

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST PAUL'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Ryhope

LEA area: Sunderland

Unique reference number: 108836

Head teacher: Mrs Y Gray

Reporting inspector: Mr C Smith
25211

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 5th March 2003

Inspection number: 246830

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Waterworks Road Ryhope Sunderland
Postcode:	SR2 0LW
Telephone number:	0191 553 6281
Fax number:	0191 553 6284
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	The Reverend D Meakin
Date of previous inspection:	February 1998

© Crown copyright 2003

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
25211	Colin Smith	Registered inspector	Mathematics Geography Design and technology Educational inclusion	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school results and pupils' achievements. Teaching and learning Key issues for action
9952	Lillian Brock	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
23887	Peter Nettleship	Team inspector	English Religious education Music	Quality and range of opportunities for learning
17685	Linda Spooner	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Information and communication technology Art and design	Leadership and management
32567	Steve Isherwood	Team inspector	Science History Physical education Special educational needs	

The inspection contractor was:

Primary Associates Limited
Suite 13
West Lancashire Technology Management Centre
Moss Lane View
Skelmersdale
WN8 9TN

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	1
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	5
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	8
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	9
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	12
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	14
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	14
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	16
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	18
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	23

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Paul's is a newly built Church of England primary school in the village of Ryhope, near Sunderland. The area served by the school is within the lowest 15 per cent of national measures of deprivation. There are 180 pupils on roll, 82 boys and 98 girls. All but a very small number of children from refugee families, who speak Portuguese and French, are white and English speaking. Pupil numbers are stable, although there is much current development in the area. The school has 40 pupils who are eligible for free school meals (22 per cent), which is slightly above average. Forty-one pupils (23 per cent) have special educational needs, which is broadly average. Most of these pupils need help with learning but a few have behaviour or physical difficulties. Four pupils have statements of specific need, which is slightly higher than the national average. There have been no staff changes over the last four years. When children enter the reception class, their attainment is below that expected for their age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a sound education for its pupils. By the age of 11 years, standards are average in mathematics and science but are below average in English. Pupils achieve steadily overall, and well in most junior classes to reach standards that are higher than in similar schools. Standards are at the levels expected in all other subjects and higher in music. Teaching is satisfactory overall, and good in Years 5 and 6. The school's very caring approach benefits all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave very well. The headteacher and governors lead and manage the school well and provide many additional activities that have a positive influence on pupils' development. A programme of monitoring and evaluating the work of the school has been established, but not all of the weaknesses have yet been remedied. The school gives sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve well in reading, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and music, particularly in junior classes;
- Pupils respond well to the school's caring ethos by showing enthusiasm for learning and behaving very well;
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well catered for and they make good progress;
- Good provision is made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- Strong links between home and school, through activities such as homework, significantly add to pupils' learning;
- The headteacher and governors provide good leadership and management for the school.

What could be improved

- More could be done to enable the more able pupils to fulfil their potential;
- There is scope to improve pupils' writing to match their progress in reading;
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to find out for themselves to enable them to develop the full range of enquiry skills in subjects such as science, history and geography.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory improvements since it was last inspected in February 1998. Standards initially slipped. The headteacher, staff and governors looked closely at teaching and pupils' results and identified areas requiring improvement. As a result, standards rose in 2002 and are continuing to rise, particularly in the upper junior classes. Teaching continues to be satisfactory but now more of the teaching is good and very little is unsatisfactory. The teaching of ICT has improved considerably and standards are now at the levels expected. Pupils with special educational needs now make good progress because the provision has improved. There are better procedures for assessing

pupils' learning but still more needs to be done to use the information gathered to provide challenging work for all pupils, particularly the more able ones. The work of the school is more rigorously examined than it was, although subject leaders could learn more about standards by checking pupils' written work regularly. There is a strong drive to raise standards on the part of the headteacher and governors and this is helping the school to move forward.

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				Key
	all schools			Similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	E	E	D	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	D	E	D	C	
science	D	E	C	B	

After two years of downward trends, the school's national test results improved significantly in 2002. More challenging targets were set and reached and, although standards settled at below average levels in English and mathematics, they were average in science and, on balance, better than those of similar schools. The 2002 results suggest that standards in mathematics are not as high as in the other subjects. However, junior pupils are now receiving much more demanding work and are achieving well. Mathematics is the most improved subject and standards are rising quickly. This is evident in Year 6 where pupils are working comfortably at average levels. Pupils achieve well in reading and in speaking and listening throughout the school but standards in writing are still below average, largely because very few pupils reach the higher levels.

When children enter school, their attainment is lower than expected for their age. They achieve steadily in the reception class to reach the levels expected in their creative, physical and personal development. Despite the good progress they make in acquiring language and mathematical skills, by the end of the reception year their attainment remains below average and they still have limited knowledge and understanding of the world. Pupils make satisfactory progress in the infant classes. This year, standards by the age of 7 are average in reading but below average in writing and mathematics. Standards are not as high as in 2002, mainly because last year's Year 2 pupils were a higher achieving group.

Standards in ICT have improved significantly since the last inspection. Pupils are now achieving well and reaching the standards expected, although greater use could be made of classroom computers. Pupils achieve steadily in almost all other subjects to reach the standards expected at the age of 7 and 11 years and they achieve well in music to reach good standards. Standards in religious education are also where they should be, but pupils' knowledge of different religions is stronger than their understanding of how religions affect people's lives and values. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The very few none English speaking pupils, recently welcomed into the school, have settled well and are making sound progress. However, more able pupils are still not making the progress of which they are capable. Boys have outperformed girls over recent years but the gap is closing.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school and give of their best.
Behaviour, in and out of	Very good. Pupils are courteous and helpful. They act responsibly

classrooms	towards others and sensibly in lessons and around school.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory, relationships are very good. In many respects pupils' personal development is strong but in lessons there are not enough opportunities for them to acquire the skills to find out for themselves.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance has improved this year and pupils are punctual.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is satisfactory overall, and there is some good teaching in every class, particularly in Years 5 and 6, where most of the teaching is good and some is very good. The reception teacher has made a positive start in her first year of teaching young children. A good range of interesting activities is provided which stimulates children's curiosity and their desire to learn. The important literacy and numeracy skills are taught well enabling reception age children to make a good start in learning to read, write and handle numbers. However, these sessions are sometimes too long to hold children's concentration. Teaching in the infant classes is satisfactory. Lessons are often imaginatively presented. Again, reading, writing and mathematical skills are well taught but the level of challenge in the work provided and the pace of lessons are not always sufficient to extend the learning of the more able pupils. More than half of the teaching in junior classes is good, particularly in mathematics, ICT, music and increasingly in most aspects of science. However, in subjects such as religious education, history and geography, the time spent on teaching facts and knowledge is not equally balanced by opportunities for pupils to explore and find out for themselves. Although pupils' knowledge and understanding is secure, their skills of enquiry and investigation are not developing at the same rate. This also holds back the learning of the more able pupils, who, with encouragement to search for information, could achieve more. Reading is taught well throughout the school and this is reflected in pupils' good achievements, although there is scope to improve the teaching of writing. Mathematics is taught well in junior classes where work provided is demanding. All teachers manage pupils well and ensure that they try hard and give of their best. Teachers also explain new ideas clearly and ask searching questions to make pupils think and move their learning on. Pupils with special educational needs are well catered for. Teachers and classroom assistants and helpers provide good support, which greatly enhances their learning. The recently arrived pupils who need help with English benefit from sensitive and caring support from adults and their classmates. This has enabled them to settle well into learning routines.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Pupils benefit from a curriculum, which is mostly well planned and enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities. However, not enough opportunities are offered for pupils to find out for themselves, particularly the more able ones.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Their needs are well understood and they receive good levels of support. This boosts their confidence and helps their learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Successful arrangements have been made to enable these children to learn to speak English and to socialise. They have made a sound start in their learning in other subjects.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Pupils' moral development is very well provided for and the school's provision in all other areas is consistently good. This is where the school's values are very visible and the influence of the strong provision is reflected in the school's caring, Christian ethos.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Pupils' welfare is highly regarded. Their personal and academic progress is carefully tracked in the main subjects but the information is not always used to identify the next learning steps.

The school promotes racial harmony well and the successful partnership between home and school greatly benefits pupils' learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, good communication skills and a high level of energy and determination to involve all members of the school community in improving the provision and raising standards. Key staff and subject leaders provide sound support.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Through meetings and regular visits, governors are knowledgeable about the school and central to all decision making.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Teacher's benefit from professional feedback on their lessons and assessments made of pupils' learning are carefully analysed. However, checking pupils' work in their books is not rigorous enough and weaknesses go undetected.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Financial planning is efficient and focused on clearly identified priorities. Full account is taken of how the school compares with others to ensure that the best value is provided.

School accommodation is good and the levels of resources are satisfactory. The school is fortunate in having well trained support staff and many voluntary helpers.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school, are well behaved and make good progress; • Parents find the staff helpful and easy to talk to and are pleased with information about their children's progress; • Parents appreciate the leadership of the school and the teaching; • The school is successful in helping children to act responsibly and to care for others; • Parents appreciate the range of extra curricular activities and the amount of homework provided. 	

