

INSPECTION REPORT

Branton First School

Branton, Powburn, Alnwick

LEA area: Northumberland

Unique reference number: 122188

Headteacher: Mrs A Lloyd-Harris

Reporting inspector: Mrs M Warburton
22522

Dates of inspection: 10th – 11th February 2003

Inspection number: 248327
Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Branton Powburn Alnwick Northumberland
Postcode:	NE66 4JF
Telephone number:	01665 578225
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Appropriate authority:	Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Andrew Hindhaugh
Date of previous inspection:	08/12/1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22522	Mrs M Warburton	Registered inspector	Mathematics Geography History Music	What sort of school is it? How High are Standards? The Schools Results and Pupils Achievements. Pupils Attitudes, Values and Personal Development. How Well are Pupils Taught? What should the Schools do to Improve further?
19431	Mr J Holmes	Lay inspector		How Well does the School Care for its Pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
32233	Mr A Dent	Team inspector	Science Information Technology Religious Education	How Good are the Curricular and other Opportunities offered to Pupils?
32283	Mr D Goodchild	Team inspector	English Art Design Technology Physical Education	How Well the School is led and managed?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Branton First School is a very small school, much smaller than most schools, and is situated in the tiny hamlet of Branton, close to the small village of Powburn in north Northumberland. There are currently sixteen pupils on roll, aged from four to nine, most of whom are transported to the school from local farms, hamlets and the village. The school has part time nursery provision for pupils from the age of four, and currently three nursery pupils attend. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average, and the percentage who have special educational needs is well below. No pupil has a statement of special educational need. There are no pupils with English as an additional language, and all are of British heritage. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is broadly average but the full range is represented.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school where there are many strengths. Pupils make good progress and attain standards that are above average. There is a very positive culture within the school and parents feel privileged that their children can attend. The teaching is consistently of a very good standard, and the newly appointed headteacher, supported well by all staff and a committed Governing Body, is enthusiastic and ready to continue to move the school forward. Although the unit costs are high in such a small school, given the very good provision that it makes and the standards achieved, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Very good teaching results in pupils making good progress and achieving standards that are often above national expectations.
- Provision for pupils' social and moral development is excellent, resulting in excellent relationships and behaviour, and very good attitudes to learning.
- The school provides a very good range of learning opportunities for all pupils that stimulate their interest and enjoyment.
- The school is a very caring environment where pupils are well known and individual academic and personal needs are met.
- The newly appointed headteacher has developed a good relationship with parents and the Governing Body and ensures that the school's aims and values are reflected in its' work and that there is a commitment to improvement that is shared by all.

What could be improved

- Strategic planning, including planning for the longer term direction for the school.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Improvement since the last inspection in December 1997 has been good. The strengths identified in the previous report have been maintained, and the standards that pupils achieve are now higher in many subjects. Teaching is better. It is never less than good and there are now many more very good lessons. Most of the issues raised in the previous report have been solved. Planning and provision for the youngest children in the school are now good, having been recently developed well by the new teacher in that class. Policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects and give good support and guidance to teachers. The assessment of pupils' work is good in most subjects, and is used to plan for their progress. Teachers' planning is very good and includes clear learning targets that are closely matched to pupils' individual needs. Provision for physical education is now satisfactory. The issue relating to the strategic management of the school is still in need of further work because the

headteacher, class teacher and several Governors are new to their roles. However they have made a good start in getting to know the school and in identifying its strengths and areas for development.

STANDARDS

Because of the very small numbers of pupils in each cohort, national comparisons are not relevant or reliable. There is a wide range of attainment when children start in the nursery. In the Foundation Stage they make satisfactory progress so that when they transfer into Year 1 most achieve the early learning goals for children of that age. Throughout Years 1 – 4 pupils make good progress and their achievement is good, so that by the end of Year 2, many attain standards that are above national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics, and when they leave the school at the age of nine achievement is progressing well towards the expectations for eleven-year-olds in the core subjects of English and mathematics. In science standards and progress are satisfactory in Year 2 and Year 4. In history and geography and religious education pupils make good progress throughout the school and their achievement is good, above national expectations. In all other subjects of the curriculum pupils make steady progress and their achievement is satisfactory.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils really enjoy school, they are fully involved in lessons and other activities and are enthusiastic, showing great interest in their own work and that of others.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Excellent. No oppressive behaviour was observed during the inspection. Pupils are extremely polite and self-disciplined.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. There is an ethos of mutual respect between all adults and pupils in the school. All pupils get on well together with the older ones helping the younger without any prompting. There are high levels of respect for the feelings of others and a clear understanding of the impact of their actions on others.
Attendance	Well below the national average, but matches other small schools in the area. It is adversely affected in bad weather when pupils from remote areas find it difficult to get to school. The small numbers on roll mean that any epidemics have a significant impact on attendance figures, as does the absence of one pupil.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Much of the teaching is very good. There were no unsatisfactory lessons during the inspection and all teaching observed was at least good. Teaching in English and mathematics is very good, and the basic skills of speaking and listening, reading, writing and number are taught very well. The needs of all pupils are met through the provision of tasks that are well matched to extend what they already know and can do, and through teachers' high expectations of what they will achieve. A particular strength in the teaching is the excellent relationships that exist throughout the school, and pupils respond very well to these, working hard and wanting to do well. Time is used well and the pace of learning is brisk, enabling pupils to make the good progress that they do.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum provided for pupils is both broad and balanced and the quality and range of learning opportunities provided at the school are very good. Planning is now more consistent than at the time of the last inspection and the national strategies for numeracy and literacy are well established. Provision for extra-curricular activities is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision provided for pupils with special educational needs is very good, as is equality of access and opportunity for pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall provision for personal development is very good. Provision for social and moral development is excellent and is a strength of the school, whilst spiritual development is good and cultural development is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The school is a very caring environment where all pupils are known very well and their individual academic and personal needs are met.

The school has a good partnership with parents, who are very supportive and appreciative of all that it offers their children. The community contributes most effectively to learning and the liaison with other schools, including the middle school is good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The newly appointed headteacher has a clear understanding of the needs of the school and has put in place management structures that are appropriate to the size of this small establishment. She is supported well by the other staff, all of whom work effectively together.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Although many Governors are new they are very supportive, meet on a regular basis and fulfil all statutory requirements. As yet they have not secured a longer term strategic vision for the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Individual pupil performance is regularly monitored and appropriate targets are set. The headteacher, staff and Governors have a good sense of the strengths and the areas for development of the school.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The headteacher is persuasive in raising funds that are used to benefit the pupils. The school makes good use of the resources available and provides good value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They find the school approachable and feel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The amount of work that children get to do at

