

INSPECTION REPORT

CRAMLINGTON NORTHBURN FIRST SCHOOL

Horton Drive, Cramlington. NE23 3QS

LEA area: Northumberland

Unique reference number: 122269

Headteacher: Miss J. Bentley

Reporting inspector: Mrs. B. Hudson
28772

Dates of inspection: 19th to 22nd May 2003

Inspection number: 248338

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First school
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Horton Drive, Cramlington.
Postcode:	NE23 3QS
Telephone number:	01670 739111
E-mail address:	admin@northburn.northumberland.sch.uk
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. J. Goodfellow
Date of previous inspection:	10 th November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
28772	Mrs. B. Hudson	Registered inspector	English Special educational needs English as an additional language	Summary of the report How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
22358	Mrs. V. Lamb	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
16431	Mrs. E. Graham	Team inspector	Science Art Design and technology Religious education	How well are pupils taught?
21458	Mr. P. Smith	Team inspector	Mathematics Information technology Music Physical education Educational inclusion	The school's results and pupils' achievements
30499	Mrs. T. Woods	Team inspector	Geography History Foundation stage	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Cramlington Northburn First School caters for boys and girls aged from three to nine years. Most of the pupils live within the immediate area that comprises privately owned houses to the north of Cramlington town centre. The school was built 10 years ago to cater for the expanding 'new' town. There are 260 pupils on roll, 138 boys and 122 girls. Twenty-seven boys and twenty-three girls attend the nursery part time. 13% of the pupils have special educational needs (SEN), which is well below the national average. Seven pupils have a statement for SEN, which is above the national average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. Although the attainment of pupils on entry to the school is average overall, there is a full range of ability represented.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school that provides its pupils with a very good range of learning opportunities. It achieves above average standards in English and mathematics. Overall teaching is good, having most strengths in the nursery and reception classes. Pupils have very good attitudes and behaviour. The school is well led and managed by the head teacher who is ably supported by the team leaders, staff and governors. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and it is providing good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve above average standards in English and mathematics because of the good quality teaching.
- The quality of teaching and learning in the nursery and reception classes is very good.
- Pupils receive a very good quality curriculum with a very good range of learning opportunities and this enables them to become confident and independent. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is very good.
- Relationships are very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school, their attitudes, behaviour and attendance are very good. Pupils receive very good care, ensuring they become equal members of the school community.
- The school's very good relationships with parents supports pupils' learning well.
- The governors have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and actively monitor the work of the school.

What could be improved

- Raise standards in the other subjects to the high standards achieved in English and mathematics.
- Provide more ICT resources so teachers can plan learning opportunities across the curriculum.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1997. Since then the school has made satisfactory improvement and addressed most of the issues raised in the report at that time. The school is now achieving standards in English and mathematics that are above average. The governing body has a very clear role in shaping the direction of the school and has effective systems for ensuring value for money is monitored. The school has successfully introduced an appraisal system. Standards in gymnastics and art have improved. The teachers have improved the marking of pupils' work, however, this is not consistently applied. Pupils' handwriting is now satisfactory but the presentation of their work is not as good as it should be.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
Reading	B	A	C	D
Writing	C	A	B	C
Mathematics	B	A	B	C

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

Children under five make good progress and most leave the reception classes having achieved the early learning goals set for pupils of this age.

By the age of seven, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 and the higher Level 3 in the national tests for 2002 is above the national average in writing and mathematics. In reading, standards are average. The results in writing and mathematics are as expected by pupils in similar schools and below in reading. Standards in writing and mathematics have fluctuated since the last inspection but in reading they have fallen. Inspection evidence and the results emerging from this year's national tests indicate that the standards in reading, writing and mathematics have improved on last year's results.

Pupils in Years 3 and 4 make good progress in English, mathematics and satisfactory progress in the other subjects. Attainment at the age of nine years is above the level expected in English, mathematics and science. The school's targets were exceeded. Pupils in Year 4 achieve standards in English, mathematics and science that are above what is expected. Standards in art are good because some techniques in painting, drawing and three-dimensional work are very well taught. In all other subjects standards are in line with the national expectations.

Across the school pupils with SEN make good progress. Overall achievement is good. Children enter the school with average attainment and leave with standards above average.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes are very good. Pupils enjoy their lessons and activities and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good. They behave well both in class and around the school and this has a beneficial effect on their learning.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils respect each other and their teachers. They are considerate of other people and their environment. Relationships are very good throughout the school.
Attendance	Attendance is very good. It is well above the national average.

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, personal development and attendance are real strengths. Pupils are well motivated, happy and enjoy their work. Pupils show respect for other people's feelings. Older pupils are mature, show good initiative and take personal responsibility well.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is good overall. There is no unsatisfactory teaching and in three-quarters of lessons it is good or better and in a third of lessons it is very good. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good because teachers have a secure understanding of the skills that pupils need to learn. Strengths in teaching include the effective use of 'thinking skills' that results in pupils being mature and independent, high expectations of pupils' behaviour and the high level of mutual respect between pupils and teachers.

The teaching in the nursery and reception years is very good and provides pupils with a firm foundation for learning in the rest of the school. Much of the teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good or very good and helps pupils to make good progress. In Years 3 and 4 teaching in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is generally good. The ability groupings for English and mathematics lessons are supporting the progress of all groups successfully. Teaching in the other subjects is more variable and does not meet the needs of the very able pupils well enough. More opportunities to use ICT across the curriculum needs to be planned to further improve pupils' language, communication and number skills. Opportunities for assessing how well pupils are achieving are sometimes missed because pupils do their work on white boards and there is therefore no record of their work. Throughout the school pupils with SEN are well supported and make good progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of the curriculum is very good because it provides very good learning experiences that benefit all pupils. This is a strength of the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes very good provision for pupils with SEN. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure that these pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Pupils are encouraged to be independent and to reflect on their actions. There is very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is a strength of the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Assessing pupils' progress in English and mathematics is good. It is not as well developed in other subjects. Educational and personal support for the pupils is good.

The school works very effectively with parents. The school curriculum is very carefully planned, meets the legal requirements and is relevant to the needs of all pupils. All pupils are well known to all adults in the school and parents appreciate the very good quality of care their children receive.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Good. The head teacher provides good leadership and management, ably supported by the team leaders and staff. The curriculum co-ordinator's role is not sufficiently focused on the standards pupils achieve.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governors know the school very well, and use their information to provide an objective but collaborative approach to decision-making. They are very aware of their responsibilities and they carry them out effectively and efficiently.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has good systems in place for evaluating the performance of pupils in English and mathematics. In other subjects, a recently introduced system needs to be used more effectively to raise standards.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of resources – staff, financial and material. The accommodation inside and outside is very good. The school spends its budget wisely.

There is a good number of well-qualified and experienced staff to meet the demands of the curriculum and the administrative needs of the school. The school keeps the accommodation in good order and ensures an attractive learning environment. Its cleanliness is a credit to the caretaker and cleaning staff. The administrative staff ensures that the school runs smoothly and efficiently. Care is taken to ensure that decisions on spending are linked to its priorities and impact positively on pupils' achievement and wellbeing.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy coming to school. • The teaching is good and they make good progress. • The school expects the children to work hard and do their best. • They feel able to approach the school with questions and problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount and inconsistent approach to homework. • The school does not work closely with them.