Parents' views of the school are extremely positive. The school is very popular and highly regarded by all parents. The inspection team endorses parents' positive views and believes that parents are right to be proud of their school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When children enter school their attainment and background knowledge are lower than expected for their age and occasionally well below. They respond well to the many interesting activities provided in the reception class and made sound progress in their creative, physical and personal development to reach the levels expected at the end of the reception year. Much attention is given to children's literacy and numeracy skills to enable them to succeed in learning to read, write and handle numbers. However, despite achieving well in these areas, when children enter Year 1 their attainment in language and mathematics is still below average and their knowledge and understanding of the world is still at a low level.
2. Pupils achieve steadily in the infant classes where teaching is mainly satisfactory. The school's national test results for pupils at the age of 7 years have fluctuated considerably in recent years and reached their lowest (well below average) point in 2000. However, since then results have been rising, largely because of the attention that English and mathematics have received nationally. The higher attaining group of seven-year-olds, tested in 2002, gained results that matched the national average in writing and mathematics and exceeded it in reading. Results in all these subjects were higher than those in similar schools. The current Year 2 group of pupils is more typical and standards are average in reading and below average in writing and mathematics.
3. Pupils achieve well in the junior classes, particularly in Years 4, 5 and 6 where teaching is at its strongest. Until 2001, the school's national test results gained by 11-year-olds had been falling in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. In response, decisive action was taken to assess pupils' attainment at the end of each school year and analyse the results to identify where improvements could be made. From this flowed a number of initiatives, which proved to be successful in raising standards. All of the teachers together now examine results, identify areas that pupils find difficult and make a determined effort to overcome these barriers. The progress of individual pupils is carefully tracked and those likely to benefit from extra help are provided with booster lessons and small group additional support. This includes specific teaching of groups of more able pupils. Results dramatically improved in 2002 and are continuing to rise this year in response to the challenging targets set. The current Year 6 pupils are attaining average standards in reading, mathematics and science, although standards in writing are still below average. This represents good achievement from pupils' below average starting points when they began school.
4. Pupils achieve well in reading. A combination of good teaching of word building skills in infant classes, reading for understanding in junior classes and well established systems of reading practice at home, all contribute to pupils reaching the standards expected. Pupils also achieve well in speaking and listening. Many opportunities are provided in literacy, numeracy and in other subjects for pupils to discuss and compare opinions and to express their ideas. By the age of 11 years, most pupils are confident and articulate speakers. Pupils achieve steadily in writing. Their handwriting and presentation skills are good, reflecting the emphasis that teachers put on this. Pupils' skills of spelling and punctuation are typical for their age and they have many opportunities to learn these skills through exercises. However, the content and style of pupils' writing could be better. There is limited challenge in the work provided, particularly when pupils are asked to copy work from the whiteboard

or books. There are also limited opportunities for pupils to express their views and feelings in writing or to redraft and improve their work. Consequently, standards in writing are below average and are not as high as they are in reading.

5. Most pupils achieve well in mathematics, particularly in the junior classes. Through effective training, teachers have a clear idea of how pupils learn and encourage them to try different ways to calculate and to check their answers. Consequently, pupils gain a good understanding of processes such as multiplication and division and use these skills increasingly well to solve mathematical problems. Although pupils work accurately, those in infant classes are not quick enough with their answers because teachers do not sufficiently encourage quick and accurate calculation enough. In junior classes the pace of learning is quicker, which is reflected in pupils' instant recall of number facts and in the large volume of work covered over the year so far.
6. Pupils achieve well in acquiring knowledge and understanding of the different aspects of science. This is partly because of the many good opportunities pupils have to conduct experiments and make observations. Their achievement is helped further by teachers ensuring that they understand the meaning of scientific terms. Teachers are beginning to introduce specific activities to help pupils to plan their own experiments. These include, making predictions and ensuring that scientific tests are fair. However, these skills are not yet consistently taught and built up as pupils move through the school. As a result, their learning of the skills of enquiry does not keep pace with their increasing knowledge and understanding.
7. Standards in ICT have improved considerably since the last inspection. The provision of a computer suite and good training of teachers has made a difference and pupils now achieve well to reach the standards expected at the ages of 7 and 11 years. Despite these improvements, there is scope to improve the use of ICT in the learning of other subjects by using the classroom computers more often.
8. Pupils achieve steadily to reach the levels expected in religious education in Sunderland schools. Infant pupils achieve well in response to the interesting teaching approaches used. Junior pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other religions develops strongly, however opportunities to learn from other religions, reflecting on their own feelings and beliefs, are more limited and their attainment in this area is less evident.
9. Pupils make satisfactory progress in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and physical education. These subjects are well planned for and form an important part of the curriculum. As a result, pupils reach the levels expected at the ages of 7 and 11 years. Junior pupils achieve well in music to reach standards higher than expected and standards in swimming are good.
10. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for and their needs are fully met through specially adapted activities and good levels of additional support. The school has recently admitted a very small number of pupils whose spoken language is not English. These pupils have been sensitively introduced to their classes. Teachers and other children work with them and encourage them to talk and to play a full part in the life of the school. As a result, these pupils are making good social progress and achieving steadily in their learning. The school recognised that more able pupils, in the past, were not challenged enough. To counter this, an additional teacher works with groups from Year 2 to Year 6 in turn, each morning of the week. During these sessions, more able pupils work at a much higher level of challenge than their classmates and their learning accelerates. However, when these pupils work in the normal classes, not enough is done to maintain the same high level of

challenge and this holds their learning back. Results over recent years show that boys were performing at higher levels than girls. However, results in 2002 and the pupils' current work show that the gap is closing. The headteacher and staff ensure that a wide variety of additional activities are provided, such as instrumental music lessons, after school clubs and regular opportunities to participate in school assemblies and concerts. These activities make a valuable contribution to pupils' achievements in several subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour have continued to improve since the last inspection. There have been no exclusions from school in the year prior to the inspection. Pupils are living proof that the school's mission statement achieves its aim of encouraging pupils to show acceptance and tolerance of others.
12. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They are enthusiastic about school and this has a positive effect on their learning. They persevere even when tasks provide them with real challenge. For example, during a religious education lesson for Year 3 pupils, they worked hard to make the link between their previous learning on the life of Moses and the qualities needed to be a good leader. Children in the Foundation years are learning the routines of school life and gaining the skills to work together. Pupils' willingness to work co-operatively with a partner or as part of a group is a good feature in the learning. They share resources sensibly and value one another's ideas and expertise. Teachers and classroom assistants show a sincere respect for all pupils, which encourages them to be fully involved in all that the school provides. Pupils with special education needs and those with English as an additional language have good attitudes to learning as they work in class or withdrawal groups in a fully inclusive learning environment. Pupils show respect for the feelings and values of their classmates and others and relationships between all members of the school community are very good.
13. Pupils' behaviour is very good and is now a strength of the school. This very good behaviour contributes well to learning because teachers lose very little time having to gain pupils' attention. Pupils enjoy learning, particularly when teachers use lively approaches. For example, pupils in Year 4 had fun playing a game to speed up their learning of multiplication and division facts. Pupils behave sensibly around school and show an awareness of the need for safety. In the playground, pupils play well together and no evidence of bullying or harassment was seen during the inspection. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs follow the very good examples set for them and behave well.
14. Pupils' personal development is good outside of lessons but is limited in some lessons, where there are not enough opportunities for them to explore and find out for themselves. Pupils of all ages are happy to show their completed work and want to talk about it when asked. Additional responsibilities are accepted willingly. For example, Year 6 pupils act as 'Buddies' to Reception children during their first weeks in school. The school council is giving pupils a 'voice' in the school; any suggestions are considered by the senior management team. They have conducted a survey on how to make playtimes more interesting and are now organising activities for Red Nose Day. The school's involvement in the Northumbria 'Cops, Kids and Schools' initiative is giving pupils the skills and knowledge to make informed decisions about their lives in and out of school.
15. Attendance has shown an improvement during the current academic year and is now satisfactory. Pupils enjoy receiving rewards for good attendance and during the autumn term, a quarter of all pupils achieved 100 per cent attendance. Most pupils

are punctual to school ensuring that lessons start on time. Pupils enjoy school and attend willingly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. Teaching is satisfactory as it was at the time of the last inspection, although unsatisfactory lessons are now extremely rare and more of the teaching is good. There have been improvements in the teaching of ICT and music and in the way pupils are managed. However, there is room for further improvement in the level of challenge in the work provided for more able pupils and in the use of time. Teaching is frequently good and sometimes very good in Year 6, mainly good in Year 5 and half of the teaching in the reception class is good. In other classes, teaching is mainly satisfactory with a third good.
17. The reception teacher has made a bright start in her first year of teaching these children. Teaching is sound with good features. Children benefit from good teaching of early reading and number skills, although whole class sessions are sometimes too long and children lose concentration. A wide range of interesting and exciting activities is provided which arouses children's curiosity. They are encouraged to choose some of their activities and explore and learn for themselves. This sets a positive climate in which children become self-reliant. The high number of well trained adults in the reception class ensures that children have good opportunities to communicate, which contributes significantly to their speaking and listening skills.
18. Teachers manage pupils well. Their approach is based on trusting relationships and firm but fair discipline. The atmosphere for learning in lessons is relaxed and purposeful. Most teachers gain pupils' attention effortlessly, without having to raise their voices. For example, in a Year 3 lesson the teacher said, 'Jessica, would you like to bring out your book and explain what you have done.' Instantly, every pupil stopped work and paid attention. Pupils always listen to their teachers and to each other and are in the habit of giving their best. Their books are well presented and they take pride in their work.
19. A strength in the teaching is the thorough and effective way in which numeracy and most of the literacy skills are taught. Early reading skills, such as blending letters to make words, are taught well. These are built on successfully in junior classes, where pupils are taught effective strategies to enable them to understand what they read. This is reflected in pupils' fluent reading throughout the school. The skills of handwriting and the rules for spelling, punctuation and grammar are taught thoroughly, evident in pupils' neatly presented written work. However, more needs to be done to enable pupils to improve the style and content of their writing, particularly in knowing how to redraft and refine it. In mathematics, teachers understand how pupils learn and provide them with equipment and illustrations to enable them to see relationships between numbers. Good opportunities to apply these skills, particularly in solving problems in mathematics, strengthens pupils' understanding and helps them to make good progress in these areas.
20. Teachers have a secure understanding of the subjects they teach. This ensures that they know what they are trying to achieve and they almost always explain new learning clearly. Pupils are usually taught as a whole class for the first half of the lesson and this is where teaching is most effective. Teachers often make good use of overhead projectors, large numbers squares and wall charts to help pupils to see patterns and relationships, for example, between an aerial photograph and a map. Middle and upper junior teachers exchange classes for music, religious education and physical education. This sharing of teachers' expertise works well and pupils benefit from coaching in a range of competitive sports and opportunities to tackle

composing in music. Technical expertise in ICT ensures that pupils understand how to carry out complex procedures, such as combining text and graphics to create interesting presentations. Teachers are particularly skilled in questioning pupils to find out what they know and to make them think. In a Year 5 music lesson, for example, the teacher wanted pupils to compose an accompaniment for their singing. She asked, 'When do you think the music should get louder and how will you make this happen?' This resulted in some creative and original performances. Occasionally, class discussions take too long and pupils do not have enough time to complete the follow up tasks.