<p>privileged to have their children there.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• They are delighted with pupils' behaviour.• They recognise that their children like school.• They are kept well informed about their children's progress and are happy with the standards they achieve.• They think that the school is well led and managed.	<p>home, which some parents feel is too much.</p>
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The inspection team agrees with the positive views expressed by the parents. The school makes good use of homework to support pupils' learning and the team judges that the amount given is appropriate for pupils of this age.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When children start in the nursery their attainment is around that expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress in the foundation stage and most achieve the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning by the end of the reception year, although fewer reach them in the musical aspects of creative development. Throughout Years 1 to 4 pupils make good progress, and overall achieve standards that are above national expectations. This is better than at the time of the last inspection.
2. Because of the extremely small number of pupils in each cohort, any comparisons made with national results or with similar schools in the tests at the end of Key Stage 1 are not relevant or reliable as each pupil accounts for a significant proportion of the whole. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in English, mathematics, geography, history and religious education are above the national expectation and that all pupils, including those who have special educational needs, make good progress. In all other subjects standards match national expectations and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The school sets challenging targets for all pupils.
3. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are good. By the ages of seven and nine pupils are confident, articulate speakers who listen attentively. In reading and writing pupils make good progress. They read fluently and accurately and by the age of nine write complex stories well, showing good attention to detail, language and structure, but the good presentation of their work in English is not always seen consistently in other subjects. In mathematics pupils have good number skills. By the age of seven they use mental addition and subtraction to solve problems and know the place value of tens and units. By the time they are nine higher attainers recall multiplication facts from the times tables up to times nine, and use a range of strategies to solve problems. In science pupils in Year 2 can make a working electrical circuit using bulbs and buzzers. By the end of Year 4 higher attainers achieve standards that are above average, for example when investigating soil and rocks.
4. In history, geography and religious education all pupils make good progress because the curriculum provided is well matched to their interests, the teaching is good and pupils have very good attitudes to learning. Pupils also make good progress in dance, but progress in gymnastics is only satisfactory because pupils are not given enough opportunities to evaluate their work and to think about how it could be improved.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

5. Pupils really enjoy coming to school and have very good attitudes to learning. They work very well together and relationships are excellent with very high levels of trust and respect between pupils and teachers. Pupils are friendly and confident in class and around the school; they are

articulate and talk easily with adults. Pupils listen to teachers and show interest when others are speaking, responding well to questions. Questions are answered sensibly and pupils contribute confidently in discussions. The schools aims to develop self-confidence and work co-operatively in groups are fully promoted.

6. The school has an act of collective worship at assembly each day and the pupils contribute in a mature manner by writing their own assembly and prayers. Older pupils wrote about caring and sharing, especially with those less fortunate, and to think of others. The pupils had time to reflect on the feeling of others who were less fortunate than them and the reflective time leads to good spiritual development. The school has been involved with raising money for Water Aid to raise money to buy a pump in Africa and pupils have responded enthusiastically to this. Assemblies make a strong contribution to the excellent moral and social development.
7. Pupils' behaviour is excellent both in class and around school. There was no oppressive behaviour observed in the school during the inspection. There has been no exclusion in the past year. Pupils display an excellent level of self-discipline and any problems are discussed. The ethos of the school promotes respect and understanding of the impact of actions on others, giving excellent moral development.
8. Pupils' personal development is very good overall. Pupils of all ages take responsibility for some small aspect of school life, for example giving out books or equipment at the start of lessons.. At lunchtime they enjoy a family style mealtime with older pupils thoughtfully looking after the younger ones. The lunchtime begins with grace and is an orderly calm period of the day. Pupils help in school by collecting and giving out the milk at breaktime, and tidying up after lessons. Pupils are consulted about the class rules and they have a good understanding of the school rules that they helped to draw up. The interaction between the older and younger pupils both at lunchtime and in class leads to excellent social development. The cultural development is very good with pupils having experiences to allow them to understand local culture and they have good links with an African school.
9. Attendance is well below national average and therefore unsatisfactory, although it matches other small schools in the area. Some of the pupils live in remote locations that are affected during bad weather making attendance at school very difficult. Due to the small numbers on role the attendance is also badly affected if there are any epidemics as each pupil represents seven per cent of the school population.. The level of unauthorised absence is nil as parents are good at notifying school of absence. The school has written to parents to discourage time off during term time for holidays. Punctuality is good with registration starting promptly at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

10. Much of the teaching is very good. It is good in the foundation stage and very good in Years 1 to 4. All teaching observed during the inspection was at least good.
11. The consistently good and very good teaching is the main factor in the good progress that pupils make. The teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good, meets pupils' individual needs and includes good support given by the special needs assistant.
12. The basic skills in literacy and numeracy are taught very well. The teachers have very good understanding of the national strategies and use these well to plan lessons and activities that challenge pupils to improve their skills. Good questioning and explanations help pupils to make

good progress. This was seen in a very good lesson in Year 1 where the teacher's questions and explanations helped pupils to understand the aspects of a play script. Similarly in an excellent numeracy lesson, challenging questions enabled pupils in Years 3 and 4 to rapidly extend their ability when working with numbers.

13. The very good teaching in history, geography and religious education is characterised by teachers' very good subject knowledge, high expectations and the provision of interesting tasks and activities that motivate the pupils. In a Year 3 and 4 religious education lesson for example, the teacher had very good knowledge of the flight out of Egypt, and pupils carefully considered what it would be like to be a child at that time, and to wrote a thoughtful prayer asking for God's help. Good teaching in music, information and communication technology and physical education is under-pinned by secure planning, teacher enthusiasm and clear expectations, as seen in a Year 1 and 2 dance lesson where pupils made very good progress because of the clear guidance and demonstrations that were given.
14. One of the main factors contributing to the high quality teaching seen is the very good balance that teachers maintain between challenge and support for pupils. Expectations are invariably high but teachers ensure that pupils have sufficient confidence and self- esteem to try things without fear of criticism when they do not get the expected answer. Relationships are excellent and there are very high levels of respect between all adults in the school and the pupils. This makes a very positive contribution to pupils' attitudes and their learning. Pupils are very well known, so individual support is appropriately targeted. Very occasionally teachers intervene to question or support pupils too early, before they have had time to think things out for themselves. However in almost all lessons the clarity of the intended learning, which is shared with pupils at an individual level and matched to each pupil's needs, ensures that they make progress in their learning that is at least good.

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

15. The quality and range of learning opportunities for such a small school are very good. The school provides a good, broad and balanced curriculum that complies fully with the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Activities are both challenging and well differentiated for different abilities and ages within each class. Interesting topics such as investigating rocks and soils, and the use of the outdoor environment around the school help to bring the curriculum to life for pupils.
16. The school provides very effectively for pupils' personal and social education, including health education. The school is currently working towards accreditation as a 'Healthy School' and incorporates citizenship into the curriculum. All pupils' individual needs are very well catered for and this applies equally to those with special educational needs. These pupils make very good progress and learn most effectively because they are given work that is matched well to their interests and this motivates them.
17. This is a tiny school in terms of pupil numbers, but the very caring family atmosphere it has created makes a very positive contribution to pupils' learning, because planning is based on a close understanding of each individual's needs.
18. The long, medium and short term planning ensures that children between the ages of five and nine spend a suitable amount of time on each National Curriculum subject and religious

education and citizenship. There are very few extra-curricular activities at the end of the school day due to transport arrangements in a rural school like this. However, the school does manage to provide a good range of other experiences that give an opportunity to develop independence and self-reliance. These include opportunities to work with professional musicians and visits to theatres, the library and environmental centres.