The inspection evidence strongly supports the positive views that parents have of the school. Inspectors feel that parents are provided with a varied range of opportunities to work with the school. The head teacher and governors should continue to develop ways of involving parents. The amount of homework given is appropriate in most cases but also recognises that there is some inconsistency between classes.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards in English and mathematics are above the national average. Overall pupils make good progress because of the good quality of teaching. Pupils with SEN are very well supported, and most higher attaining pupils are provided with good levels of challenge. However, in some lessons the very able pupils are working well within their capabilities and need more challenge in their work.
2. Standards in English and mathematics have improved since the last inspection and have largely been high in comparison with national expectations although the most recent results in reading are only in line with the average. In science, standards by the end of Year 2 are in line with national expectations and above average at the end of Year 4. In the last inspection, science was judged to be above average at the end of Year 2 and in line with national expectations at the end of Year 4. In art standards are above expectations, which is an improvement, whereas in all other subjects standards have been maintained in line with the expectations of the National Curriculum.
3. Children start school in the nursery class. Their attainment is typical of most children their age in all areas of learning except the speaking and listening aspects of communication, language and listening and creative development where it is below. As a result of very good teaching in the nursery and reception classes most children achieve the early learning goals set for them and some children exceed these goals in writing, reading and some aspects of creative development. As a result, higher attaining children are already starting to work on the National Curriculum in literacy and mathematics.
4. By the age of seven, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 and the higher level 3 in the national tests for 2002 is above the national average for writing and mathematics whereas in reading they are average. In writing and mathematics standards are as expected for pupils in similar schools and below in reading. Inspection evidence and the results emerging from this year's national tests indicate that the standards in reading, writing and mathematics have improved on last year's results. The improvement in standards in reading indicates that the strategies that the school has put in place are having a beneficial impact and this has reversed the recent decline. Over time girls have slightly out-performed boys in reading. During the inspection there was no significant difference in the performance of girls and boys.
5. At the end of the last school year, pupils in Year 4 attain standards above the level expected for their age in English, mathematics and science. Overall all pupils achieve well. The higher attaining pupils are achieving very well, with many gaining a Level 4, the expected level for the end of Year 6. There was no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls.
6. The school sets challenging targets for standards to be reached in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. Both were slightly exceeded. In the current year, targets set are again challenging but realistic and the school is well placed to achieve these.

7. The inspection evidence shows that pupils make good progress as they move through school and they achieve higher standards than might be expected given their attainment on entry. From an examination of pupils' work, overall standards achieved in Year 4 English, mathematics and science are above average and the standards of learning are good. In all lessons observed the progress pupils made was always satisfactory and most often good in English and mathematics. Pupils show a good understanding of the work being covered, however in some lessons the very able pupils are working well within their capabilities and need more challenge in their work.
8. In English pupils make good progress. Throughout the school pupils develop good speaking and listening skills and because of recent work by staff on developing pupils' 'thinking skills', all pupils are willing to contribute in discussions because they know that what they say will be valued by their teachers and respected by their classmates. They learn well through discussion activities in all areas of the curriculum. Most pupils enjoy reading and show confidence when reading out loud. They have good opportunities for reading and most have sound strategies for tackling unfamiliar words. Higher attaining pupils read fluently, with expression, and often alter their voices to take on different characters in the story. Pupils develop good writing skills because they are provided with many opportunities to write letters, accounts, stories and diaries. Punctuation and spelling is of a good standard overall. However, pupils do not develop their handwriting skills well enough because writing activities are often recorded on white boards or paper that are not retained. While this is appropriate in some lessons, over-use limits opportunities for teachers to reinforce specific skills or for pupils to practice and consolidate their knowledge and understanding.
9. Standards in mathematics at the end of Year 2 and Year 4 are good and all pupils are working at or above the level expected of them. The introduction of the numeracy strategy, particularly the mental and oral sessions at the beginning of lessons, has helped to raise attainment. Pupils are keen to offer answers to the teachers' brisk questioning. In lessons seen during the inspection, pupils made good progress overall. The use of projects, such as 'thinking skills', is having a positive impact on teaching and learning. Pupils' skills in solving problems that require them to decide which mathematical method to use are not as well developed as their ability to answer questions where the method is very clear. Pupils confidently use correct mathematical language such as 'faces, edges and vertices' to describe the properties of three-dimensional shapes.
10. In 2002, the teacher assessments for science at the end of Year 2 show that pupils' standards are in line with national expectations. In comparison with similar schools the percentage of pupils attaining the level expected is below average. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 is well above the national average. Pupils at the end of Year 4 achieve standards that are above the national average. The focus on developing pupils' investigative skills has motivated them well to learn and as a result their progress is good and they have achieved well by the time they leave the school.
11. The teachers actively promote the use of literacy and speaking and listening skills across the curriculum. This has a positive impact on the standards pupils achieve in English. However, too few opportunities are identified in teachers' planning to extend pupils' mathematical skills through other subjects. More resources are needed to enable teachers to plan opportunities for ICT to be used across the curriculum.
12. Standards in art and design exceed expectations and in the other subjects of the curriculum they are in line with national expectations. The school provides pupils with many worthwhile learning opportunities and this is a strength of the school.

13. The school makes very good provision for those pupils who have SEN or whose attainment is lower than would be expected for their age. These pupils are given high levels of good additional support both in class and with work specifically targeted for them in withdrawal groups. These pupils make good progress and attain standards very close to what they should be for their age. However, in some lessons the very able pupils are working well within their capabilities and need more challenge in their work.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development, including behaviour, are very good and are a strength of the school. This is an improvement on the last inspection. Pupils like school and they respond very well to the values that the school promotes. They work hard in lessons and demonstrate a very high level of interest and involvement in the activities provided. Attendance levels are high when compared to similar schools nationally.
15. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and in and around the school is very good. They are very polite to visitors and to each other. For example, pupils open doors without being prompted and wait their turn patiently when queuing for dinner and to enter school. In the playground pupils make very good use of the space available to them and are all happily occupied during breaks. At lunchtime and assemblies, pupils keep the school routines without fuss. During class discussions pupils take turns, listen carefully to each other and respect each other's views. There is no evidence of bullying, racist or sexist behaviour. Pupils clearly understand the consequences of unacceptable behaviour and respond very well to the school's high expectations and system of rewards. Occasionally some pupils find it difficult to maintain the high standards of behaviour expected in school but they respond very well to the guidance provided by staff.
16. Relationships are very good throughout the school. Pupils clearly like and respect their teachers and assistants and learn very well from their good example, that is to respect their own and others' endeavours and the differences amongst each other. For instance, during a literacy lesson, pupils in Years 3 and 4 enjoyed bantering with their teacher and did not overstep the mark of respect.