21. Teaching is sometimes less effective in the latter half of lessons. The activities provided are often not as varied and stimulating as they could be. This is because teachers prefer to closely direct pupils by giving them worksheets and written exercises to complete. In religious education, history and geography, for example, teaching approaches are often narrow, leading to retelling of stories, drawing pictures and answering written questions. As a result, pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop enquiry and study skills to enable them to become independent learners. Their enthusiasm and desire to take learning further is much more pronounced when they are encouraged to take some responsibility for their own work. This is vividly illustrated in Year 6, where pupils search the Internet for information about mountains to add to their display in the corridor.
22. Most pupils' learning needs are well catered for. The content of the lesson is almost always pitched at the right level to be meaningful. Pupils with special educational needs are often given simplified tasks, matched to their particular stage of development. For example, they are given words and sentence prompts to help them answer questions and simpler numbers with which to calculate. In addition, they benefit from good levels of adult support to ensure that they understand their work and have good opportunities to discuss it. On some occasions, the work provided for more able pupils is challenging and their learning accelerates. In particular, this happens when the additional teacher is employed to withdraw small groups for extra work. However, this is only once a week for pupils in any year group. On the remaining occasions, particularly in science, religious education, history and geography (and in mathematics in infant classes), the work provided is not sufficiently challenging. This was an issue at the time of the last inspection and only modest improvements have been made.
23. Pupils have good opportunities to learn outside lessons. The headteacher has been very persuasive in involving adults from many different walks of life to share their experiences with pupils. For example, one of the school governors provides highly effective support teaching, which benefits many pupils. Extra-curricular activities, such as learning French and problem solving, make a significant contribution to pupils' learning of language, geography, mathematics and science. Homework plays a vital part in learning. The good relationship between home and school ensures that pupils regularly practice and consolidate the skills they have learned earlier. The many additional opportunities available clearly boost pupils' achievement.

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

24. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school are satisfactory. There are some good and some very good aspects to this provision. A major stimulus has been the move to a new school building. This has extended opportunities for learning in such areas as the new computer suite, the library and the hall. Improvements made to the curriculum since the previous inspection includes the provision for ICT, the teaching of numeracy and music and a wider

range of extra-curricular activities. However, two issues from the previous report have only been partially addressed. More able pupils are still not challenged enough in some lessons and opportunities are missed to encourage pupils to develop the skills of independent learning, for example, by extending their investigative and creative talents.

25. The equality of access and opportunity provided for the pupils is satisfactory. The school has an open ethos that welcomes pupils and parents into its Christian community. Pupils have equal access to the full range of activities. However, opportunities for pupils to develop their creative talents and skills of independent learning are restricted when they are given work to copy, rather than express their own ideas. Opportunities for more able pupils to be extended are limited when they are given much the same work to do as all the other pupils in the class.
26. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is now very good. The headteacher, in her role as co-ordinator for special educational needs, has set up effective systems that enable pupils to be accurately identified and given very good support according to their individual needs.
27. The very small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language are provided with a good programme of activities to help them to learn to speak English. Systems are well established which enable other pupils to give them additional support within the classrooms. This helps to develop their social as well as their learning skills.
28. Strategies for teaching literacy are satisfactory. Infant pupils now follow a scheme called 'Jolly Phonics'. This develops skills of spelling and reading and is proving very effective. Skills of speaking and listening are well developed through high quality discussions that are a feature of literacy, numeracy and other lessons. A number of initiatives have been tried since the previous inspection to raise standards in writing. These have only been marginally successful and this aspect of literacy is still under the microscope within the school development plan. Pupils are not encouraged sufficiently to express their own ideas and or to improve and refine their writing and the work provided is not always matched to pupils' different stages of development. This particularly inhibits the learning of the more able pupils. Strategies for teaching numeracy are good. Developing pupils' understanding is seen as the key to learning and pupils have good opportunities to compare different methods and improve their skills of mental mathematics. Recent improvements include the development of pupils' mathematical problem solving skills, particularly for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6. Standards are rising significantly as a result.
29. Pupils benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Many are linked to school subjects. For example, a problem-solving club for older juniors meets weekly to wrestle with different challenges. Other clubs are introduced as talents are revealed that could be exploited. For example, a club for German speaking has run for almost two years. During a lunchtime session, the pupils sat in a circle with their teddies, spoke about them individually and in then in pairs, before going out to sing a German skipping rhyme. These additional experiences make an important contribution to pupils' achievement in other subjects, such as English and geography
30. The school has good links with other schools in the area. As well as having a very close partnership with the local senior school, St Paul's has made some very positive contacts with a school for children with hearing loss. The pupils there sent letters expressing great appreciation after a junior class visited them and gave an assembly, using the signing that they had been taught to deliver their message.

Such exchanges are memorable and enrich the lives of all concerned. Very good community links have been established, which enrich the school's curriculum. Some bring financial benefits, such as the grant from London Electric used to purchase reading books for the junior classes. Others help the pupils to feel part of the larger community. For example, the very close links established with the neighbourhood policeman develop positive links from their very earliest schooldays.

31. The provision for pupils personal, social and health education is good. The school's success in these areas is reflected in the achievement of the 'Healthy School' award. Pupils are now far more aware of healthy lifestyles and their own emotional well being.
32. The provision for pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development is good and very good provision is made for their moral development. This area, although good at the time of the last inspection, has been strengthened further through an excellent school policy, to guide staff in promoting this aspect of pupils' learning. Pupils grow and thrive in a caring, Christian community where they are given the opportunity to explore the values and beliefs that influence their lives.
33. The provision for spiritual development is good and has a profound effect on the experiences of pupils. For example pupils, with the support of students from Sunderland University, have designed beautiful stained glass windows outside each classroom. These provide a 'window' on pupils' lives and cultural experiences, such as the local mining heritage, reflected strongly in one of the windows. Pupils proudly talk about the memories it evokes when seen by visitors to the school. Assemblies provide pupils with good opportunities to reflect on the world around them and to consider how people with a hearing impairment cope with life. For example, with the help of a visitor they gave a very moving demonstration of how to communicate through sign language and song. Pupils are encouraged to develop a sense of respect for themselves and others through quiet periods of reflection during assemblies and throughout the school day. When asked what gift pupils would give to a new baby, a girl said 'a special gift that no one can see, this is a good and happy life and a good education'.
34. The school provides very well for pupils' moral development and the results of the provision can be seen in the very good behaviour of all pupils. There is a clear moral code of behaviour and all adults in school provide good examples for pupils to follow. Pupils are clear about school and class rules and all staff reinforce these consistently. Year 6 pupils confirmed that teachers have high expectations of behaviour and that most pupils do not want to let them down. Moral issues are discussed in personal and social education and pupils have a clear understanding of right from wrong.
35. The school provides very good support for all groups of pupils to ensure that they are fully included in all aspects of provision and this encourages their social development. Pupils have opportunities to participate in community activities that help to develop their social skills. For example, they worked with the Visual Artist at the local hospital to produce a silk painting poster to promote Mental Health Day. A nurse visited school to raise pupils' awareness of the difficulties which people with mental problems face and, along with the learning of sign language, this shows that pupils are made aware of the needs of others. Pupils work well in pairs and groups in lessons as seen during a Year 2 personal and social education lesson on the choices that can be made in life. The police liaison officer worked with pupils in a friendly, sociable learning environment in which pupils made good progress as seen in their oral responses.

36. There has been an improvement since the last inspection in the provision for pupils' cultural development. Displays around the school show that pupils are aware of their own cultural heritage as seen in the local history display on the lives and working conditions of miners. Year 6 pupils have made musical instruments in their design and technology lessons and there are examples of poetry and art around the school. The school helps pupils to be more aware of the multicultural nature of society. For example, pupils learn the German language and there is a Russian Pen-Friends Club. They look at masks and rituals of people in Africa and compare and contrast the Christian faith with Islam, Sikhism and Judaism. In a Year 1 religious education lesson, pupils engaged in role play to act out scenes from the life of Buddha. Year 5 pupils correspond with pupils from a school in America. All these good examples ensure that pupils' not only learn about their own cultural heritage but also that of other people.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. The provision for child protection and for the welfare of pupils is very good. The staff and governing body work together well to create a caring school where the personal needs of pupils are well met. The head teacher leads well here by providing a strong and supportive role model for the pupils, staff and parents. There is a positive atmosphere in school and the teachers and classroom assistants know their pupils well. Pupils with special educational needs and refugee children are well supported and fully involved in all activities. The school fulfils the promise in its mission statement of providing a warm, secure and welcoming environment where everyone will have the opportunity to reach their full potential. These features, although present at the time of the last inspection, are now even stronger.
38. There are two designated teachers for child protection who are well trained and share their expertise with staff. They liaise with a range of support agencies on behalf of pupils and the procedures for child protection work well when tested. There is a detailed health and safety policy and all staff are aware of their individual responsibilities in ensuring the safety and well being of all pupils. Risk assessments of the premises are undertaken by the health and safety co-ordinator and the local authority offers good guidance to the school on the procedures to follow. The new school building provides a safe, secure learning environment in which pupils can grow and flourish. The site manager ensures that the site is safe, clean and free from debris. There are two members of staff with first aid qualifications and the medical needs of pupils are given careful attention. All these very good procedures add up to a school that puts the safety, protection and care of pupils at the top of its agenda.
39. The school's procedures for monitoring and supporting behaviour are very good and their success can be seen in the very good behaviour of pupils. The school has been concerned to involve pupils in setting their own rules of conduct and this has successfully fostered a good atmosphere in lessons. Unacceptable behaviour is dealt with appropriately and parents are involved early if there are any concerns. Good behaviour is rewarded and there are special assemblies when pupils celebrate each other's achievements. Year 6 pupils and parents at the meeting confirm that any instances of bullying or unkind behaviour are dealt with well.
40. The procedures for monitoring and encouraging good attendance are very good and have resulted in improved attendance. The school's involvement in the 'Every School Day Counts' initiative is having a good effect on pupils and they are keen to attend regularly. Records show that the authorised absence is due to holidays taken in term time and to the poor attendance of pupils from a few families. To balance this, many pupils achieve full attendance. The officer from the education welfare