19. Detailed planning means that lessons are very carefully structured so that no time is wasted and all pupils work at the appropriate level for their age and abilities. Planning was not a strong feature of the previous inspection but now there is clearly more consistency to meet the needs of the National Curriculum. Detailed medium term planning includes learning objectives, lesson activities, programmes of study and learning outcomes and this ensures that all aspects of the curriculum are fully covered.
20. The effectiveness of strategies for teaching literacy skills in the school is very good and for numeracy skills is good. Both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are well established in school. Individual short-term targets are shared with the pupils and they have a termly target sheet in the front of their literacy books. Good use is made of opportunities to develop literacy skills in other subjects, for example in poetry written to accompany work in science on sedimentary rocks and in a geography display of endangered species.
21. There is clear policy guidance for equal access and opportunity to the curriculum for all pupils. For example, all pupils had a speaking part in the Christmas play, written especially for them. All pupils have equal access to the school's computers and to other activities such as swimming. The match of work to pupils' ages and levels of attainment in the two mixed-age classes is planned carefully to ensure that there is no repetition. Effective cross-curricular links are frequently made and this helps to provide good overall coverage of the National Curriculum and consolidation of pupils' learning.
22. The constructiveness of relationships with partner institutions is good and pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Care is taken to make the transition from this school to the middle school as smooth as possible and good links are made with other schools in the cluster. The pupils work with pupils at other schools in the cluster to develop confidence and friendship groups.
23. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is very good. For example the school recently had a visit from the local vicar to talk to the pupils about the context of the Bible in religious education. A large wildlife area has been created close to the school for the benefit of and use by the pupils. When it is complete it will have a pond with a jetty, two large lakes for waterfowl, a large wooded area with trees chosen by the pupils and even an otter holt. The company involved has created access in the form of a bridge for the school. This is an exciting development for the school and has great potential for enriching the pupils' learning and investigatory work.
24. The quality of the school's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Pupils' spiritual development is good and is well promoted through religious education and in collective worship. Music is used well in assemblies where aspects of it are discussed and the choice is appropriate to the theme. Music is also effectively used to create a mood in other lessons, for example in a dance lesson when the pupils are creating snowmen. The linking of collective worship to a theme is effective in encouraging deeper reflection by pupils. In all lessons observed, praise and enthusiasm create a positive ethos that helps to make pupils more reflective learners. Teachers take appropriate opportunities through the curriculum

to promote spiritual development, for example in the development of themes such as concern for endangered species where pupils are able to produce thoughtful and sensitive poetry describing their feelings. In an assembly pupils are confident to express their feelings in front of others about private matters like special toys and teddies. There is no embarrassment and all pupils show genuine care and consideration for the feelings and views of others.

25. The provision for pupils' moral development is excellent. There is a very strong emphasis on showing care and consideration for others. Teachers take every opportunity to raise the awareness of good attitudes and the school's behaviour policy is well known to pupils and parents. All pupils clearly understand the difference between right and wrong. Affirmation posters on the school walls seek to remind everyone of positive ways to behave towards each other. Registration at the start of the school day involves the whole school together and this sets the tone and positively reinforces the school's ethos.
26. Pupils' social development is excellent. Older pupils show genuine affection and care for younger pupils. They sit with them at lunchtime, set a good example by eating and talking sensibly and help them to cut their food if necessary. Pupils bring chairs for adults, without being asked, show respect for visitors and make reasoned judgements showing a respect for the interests and feelings of others as well as their own. They exercise independence and responsibility by choosing sensibly where to sit and which prayer should be said for grace at lunchtime. Theatre and environmental studies centre visits and a variety of sporting, musical and artistic activities, including a weekly swimming trip to Alnwick all help to promote excellent social development. The ethos of the school encourages pupils to be caring and support each other and this is further reinforced through the need for pupils of different ages to work together in class. Pupils are given good opportunities to take responsibility. For example at the start of a history lesson two pupils explained in detail to another pupil all that they had learnt in the previous lesson when he had been absent.
27. There is very good provision for pupils' cultural and multi-cultural development. Music and art are evident throughout the school and teachers effectively encourage pupils to reflect upon them, for example in assemblies and in drama. Reflective poems as part of a display on endangered species and sedimentary rocks are clear examples of this. A display of sculpture including books, statues, pictures and photographs is a clear indication that the pupils have discussed and appreciated both local sculpture, for example The Angel of the North, and that of Greece.
28. An interesting and exciting development is the forging of a link with a school in The Gambia. The headteacher is to visit the school with a reciprocal visit in June. Since the last inspection the school has had a link with a school in Chirapatre and villages throughout the world through the 'On The Line' project, enhancing their understanding of different ways of life in other countries..

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

29. The working environment is safe and secure and pupils of all ages are supervised at work and play. The building is clean and well maintained and all of the statutory safety checks on equipment and materials used in the school are carried out. All the required health and safety policies and procedures are in place.

30. Pupils are known as individuals and there are good procedures for monitoring and supporting their personal development. Good child protection procedures are in place, and the named person has had relevant training. All staff are all aware of the procedures.
31. The school has excellent procedures to promote good behaviour and also to monitor and eliminate oppressive behaviour. The school monitors attendance and encourages pupils to attend school although it does not have a formal written attendance policy. The occasional parent who fails to notify the school of non-attendance is contacted on the first day of absence.
32. The pupils are supervised well at lunchtime in the school with all the pupils having lunch together whether they have a school meal or bring a packed lunch. The outdoor facilities for pupils to use at break and lunchtimes are good. The school promotes a caring family atmosphere in line with its aims.
33. The school's tracking of the personal development of pupils is very good. The staff know the pupils well and respond to individual needs. Assessment of academic progress is good, particularly in English and mathematics where pupils are regularly assessed and their progress monitored so that appropriate targets can be set. Records are detailed and accurate, and give a clear picture of pupils' progress over time.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

34. The school's relationship with parents is very good. Parents consider that they are privileged to have their children in the school. The responses from parents who replied to the questionnaire sent out prior to the inspection indicated overwhelming support for the school with all questions except three showing 100% agreement. Over 70% of parents who replied strongly agreed that the pupils enjoyed school and that they felt comfortable about approaching the school. They believe that the school is well led and managed, that their children are expected to work hard and that parents are kept well informed. The inspection team agreed fully with the positive views of parents.
35. The one area that parents indicated some concern was the question of children getting the right amount of work at home. From the parents meeting some parents felt the level of homework was too much. The school does not have a homework policy but the inspection team found that the amount of homework given was appropriate for the age of the pupils, and was used well to support learning.
36. The information to parents about the children's progress is good. Parent's consultation evenings are held twice each year with a written report in the summer term. The reports give parents a clear view of how well their children know, understand and do things, and also include information on each child's personal development. The reports have appropriate targets, which are discussed with parents at the consultation evenings. The attendance at consultation evenings is very good.
37. Parents are invited to attend functions, which are held for the school community, some to raise funds and others as social events. Parents are invited to attend the open assemblies that are held twice each term. The school sends out newsletters and information each term on topics to be covered. An open door policy exists with parents happy to approach school. The school has a good information booklet for parents that include details of the curriculum in each subject. It also has information on the school rules and general information useful to parents. The

governors' annual report to parents fulfils requirements. The school's relationship with parents is very positive.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

38. Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has very recently been appointed from the position of acting headteacher. The school's aims are detailed within the school brochure and provide clear educational direction. These aims and values are very evident in the daily life of the school and are reflected in the work of the headteacher and staff. This is instrumental in providing a calm, orderly and supportive learning environment. The positive ethos within the school supports good relationships and attainment and ensures that all pupils have equal access to the opportunities offered. Despite a period of uncertainty and change key issues from the last inspection have been addressed and improvements to the curriculum and to the building have been made.
39. The headteacher understands the needs of the school and has put in place management structures appropriate to the size and complexity of the organisation. The work of the teaching and non-teaching staff is managed efficiently. There is appropriate allocation of curricular and other responsibilities between herself and the other teacher. The staff work closely together in the planning and teaching of the curriculum to fully meet the needs of individual pupils. Through this close co-operation the headteacher is able to monitor and evaluate planning. Staffing within the school has been through a period of change, and the school is now in a position to implement fully performance management and begin performance reviews for staff.
40. The role of the secretary is well developed. She is familiar and competent in the use of management information systems in effectively carrying out her administrative and financial role. The last county audit identified no issues of concern. The secretary also fulfils a role as a part time teaching assistant and is supportive of the school in assisting in the supervision of pupils at playtime, lunchtime and in extra-curricular activities.
41. The school now has all curricular policies and schemes of work in place. This represents an improvement on the previous inspection. Other statutory policies are also in place which establish the framework for the health, safety, care and protection of the pupils. However a policy on attendance has yet to be established. Policies were developed by staff and in consultation with the governing body, and review dates are in place for each policy.
42. Arrangements for pupils with special educational needs are fully established. Individual education plans are maintained with targets for development set and review dates in place. Appropriate consultation with parents and external agencies are organised. The school secretary in her role as teaching assistant provides additional support and help for pupils.
43. The accommodation is small but is maintained to a high standard and managed efficiently. Classrooms are bright with a range of attractive displays. The space between the classrooms is used effectively for physical education and when linked with a classroom there is sufficient space for large apparatus. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Appropriate maintenance and development work has been carried out including replacing windows, improving access for pupils with disability and internal decoration.
44. The school grounds are tidy and well maintained. There is a playground which is used for small games activities and extensive playing fields. A wild life area supports pupils' science and

environmental work. Extensive work is in progress in further developing adjacent land as an attractive wild life study area through very good links with a local company.

45. There are sufficient learning resources to support the teaching of all subjects. Resources for early years' creative and physical development have been developed and some large apparatus for physical education has been acquired. This represents an improvement on the last inspection. Resources within the classroom, including books, are well organised and maintained, and are presented in attractive displays that are used well by pupils to support their learning. In addition to its own book resources the school also makes use of the county library services to supplement study material on specific topics. Each classroom has a computer and there is evidence it is used across the curriculum.
46. A school improvement plan is in place which covers one year only. This was appropriate for the school as it progressed through a period of change. Areas for development were identified through a process of school evaluation. However, there are omissions within the school improvement plan that need to be included so that it provides a useful and cohesive framework for development across the whole spectrum of school life, namely:
 - There is no strategic planning in place that extends beyond the current year
 - Costing of initiatives is not included to secure effective financial planning.
 - Success criteria are not expressed in terms of raising pupil standards.
 - The timing and monitoring of developments are not included.
47. The need to develop strategic planning remains a key issue from the previous inspection.
48. The headteacher, chair of governors and the secretary are aware of the need to get the best value for pupils. In this they are effective. The headteacher is particularly persuasive in raising extra funds for the benefit of the pupils, as in the contribution made by local industry in establishing a wild life area. The governors' finance committee is now in place and is aware of the need to develop its role in monitoring the school's budget. The governing body now has a full complement of governors and each governor has responsibility for an area of the curriculum. The governors have a good sense of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are appreciative of the high profile the school has in the community. They have participated in school self-evaluation of resources and policies and come into school on a regular basis to observe and evaluate teaching. The Chair of Governors is supportive of the headteacher and they meet on a regular basis.
49. The management systems now in place, dedicated staff, supportive governors and good leadership from the headteacher indicate that the school has the capacity to improve further and remain an effective school that provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to maintain the current strengths and to continue to improve, the headteacher, staff and governors should work together to;

Improve strategic planning so that:

- there is a long term vision that extends beyond the current year and provides clear direction to the work of the school
- there is more precise costing of initiatives within the one year plan so that financial planning is secure and is linked more clearly to developments
- success criteria are expressed in terms of pupils' achievement
- there is greater precision in terms of the monitoring , evaluation and timescales of developments.

(Paragraphs 46 and 47)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

18

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

14

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	11	6	0	0	0	0
Percentage	6	61	33	0	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		16
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y4

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		1

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.4
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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	0	2	2

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	N/a	N/a	N/a
	Girls	2	2	2
	Total	2	2	2
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (50)	100 (50)	100 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	N/a	N/a	N/a
	Girls	2	2	2
	Total	2	2	2
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (50)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	14	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	6.3
Average class size	6

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	2.1
Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	
Number of pupils per FTE adult	

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
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	£
Total income	98,313
Total expenditure	96,658
Expenditure per pupil	5087
Balance brought forward from previous year	7602
Balance carried forward to next year	9257

Recruitment of teachers

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

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.9
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	19
Number of questionnaires returned	13

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	77	23	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	38	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	46	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	62	23	15	0	0
The teaching is good.	62	38	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	69	31	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	23	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	31	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	62	38	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	69	31	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	38	0	0	8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	54	38	8	0	0

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

50. At the time of the inspection there were four children in the foundation stage, three of whom were of nursery age and attend part time. Children start full time in the reception class in the September following their fourth birthday.
51. Provision for children in the foundation stage is satisfactory. The development of the foundation stage provision has been a recent priority for the school, following the appointment of a new teacher who at the time of the inspection was employed on a temporary contract. She has worked tirelessly to improve the curriculum and resources, and has developed and improved her own knowledge and expertise through attendance at courses and other professional development. As a result good improvements have been made. Teaching for these children is good because the teacher has a very good understanding of their needs. She plans appropriate activities that help them to get off to a good start and make progress that is at least satisfactory and often good. Provision for the foundation stage was a key issue in the previous report and these recent developments have ensured that it has been addressed and that planning and provision are now better than they were then.
52. When the children start the school their attainment is broadly average, although the full range is represented. In the areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development children make steady progress and are well on the way to achieving the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year. In personal and social development attainment on entry is slightly better than the other areas of learning with more children attaining average levels and some higher. The school places a high priority on this area and children make good progress so that when they start in Year 1 standards are higher than average. In creative development fewer children start at the expected level and fewer achieve the Early Learning Goals, particularly in the musical aspects, because they do not have enough opportunities to experiment and explore the sounds that instruments can make.
53. Planning for the foundation Stage is now good and is based on national guidance. All areas are suitably covered, and there are clear learning objectives for all children that ensure progression. An appropriate emphasis on developing confidence and self-esteem is evident for the nursery children, which is in keeping with the school's caring approach. The classroom environment has been recently improved to accommodate all areas of learning, and this has been achieved after a great deal of thought and re-organisation, given that there are also Year 1, and often Year 2 pupils in the class. Resources have improved, and are now adequate to cover all areas of learning, although some that have been ordered for outdoor play have yet to be received by the school.
54. Good assessment procedures have been put in place, which give a good basis for planning for future progression. Given the recent focus on the development of the foundation stage, the commitment of all staff to implement new approaches and the further training that is planned, there are clear indications that provision is likely to improve.