17. Pupils respond very well to the systems in the school for promoting personal development. Pupils learn to respect each other and the adults in school. They talk confidently about how much they like their teachers and how they enjoy seeing their friends at school. They learn to develop good working habits and display good levels of independence and personal responsibility as they move through the school. Pupils of all ages are able to approach teachers and teaching assistants confidently and respectfully and are pleased to receive recognition for their successes. During assemblies pupils respect the nature of the occasion, listening thoughtfully to the stories and joining in the activities in a mature way. Pupils enjoy the clubs on offer and are well motivated to take part in a wide range of activities that broaden their experiences of the world. For instance, they enjoy going on excursions to places of interest in the immediate neighbourhood as well as farther afield. Pupils talk with pleasure about visitors who come into school to provide them with a range of opportunities. During the inspection pupils in Years 1 and 2 had a lot of fun learning how to play a tune together on steel drums brought to the school by a visiting musician. They paid close attention to their visitor's demonstrations, trying very hard to refine their performance as the session progressed.
18. Pupils of all ages willingly accept responsibility. They help with the smooth running of the school and older pupils carefully look after younger ones. Pupils have the opportunity to volunteer to be monitors and those selected carry out their duties conscientiously, acting responsibly and with maturity. For example, some older pupils volunteer to be 'buddies' and provide a valuable service in the playgrounds by befriending any pupil who feels lonely or upset. Staff value pupils' views in a range of situations, both day-to-day and relating to specific issues. Pupils make sensible suggestions that the school acts upon when possible. They are considerate towards others and are becoming good young citizens.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19. Overall the teaching is good and makes a significant contribution to the standards that pupils achieve in the school.
20. The teaching in the nursery and reception years is very good and provides pupils with a firm foundation for their learning in Years 1 and 2. It effectively develops their confidence and their ability to work independently. Much of the teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good and some very good. In Years 3 and 4 teaching in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is generally good but teaching in other subjects is more variable although it is still satisfactory overall. There is no unsatisfactory teaching.
21. Throughout the school the teaching in English and mathematics is always satisfactory and often good or very good and the basic skills are well taught. The ability groupings that are created for teaching literacy and numeracy lessons in Year 3 and Year 4 are proving an effective way of ensuring that pupils' needs are met, including those children with SEN. The teaching assistants support such pupils very well, helping them to make good progress. All pupils achieve well in numeracy and literacy lessons because teachers have a secure understanding of the skills that they need to learn. The national strategies are providing a structured approach for teachers' planning which effectively identifies what they expect pupils to learn.

22. Objectives are usually carefully outlined to pupils at the start of the lesson so that they are aware of their teachers' expectations of them. In Years 3 and 4 when other National Curriculum subjects are taught in groups representing the full ability range, work is sometimes not sufficiently challenging for the very able and although the majority of pupils achieve well, these pupils are working well within their capabilities.
23. A positive feature of the teaching is the effective use of 'thinking skills' activities that teachers use to help consolidate learning before morning and afternoon sessions. In a class of Year 1 and Year 2 pupils for example, the challenge was to recall facts from previous topics and to frame questions from them using 'where', 'why', 'when', 'what' or 'how'. The children thoroughly enjoyed the activity, which successfully settled the class and made them alert for the work to follow.
24. Relationships are very good in all lessons. There is a high level of mutual respect between pupils and their teachers, and pupils are confident enough to ask for help when needed. Teachers place a strong emphasis on work that encourages pupils to think for themselves with the result that they are mature and independent. Good examples were seen in art and design and science lessons. Tasks often require pupils to record their work using white boards or paper, which is not retained. While this is appropriate for some activities, over-use of the method in subjects such as science and mathematics, particularly in Years 3 and 4, has meant that pupils have little recorded work for their own reference or for teachers to use when assessing how well individual pupils have understood. Overall there is insufficient emphasis on encouraging pupils to record their work to a high standard of presentation with the result that work is often untidy.
25. A feature of the teaching throughout the school is the very effective management of pupils. Teachers expect and achieve very high standards of behaviour from their pupils. In lessons they make sure that all children have the chance to take part, which is particularly effective in meeting the needs of all pupils. Teaching assistants very effectively support pupils who need additional help to achieve this.
26. The school has begun to consider how to support pupils who are particularly very able. The use of projects such as 'thinking skills' is having a positive effect on teaching and learning and is helping to challenge the skills of the more able. Teachers are beginning to recognise the needs of very able pupils, although there are still examples of work that does not provide sufficient challenge for them.

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

27. The curriculum is a strength of the school. The quality and range of the curriculum is very good because it provides very good learning experiences that benefit all pupils. The school, therefore, fulfils its stated aims in providing a varied and exciting curriculum based on practical experience. It fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education (RE). There is very good provision for personal, social and health education. Some aspects such as sex education and attention to drugs misuse are carefully planned into science lessons. Citizenship has also been successfully introduced into the curriculum. The school has been particularly successful in its implementation of the Foundation Stage curriculum for children in the nursery and reception classes and as a result these pupils flourish and are very well prepared for later learning.

28. The school has a very good framework for planning the curriculum. However, some teachers do not plan lessons that meet the needs of those pupils who are very able. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been implemented effectively. There are, however, insufficient planned opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to practise and improve presentation skills, and for pupils in Years 1 to 4, to add to a permanent record of their work, making it difficult for teachers to track their progress.
29. Provision for pupils with SEN is very good. Planning for these pupils is effective and there is very good support available from teaching assistants. Pupils with statements and individual education plans (IEPs) are regularly reviewed and the school's special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) ensures that the efficient systems in place are well used to provide a curriculum that meets the needs of the pupils.
30. The quality and range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. Pupils have opportunities to be involved in playing football. They can join the recorder club and have recently had opportunities to learn French. During the inspection pupils were enjoying a range of activities in the art club, for example adding to a long-term project of making a Roman style mosaic for their school by cutting squares of ceramic tiles and arranging them to form a pattern around the letter N.
31. The curriculum is enriched with a very good range of educational visits and visitors to the school. In the Foundation Stage children visit the local park and shops to learn more about their local area. They invite grandparents and parents into school to talk about their job as a nurse or their interest in gardening and how times have changed since they were young children. Older pupils visit places such as Beamish Museum, Vindolanda and Holy Island to enhance their study of history and geography. The school's curriculum has also benefited from initiatives such as the Healthy Schools' Award and partnership with an environmental organisation. These initiatives are reflected in displays around the school where pupils communicate their understanding of issues such as global warming and animal conservation through posters and writing.
32. The community also makes a significant contribution to the pupils' learning by providing financial and practical support such as coaching for football. Pupils benefit from well-developed school grounds and learn how to take care of their environment in partnership with local industry. Links with partner institutions are well established and productive, particularly with the local middle school to which nearly all pupils transfer, and the other local first schools. Students from neighbouring schools and colleges work in school, for example as part of their training as teachers or nursery nurses, or to work in the grounds alongside staff and pupils.
33. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and a strength of the school. It has improved from the last inspection. Pupils' spiritual development is very well promoted through imaginative teaching. For example, children watch with amazement as a balloon is launched into the air and is carried away by the wind. They experience first hand what life was like for children in the past by attending a Victorian schoolroom. In assemblies pupils listen to well-chosen music and reflect on the experiences and emotions of the disciples as they come to terms with the death and resurrection of Jesus. They talk and write about the life and faith of people such as St. Cuthbert and St. Bede and improve their understanding of what it means to be a Christian.
34. Moral development is also promoted very well. Teachers and all other adults have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and the simple values of right and wrong are consistently reinforced with reference to classroom and school rules. All adults provide

excellent role models as they deal calmly and fairly with all pupils. Pupils show respect and courtesy towards adults by holding doors open for them. During the inspection pupils were adamant that there are no incidents of bullying in their school and were polite and respectful when asked about their work or the activities in which they were involved.