service provides good support to the school by working with families who have difficulty sending their children to school regularly. All these very good features are having a positive effect on the overall attendance. According to the figures for last term attendance is now at the national average. Punctuality is well monitored and registration periods are calm and orderly.

41. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is good. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in all activities and those pupils from an ethnic minority background are well supported. The school provides a range of experiences that help pupils to mature into responsible and caring individuals. These include visits out of school to places of interest and residential experiences for older pupils. Pupils can discuss their thoughts and feelings in personal and social education lessons. The mature and sensible approach of the school council is having an impact on the facilities available to pupils, for example in the provision of playground games. Pupils mature and grow into responsible young adults within the 'family' of St. Paul's Primary School.
42. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory overall. Much data is collected and analysed by the school about the performances of all its pupils and the quality of marking of pupils' work has improved with clear policy guidelines. The school uses a suitably wide range of assessments and results are analysed to give teachers a clear picture of pupils' progress and to predict likely performance in the national tests at ages 7 and 11 years. Information gathered in English and mathematics is extensive but the assessment of pupils' learning in science still requires further work to make it useful in determining what should be taught next. Assessment arrangements in other subjects are still at an early stage of development, and as yet, are not having a marked effect on standards. The school has a clear timetable of what will be assessed and when and how teachers should go about it. The school has made progress in measuring the levels of attainment reached by pupils and in tracking their progress from year to year. However, procedures for monitoring the quality of work currently produced by pupils require more rigour, so that immediate adjustments can be made to their programme of work when necessary. Targets are being identified by teachers to help individual children improve in English, mathematics and science but as yet are not shared consistently with all pupils to ensure that they know enough about what they have to do to improve.
43. Teachers are not consistent in the way they use the information they have about pupils' learning. They do not always take pupils' different stages of development into account when planning lessons, particularly for the more able pupils. The use of assessment to raise standards for pupils with special educational needs is good. Extensive records are kept on each pupil and individual targets are set. The quality of individual education plans for these pupils is good; they provide clearly achievable targets for development within a realistic time frame. The school recognises the need to use the assessment information available more fully. A revised reporting system has been introduced. This covers all subjects and identifies the key skills needed by pupils in each year group. However, the system has only recently been introduced and is not yet having a marked impact on standards.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. Parents view the school as a very good school which their children enjoy attending and where they are expected to work hard and achieve well. They consider that the school promotes the attitudes and values they would expect and develops an understanding of moral and social issues as set out in the school's mission statement. The information that parents receive and their involvement in children's learning are good and have a positive impact on the partnership they have with the school.
45. The quantity and quality of information that parents receive is good. Regular newsletters inform them of events and activities taking place in the school. There is an induction meeting for parents of children new to the school and helpful written information about how they can prepare their children for school. There is a consultation evening each term when parents meet with teachers and gain up-to-date information on what pupils are learning and on the progress they are making. The language in the school prospectus and the annual report of the governing body is accessible to parents and gives them useful information on the facilities in school and the plans for future development. The school is currently developing a new format for the reports to parents, which will give more regular information to them on the academic and personal development of their children.
46. The school encourages the involvement of parents in its work. However, whilst parents will attend assemblies and concerts in the school in large numbers, meetings of an academic nature are not well attended. For example, only three parents attended a meeting to give guidance to parents on how to support their children with mathematics. The school seeks parents' views on the school by sending out a questionnaire and acting on some of the suggestions. Ten parents and governors help regularly in school and confirm their enjoyment of this and also of the opportunity to gain qualifications for the work they do. Parents say that they find staff approachable and can make an appointment if they have a problem or concern knowing that they will be listened to.
47. The Friends' Association is an enthusiastic band of parents who work hard on behalf of the pupils. They have organised some exciting ideas for fund raising, for example, a Chocoholics event. They have raised funds to enhance the learning experiences of pupils, for example, through the purchase of whiteboards to help pupils during their lessons. Most parents support children's learning at home. They help with homework and listen to children read. The ICT skills of some parents have been enhanced by the opportunity to attend a course organised and funded by the Friends group and they confirm that this has given them a greater insight into the work their children do at school.
48. The level of involvement of parents of pupils with special educational needs is good. Learning and personal targets are shared at consultation meetings and communication with individual parents is good. The school works hard to involve parents and values the difference they make to their children's learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The school is well led and managed. The headteacher continues to provide good leadership and leads by example, for instance in co-ordinating the provision for pupils with special educational needs very effectively. She has clear aims and a strong commitment to meeting both pupils' learning and personal development needs. In the drive to raise standards, the headteacher has made it possible for an additional part time teacher to work with more able pupils in English and

mathematics. However, although this raises their attainment, there is more to do to maintain and reinforce the higher levels of challenge in other lessons. The headteacher is resourceful in seeking help and commitment from staff and friends of the school. For example, by encouraging a good range of extra curricular activities, the school has provided good opportunities to develop hobbies and interests. These additional activities, such as learning sign language and the problem-solving club, significantly raise pupils' achievements in different subjects. The importance placed on homework is reflected in the provision made in all classes and across a range of subjects. This not only helps pupils to consolidate their learning in lessons but also prepares them well for the next stage in their education. The headteacher's skills in promoting change through teamwork lead to positive relationships and a productive partnership with governors and staff. The good links existing between the school and parents result in their willingness to contribute to many aspects of the school and explains their very positive view of the head teacher as a leader and manager.

50. The key issues for improvement, identified at the previous inspection, have been suitably attended to, although one or two require further improvement.

- Standards in ICT have improved significantly.
- The governors now play an important part in evaluating the work of the school and in shaping its future direction.
- More able pupils now receive a greater level of challenge in some lessons, such as mathematics, but not in all. As a result, they are still not reaching their full potential. Good procedures for assessing pupils' learning are in place but the information could be better used to identify the next steps in learning.
- Although some teachers now provide more opportunities for pupils to take some responsibility for their own learning, this is not consistent in all lessons.
- Subject leaders check teachers' planning but not enough checks are made on how well pupils are learning.

51. The deputy headteacher and senior management team provide sound support for the head teacher in managing the school. Responsibility for subject areas and the Foundation Stage is delegated to co-ordinators who manage the spending on resources and provide staff with ongoing support and guidance. They check teachers' planning and this successfully ensures that the full programmes of study are being taught. Assessment results are analysed by the head teacher and other members of staff and these are used effectively to identify groups of pupils who need extra learning support and to calculate the progress being made by groups of pupils in English and mathematics. However, there are not enough opportunities for subject leaders to evaluate the work in pupils' books or to observe pupils' learning in lessons. As a result, the school still does not have enough information about standards in each year group to help to remedy any weaknesses and set targets for improvement.

52. The governing body provide good support for the head teacher. Governors have a well-informed working knowledge of the school and a realistic understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. They are kept up to date by detailed reports from the head teacher. These are questioned and discussed carefully before decisions are made. Many governors visit the school regularly to observe and work with pupils and talk to teachers and other staff as part of their subject link roles. As a result, they keep up to date with what is happening in school and get to know the pupils and staff well. The full governing body meets at least once each term and committees meet regularly to discuss a range of issues including those linked to finance, staffing and the curriculum. The work done by the governing body plays an important role in

helping to determine the priorities facing the school. The governors fulfil all of their statutory duties.

53. The financial and day-to-day management of the school are good. The school development plan identifies the key areas for improvement and provides clear information on the action to be taken and how the school's success will be measured. Educational priorities are supported very effectively through its financial planning systems. New developments are clearly linked to the annual budget. Governors evaluate the work of the school effectively through a range of initiatives, such as linking individual governors to specific curriculum areas. Governors also monitor the school's budget regularly and good financial controls are in place. The principles of best value are applied well. The school seeks competitive tenders on all major spending decisions. It assesses its performance in comparison with other schools, seeks the opinions of parents, for example, when deciding on whether to change the school uniform before moving into the new building, and has a school council that meets regularly to discuss pupils' views.
54. There is an adequate number of teachers and well-trained support staff to meet the needs of the curriculum. Classroom assistants are used effectively to support pupils' learning, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Teachers' performance is suitably evaluated and professional targets for improvement are identified. Although the school has not employed any newly qualified teachers for several years, as part of its successful accreditation as an 'Investor in People', the school has high quality procedures to ensure that staff new to the school are provided with good levels of information and guidance.
55. The accommodation has improved significantly since the previous inspection as the school is now housed in a new building. This provides plentiful teaching space for most subjects, including ICT. The school grounds are extensive, providing both hard play and grassed areas, and are used well for physical education, science and geography. Children in the Foundation Stage now have a designated outdoor learning area and this provides good opportunities for them to extend their learning. Resources for learning are adequate to support all subjects and the Foundation Stage curriculum and are of good quality. Resources are good in ICT and this contributes to the improvement in standards since the previous inspection. The number of computers is above average but those in classrooms are not used enough to enable pupils to use their ICT skills significantly in other subjects.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56. The headteacher staff and governors should now:
- (a) Further improve the learning of the more able pupils by:
- raising teachers' expectations of what these pupils can achieve;
 - checking pupils' work in their books and folders more carefully to identify strengths and weaknesses in their progress;
 - using the information gathered from assessing their learning to set more demanding tasks and sharing the targets for improvement.