Personal, social and emotional development

55. Teaching in this area of learning is good and children make good progress. They are happy and have good relationships, co-operating well together. They tidy up willingly, showing responsibility for the equipment. In their interactions with adults and older pupils they demonstrate confidence and maturity. At break and lunch times they play happily with each other and with pupils of all ages. They are respectful and observe the school rules and routines. In lessons and around the school they are provided with many opportunities to further their personal and social development and they respond well to these, growing in self-esteem. Even the youngest children introduce themselves to visitors, converse confidently with them and ask for help when needed.

Communication, language and literacy

56. Children are very happy to talk about what they are doing and they communicate well using sentences and asking questions. They make good attempts at writing, initially using marks and symbols to represent letters and words, for example when recording their ideas on a white board. By the end of the reception year most children write a sentence clearly and form their letters correctly. They know the upper and lower case letters. Children in the nursery enjoy looking at books and talk about the story. They know that print conveys meaning and follow the words on a page with their finger as they 'tell' the story. By the end of the reception year most recognise the letters of the alphabet and the sounds they make. They accurately read words and sentences in their reading books and recognise words that rhyme. They know the characters in the reading scheme and talk about the stories. Teaching in this area of learning is good.

Mathematical development

57. The teaching is good because of the good range of activities that promote learning in this area. Children in the nursery count five objects and recognise the numerals for 1 – 5. Some pupils accurately record these. They are beginning to understand subtraction by counting the number of skittles left when they have knocked some down, or the number of currant buns left when some have been bought. When playing in the class 'Post Office' they use coins to 'buy' things, beginning to recognise the value of the coins. The children's learning is enhanced substantially by these practical activities, enabling them to develop mathematical concepts and language. By the end of the reception year most children order the numbers 1-10 and accurately count ten objects. Higher attaining children count up to twenty. They have a sound grasp of addition, and understand that subtraction means to take away. They recognise and make simple repeating patterns with shapes, know the names of simple two-dimensional shapes such as circles and squares and can name the days of the week in order. They are beginning to understand and use mathematical language such as 'heavier', 'lighter' and 'behind'.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

58. By the end of the reception year children talk about their homes, transport and places they have visited. They know the difference between old and new things. They have investigated materials and accurately describe things that are hard, soft or transparent. They know that objects can be made of different things such as wool or plastic. Through planting seeds they have observed how things grow, and understand that plants need water in order to grow. They have made cakes, puppets and clay pots and have good knowledge about Christian festivals such as Easter, making cards to celebrate the occasion. Throughout the foundation stage their

learning is enhanced by the use of role-play such as the class post office and this makes a very positive contribution to their learning. The good teaching and activities provided in this area of learning enable children to develop an early understanding of some of the basic aspects of science, history, geography and religious education.

Physical development

59. Little evidence of this area of learning was seen during the inspection and it is not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching. Children's records indicate that standards are consistent with expectations. Observation of children at playtime indicates that some aspects are good. Children control a ball well with their feet, aim it accurately into a net and run and jump with good control. In classroom activities such as sand play and skittles they manipulate equipment with satisfactory control. Some children join in with Year 1 and 2 pupils for dance activities and in doing so show an appropriate awareness of space and of other people, refining and controlling their movements well. There have been limited opportunities for children to use large outdoor play equipment such as bikes and climbing frames but this will be addressed when the resources on order are received by the school.

Creative development

60. Teaching in this area is satisfactory. Children draw and paint pictures to a satisfactory standard. They use pencil, crayon and paint in their work. Nursery children explore materials such as play dough, manipulating it to create representations of things such as cakes or bread. All children have contributed to a collage of an octopus using tissue paper. They use their creative skills when making things such as clay pots and Easter cards. Throughout the foundation stage children enjoy singing, and join in with percussion instruments when working with the Key Stage 1 pupils. However there are fewer opportunities for them to explore the sounds that instruments make independently. They make good use of the role play area to develop imagination, for example when purchasing things from the class 'post office'.

ENGLISH

61. Standards in English are above the national expectations in Year 2. By the end of Year 4 pupils are well on track to achieve standards above the national expectation at the end of Year 6. This represents an improvement on the previous inspection. From an average starting base in Year 1 pupils make good progress in reading and writing by Year 2. By Year 4 pupils have made very good progress in reading and good progress in writing.
62. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are a strength within the school. All pupils demonstrated good listening habits during the inspection. They listen attentively to the teacher and respond appropriately when listening to each other, for example in assemblies. During lessons they listen carefully to teachers' instructions and explanations. In a dance lesson Year 1 and Year 2 pupils refined and improved their movements well in response to the teacher's direction. All pupils respond and express themselves with confidence. Year 2 pupils talk clearly and confidently about their weekend activities during assemblies and their likes and dislikes of reading books. They read very clearly from prepared writing and share ideas within lessons.
63. By the time they are nine pupils are confident and articulate in speaking and share their experiences and ideas well with adults and their peers. They adapt their speech to different audiences. In reading out a prepared speech on 'caring' to their fellow pupils they adopted

appropriate tone, expression and sensitivity. During interviews they are articulate in describing events and their schoolwork. At lunchtime they converse freely and fluently with their peers and adults and share and discuss their ideas with pupils during lesson time.

64. Standards in reading are good in Years 2 and 4. The school emphasises the teaching of reading through the literacy hour. Pupils in Year 2 read fluently with due recognition of sentences and with appropriate change of tone when reading the spoken word. There is a satisfactory level of word recognition and pupils attempt to build up unknown words. They identify terms such as title, author, illustrator and contents page and outline the story and identify the main characters well. Pupils in Year 2 have a positive attitude to reading and regularly take books home to read to parents and other adults. Their reading records contain positive comments from both staff and school, which help support their progress.
65. By the time they are nine pupils read with improving fluency and accuracy and interpret and predict storylines well. They read with expression identifying speech marks and paragraphs by changing the tone of their voice and pausing at the correct places. Favourite authors are named such as Quentin Blake and Dick King Smith and preferences expressed clearly, with good reasons given. They recognise the contents and index page and have a good understanding of the purpose of a glossary. Pupils have access to a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books that are classroom based and are attractively displayed. They also have access to the county's library van that visits the school regularly.
66. Standards of writing are good by the age of seven and nine. By the age of seven pupils consistently use full stops and capital letters in the right places. They write short stories with well-developed ideas and sequenced sentences. Creative writing includes some imaginative phrasing as in a description of a balloon flight where people are described as 'looking like insects.' Pupils use storyboards and planning sheets well to develop their ideas for stories and there is evidence of them beginning to check their work for mistakes. Pupils also compile lists, write instructions and reports in science, write postcards and label pictures and diagrams, showing a good understanding of writing for different purposes. They practise their handwriting and produce neat writing, in the context of their literacy work, which is consistent in size and formation and usually joined. Neatness in presentation is not always transferred to other areas of the curriculum.
67. By the age of nine pupils write more complex stories well. They use planning sheets effectively to identify setting, develop characters and work on opening sentences. Stories are extended with good use of paragraphs, chapters and speech marks. Punctuation is used appropriately and spellings are correct. They write for different purposes, for example instructions describing how to play nine men morris, letters of thanks following a visit by the vicar, constructing questionnaires, writing a report on swimming achievements, using information technology and labelling and recording plans in design technology. Writing is used effectively in other areas of the curriculum as in writing a description on Tudor fashion or writing a science report on sedimentary rocks in which a pupil wrote, 'I have many secrets in me – many dinosaurs have run over me.'
68. The standard of teaching is very good overall. It is characterised by good teacher knowledge and enthusiasm. Teachers know their pupils well and have a good understanding of their needs. This linked with good relationships and class management provides a supportive learning ethos in which pupils feel confident as learners. In a Year 1 lesson good subject knowledge and effective use of the literacy strategy helped pupils to understand the difference between story and play scripts and also their understanding and use of the spoken word in their