35. Social development is promoted very well. Pupils are given opportunities to work together in many subjects such as imaginative play, science and PE. They co-operate well and show respect for each other as well as adults. Pupils fulfil their responsibilities well, particularly as 'buddies' on duty in the playground and as monitors in classrooms and around school. The school promotes a strong sense of belonging that supports pupils in becoming confident members of the school community.
36. Cultural development is very well promoted through an interesting range of activities. In assemblies pupils learn about the customs, special celebrations and symbols of Christianity and other world faiths. Pupils visit the theatre and local museums and take part in activities linked to the Chinese New Year and the celebration of Divali. In literacy they read and work with stories and poems from different countries such as Africa. Pupils listen to and talk about a range of musical styles both at the start of assemblies and during their music lessons.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. The school provides very well for pupils' welfare, health and safety. Staff know pupils well and are sensitive to their needs. Good attendance is expected throughout the school and opportunities are provided for pupils to take on added responsibilities. Very good procedures are established for promoting high standards of behaviour and pupils know what is expected of them. Training for child protection, which was unsatisfactory at the last inspection, is now fully in place.
38. The school supports pupils' personal development very well through providing a clear framework for conduct, both in respect of behaviour and attitude to work. Staff act as very positive role models and are conscientious in establishing and maintaining very good relationships with pupils. Opportunities are provided for pupils to take special responsibility such as being playground 'buddies'. The school welcomes pupils' suggestions and takes their contributions seriously; discussing them fully and implementing desired changes as far as possible. The school takes part in fundraising events that help pupils to develop responsible attitudes towards the needs of others and takes part in projects to raise pupils' awareness and skills in order to become good citizens, particularly in relation to the natural environment.

39. The school's effective procedures for monitoring and promoting behaviour mean that pupils are expected, and encouraged, to be extremely well behaved at all times. Staff provide very good role models and set very high standards for behaviour during lessons, based on a system which makes expectations clear to all pupils and focuses on acknowledging successes to which pupils respond positively. All staff, including lunchtime supervisors, make a very significant contribution to good behaviour and standards during breaks and lunchtimes. A very good feature of this school is the attention paid to the quality of experiences made available to pupils during breaks and lunchtime which ensure that all pupils can pass the time happily in an activity of their choice, carefully supervised.
40. The school has made very good arrangements to meet health and safety obligations. Accidents and illness are handled with care and consideration and a comfortable area is available for administering first aid and supervising pupils who are ill and unable to remain in class. Clear and appropriate procedures are established for administering medication during school hours. The school is careful to record accidents and first aid and to inform parents of anything that may need further attention. The school is aware of the need to modify the storage of registers, especially with regard to their ease of access during emergency evacuation. The school has developed very good procedures to manage arrangements for child protection in line with those laid down by the Local Education Authority (LEA) in conjunction with other support agencies. Staff have received training and are aware of appropriate responses should they have concerns about a child's welfare.
41. There is a very good formal programme for personal, social and health education that provides a forum for pupils to express their views and feelings. Participation in events supported by outside agencies helps children to learn how to look after themselves. Pupils know who to turn to for help and advice.
42. The monitoring of pupils' attendance is very good. Registers are completed accurately and are kept up-to-date to maintain a record of those present and to identify any pupils who may need support to maintain regular and prompt attendance. Staff are conscientious in contacting education welfare staff should they require further assistance. These measures ensure that reasons for absence are responded to appropriately so that support is provided for pupils whose attendance gives cause for concern.
43. Overall, the procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. In the nursery and reception classes they are good because teachers monitor children's progress towards the early learning goals well and the information is used well for further planning. In other classes there is a clear programme of formal assessment in English and mathematics for each age group. The information is used well to set individual pupils' targets for improvement. The quality of marking of pupils' work, whilst satisfactory overall, varies from class to class.
44. The school makes appropriate arrangements for pupils to take the statutory National Curriculum tests and assessments at the age of seven. In addition the school administers optional testing materials for English and mathematics in Years 3 and 4. The results of these tests are used well to analyse areas of success and where further developments can be made. They also track pupils' progress from year to year and to evaluate trends of groups of children including boys and girls. The analysis of test data and its use is an improvement since the last inspection.

45. The use of assessment information to guide curriculum planning is satisfactory overall. In English and mathematics the information is far more comprehensive and enables teachers to focus on aspects to improve pupils' skills and knowledge. In all other subjects the main focus for curriculum guidance has been to ensure that pupils do not repeat work. Curriculum co-ordinators complete this by looking at teachers' planning and wall displays. Curriculum co-ordinators therefore do not have a good enough knowledge of the standards achieved by pupils for the subject for which they are responsible. A recent introduction is the completion of assessment sheets at the end of a unit of work. This is a helpful practice that needs to become more effectively used to keep the school informed about standards in all subjects.
46. The assessment arrangements for pupils with SEN are good. The procedures for identifying pupils with SEN are very effective. Such pupils have good quality IEPs that are regularly reviewed. Alongside the very good provision for SEN, these targets help pupils make good progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. The school provides a good range of opportunities for parents to be actively involved in their child's education. Written information is of a high quality and the school seeks the views of parents on many aspects of school life. The prospectus is very clear about the attitudes and values that the school promotes and includes clear information about school life in general as well as an outline of the day-to-day procedures. Teachers are available to parents on an informal basis day-to-day and provide useful information during formal consultation appointments. Written reports on pupils' progress are specific to individuals and include significant aspects of pupils' academic progress and personal development. In Years 3 and 4, parents are invited and many attend, a meeting each half term that explains what their children will learn during that half term. The school invites parents' comments about their child's progress and provides an opportunity for parents to discuss the reports with class teachers. In addition, parent and teacher consultations are held twice each year and are very well attended. Parents receive frequent newsletters providing a good range of additional information to keep them up-to-date about activities in school and the wider community.

48. The school welcomes parents' involvement and provides a good range of opportunities for parents and staff to work in partnership. Parents' views are sought on new school developments so they are instrumental in contributing to the type of education and experiences that they want for their child. Parents are consulted if problems arise concerning their child with a view to home and school working closely together to help the child. Parents respond positively to the opportunities provided for them to support their child with homework and this makes a good contribution to the home-school partnership. However, a significant number of parents expressed dissatisfaction with the arrangements for homework. The inspection found that the amount of homework given is appropriate in most cases but also recognises that there is some inconsistency between classes. The school frequently invites parents to see the school in action. Several parents work in classrooms on a regular basis helping teachers with general classroom duties and listening to pupils read. There is a dedicated parent-teacher and friends association that organises special fundraising and social events that many staff and parents, as well as other family members support. Parents' attendance is very good at special events, such as assemblies, concerts and sports days. The vast majority of parents take up the opportunities to be involved in their child's education and attend consultations with staff. The school provides opportunities for parents to attend workshops and information sessions on a range of topics to support children's learning, as well as general interest such as in first aid, and these are usually well attended.
49. Parents value the way in which the school sets high expectations for pupils' work and, on the whole, are satisfied that their children make good progress. Parents are satisfied that behaviour in school is good and that their children are helped to become mature and responsible. Parents find staff approachable about any suggestions or concerns and are confident that their children like school. A significant minority of parents feel that the school does not work closely enough with them, that they are not sufficiently well informed about their children's progress and are dissatisfied with the leadership and management in school. Parents' satisfaction with the school is well founded but the views expressed about a lack of close partnership do not reflect the wide range of good quality links currently in place.
50. The very effective links between home and school have a significant impact on pupils' academic attainment and personal development and continues the very good partnership in place at the time of the last inspection.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The leadership and management of the school are good. The governors have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and fulfil their statutory responsibilities properly. As was found at the time of the last inspection, all work together effectively and provide the school with a clear sense and purpose. Since the last inspection an appraisal system has been successfully introduced, all staff have received training in child protection and the governing body have a good system for measuring how well the school spends its money in relation to the quality of provision.