(paragraphs) 10, 16, 22, 24, 42, 43, 50, 51, 68, 73, 80, 87, 90, 91 and 105.

(b) Improve standards in writing by:

- encouraging pupils to express their own ideas, instead of copying work and completing so many worksheets;
- teaching pupils how to redraft, improve and refine their work;
- emphasising the importance of expressive writing by recognising and rewarding success.

(paragraphs) 4, 19, 28, 71 and 72.

(c) Improve pupils' skills of enquiry and investigation by:

- providing more opportunities and support for pupils in planning their own scientific tests;
- concentrating as much on developing pupils' skills as on increasing their knowledge and understanding, in subjects such as history, geography and religious education;
- making greater use of computers in classrooms.

(paragraphs) 6, 7 14, 21, 24, 25, 79, 86, 88, 92, 93m 96 and 103.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	47
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	33

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number		2	19	25	1		
Percentage		4	40	53	2		

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 two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	180
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	40

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	41

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.1
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	11	17	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	10
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	26	26	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (71)	93 (75)	93 (82)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	10
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	26	26	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (75)	93 (75)	93 (82)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	15	17	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	11	14
	Girls	12	10	14
	Total	23	21	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (57)	66 (57)	88 (79)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	12	14
	Girls	13	12	14
	Total	24	24	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (n/a)	75 (n/a)	88 (n/a)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

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

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
168	0	0
0	0	0
4	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
4	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	81

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	383,674
Total expenditure	389,226
Expenditure per pupil	1,922
Balance brought forward from previous year	14,353
Balance carried forward to next year	8,801

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	0
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.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	180
Number of questionnaires returned	103

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	27	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	38	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	37	1	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	54	5	0	1
The teaching is good.	64	34	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	36	8	1	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	22	5	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	31	2	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	51	43	4	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	59	41	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	63	37	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	45	8	1	12

Percentages are rounded to the nearest integer and may not total 100.

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

57. Provision for children in the reception class ensures that they make a good start to school life. At the time of the inspection, there were 30 children attending full-time. Children are admitted into the reception class in the September following their fourth birthday. Good improvement has been made since the time of the previous inspection, particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy skills. The overall judgement on the quality of teaching is the same as at the time of the previous inspection, but the proportion of good lessons observed has risen. As a result of moving to a new building, outdoor learning opportunities, identified previously as a significant weakness in provision, are now good.
58. Children's attainment on entry to the school is below the level expected of children of this age and occasionally even lower. By the end of the reception year, most children reach the level expected in their personal, creative and physical development. Although the majority of children are not on course to reach the goals expected in speaking, reading, writing, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world, most are achieving well from a low starting point. Children with special educational needs also achieve well because activities in lessons are carefully planned to match their learning needs and adults provide carefully focused support.
59. Teaching is sound and there are a number of good features. The teacher has made a confident start in teaching children of reception age having transferred from Year 1 at the beginning of the school year. Planning is detailed and comprehensive and provides a good framework for children's learning in all six areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The teacher and nursery nurse plan lessons together and other adults are made aware of the learning intentions to ensure that they have a clear understanding of their role. This injects a sense of purpose into children's learning. Elements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are introduced successfully and this helps to prepare children well for the work they are expected to do in Year 1. However, these lessons are sometimes too long, often lasting for over an hour with the result that some children lose concentration towards the end. This weakness has been missed because, although the work of Foundation Stage is satisfactorily co-ordinated, the Foundation Stage leader does not have enough opportunities to check on what is happening in the classroom. The teacher maintains careful records of progress in all six areas of learning and uses this information effectively to make sure that lesson activities meet the children's learning needs. Homework is set regularly and is effective in helping children to build upon what they have learned in class. Parents play their part well in contributing to learning through the help and support they give to their children in the work they are asked to do at home. Parents are provided with satisfactory opportunities to visit the school before their children are admitted. In addition, children make special visits before they start school to help them find out about their classroom and get to know their teacher and support staff.

Personal, social and emotional development

60. Most children achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area because of good teaching. The teacher and other adults provide good examples for children to follow and provide many opportunities for them to learn about themselves and how to behave well. Routines are made clear and good relationships are sensitively

established. Many opportunities are provided for children to listen to each other and as a result, most have already learned to wait until it is their turn.

61. Activities are interesting and well resourced, and because the children know what is expected of them, they are beginning to develop independent skills. They tidy away efficiently when asked because they know where things are stored. However, independent skills are not as well developed in activities such as writing or number work. This is because many of the children need to rely on high levels of adult help in these more focused activities. Children regularly take part in assemblies and are successfully learning about being part of a larger community.

Communication, language and literacy

62. From a low starting point, children achieve well because the teaching of important language skills, through carefully planned activities, is good. Many opportunities are provided during class discussions and activities for the children to develop language skills. For example, key words are carefully introduced at the start of lessons and reinforced by adults during activities. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to let the children take a more active role in the introductory parts of lessons, although this is not the case at the end of lessons when the children are given good opportunities to talk about what they have done. Most children listen attentively, paying attention to what others say, and this is an area of learning where many children achieve the levels expected. However, children's speaking skills are not as advanced. For example, when speaking to adults or other children, some use short phrases or sentences to answer questions or to talk about what they are doing but a minority use only one or two words and their speech is immature. Staff and helpers are particularly skilled in encouraging children to talk and improve their spoken language.
63. The teaching of reading is planned carefully in small focus groups and ensures that individual children are successful in building their reading skills step by step. As a result, the large majority of children are gaining a secure understanding of how stories develop, and are learning to use pictures as clues to help them understand the story and to link the pictures to the writing on the page. A few read familiar words accurately and can explain simply what is happening in the story or in the pictures. The majority of children can identify the sounds of many of the letters in the alphabet and a few are able to use this knowledge to help them to work out familiar words. Children's writing is below the level expected and most use strings of letters (rather than words) to represent what they want to say. A small number of children are beginning to use their knowledge of letters and sounds to write simple words independently. The teacher has high expectations of the presentation of work and this is reflected in children's carefully formed letters.

Mathematical development

64. Teaching in this area is good and children achieve well, particularly when learning about number. Techniques, such as the 'Sally the giraffe' puppet, are used effectively to capture children's interest. This also helps the teacher to emphasise important teaching points, such as matching the number name to its written symbol. Activities are matched well to children's different learning needs and this ensures that they learn successfully. For example, children with special educational needs receive small group support. This is particularly effective in helping them to use the correct mathematical language, such as 'add and makes'. More able children are expected to tackle stiffer challenges and, as a result, they have learnt to add three numbers together correctly. Adults are well deployed and play an important part in children's learning. This ensures that children have regular practices in handling numbers and learning to count accurately. For example, one helper asked the

children, 'How do we know that we have three?' and proceeded to check that every child in the group pointed to each object as it was counted.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

65. Teaching is satisfactory in this area. Many valuable opportunities to learn more about the world are provided through a range of interesting activities. Adults make careful use of language to ask questions, introduce key words or to provide a commentary on what the children are doing. For example, groups of children took it in turns to make a pancake mix and watched attentively as the nursery nurse cooked the pancakes followed by the enjoyment of eating the results! This activity broadened children's experiences and specifically helped them to understand the importance of placing actions into the correct sequence. However, although the children responded positively, their language skills are not developed well enough to enable them to make comparisons, discuss differences or identify some of the features of things they observe. Classroom computers are used frequently to reinforce children's understanding of numbers and letters and to help them to express their ideas. Consequently, most children operate the mouse correctly to make things happen on the screen. Although most children are able to work independently, those not as confident are sometimes left for too long without adult help and their learning suffers.

Physical development

66. Most children are likely to achieve the learning goals in this area except in activities such as handwriting which needs smaller, more precise movements. Teaching is satisfactory in this area. In the physical education lesson observed, the well-established safety routines ensured that the children took good care of their own and others' safety and were learning to carry floor mats correctly. When working in groups, they travelled across the apparatus in a variety of ways. A weakness in the lesson was that the children were expected to wait for a considerable time as equipment was organised or as they waited in queues until it was their turn to go on the apparatus. This slowed their learning.

Creative development

67. Teaching is satisfactory in this area of learning. Resources are carefully selected to help the children make decisions as they learn. For example, when mixing colours, the teacher provided good opportunities for them to decide which colours to mix together and they learned that adding white made colours paler. Children are developing satisfactory imaginative skills in role-play situations, although opportunities are sometimes missed to extend their use of language further through discussion with adults. A group of children supervised by the nursery nurse played a camouflage game outside. They enjoyed being grasshoppers and other creatures as they hid to escape the fox. This was an example of a carefully planned activity that successfully combined and promoted the use of imagination, the ability to follow rules and opportunities to run and climb as the children hid from the fox.

ENGLISH

68. Standards at the age of 7 and 11 years are average in reading and below average in writing and the school's national test results are generally higher than in similar schools. Teachers are successful in raising most pupils' attainment from a low starting point, when they enter school, to average levels by the end of the junior years. However, the school is less successful in enabling the more able pupils to reach higher levels in writing. The very few pupils with English as an additional

language are making good progress in learning the English language and are already able to communicate with teachers and other pupils. Although standards have risen as a result of the National Literacy Strategy, the restricted levels of challenge for more able pupils, identified at the last inspection, continues to be a weakness. Leadership is satisfactory. Clear guidance for teachers has been provided to enable English to be taught to expected levels. However, the work of the pupils is not sufficiently checked to make sure that good progress is maintained through the school.