writing. Good questioning and explanation in a mixed Year 2, 3 and 4 lesson on ‘powerful verbs’ helped develop pupils’ understanding and they were able to replace ‘said’ with many examples. In both lessons the response of the pupils was very good because the teachers ensured that all pupils listened and were involved in the discussions. Good use is made of a teaching assistant and information technology to give appropriate support when necessary, particularly in work on word building and spelling.

MATHEMATICS

69. Standards achieved in mathematics are above the national expectation at the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 4 pupils are well on track to achieve above the national expectation at the end of Year 6. When pupils begin Year 1 usually they have attained the Early Learning Goal in mathematical development. All pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and usually attain standards that are above the national average in the statutory tests at the age of seven. Throughout Years 3 and 4 all pupils, including those who have special educational needs, continue to make good progress and their achievement is good overall, and often very good in number work. This is better than at the time of the previous inspection, and improvement since then has been good.
70. Pupils in Year 1 count accurately to thirty and know odd and even numbers to twenty. They add and subtract numbers within twenty and the higher attainers count in twos and tens correctly. Most pupils solve simple word problems accurately using their addition and subtraction skills. They work with measures to find out, for example, how many cups of water will fill a container, and use simple mathematical language correctly to describe the size or weight of an object or to compare it with another. They put in order the days of the week and the seasons. They recognise simple two-dimensional shapes such as a triangle or circle. By the end of Year 2 pupils count in steps of three, four and five to thirty. Higher attainers know the two, three, five and ten times tables well. They use mental addition and subtraction to accurately solve numerical problems expressed in words. They add on in tens and know multiples of ten, have quick mental recall of number bonds to thirty and have a good understanding of the place value of tens and units. They have a sound understanding of fractions including sixths, halves and quarters and can accurately use standard units of measurement including centimetres and kilograms.
71. Pupils in Year 3 multiply and divide by two and three with confidence and accuracy. They calculate amounts beyond £1 and give the correct change from £1. Higher attainers know the times tables up to times seven. They half and double numbers and investigate odd and even numbers up to 100 well. They know the names of two dimensional shapes such as a rhombus or hexagon. They have a good understanding of the language associated with shape such as face, vertices and edges, and correctly identify lines of symmetry. By Year 4 they investigate the nets of three dimensional shapes and calculate the perimeter of shapes such as triangles and rectangles. They order numbers to 10,000 and add and subtract hundreds, tens and units, using a good range of strategies. Higher attainers have quick recall of the times tables up to x 9, while lower attainers know up to x 6. Pupils measure accurately using millimetres. In both key stages there was little evidence available relating to the area of handling data, because this had not yet been covered in this academic year. However, the work that teachers have planned indicates that as in the other areas of mathematics it is likely that attainment will be above average.

72. Teaching in mathematics is very good in both key stages. There are very clear intended learning outcomes for every lesson that are shared with pupils at the start and re-visited at the end to check on the progress made. This means that pupils are clear about what they have learned and have pride in their achievements. The pace of learning is brisk and teachers have high expectations of their pupils. Tasks are well matched to prior learning and teachers are skilled in maintaining a very good balance between challenge and support. There is a very high level of focus on pupils' individual learning needs and this ensures that all pupils make very good progress. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and sometimes they are excellent. In one lesson for example a pupil demonstrated extremely high levels of concentration and perseverance and was highly motivated and encouraged by his success in counting on in sixes for the first time.
73. Leadership and management in mathematics are very good and this makes a positive contribution to the standards achieved. The headteacher and class teacher work closely together to plan the curriculum and to ensure that all areas are appropriately covered. They check pupils' progress, making adjustments as necessary. The curriculum is regularly reviewed to ensure that individual needs in the very small cohorts are met. The national numeracy strategy has been carefully implemented and good use is made of the guidance. Assessment in the subject is secure with each topic assessed after a unit of work has been completed. Resources for learning are satisfactory.

SCIENCE

74. As at the time of the previous inspection standards achieved at the age of seven are in line with the national expectation. Pupils of all ages make satisfactory progress and those with special educational needs make very good progress. It is not possible to make a judgement of the quality of teaching in science as no lessons were timetabled during the two days of the inspection. However discussions were held with staff and pupils and teachers' planning and work in books and on wall displays were scrutinised.
75. By the ages of seven and nine, pupils' work in science is of a satisfactory standard and is in line with national expectations. Some pupils achieve at a higher level than this, with the work of some of the Year 2 pupils consistently exceeding the expected standards. During the current science topic in Years 1 and 2 pupils correctly identify electrical appliances and make a working circuit using bulbs and buzzers. They interpret information on a circuit diagram and successfully design, make and test a similar device. Pupils in Year 4 correctly identify the properties of solids, liquids and gases. They know that there are different types of rocks and know the names of some of them. They correctly identify and name the different parts of a tree or a flower. When studying the human body, they name some of the bones and muscles. They have good knowledge of teeth. They have studied the movement of the earth, sun and moon, and explain clearly how shadows are formed. They have carried out some investigations, for example into how freezing water in rocks affects them. In this investigation they showed that they had a good understanding of how the expansion of the water when it froze caused the rocks to shatter, and they communicated their understanding well through writing and diagrams. They understand the principles of a fair test.
76. Planning for science is thorough and is carried out as a whole school activity. It identifies learning objectives and activities, learning outcomes and resources but does not always indicate assessment opportunities. Very clear cross-curricular links are made to art, design and technology, ICT, literacy, numeracy and geography. Planned over a rolling two-year cycle, it is

clear that in this way all pupils will have access to the full programme of study for science. An example of the effective cross-curricular links made could be seen in the Year 3 and 4 classroom as part of a good display of work for the rocks and soils topic. Pupils' writing described items found in the grounds and magnified many times. For example a piece of bark was found and magnified 200 times and the resulting picture described well. The pupils had written some good imaginative poems about sedimentary rocks.