52. The head teacher provides good leadership and good management of the school. She is determined that the staff will provide a good quality curriculum with many practical activities that are accessible to all pupils. This approach helps pupils become confident and independent. She works closely with her staff and ensures that the very good teaching assistants are part of the whole school team. Together, they have helped to create a very positive and supportive environment in which all members of staff, pupils and governors work effectively to promote the aims of the school.
53. The senior management team, following a recent re-structuring, comprises of the head teacher and two team leaders. It is proving to be effective in ensuring that the school focuses on the planned areas for development. The communication systems in the school are good and all staff are kept informed about progress towards the targeted school improvements and any other areas that arise. A success of this team is the way in which they support all staff and pupils. The system used by the curriculum co-ordinators to gather information about their subjects is sound, however, it needs to include more focus on the standards attained by the pupils so that they can make a clearer judgement about the strengths and the areas for development. The recently introduced assessment sheets need to be better used in this process.
54. The governors are knowledgeable and fully involved in the life of the school. There is a good balance of skills and experience on the governing body and there are effective and efficient committees, all of which meet on a regular basis. They are supportive, objective and understand their role. Governors are kept well informed by the head teacher and show a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Since the last inspection, a governor has been allocated to oversee the development of each strand of the school development plan, each subject and SEN. Governors make focussed visits to the school where they evaluate progress and present reports of their visit to the full governing body and the staff. The trust and relationships between staff and governors is a strength of the school.
55. The aims and values of the school are very clearly stated in the school brochure. They are concerned with ensuring the whole school community feels safe and secure, where learning is enjoyable and rewarding. All adults and children work hard to ensure that life within the school reflects these aims and values. This results in a very good learning environment in which all pupils are encouraged to achieve their best.
56. The school development plan is a concise, effective and useful document. It has a realistic number of appropriate priorities that are linked to the school's aims, the long-term plan for the school and the whole school review. Monitoring strategies are identified and responsibilities, including those of the governors, are clearly highlighted, however the success criteria relating to pupils' attainment are not specific enough. A strength of the school is the way in which staff, governors and parents are involved in identifying areas for development and receiving information on progress.

57. The head teacher and team leaders monitor teaching both formally and informally to fulfil the performance management system which has been successfully implemented since the last inspection. This is having a positive impact on teaching as no unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. The head teacher makes an effective analysis of performance data such as annual standardised tests. This information is used to provide the focus for the areas to be developed in the school development plan and to set targets. The curriculum co-ordinators do not have the opportunities to monitor teaching and learning nor do they monitor pupils' work adequately to ensure consistency across the school in marking, presentation and also as another tool to raise standards, particularly in those subjects where there are no National Curriculum tests.
58. SEN is very well led and managed by the head teacher and the governor with this responsibility. Teaching assistants work alongside teachers to provide a very high level of additional help that ensures pupils with SEN make good progress. The school uses the SEN budget to support pupils exceptionally well. The staff know their pupils well, which ensures that the procedures for identification, assessment, planning and monitoring are efficiently applied. Resources are good and readily available for use in classrooms. However, too little emphasis is given to provide advice, guidance and resources for those very able pupils.
59. Procedures for financial planning and the monitoring of the annual budget and ensuring all grants are appropriately spent are good. The school uses the substantial additional funds from the parents' association to supplement the budget and this has a positive impact on resources. The governors maintain a strategic overview from the comprehensive information shared by the head teacher. Priorities in the school development plan are carefully costed and the success criteria are evaluated well. The school challenges its suppliers to quote the best possible price for goods and services. Although there was a higher than average carry forward last year, this was part of the school's policy to maintain the teaching staff structure for this academic year.
60. There is a good match of teachers and support staff to meet the needs of the curriculum and support those pupils with SEN. The priority given by the head teacher and governing body to maintaining staffing levels and ensuring a good range of professional development for all staff has been beneficial in maintaining above average standards in English and mathematics and securing developments in new areas such as citizenship. Care is taken to ensure that classes are provided with sufficient support staff. There is sufficient, very effective administrative support to meet the needs of the school. The school has a useful and informative staff handbook and induction arrangements for new staff are good and thorough.
61. The accommodation is good. It is well maintained and kept very clean by the caretaker and cleaning staff. The teaching areas are light and airy and this, along with the good artwork, creates a very positive learning environment. The classrooms are of a good size. There is no spare capacity in the school's internal accommodation. The outside area is excellent and is very well used by teachers to enhance the pupils' learning. The hard play area is very well zoned so that all pupils can play safely and with enjoyment.
62. Overall the school is adequately equipped with learning resources for all subjects. However, in ICT more resources are needed, in particular sensing and data-logging equipment. The resources for art, music and pupils with SEN are good and well used. Most resources are in good condition and readily accessible.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. In order to further raise standards, the governing body, head teacher and senior managers should:
- Raise standards in other subjects to the high standards achieved in English and mathematics by;
 - extending the role of the curriculum co-ordinators so that they have a greater impact on raising standards in their subjects by monitoring and evaluating standards and teaching in the foundation subjects; (Paragraph numbers 45, 53, 57, 110, 117, 122, 128, 134, 150, 155)
 - identifying more opportunities for pupils to record their work permanently so that the teachers can use it for assessment purposes; (Paragraph numbers 8, 24, 28, 57, 95, 102, 122, 134)
 - improve the presentation of the pupils' work. (Paragraph numbers 8, 24, 28, 57, 90, 91, 94, 95, 102, 127, 133)
 - Provide more ICT resources so teachers can plan learning opportunities across the curriculum. (Paragraph numbers 89, 96, 132, 141)

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

64. In addition to the key areas for development, the following less significant, but nevertheless, important aspect should be considered for inclusion by the governors in the action plan:
- Improve advice, guidance and resources to help those pupils who are very able to make more progress in lessons. (Paragraph numbers 7, 28, 58, 97, 103, 108)

(In this report the term 'very able' means a tiny minority of pupils who are well above average academically in the whole school. 'Higher attaining' pupils means those pupils who are above and well above average academically and that group includes the small sub-set of 'very able' pupils.)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	16	20	12	0	0	0
Percentage	0	33	42	25	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)	25	210
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	39

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	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.5

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	28	18	46

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	27	26
	Girls	18	18	18
	Total	45	45	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (93)	98 (91)	96 (98)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	25	26
	Girls	18	17	18
	Total	45	42	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (93)	91 (95)	96 (98)
	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	166	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1	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)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.2:1
Average class size	26.1

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	192

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.1
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13.1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

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

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	514,053.00
Total expenditure	501,892.00
Expenditure per pupil	2,100.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	38,197.00
Balance carried forward to next year	50,358.00

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	260
Number of questionnaires returned	102