69. The school places much emphasis on the development of speaking and listening in all subjects. As well as enjoying discussions, many pupils are also keen to be interviewed in the role of a character from literature or a person from the past. For example, one Year 2 boy, in the role of 'Inchkin', was asked his age. He said, with feeling, 'I'm *really* old. I'm nearly thirty!' In some lessons, pupils face each other, in pairs, for concentrated debates. In Year 6, they offered opposing views on the benefits of school uniforms. A girl argued the case for individualism and free choice, whilst the boy countered with the potential likelihood of isolation and even bullying. This was a good example of pupils responding well to the challenge of developing their own thoughts. This is also seen in numeracy lessons, where pupils are regularly asked to explain the strategies they have used to arrive at an answer. Most pupils achieve well in speaking and listening to reach typical levels for their age.
70. Pupils throughout the school achieve well, in reading. Parents provide good levels of support with their reading and this has a significant effect on standards. Reading strategies are developed well with younger pupils. By the end of Year 2, most pupils make good use of letter sounds and shapes, groups of letters and clues within the text to help them to read new or difficult words. These word-building skills are taught well at the beginning of the literacy lessons. The pace of learning is brisk, pupils respond positively, enjoy their work and achieve well in the infant classes. In junior classes, more attention is given to group reading. This is proving to be increasingly effective in enabling pupils to understand what they read. Pupils continue to read regularly at home and are given responsibility for maintaining their own reading diaries. Pupils develop a love of books and they are also taught how to use books as a source of information, although opportunities are sometimes missed to apply and extend these skills.
71. Most pupils are able to express their ideas on paper and write legibly with reasonable accuracy. They take a pride in the presentation of their work. Most make satisfactory progress, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Some pupils are given 'booster' lessons and these are effective in raising standards. There is a strong emphasis on exercises in grammar, punctuation and spelling in all classes. However, these exercises are rarely connected with other areas of the pupils' learning, so they tend to lack relevance. Often, all pupils are set similar challenges, regardless of their different learning needs. This limits the progress of more able pupils particularly and their achievement is not as good as it should be in some classes. Even in lessons when these pupils are well supported, their progress arises more from the discussions than from the actual tasks being undertaken. There also tends to be too much copying of texts. This limits both creativity and independence. However, pupils do have some opportunities to develop their own ideas and on these occasions they respond with enthusiasm. For example, with an audience seemingly in mind, one Year 2 pupil wrote, 'The giant had a baldy head. His eyes were blue and he had a runny nose and he stomped around the place.' By Year 6, a much more mature style emerges. 'Parents over the years have relied on school uniforms because they are cheap. Children may not like school uniforms but people say they look tidy and smart.' This particular extract was produced on a white board, prior to being written

into the pupil's book. This kind of redrafting is done, especially in Year 5, but the pupils are not sufficiently encouraged to improve upon their original drafts as a matter of course. Word-processing skills are taught well but pupils do not have enough opportunities to use them in lessons.

72. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. In all classes, teachers have high expectations of behaviour and they manage the pupils well. This creates a good atmosphere for learning in which pupils try hard and give of their best. Extra helpers and classroom assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs. This ensures that they understand what they are expected to do and receive help with reading instructions and spelling to enable them to make good progress. There are strong features of teaching, especially in Years 2 and 5. In these classes the work provided is better matched to pupils' different abilities, and literacy skills are developed well across a range of subjects. For example, writing skills are extended in history, art, science and religious education through a rich variety of different forms, including stories, diaries, letters, poems and descriptions. This kind of creative teaching is not as evident elsewhere. Standards of marking are satisfactory but teachers miss many opportunities to make comments to extend the pupils' understanding. Assessments of annual tests are well used to check the progress of pupils and to set targets for them. However, the pupils themselves are not made sufficiently aware of what they have to do to improve. This means that they are less able to set targets for themselves to reach higher levels.

MATHEMATICS

73. Pupils enter Year 1 with below average attainment in mathematics. They make satisfactory progress in the infant classes but their attainment is still below the national average by the age of seven. Standards were average last year because of a higher achieving group of pupils. In infant classes, pupils with average and below average ability make sound progress. They respond well to effective teaching of number skills, such as addition and subtraction, and as a result, their calculations are usually accurate. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented successfully. This is evident in the way teachers encourage pupils to look for different ways to solve problems and explain the methods they use. This strengthens pupils' understanding and gives them the confidence to work out answers mentally. However, there are two weaknesses in learning in mathematics in the infant classes. Firstly, the work provided for more able pupils is not always sufficiently challenging to extend their learning. Secondly, pupils are not encouraged to think and answer quickly enough. There is scope to increase pupils' achievement by making adjustments to the teaching.
74. The changed methods of teaching mathematics have had a marked impact on pupils' learning in junior classes. This is largely because of the influence of an effective subject leader who leads by example and influences others to follow. In particular, pupils achieve well in Years 4, 5 and 6, where new lesson plans are being trialled. Despite teachers' initial reservations that the lesson objectives would be too difficult for the pupils, the outcomes proved a pleasant and welcome surprise. Most pupils enjoy the subject. They work hard and have covered a considerable amount of work since last September. In the junior classes, the general level of challenge in lessons is high and more able pupils are given demanding tasks. This is accelerating their learning. For example, most Year 6 pupils confidently convert fractions to decimals and percentages, and the more able complete this task using complex numbers. The impact of teachers' higher expectations and the increasing skills in teaching problem solving are raising standards. In 2002, results in mathematics had risen but were still below the national average. This year, standards are continuing to rise and have reached average levels in Year 6. In

addition to better teaching, the improvements are attributable to more rigorous assessment of pupils' learning. The results are thoroughly analysed and any weaknesses are pinpointed and strengthened in future lessons. In 2000 and 2001, results showed that boys had considerably outperformed girls but the gap closed in 2002 and there is little difference in their performance currently.

75. Pupils with special educational needs in both infant and junior classes make good progress. Their difficulties in learning are clearly identified and tasks are provided at just the right level to move their learning on. A small number of pupils with English as an additional language have recently entered the school. In addition to receiving specific help with English, teachers involve them in lesson discussions successfully and arrange for them to work alongside mature and helpful classmates. This has enabled them to adjust to the school and make sound progress in mathematics.
76. Teaching is satisfactory in the infant classes and good in most of the junior classes. Lessons follow a familiar and successful pattern, in which pupils have good opportunities to develop their mental skills, learn about number operations and processes and solve mathematical problems. Teachers are skilful in developing pupils' understanding. They explain new ideas clearly, often making good use of visual aids to illustrate the link between pencil and paper calculations and mental mathematics. For example, in Year 3, the teacher used an overhead projector to show pupils a picture of 12 counters. She illustrated how these could be divided into two and then four groups. She then covered up the image and asked pupils to work on similar examples. This proved to be successful because pupils held a mental picture of the process and were subsequently able to work out halves and quarters of different quantities without difficulty. A strong feature of the teaching is the emphasis on solving mathematical problems. There are now many good opportunities for pupils to deepen their understanding, by using the skills they have learnt to tackle mathematical problems. This pursuit goes beyond lessons, for example the school runs a problem solving club where pupils investigate ideas, such as how fast model boats travel across water. In lessons, pupils are constantly asked questions such as, 'What you think, how did you work it out and could you explain your ideas to the class?' This not only improves pupils' mathematical understanding but also significantly improves their speaking and listening skills. In a few instances, pupils extend their learning of mathematics in the computer suite but computers are not used enough in the classrooms. On rare occasions, teachers fail to give clear instructions, particularly when they are trying to explain different tasks to different groups. This results in confusion, pupils become restless and their learning suffers. Such an occasion led to the only unsatisfactory lesson of the inspection.

SCIENCE

77. When pupils enter the infant classes, many have limited background knowledge and some still have inadequate use of language. For example, most Year 1 pupils are able to recognise the different sounds made by a variety of musical instruments but struggle to find the words to describe them. By the age of 7 and 11 years, standards are in line with national averages but above when compared to schools in similar circumstances. Taking account of pupils' low starting points, this represents good achievement, particularly in the junior classes. Standards are not significantly different to the time of the last inspection but have improved over the last year. This is due to whole school improvements in assessing and tracking pupils' progress, which ensures that they achieve well in acquiring knowledge and understanding and that all areas of the subject are covered. Pupils with special needs make good progress. They benefit from good support provided by classroom assistants. For example, in a Year 5 science lesson, the classroom assistant prompted pupils with special educational needs to discuss their ideas. This helped them to understand

scientific vocabulary and by writing down their ideas for them, their skills of predicting, observing, describing and investigating improved significantly. Boys and girls perform at similar levels.