77. The local environment is clearly used to enrich the science curriculum and this is of great benefit to pupils in enabling them to observe things first hand and to collect data and materials. In a topic on rocks and soils in Years 3 and 4 visits were made to the school grounds and to a local quarry in Powburn to collect samples. This enrichment to the curriculum should be further enhanced when a large wildlife area close to the school is fully developed to offer the potential to study the flora and fauna.
78. The subject is managed well with the headteacher and class teacher working in close partnership. Resources for the subject are used well and pupils make good use of new technology such as CD-ROM's, the Internet, the microscope and the school's digital camera to develop a more thorough understanding.

ART AND DESIGN, AND DESIGN TECHNOLOGY

79. Judgements in these subjects are based on analysis of pupils' work, scrutiny of displays around the school and discussion with pupils and teachers. These indicate that standards match the national expectations in both subjects by the age of seven and nine. Because of the school's timetable it was not possible to observe a lesson in either subject, therefore it is not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching.
80. Scrutiny of work and displays shows that pupils experience a satisfactory range of activities and develop an appropriate range of skills in both subjects. By the age of seven they have carefully used a range drawing materials including pencil, crayons, pastels, chalk and paints. For example pencil and crayon drawings are used effectively to illustrate a poem on a hot air balloon. These media combined with paints illustrate an attractive frieze on 'Katie Morag'. Year 1 used an art package in information technology to create patterns based on repeating shapes whilst Year 2 created a Christmas tree. In design technology they drew suitable designs for a 'pop-up' card and carefully labelled the diagram.
81. By the age of nine sketches and diagrams are more detailed as in diagrams for a 'pop-up' card in which they designed and made a paper spring well. Other work in design includes designing a poster for a 'clean your teeth' campaign. Information technology is used effectively to create striking images of sandstone particles in science work. Pupils also use information technology to research into the work of famous sculptors such as Gormley and Rodin. This follows an 'artist in residence' visit linked to the development of a sculpture garden in the school grounds. Designs for this project are in the early stage of development but this work has the potential to make a valuable contribution to pupils' knowledge and appreciation of art. Pupils used various textiles and materials in a three dimensional collage work to create a good display of Tudor clothes. A range of drawing materials is used to illustrate work in other areas as in geography and history. However, a sketchbook is not used to compile and develop ideas and show progress over time and evidence that pupils evaluate and modify work in design technology, is limited.

82. Leadership and management of the subjects are good, with the headteacher and class teacher working together effectively to plan and deliver the curriculum. The school now has policies and schemes of work in place for both subjects, and the range of materials and resources available is satisfactory.

GEOGRAPHY

83. There were no geography lessons seen in Years 3 and 4 during the inspection and only one seen in Years 1 and 2. Discussions with staff, examination of planning documents and scrutiny of work and wall displays indicate that by the ages of seven and nine, standards are above national expectations. This is better than at the time of the last inspection.
84. Pupils make good progress throughout the school and those with special educational needs make very good progress as they have a lot of individual attention and are presented with challenging activities. In Year 2 pupils accurately identify the physical and human features of a place and explain how an island is different from the mainland. They have a sound understanding of the similarities and differences between a Scottish island and Branton and are familiar with the correct terminology for describing those differences. Good links are made to other areas of the curriculum through the use of 'Katie Morag' stories. Activities are very well differentiated for different ages and abilities within the class. There was little evidence of work available during the two days of the inspection, but teachers' planning and the very good links seen with science in a topic about rocks, soil and weathering indicate that expectations were above those anticipated nationally.
85. Leadership and management of the subject are good. Planning is good and most appropriate to the needs of a very small school. A two-year whole school cycle allows all pupils to participate in learning from the programmes of study for geography. Learning resources are good and they are put to good use. For example a display of work to support the current topic includes a large wall map with pupils' work prominently displayed, books, atlases, the big book and a kilt.
86. The small amount of geography teaching in the one lesson seen during the inspection was very good. A skilful mixture of open and closed questioning allowed pupils to demonstrate their understanding as the lesson progressed. Subject knowledge and the teaching of basic concepts are both very good whilst the teacher's expectations of the pupils are high. Pupils' attitudes to geography are very good and their behaviour, personal development and relationships are all excellent. They pay very good attention to the teacher, organise themselves sensibly and concentrate on their work to complete the task in hand. They are very confident and communicate information freely, responding most positively in discussion sessions.

HISTORY

87. Standards in history are above the expected levels by the end of Year 2 and Year 4 and pupils achieve well. Only one lesson was seen in Year 3 and 4 and therefore judgements are based on a sample of pupils' work, discussions with staff and pupils, wall displays and the examination of teachers' planning documents. Standards have improved since the last inspection.
88. All pupils make good progress and those with special educational needs do very well. Pupils are suitably challenged and are given the opportunity to make very good progress. Younger pupils are clearly beginning to develop a good sense of what is old and a feeling of things from the

past. By the age of 9, pupils are beginning to gain some detailed knowledge and understanding of major periods in history. They are beginning to take some responsibility for their own learning and are growing in confidence to share this with others. For example at the start of a history lesson on Tudors in Year 3 and 4 two pupils clearly explained Tudor dress and accessories to a pupil who had been absent the week before, demonstrating a good grasp of Tudor times. They did this with confidence and sensitivity and this is evidence of very good teaching and learning. The pupils' attitudes to the subject are very positive throughout the school. They listen attentively, respond well to discussion and are clearly willing to give their opinions, based on good historical knowledge. Pupils work very well together and their behaviour is excellent. They readily transfer skills learned in other areas of the curriculum. For example, when talking about 'cutpurses' in Tudor times, one pupil mentioned that it was a compound word, recently the focus of a literacy lesson.

89. Teaching seen during the inspection was very good. Expectations are high, interesting and well-differentiated activities are provided and pupils respond with enthusiasm to an approach that fosters independent learning. Pupils are encouraged to research and find things out for themselves. Management of lessons is excellent and the use of time and resources is very good, whilst high expectation of pupil achievement promotes good progress. Teaching and learning in history lessons contribute very well to pupils' personal development and especially their social and cultural development. Planning in the subject is of good quality, with a two-year cycle to ensure that all pupils have access to the full programme of study.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

90. Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2, and when pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4 they are on target to meet the nationally expected standards at the end of Year 6. When pupils enter Year 1 most have achieved the Early Learning Goal in the area of knowledge and understanding of the world. Throughout the school they make steady progress and their achievement is satisfactory. This was the case at the time of the previous inspection.
91. Pupils in Year 1 know the hardware associated with a computer such as the monitor and the mouse. They use the mouse with good control to click on the different tools in an art package, for example a paintbrush or pencil, and to change the colour they are using. By the end of Year 2 they create good pictures, such as a Christmas tree. Information and communication technology is used well to support their work in other subjects. They independently use programmes that help them learn their tables or spellings, and confidently use the Internet to find information, for example when finding out about another small school in Northumberland to support their work in geography.
92. In Years 3 and 4 pupils continue to satisfactorily develop their skills and to use information and communication technology within other subjects. They have used the Internet to find out about the artist Anthony Gormley as part of a project on sculpture, and access CD Roms to gain information about the Tudors to support work in history. They develop good word processing skills, changing fonts and colours and moving text around within a document. They create pictures using an art package and drag images into their work to improve it. One particularly good feature observed was the use of the Intel microscope to look at soil samples which were then printed out for display in the school. Throughout the school pupils make good use of a digital camera to record events such as the visit of a dental nurse, and this contributes to their understanding of how information and communication technology can be used in a range of situations. Good use is made of programmes to support all pupils, including those who have

special educational needs, in developing literacy and numeracy skills, including reading, spelling and times tables.