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57.8	36.3	4.9	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	46.1	51	0	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	54	1	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27.3	56.6	12.1	0	4
The teaching is good.	42.2	52	0	0	5.9
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35.3	54.9	7.8	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	52	47.1	0	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	43.6	52.5	1	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	32.4	52	9.8	2	3.9
The school is well led and managed.	31.4	48	6.9	2.9	10.8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41.2	55.9	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	18.2	53.5	7.1	6.1	15.2

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

65. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good because the staff plan an effective curriculum that provides a very good range of learning opportunities and prepares children very well for later learning. The quality of teaching is very good because teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the learning needs of young children. Relationships between teachers, support staff and parents are very good in the nursery and reception classes and this creates a welcoming learning environment for all children. The leadership of the co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage is very effective in achieving a consistency of approach across all classrooms.
66. Children's attainment on entry to the nursery is broadly average with a full range of ability represented. Some aspects of speaking and listening and creative development are below average. For example, children often find it difficult to listen to others and then explain their ideas. They need a high level of support to learn how to work in small groups and follow routines. They also have difficulty in entering into imaginative play. All children, including those with SEN, make good progress. By the time they leave the reception classes the majority have attained the early learning goals and some have exceeded them, particularly in reading and writing and in some aspects of their creative development.
67. The quality of teaching is very good and teachers use their very good knowledge to plan the steps that children need to reach the nationally determined early learning goals. Teachers have high expectations and teach the basic skills very well. They make very good links to children's interests and provide activities that capture their attention and motivate them to learn. For example, in one lesson the teacher used a familiar 'Postman Pat' story to support the learning of initial letter sounds and letter formation.
68. Resources are good for both indoor and outdoor activities and they are used well to promote learning in physical development, personal and social development as well as creative development. The accommodation is good and provides a safe environment in which to learn.

Personal, social and emotional development

69. Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is very good and, as a result of very good teaching and guidance, children make good progress. Children's welfare is given a high priority and parents and carers know that they can approach any member of staff to talk through concerns. Children are welcomed at the start of the day with interesting tasks that help them to settle quickly. For example, during the inspection children and adults in the nursery looked at books together and in a reception class children worked quietly with a range of simple tasks whilst listening to calming music in the background. During both indoor and outdoor activities children play well together and learn more about co-operating with each other by working in small groups where equipment has to be shared. Routines are well established and activities are well organised so that children experience success. As a result behaviour is very good at all times and children grow in confidence and self-esteem. Adults have high expectations of children's abilities to be independent from an early age and regularly encourage this to take place. For example, children were observed helping themselves to milk and fruit as well as self-managing tasks such as getting into their own aprons and putting them away at the end of an activity.
70. Each class makes very good provision for children to learn about their relationships with other children through role-play. In the nursery an area was set up outside for children to act out the roles adults take whilst working at a flower stall. By playing with a selection of clothes, kitchen utensils and tableware, children begin to recreate family experiences and learn more about themselves as individuals. Teachers and classroom support assistants in both nursery and reception classes provide very good role models for the children, managing them very well and using praise to celebrate their successes.

Communication, language and literacy

71. The majority of children make good progress and are expected to achieve early learning goals by the end of reception year. The attainment of some children exceeds levels expected for children of their age, particularly in reading and writing. This is because teaching is very good and children are prepared very well for each step in their learning. For example, in the nursery children are encouraged to use pencils and crayons in their play. Those who are ready are guided towards activities that help them understand letter sounds and letter formation. Teachers use songs and rhymes to reinforce children's use of language and introduce new vocabulary so that children can repeat it and use it for themselves.
72. In reception, teachers build on progress in the nursery to provide experiences that help children think and talk about the structure of stories. They continue to help them broaden their vocabulary so that they can express their ideas and talk about what is in their imagination. Through a range of carefully planned activities children practise their writing skills and improve their pencil control. By the time they leave reception the majority can write a sentence that conveys meaning. Higher attaining pupils are able to put sentences together in story form.
73. In all classrooms the love of books is encouraged through their use in every aspect of learning. Children experience good quality books and take books home that interest them from the class library. As a result, the majority of children know that print carries meaning and many can read a range of common words with confidence. Higher attaining pupils read simple sentences and show that they have understood what they have read.

Mathematical development

74. Provision for children's mathematical development is very good. Teachers provide a very good range of opportunities so that children make good progress. In the nursery children develop their understanding of numbers to 5 through a range of activities that help them to count accurately and recognise the formation of each number. For example, during the inspection children were encouraged through imaginative play to describe and count the flowers on their market stall. In another activity they counted the number of shoes that each of them were wearing. They learned more about pattern and shape when painting butterflies and flowers.
75. By the end of the reception year the majority of children have reached the standards expected for their age. They can count accurately to 10 and most say the number names in order to 20. Some know the order of numbers beyond 20. The majority know the names of common two-dimensional shapes and some of their properties. Teachers use effective questioning to help pupils distinguish between shapes that have curved and straight sides. They make very good use of songs, rhymes and practical activities to reinforce children's learning. For example, in reception children manipulated string to make rectangles and circles. In another class children made a square with straws and joined in a song that described its properties.
76. Overall, teaching is very good because activities are well matched to the interests and abilities of the children. Children enjoy this area of their learning, work hard and concentrate well.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

77. Children make good progress in improving their knowledge and understanding of the world particularly in the knowledge of their immediate environment. Teaching is very good with teachers planning activities that make very good use of both outdoor and indoor areas for learning. For example, during the inspection, children in the nursery painted flowers on an outside wall as well as making flower structures from paper and other materials in the classroom. In reception children went outside to learn more about the power of the wind as it carried a balloon up into the clouds before writing a story about its journey.
78. Teachers make sure that children explore the local environment through visits to the school's garden, the local shops and park. They provide seeds so that the children can observe them growing into plants. They talk with them about animals that might live in the garden. Children in reception learn more about far away places through stories and songs from Africa. They talk about journeys and how they might travel from place to place. Other activities contribute positively to children's learning about materials such as building bricks, wet and dry sand and construction toys. Suitable activities such as these and the active involvement of adults, both in the nursery and reception classes, encourage children to be curious about the world around them and provide a wealth of opportunities to describe what they see and do.

Physical development

79. Children make good progress in all aspects of physical development because teaching is very good and there is a very good range of opportunities for indoor and outdoor play. As a result the majority of children achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year.

80. In both the nursery and reception classes teachers provide activities that help children develop their fine motor skills using scissors, pencils, paintbrushes and the computer mouse. They manipulate materials and tools with growing dexterity, for example when using a trowel to plant in the garden or rolling dough ready to make the first letter of their name. They are taught how to handle equipment safely and are expected to take responsibility for its care. As well as sessions of free play, children are shown how to push on the pedals of a bike and steer them around shapes drawn on the playground. All children improve their ability to move with control, showing an awareness of the space and people around them. For example, during the inspection children in the nursery were observed enjoying running under and around a parachute with their classmates, controlling their movements so that everyone could run at their own pace. In another lesson children in reception were observed keeping within a designated area on the field whilst running with their friends to find shapes hidden in the grass.