78. Pupils are given many good opportunities to handle and explore materials and scientific equipment. They enjoy these practical experiences and gradually learn to use the correct terms. Their knowledge of living things, materials and physical processes, particularly in electricity, develops strongly. For example, Year 4 pupils are able to explain correctly which materials conduct electricity and explain why a bulb fails to light when the circuit is broken. Year 2 pupils are able to recognise the items that use electricity around the home and can compare the way in which devices such as bulbs work in simple electrical circuits. Year 5 and 6 pupils make good progress because lessons usually combine demonstrations provided by the teacher and experiments carried out by pupils. There is plenty to see, touch and talk about and, as a result, pupils use of scientific language improves along with their ability to observe, measure and draw conclusions. For example, Year 5 pupils have investigated the similarities and differences of animal skeletons and whether people with the longest legs jump further and have successfully used computers in recording their findings. The use of ICT in supporting the learning activities is stronger in the upper end of the school.
79. Despite pupils' good gains in acquiring scientific knowledge and understanding, there is scope to improve the learning of more able pupils, particularly in the infant classes. The work provided is not always sufficiently challenging to fully develop their skills of scientific enquiry. This results in limited opportunities for children to be taught to think logically in planning the steps to be taken to answer investigative questions and in using and applying their knowledge across the subject. For example, Year 3 pupils can understand the need for a fair test but are less confident of how to make predictions about possible outcomes or how to draw conclusions from the available evidence. Not all teachers are confident in developing these skills at a fast enough pace and in using assessments accurately to clearly identify the next step in the learning process for the more able pupils. For these children there is too much emphasis placed on consolidating skills instead of acquiring new ones. This is why comparatively few pupils reach the higher levels by the age of 7 years.
80. Teaching is satisfactory overall and good in Years 5 and 6. Teachers share the aims of the lesson with the class to ensure that pupils know what they are expected to learn. They manage pupils well through positive relationships, which results in pupils acquiring good attitudes to learning. Teachers use questioning effectively which leads to good class discussions. For example, Year 6 pupils were able to discuss the water cycle in terms of the processes of evaporation, condensation and purification. One pupil was able to use this knowledge when attempting to investigate how to separate materials from solutions by suggesting that you could evaporate the mixture out of the solution by getting it to condense on a mirror over heat. Teaching is stronger in Years 5 and 6 because teachers here have higher expectations, set more challenging work and develop pupils' investigative skills with greater pace and increased opportunities for independent thinking. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The headteacher and subject leader recognise the need to improve pupils' skills of scientific enquiry and provide greater challenge for the more able pupils. These areas have been prioritised for development through staff training and additional resources. Although some monitoring of teaching and work scrutiny has taken place, the resulting action has not been rigorous enough to remedy all of the weaknesses.

ART AND DESIGN

81. Pupils make satisfactory progress and reach the standards expected for their age by the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards are not as high as at the time of the previous inspection. This is due to a reduction in the amount of time available to teach art and design in order to allow the school to respond to the introduction of national initiatives in English and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils because they are provided with effective additional adult support in lessons. Subject leadership is satisfactory. Teachers' planning is monitored to ensure that pupils' skills are built up as they move through the school. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to study the work of artists from different cultures. This weakness has been missed because the subject leader does not have enough opportunities to check pupils' work in other classes.
82. In Year 1, pupils use magnifying glasses well to look at woven objects and draw what they see. Through this, they develop a clear understanding of the different techniques, such as coil weaving. For example, one pupil described what she observed as 'a line and a gap and a line'. Pupils' observation skills develop well and by Year 2 they use language more precisely to describe the shape of objects and explain how they might start their drawing. In one lesson, for example, pupils had good opportunities to talk about what they saw in front of them and what they were doing and to choose from a good range of natural objects. However, the teacher did not remind pupils to keep looking at the object being drawn, which resulted in some lack of detail in the completed sketch. Nevertheless, the resulting work was pleasing to the pupils and more talented ones produced very effective pencil and crayon images.
83. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils achieved well as they designed and printed Rangoli patterns, making their own decisions as to whether the finished patterns were to be continuous or more random. The work of some Year 6 pupils on display shows a good understanding of the effects of pencil and chalk pastel in creating a sense of dimension through shading and tone. Art is also used creatively to support other subjects, such as paintings related to Easter week in religious education and pictorial recording of the results of science investigations into changes in materials.
84. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers prepare their lessons well and provide interesting resources and good opportunities for pupils to build on their observational skills. Adequate use of ICT is made to investigate graphics, such as in Year 6, where images had been skilfully imported to provide a 'winter scene' backdrop to their poems. The teaching of skills and techniques to create different effects is strong but is not matched by guiding pupils to understand the work of famous artists.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

85. Pupils achieve steadily to reach the standards expected at the ages of 7 and 11 years. This was broadly the picture at the time of the last inspection. However, since then, better provision has been made for pupils with special educational needs. In lessons, these pupils are often well supported by teachers, classroom assistants and voluntary helpers. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, pupils with special educational needs were given help to read the instructions on the worksheet. This enabled them to investigate and design a fruit salad successfully. The subject is soundly led. The Subject leader is enthusiastic and persuasive in encouraging other members of staff to try out new ideas and display pupils' work. However, in most classes, pupils do not have books in which to record their designs and write accounts of their experiences and impressions. This makes it harder for teachers, pupils and the subject leader to reflect on the progress pupils are making. On some occasions, good links are made between the designing, making and evaluating of their work. In Year 2, for example, one pupil wrote, 'My sewing would be better if I

could stop the cotton from pulling out of the eye of the needle.' However, on other occasions, one or more of these steps are omitted and pupils' skills in all three areas do not develop evenly. There is scope to improve the way in which pupils' learning is checked to remedy these weaknesses.

86. Given some inconsistencies in pupils' progress in designing and evaluating their work, pupils achieve well in the practical activities. Teachers are successful in ensuring that pupils work carefully and accurately. The skills needed, such as measuring, cutting and assembling, are systematically taught before pupils are allowed to begin constructing. For example, Year 6 pupils practised sawing, drilling and joining pieces of wood, in preparation for making musical instruments. They had also benefited from encouragement to select bright and contrasting colours and use paintbrushes carefully. As a result, their completed musical instruments are impressive. As yet, very limited use is made of ICT to improve pupils' design skills.
87. Teaching is satisfactory and there are good features, such as the careful preparation and organisation of lessons and the effective management of pupils. Year 1 pupils, for example, were left in no doubt of the importance of using knives, peelers and chopping boards safely and of the need for hygiene when handling food. The purpose of the lesson is always made clear and pupils know exactly what they are expected to do. At the end of the lesson, teachers make good use of discussion sessions, to ensure that pupils' learning is pulled together. In a Year 4 lesson, examples of pupils' work were shared. One pupil demonstrated a very attractively designed pop up card, which opened to reveal a bird's beak. Other pupils were very impressed. Approaches such as these help pupils to recognise the value of different ideas and approaches, which in turn encourages creativity and originality. When the task involves problem solving, such as creating moving pictures or fairground rides, pupils become totally absorbed in the challenge. However, on other occasions, there is little extra to extend the learning of the more able pupils and their progress is held back.

GEOGRAPHY

88. Standards are at the levels expected at the ages of 7 and 11 years, as they were at the time of the previous inspection. Subject leadership is adequate. The work to be covered by different year groups is suitably mapped out to ensure that pupils have experience of local geography and also study places further afield. These include valuable studies of Kenya and India, which enhance pupils' understanding of different cultures. However, pupils' learning in different classes is not checked sufficiently and some weaknesses go undetected. For example, although pupils' knowledge and understanding develops well, their skills of enquiry are fragmented. It is noticeable that whilst most pupils concentrate on their work and give of their best, the real enthusiasm emerges in Year 6 where pupils are encouraged to research information, using the library and the Internet, for example to find out about mountains. In other classes, learning is more often related to completing worksheets and acquiring geographical facts and there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to discover and learn for themselves.
89. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall and they achieve well in learning about their own locality. In this aspect, pupils' skills of enquiry keep pace with their increasing knowledge. This is because teachers make good use of the surrounding area to develop pupils' powers of observation. Their understanding of scale, direction and position increases well when they compare the real environment with aerial photographs and maps and their mapping skills develop well. In Year 2, pupils begin to make thought-provoking comparisons between living in Sunderland and on a Scottish Island. They write interesting descriptions, such as, 'Sunderland has lots of good roads and many shops, but on Katie Morag's island there are no roads - just

a track.' In junior classes, pupils do not have enough opportunities to extend their critical thinking. Where they do, pupils rise to the challenge well. In the Year 3, for example, one pupil wrote, 'I would put car parks outside the town and away from the shops, to stop traffic going down the main streets.' In addition to geography lessons, the extra-curricular French and German clubs make an important contribution to pupils' geographical knowledge and understanding.

90. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers are very successful in promoting discussions and have established an understanding that making mistakes are a natural part of learning. As a result, pupils are confident to 'have a go' and suggest ideas. This is illustrated well by the teacher's reply to a Year 5 pupil's suggestion, 'No, Spain is not a continent but you are very good knowing about different countries.' Pupils with special educational needs and the very few with English as an additional language are well catered for. Teachers sensitively involve these pupils in discussions and often provide small group support for reading and writing tasks. Such encouragement prompted one pupil who has only recently begun to learn English, to suggest that 'Belgium is in Europe.' This showed not only an improvement in speaking the language but also the confidence to share ideas. More able pupils do not fare so well. The work provided is rarely adapted to extend their learning and they are usually expected to complete the same work as other pupils. When greater challenges are provided, more able pupils show great determination to rise to the occasion. In Year 5, for example, eight more able pupils were encouraged to devise their own European quiz. They began to compare landlocked countries and those with multiple borders. This moved their learning on considerably but is the exception rather than the rule.

HISTORY

91. Standards are satisfactory at the ages of 7 and 11 years and have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils achieve steadily in their knowledge and understanding of history. This is due to new guidance for teachers on what to teach which ensures that all areas of the subject are well covered. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of improvements in assessing their needs accurately and the extra support they receive in lessons. The progress of more able children is not as effective. This is due to teachers not always setting challenging activities to fully develop their thinking and extend their understanding. However, more opportunities for pupils to research information have been created through access to the Internet and there are now suitable procedures to assess how well pupils are learning at the end of each unit of work.
92. By the age of 7 years, pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of the past well by recognising why people did things, why events happened and what happened as a result. For example, Year 2 pupils are able to understand the work of Florence Nightingale in improving conditions in hospitals and why she acted as she did. However, there are fewer opportunities for pupils to find out for themselves, which results in the development of their skills of historical enquiry not keeping pace with their knowledge and understanding. By the age of 11 years, pupils' discuss different periods that they have studied and are able to give reasons for and results of main changes and events. For example, Year 4 pupils were able to explain why Henry VIII wanted to divorce Catherine of Aragon and why he wanted to take over the church. Pupils have developed a good understanding of placing events, people and changes into correct periods of time. They can use different sources of information to answer questions about the past and communicate their findings in a variety of ways. For example, Year 5 pupils have produced some impressive work on Roman Britain which has involved creating their own model town, writing imaginative stories

from the time and researching the period well through effective use of computer technology and the Internet.

93. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and good in Year 5 because the work provided is challenging, activities are well matched and interesting and opportunities to investigate and apply independent thinking are used effectively. The use of ICT to support pupils' learning is developed well in Year 5 but is not as prevalent in other classes. Teachers manage pupils well, use questioning effectively and they share the aims of the lesson with the class. This results in good attitudes to work. Pupils work hard, behaving well and enjoying their studies. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The subject leader is relatively new to the role but sensibly intends to develop the subject further by checking pupils' learning in different classes to gain a clearer and more accurate view of standards across the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

94. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection when standards were judged as unsatisfactory at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards are now at the levels expected in both year groups. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. This improvement in standards is as a result of a range of actions taken by the school. The subject is soundly led. Systematic staff training in ICT skills has been effective in raising subject expertise and has resulted in an improvement in teaching and learning since the previous inspection. Planning for the subject now ensures that the whole programme of study is taught and that sufficient time is provided for pupils to experience all aspects of ICT. This was identified as a key issue for improvement at the time of the previous inspection. The school now has a new computer suite and has significantly increased the number of computers together with a range of other up-to-date resources. This provides more opportunities for pupils to develop specific ICT skills. The decision to buy in the services of an ICT technician for half a day each week provides pupils with extra skills support in lessons and provides efficient 'on-site' technical expertise.
95. The work of Year 2 pupils indicates that they use their keyboard and mouse skills with confidence. For example, they combine graphics with text to create pictures on a winter theme and change the appearance of text by enlarging and changing the style of fonts as they write their autobiographies. By Year 6, pupils apply their skills confidently and with good levels of independence. For example, in the lesson observed, linked to their work in geography, they used a multimedia program to compile and design holiday brochures about specific mountainous areas of the world. Other Year 6 pupils confidently demonstrated how they combined text and moving images and added sounds to create a biographical account of the life of John Lennon in their work in history.
96. Teaching is good in junior classes and satisfactory in the infants. The most significant strength is in teachers' secure subject knowledge and this is reflected in the good skills achievement made by pupils in the majority of lessons. Skills development and key vocabulary are built appropriately into lesson planning and as a result, pupils are building their ICT skills progressively and are confident when asked to explain what they are doing, making correct use of technical language. The computer suite is not large enough to accommodate a whole class comfortably. Teachers manage this effectively through ensuring that pupils have a clear understanding of what they are expected to do and organising them into pairs or groups of three. In some lessons, the class is divided into two separate groups and each is provided with alternate access to the suite during the week. Teachers keep satisfactory ongoing records of skills development and use this information appropriately to plan the next steps in learning. Good use is made of the computer

suite to teach ICT skills and to develop pupils' use of ICT in subjects such as mathematics, history and geography. However, teachers do not make enough flexible or creative use of computers in the classroom to support learning in other subjects of the curriculum. This has been missed because the subject leader does not have enough opportunities to analyse pupils' work regularly to identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning in each year group. However, there are good opportunities for pupils to extend their ICT skills through attendance at the computer club. ICT makes a good contribution to the pupils' personal development, particularly through the opportunities provided for them to work together.

MUSIC

97. Standards in music are in line with those normally seen at the ages of 7 years but are higher than the levels expected by the age of 11 years. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection. Strengths in the subject are the quality of teaching in the junior classes; the contribution which music makes to the pupils' social and cultural development; and, the very good range of resources that enhances the quality of pupils' performances. Leadership of music in the school is good. The subject leader has a strong impact in most junior classes, where she teaches music in Years 4, 5 and 6. This makes very good use of her expertise in the subject. However, not all teachers operate at this level.
98. Pupils of all ages achieve well in their singing and their playing. Those with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, progress equally well. Good provision is made for pupils with musical talent. Up to 30 pupils develop advanced skills on keyboards and violins from extra coaching by peripatetic music teachers. Many of these pupils reach good standards in reading musical notation and performing. In lessons, good links are often made between music and other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 2 took the Japanese story, 'Little Inchkin', that they were reading in the literacy lessons, and developed a musical score to accompany extracts as they were read by the teacher. Music is often used as a stimulus to extend pupils' cultural awareness. French and Jewish songs were taught in a lesson in Year 5. Frère Jacques was used to help pupils to harmonise when singing it as a 'round'. They were given responsibilities to decide how they could play their instruments to create the most appropriate effect. They were challenged to think. This helped to generate high interest levels in the music lesson. There are opportunities for pupils to compose. For example, simple scores, to regulate the speed, pitch and loudness, were created to represent themes from outer space, such as 'Mysterious Planet' and 'Alien Attack'. However, pupils do not sufficiently develop skills in composing the melody line of a tune and ICT is seldom used in this subject.
99. Teaching is good in the junior classes, where skills are more systematically developed, and satisfactory in the infants. Strong features of the teaching are the good pace between different elements of the lesson; the emphasis given to singing in tune and with accurate pronunciation; and, the regular use of instruments in every lesson. Pupils are often additionally inspired by the promise of future performance, either through recording their music on tape or in actual concerts for an audience! This gives their work an added purpose. It also creates a climate in which pupils perform without inhibition and as individuals working in harmony within the group context. This significantly impacts on their personal as well as their social development. Many pupils volunteer to be in the school choir or to have some role in the next concert.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

100. Pupils achieve steadily to reach the standards expected at the ages of 7 and 11, as they did at the time of the last inspection. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good, they behave well, take part enthusiastically and follow instructions promptly. There are guidelines for teachers on what to teach and these ensure that all areas of the subject are covered. Pupils with special educational needs receive extra support and make good progress. For example, a Year 6 pupil was shown a different technique for striking a ball with a bat that was more suited to his particular learning needs. More able pupils respond well to the increasing levels of challenge in Year 6, although such provision is not as strong in all lessons. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make good progress in swimming and the vast majority of children are able to swim at least 25 metres.
101. By the age of 7, pupils repeat simple actions with control and co-ordination and are developing their ability to talk about the differences between their own and others' performance. For example, Year 1 pupils demonstrated a variety of ways of moving in and around hoops and described their own performances, suggesting improvements. However, such good opportunities to explore and explain movements are not always provided. By the age of eleven, pupils have a clear understanding of the effect of exercise on their bodies and give reasons why warming up is important. Their skills in catching and throwing are improving due to increased confidence in comparing and commenting on skills and techniques in their own work and that of others. In Year 6, for example, pupils suggested a range of techniques to improve their bouncing and catching skills in net and wall games.
102. Teaching is satisfactory overall and very good in Year 6. This is because here activities are well matched to pupils' learning needs and opportunities to evaluate and improve performance are skilfully used. In this class, pupils are encouraged to experiment and explore with pace and challenge. Leadership of the subject is sound. There is a wide range of extra curricular sporting activities which support the subject well, effective links are established with the local community in specialist coaching activities and additional resources are used to good effect across the school. The subject leader is aware of the need to monitor teaching more closely to pinpoint standards and has highlighted this as an area for development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

103. By the ages of 7 and 11 years, pupils reach the levels expected in Sunderland schools, as they did at the time of the last inspection. Pupils make sound progress in developing their knowledge of Christianity and of other world faiths. However, opportunities are missed to enable them to reflect upon their own beliefs and values, in response to these studies. Subject leadership is satisfactory. The subject leader has produced helpful guidelines that enable the staff to know what to teach but does not check how well pupils are learning in other classes. Consequently, she is not aware, for example, that pupils spend too much time copying work rather than expressing their own ideas.

104. Infant pupils make good progress where the teaching is more creative. For example, in Year 1, two pupils enthusiastically played the parts of Buddha and the King in an impromptu scene. In it, the King said, 'If you stay with me, you will live forever', but Buddha replied, 'I am too rich, I need to see how the poor live'. This was a rich learning experience, enjoyed by the whole class and having a moral that the pupils could appreciate, 'Be aware of the suffering of others'. In the junior classes, progress is satisfactory. By Year 6, pupils have a secure understanding of faiths they have studied. They have good recall of the visits that they have made to such places as Bede's World and Durham Cathedral. However, such first hand experiences are rare. They are strictly limited to the Christian faith, with no visits made to, or visitors coming from, other faiths.
105. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from additional help and simplified tasks, such as drawing pictures rather than writing down their ideas. This helps them to make sound progress. The few pupils with English as an additional language also make satisfactory progress. These pupils are paired with willing partners who help them to understand the questions and discuss ideas. However, the tasks set for more able pupils are not sufficiently challenging to extend their learning to the full. For example, finding information from books and CD-ROMs is rarely undertaken.
106. On balance, the quality of the teaching is satisfactory throughout the school. The teaching of religious facts is good, enabling pupils to gain a sound understanding of world faiths. Religious education is used well to develop themes that influence pupils' attitudes about the roles that they have in their own school community. For example, 'Living according to rules' is studied and practised in the school's own 'Golden Rules'. Stories, parables and biographies are used effectively to provide moral guidance, such as to help those who suffer. Learning about other faiths brings understanding and tolerance that fosters respect for those who hold views different from their own. In these ways, the subject helps to create the climate for behaving, relating and learning together, which are features of the school. However, pupils are not encouraged sufficiently to reflect on the underlying meaning of a faith and the way it influences peoples' way of life and shapes their values.