93. It was only possible to observe one short session of information and communication technology during the inspection, but evidence gained through talking to pupils and looking at their work indicates that teaching is good. Pupils are enabled to develop the necessary skills to use computers independently and to use information and communication technology effectively to support their work in other subjects. Planning is very good, is based on the national guidance, and includes precise target for all pupils. In the short session observed the good support given and challenge provided by the task enabled the pupil involved to make good progress. The leadership and management of the subject are good because the headteacher and staff work effectively together to ensure that pupils make steady progress in their learning and systematically develop their skills through a range of interesting activities.

MUSIC

94. Standards in music are in line with the national expectation and pupils' achievement is good. Whilst most pupils have achieved the early learning goals in creative development when they enter Year 1 there is a weakness in the musical element of this area of learning. Throughout the school pupils make good progress, as they did at the time of the last inspection.
95. In Key Stage 1 pupils sing songs they know enthusiastically and in tune, with an awareness of beat and rhythm. They join in with the actions and identify the long and short sounds they hear. They count a steady beat correctly and move in time to the beat. They accompany their songs well with untuned percussion instruments. Pupils in Year 2 effectively use symbols to record short pieces they have composed so that they can perform them again at a later time. It was not possible to observe music in Years 3 and 4 during the inspection, but discussions with pupils indicate that they have a good understanding of rhythm and beat, play instruments such as xylophones, glockenspiels and maracas to a standard appropriate for their age and recognise different styles of music such as 'The Planet Suite' by Gustav Holst, and the African music of Ladysmith Black Mambazo. In assembly pupils listened attentively to Gershwin's 'Rhapsody in Blue', and pictured and correctly named the instruments they heard. These experiences make a valuable contribution to their spiritual and cultural development
96. It was only possible to observe one music lesson during the inspection, but this, along with discussions with teachers and pupils, indicates that teaching is good. The headteacher has very good subject knowledge and great enthusiasm, and transmits this to the pupils. She involves the school in cluster initiatives and this benefits the pupils by broadening their experiences and enabling them to take part in performances and workshops. This has the added benefit of enhancing their social development through working with pupils from other schools including the local middle school. Music is given a high profile in the school and local musical events are promoted, such as youth groups and concerts. Pupils are encouraged to listen to music at home, for example Key Stage 1 pupils were asked to listen out for the beat in any music they heard.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

97. On the basis of two lesson observations and scrutiny of planning pupils' attainment in physical education is in line with national expectations by the age of seven, and pupils in Year 4 are on target to reach the expected levels by the end of Year 6.
98. In a Year 2 lesson on dance pupils demonstrated very good progress and good attainment. This was because of very good teaching based on clear planning, very good subject knowledge and

the teacher's enthusiasm for the subject. The dance theme was based on work already carried out on the weather. Consequently the pupils already had a good vocabulary base and they made positive contributions to the discussion. Appropriate use was made of music during the warm-up activities. This coupled with clear demonstration by the teacher ensured that all pupils were interested and participated. Pupils explored different body shapes, movements, steps and tempo showing good imagination, and the teacher evaluated their work and used examples as teaching points. The pupils successfully combined elements into a sequence illustrating a snowman's dance. They responded appropriately to the music's rhythm and pace. Learning and progress were clearly demonstrated when the pupils responded spontaneously and the 'snowmen' melted to the teacher's description of the sun's warming effects.

99. In a Year 4 lesson on gymnastics pupils made good progress because of good teaching based on very good planning, clear expectations communicated to pupils and good teacher knowledge. The warm-up activity was used appropriately and pupils were asked what was happening to their bodies. They identified that their heart was beating faster and pumping more blood around. The teacher made a good teaching point that 'our muscles should now be warm so we won't damage them', so pupils clearly understood the purpose of the warm-up. Basic skills of travelling and jumping were explored and the pupils responded appropriately to the teacher's direction to flex the knees 'to reduce impact' when landing. Pupils were constantly challenged to explore more ways of travelling and pupil demonstration was used effectively to illustrate different movements. More might have been used of pupil evaluation to improve performance and challenge pupils further. The pupils linked different movement elements well to create a sequence. Movement work was transferred to large apparatus where the pupils improved and developed their jumping and control.
100. The school has an appropriate range of resources and provision for outdoor games. The school playing field and playground provides adequate space for a range of activities including football, netball and hockey. Pupils go to swimming regularly and swimming awards indicate that attainment is good. Additional football and kwik cricket coaching provide further enrichment. The school participates in cluster sports days with other small schools and also area sports days. Provision for dance and gymnastics is now satisfactory which represents an improvement on the last inspection. A policy and a scheme of work are in place including appropriate assessment procedures.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

101. Standards in religious education are above those expected by the locally agreed syllabus at the age of seven and nine. Pupils make good progress overall and their achievement is good. This is better than at the time of the previous inspection.
102. Pupils in Year 1 have a good knowledge of Bible stories such as Noah's ark, and detailed knowledge of Christian festivals such as Christmas. They have some understanding of the festivals of other religions such as the Hindu festival of Divali. They have explored the theme of 'belonging' and linked this to Christian Baptism. By the end of Year 2 they have extended their knowledge of Christianity to include the work of the disciples, and have a good knowledge of the symbols of faith such as the cross, and church artefacts such as the pulpit, font and lectern. They clearly understand the importance of Easter to Christians, and have extended their knowledge of the festivals of other religions.

103. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have a good knowledge of Bible stories including the life of Jesus and the Parables. Their study of festivals includes the Jewish festival of Purim and the Hindu festival of Holi and this has enabled them to have a good understanding of other faiths. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 4 they reflect on the links between Christian teachings and conditions in the economically developing world, particularly poverty and the lives of children. This makes a very strong contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They have more detailed knowledge of The Bible, including the Old and New Testaments and the Psalms.
104. Only one religious education lesson was seen during the inspection. This, along with the scrutiny of work and discussions with teachers, indicates that teaching is very good. In assemblies and lessons Bible stories are told well and are brought to life by the teachers' enthusiasm. Resources, including a good range of books, are well prepared and are used well to support the learning. Good questioning encourages pupils to reflect on the relevance of the stories told to their lives today. Good links are made with other subjects, for example when studying The Flight out of Egypt pupils were encouraged to think about what they had learned about Ancient Egypt in history, and literacy skills were promoted when they used 'powerful verbs and adjectives' in their writing about how the Israelites felt. Visitors to the school make a valuable contribution to the curriculum, for example the local vicar visited recently to talk about the importance of the Bible to Christians. Collective worship is used effectively to consolidate learning and to provide links between what pupils have studied in religious education and the feelings and beliefs of themselves and of others.