Creative development

81. Provision for creative development is very good because teachers use their subject knowledge very effectively to plan interesting activities that capture children's attention and develop their imagination. As a result children make good progress and the majority achieve early learning goals by the time they leave the reception class. A significant number exceed these levels, particularly in expressing their ideas through the use of paint and other materials as well as through working co-operatively to act out a familiar story.
82. Displays around the nursery show that children paint and draw in relation to their topics. For example, they paint a hedgehog and place it on a display about the garden. They learn how to make symmetrical prints for butterfly wings and make pictures of flowers with coloured paper. They use their observation skills to draw and colour a yucca plant, some children achieving a very good standard of work. With high quality support, children who lack confidence and experience learn more about playing imaginatively as they work together at the flower stall. In reception classes, children mix colours to paint pictures of boats bobbing on the water. They make simple models of the boats using a piece of balsa wood and then attach a sail. They practise and improve their ability to cut and stick with precision when making squares with art straws. Teachers make sure that children build on the work covered in the nursery that encourages children to think and work imaginatively. For example, in one lesson the teacher quickly intervened to steer children's impromptu role-play so that the group, including those with SEN, experienced a high level of success.

ENGLISH

83. Standards in English are above average and pupils are achieving well because of the good teaching. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when standards were found to be average. The effective management of the subject has identified areas for improvement and these have been successfully targeted.
84. The findings of the inspection indicate that standards are above the 2002 National Curriculum test results for seven year olds where reading was in line and writing was above all schools nationally. When compared with schools with similar intakes, pupils were average in writing and below in reading. Boys and girls achieve similar standards in writing but in reading boys are lower than girls. Overall, standards in reading and writing have been above the national average over the last five years, however, the trend shows small improvements in writing and a small fall in reading at the end of Year 2. The school has used the test data carefully to target areas for improvement and this is having a positive impact in the results that are emerging from this year's tests.
85. Standards of speaking and listening are above average at the end of Year 2, however only a few pupils reach the higher levels. The majority of pupils are confident when talking to an audience or listening to others. They respond thoughtfully to their teacher's questions. A tiny minority of lower attaining pupils have less confidence in talking to others. The teachers provide pupils with many opportunities to talk in small groups with adults such as in a Year 2 lesson where the teacher and pupils discussed how to find out information from a reference book.
86. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 make good progress, and by the age of nine, standards are above average in speaking and listening. Most pupils speak confidently and are able to express a point of view. In discussions, they listen carefully to other people's contributions and add their own thoughts as observed in a Year 4 lesson when pupils listened intently to the each other's suggestions as to why they thought the 'Balaclava Story' had taken place some time ago. The higher attaining pupils were able to justify their views.
87. Standards of reading are above average at the end of Year 2. The inspection findings show an improvement on the 2002 national test results. This is because the school has focused on developing pupils' skills of prediction and has also introduced more non-fiction and illustrated books into the pupils' reading so as to engage the interest of more pupils, in particular the boys. Most parents hear their children read regularly. The pupils home-school reading diaries, however, are not consistently used by teachers.
88. By the end of Year 2 most pupils recognise a range of simple words and use pictures, phonics and context to help read texts. Most read with confidence and the higher attaining pupils use expression well. Most pupils can use a simple dictionary and are familiar with the use of a contents page and index when reading non-fiction books. When hearing a higher attaining boy in Year 2 read a book about 'ladybirds' he was very clear as to how to find the information and how to read a passage quickly to see if it contained the information in which he was interested.

89. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 make good progress in reading and standards are above average. Most pupils read a wide range of texts, recall details and generally read out loud with confidence as was observed when a Year 4 pupil chose to read the poem 'The Highwayman' to an inspector. They are able to answer questions about what has happened in a story or poem and the higher attaining pupils make deductions and infer meaning from a text. Pupils understand how to use the library and the Internet for their research. However, pupils have too few opportunities to use the Internet when completing research work. Lower attaining pupils make good progress because the teaching assistants provide a very clear focus for the pupils using additional literacy and ICT programmes.
90. Standards in writing are above the national average by the age of seven. By the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils develop their ideas in sequence and use capital letters and full stops. The higher attaining Year 2 pupils are able to order the events of 'The Great Fire of London' chronologically and introduced some excitement to their writing by using exciting vocabulary and exclamation marks to emphasise a point. Overall handwriting is satisfactory, however the presentation of the pupils' work is not as high as it should be.
91. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 make good progress and attain above average standards in writing. Higher attaining pupils' writing is well organised, paragraphs are well used and they use interesting vocabulary to convey atmosphere such as in an account of a battle between the Celts and the Romans a child wrote 'The noise was appalling.....the smell got worse.....then the order came to move forward'. Most pupils are able to use sub-sections and write in short, succinct sentences whilst producing a publicity leaflet for Newcastle upon Tyne. However pupils' presentation of their work can be very variable across the different classes and is not always of satisfactory standard.
92. Pupils with SEN achieve well against their prior attainment in speaking and listening, reading and writing. They receive very good support by teachers and the teaching assistants who very carefully monitor pupils' work. Teaching assistants are very good at explaining what the pupils need to do, ensure that they remain on task and complete it. ICT is well used to support those pupils with SEN.
93. The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall, and never less than satisfactory. In Year 1 and Year 2 half of the lessons observed were very good and the other half good. In Year 3 and Year 4 half the lessons observed were good or very good and the other half were satisfactory. When teaching is very good the lessons are characterised by very good knowledge of how to teach the literacy skills. They have very good pace and a variety of activities are used during the lesson. Teachers include all pupils in their questioning, carefully targeting their questions towards different ability groups. This was very evident in a Year 1/2 lesson on 'thinking skills', where pupils were asked to answer questions from their own knowledge or by checking their answers from displays in the classroom. Pupils' comments are always valued and this helps them feel secure and confident. Where teaching is satisfactory, this is due to the pace of the lesson not being quick enough and that at the end of the lesson the teacher does not provide an opportunity for pupils to reflect on what they have learned during the lesson.
94. Pupils' attitudes are very good in all lessons. They listen very attentively during whole class sessions and concentrate well throughout lessons. Pupils focus well on their tasks showing good skills of independence and collaboration. Pupils are very motivated to learn, however they do not have sufficient pride in presenting their work.

95. Development of literacy skills across the curriculum is good. In all subjects pupils use their speaking and listening skills to investigate, discuss and share ideas. Pupils are provided with sufficient opportunities to read out loud or to themselves. Pupils have many opportunities to write, however, this is frequently on white boards or pieces of paper that are not retained. This results in pupils having too few well presented pieces of permanently recorded work making it difficult for teachers to make diagnostic comments, track progress and use outcomes to plan the next step of learning. The presentation of pupils' work is very variable and sometimes not as good as in their literacy lessons.
96. The co-ordinator has recently left but the evidence of her work indicates that the English was well managed. The subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the National Literacy Strategy is effectively implemented. Assessment procedures are good. Analysis of pupils' performance is enabling the school to target support and professional development appropriately, which is having an impact on standards. Overall, resources in literacy are good, however, too little use is made of ICT to enhance the curriculum for all pupils. There is an appropriate range and number of books in the classrooms and library. Use of the library is sound. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, cultural and social awareness.

