. They display good co-ordination in

activities in Year 6 with a good range of stamina building activities and exercise vigorously. By the end of the juniors, pupils work out sequences of movements with good fluency. In the lower juniors, pupils regularly attend swimming lessons. Lessons are supplemented by some additional time for Year 6 pupils in the final summer term so that by the end of Year 6, most pupils swim the recommended 25 metres.

135 The teaching of physical education is never less than good and is marked by effective demonstrations by both pupils and teachers as needed, with good levels of support and encouragement. Unlike the previous inspection, no unsatisfactory teaching was observed in physical education. Pupils are managed well and teachers make useful interventions to show how techniques can be improved and use praise appropriately to challenge pupils and help them improve. In a lesson in Year 4 using the theme of the Iron Man coming to life, the pupils' learning was supported by careful use of language, for example, 'jerky', 'stiff', and 'mechanical' and by effective use of recorded music and sound effects. Effective teachers also reminded pupils of what is required in the expenditure of energy.

136 The impact of good teaching is seen in the positive attitudes of pupils who are keen and involved, attributes which become stronger as they mature so that although a small number of younger pupils find it difficult to listen or follow instructions, good progress is made in the infants where pupils are well behaved throughout lessons and co-operate well together. Older pupils in the juniors are very positive in their attitudes to learning and apply creative as well as intellectual effort to their work. They are very focussed responsive pupils who co-operate well and show consideration for each other.

137 Since the last inspection the scheme of work has been revised to ensure a proper balance of time for all aspects of the physical education curriculum. The shortfall of time identified in the last inspection has been dealt with in that the physical education timetable now has two periods per week to tackle this matter. The provision is well supplemented for those pupils who are interested by a good range of extra curricular activities such as an athletics club, infant 'Funfit' club, netball club, Year 5 and Year 6 football practices, and a gymnastics club. There are good facilities and resources available and the outdoor, all weather pitch is used regularly by pupils, and is supported at lunchtimes by a coach. The school enters competitions and matches and is successful in these. Older pupils get the opportunity to experience a wide range of outdoor adventurous activities at a residential centre in the Lake District. This greatly enriches the physical education programme and develops well pupils' social skills.

138 Pupils respond well to the stimulus of music and recognise the importance of following rules in games and activities as part of their moral development. Socially they respond very well and carry out varying types of paired activities in lessons as well as team work in games. The subject leader has worked through a comprehensive range of monitoring and evaluation processes and this is well documented. The subject is well led and managed. Issues are shared carefully but effectively so that the subject is now an effective contribution to the pupils' experiences and learning. She has put in place a strong basis for ensuring that standards are raised and that the curriculum is covered.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

139 By the time pupils are seven and 11 years old, they attain standards that are in line with the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Pupils in the infants are acquiring knowledge about customs and practices of rites of passage such as baptism. As they move into Year 4 progress is maintained so that they gain knowledge about the practice of marriage within this country in the Christian tradition as well as background to the practice of Islam, Jewish and Sikh faiths. As pupils reach Year 5 they gain knowledge about pilgrimages as practised by Moslems to Mecca. At the end of the juniors pupils understand the values of others and confidently express opinions. They have

examined different types of places of worship and forms of prayers for help, worship, forgiveness, praise and thanksgiving. Such prayers include such phrases, as 'God is special to me because he looked after me.' 'Help my little sister who is diabetic and has needles every day' 'We worship you and believe in you.' Collective worship contributes to gains in understanding about other faiths and beliefs and this is supported in several classes by end of session class prayers.

140 Teaching is good; it is generally satisfactory in the infants and there is some good teaching in the juniors. Teachers make good use of relevant artefacts, as happened in a Year 2 lesson on baptism practices. They employ effective questioning techniques and use an excellent manner, very good strategies and pace in lessons, such as in Year 1 where the story of Noah was built around the concept of trust and faith and pupils were encouraged to listen well and stay on task. An exemplary lesson in Year 6 used debate to encourage valuing others' opinions and beliefs and to reinforce the concept of belief and understanding of moral values. In other lessons in Year 4 and Year 5 effective use was made of external 'experts' to explain the values of other faiths, particularly of Islam, and to support the mock ceremony of marriage conducted by a Christian minister. As a result, pupils give sensible responses in lessons in the infants, and behaved with enthusiasm and interest. In the juniors there is a very positive atmosphere in classrooms, which enhances learning with very focussed responsive pupils who co-operate well and show consideration for each other. In a lesson in Year 5, presented by an external speaker of the Muslim faith, pupils asked relevant and pertinent questions. By the time pupils are in Year 6 they apply creative as well as intellectual effort to their work and show a maturing attitude to debating serious issues with good respect for other's differences, values and beliefs.

141 The scheme of work to support teaching and learning has been developed to meet the needs of the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection, where the scheme of work did not provide sufficient detail for the systematic development of pupils' skills. Religious education is now a well-resourced subject including the development of resources to enable pupils to use independent research skills. This is also an improvement since the last inspection.

142 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills are developed well in religious education. Spiritual development is secured through opportunities for reflection, expressing views and opinions and opportunities to reflect on the use of prayer and stillness and through participation of pupils in collective worship. Moral development is enhanced through an awareness of the rules used by people to order their lives such as the Qu'ran and the holy books of the Sikhs as well as the Jewish and Christian faiths. Socially pupils develop well through sharing activities in assemblies and in lessons. The sharing of the practices and beliefs of Islam and Judaism and participating in the mock Christian wedding ceremony enhance their cultural development. Good use is made of educational visits to Durham Cathedral and local places of worship to add to the learning opportunities of pupils.

143 The subject is well led and managed. The subject leader has had time to develop good monitoring processes. Consequently, there is a clear view of the strengths and the areas for development in this subject. Planning and standards of work are regularly reviewed and findings used to develop action plans. Throughout the school literacy is used well in this subject with teachers expecting pupils to use opportunities for speaking and listening and for older pupils in particular to record their learning in writing.