MATHEMATICS

97. Standards in mathematics have fluctuated since the last inspection when the majority of pupils achieved standards expected for their age. Standards have remained above the national average with no significant difference in attainment between boys and girls. High standards reflect the way in which the school has developed the quality of teaching through the use of the National Numeracy Strategy and carefully planned lessons. The use of projects such as 'thinking skills' is having a positive impact on teaching and learning but the co-ordinator needs to develop a better view of mathematics teaching across the school and consider how to support pupils who are particularly very able.
98. Attainment at Key Stage 1 is above national expectations. By the age of seven, all pupils in Year 2 are currently working at a level expected for them and almost half of the Year 2 class is working beyond this. Pupils make good progress because teachers have good knowledge of the subject and use this to provide activities that are well matched to pupils' needs. Pupils with SEN make good progress because of the support they receive from teachers and well-prepared, hard-working teaching assistants. Pupils order numbers beyond 20 and identify tens and units when adding and subtracting larger numbers. They recognise number patterns including odd and even numbers, multiples of 2 and 10, doubles and near doubles. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils identified 38 as nearly half of 80 and 24 as double 12. Pupils recognise and know the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes. Year 2 pupils talked confidently about the characteristics of three-dimensional shapes referring to their edges, faces and vertices. They use mathematical words well as a result of the good opportunities in all lessons to discuss their work.
99. By the age of nine most pupils attain levels expected for them and many in the top set exceed expectations in their work on number. For example, high attaining pupils identified half-way points between numbers such as, 0 and 5000, -10 and -20. One boy gave a detailed explanation of the relationship between the 4 and 8 times tables using examples of multiples to 96. Pupils calculate the area and perimeter of regular shapes and their calculations using the four rules of number are generally accurate. All pupils make good progress because, in addition to good quality teaching, there are very good relationships in all classes that enable pupils to work co-operatively. This in turn encourages good attitudes to work and very good working habits. For example, pupils in the lower set worked in one of three groups. One group worked on their own led by a higher attaining boy – they worked conscientiously and produced good results. The teacher and a very capable teaching assistant supported the other groups. At the end of the lesson all pupils had made very good progress in their use and understanding of 'arrays' and the inverse relationship between multiplication and division.

100. Good teaching was seen in Years 1 and 2 with some very good teaching in reception class and the lower mathematics set in Years 3/4. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The teaching is benefiting from the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy and the improved planning that is now in use. Lessons have a sense of purpose and pupils are confident. Relationships are good and pupils are keen to offer answers as well as useful observations about their learning. For example, the majority of pupils in the Year 3/4 top set had enthusiastically completed their homework and were quick to offer accurate answers to the teacher's brisk questioning. They listened well to careful explanations from the teacher and other pupils. Younger pupils in Year 2 benefited from well-directed questions that encouraged them to think about a variety of ways in which to deal with subtractions such as 24-7. Various approaches were identified from simple 'counting back' to breaking up the numbers in ways that stepped accurately from 24 to 20 to 7 or from 24 to 10 to 7.
101. Pupils' attitudes are good in lessons. They co-operate well when working on group activities. They are confident to seek advice from each other and adults.
102. Although the school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, there is insufficient emphasis on recorded work which means that pupils have little recorded work for their own reference or for teachers to use when assessing how well individual pupils achieve. Though lesson planning is detailed, there are too few opportunities identified in planning for pupils to extend their mathematical skills through other subjects.
103. Mathematics is suitably managed and all teachers contribute to identifying what is needed for improvement. Governors visit the school each term and spend time in classrooms as part of their monitoring role. The results of national tests are analysed but the co-ordinator needs to develop a better understanding of what pupils and teachers do well and things they need to improve. He needs to improve resources and help those pupils who are very able make more progress in lessons by providing advice and guidance to teachers.

SCIENCE

104. Standards are in line with the national expectations for age at the end of Year 2 and above by the end of Year 4. In Years 1 and 2 pupils make good progress in developing their experimental and investigative skills and satisfactory progress in most other aspects of science. The continued focus in Years 3 and 4 on developing pupils' investigative skills has motivated them well to learn and, as a result, their progress is good and they have achieved well by the time they leave the school and this has resulted in an improvement since the last inspection.
105. Teachers' assessments in the 2002 national tests for seven year olds indicated that attainment in science was in line with the national average.
106. Teaching in science is satisfactory overall and some aspects are good. This is reflected in the variation in the standards pupils reach in the different elements of the science curriculum. In all classes pupils are given good opportunities to collect evidence by careful observation and to answer questions by devising their own tests. As a result, pupils achieve well in the areas of the curriculum that demand them to think for themselves. By the end of Year 4, for example, they are attaining at above average levels in applying their knowledge and understanding to answer questions such as "is the shadow always the same size as the object?" Pupils of all abilities in Year 4 worked very productively in their groups to use their previous work to demonstrate the relationship between a light source, an object and its shadow. The skill with which they record the results and present the evidence of their investigations in Years 3/4 is variable and many would benefit from more direct teaching about the variety and suitability of methods that can be employed to record their observations.
107. Sound teaching through topics in Years 1 and 2 ensures that by the end of Year 2 most pupils have a satisfactory understanding about living things. For example, they know what plants need to live and grow and they can identify the different parts of plants. They understand about the life cycle of a frog and they can identify the differences between human beings and animals. They work with a good range of different materials and have investigated their properties. Whilst most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding about physical processes, lower attaining pupils find this aspect of the work more difficult. This was evident in the work they were doing about sound. Less able Year 2 pupils found it difficult to understand how speech is created because the task was too sophisticated for them. Assessments indicate that this aspect of science is weaker than others and that fewer able pupils are reaching the higher levels.
108. In Years 3 and 4, teachers plan work that builds on the skills of scientific enquiry that they have acquired in Key Stage 1. Lessons provide an appropriate balance between the teaching of facts and practical investigations. Pupils with SEN are very well supported and most higher attaining pupils are provided with good levels of challenge. This results in good progress for almost all pupils. However, in some lessons very able pupils are working well within their capabilities and need more challenge in their work. Marking of work in Years 3 and 4 is sometimes superficial and does not help pupils to understand how they can improve.
109. Pupils respond well to the practical approach that the school adopts to the teaching of science. In most lessons they are interested, well motivated and fully involved. They work productively together to agree solutions to often very challenging tasks that they are given. Relationships with teachers and other adults are very good and they are well behaved both in and out of classrooms.

110. The subject management is satisfactory. A new subject leader is presently auditing the provision in order to identify any gaps in resources and the subject is due for an in-depth review as part of the planned developments in 2004. There is still no systematic means of monitoring teaching and learning in classrooms and the end of key stage assessments are insufficiently used to decide areas for improvement.

ART AND DESIGN

111. Pupils attain above national expectations in art and design at the end of Year 2 and by the end of Year 4. They are given a very good foundation in the nursery and reception years where standards attained are high and achievement is good in the creative aspects of learning. Teaching in all classes effectively builds on pupils' well-developed skills by providing good opportunities for them to learn new techniques in working with a wider range of materials. As a result, pupils of all abilities make good progress in their skills and understanding of art and design. This represents good improvement in the standards achieved since the last inspection.
112. Throughout the school, teachers provide pupils with activities in art that encourage exploration and reflection. Often these are carefully linked to work in other subjects and topics. Pupils respond by producing work of a good quality of which they are proud. Unfortunately, the high quality of presentation achieved in the work they produce in art lessons is not always transferred when they are using their drawing and colouring skills in other subjects. Here presentation is often untidy and the quality of their drawing is sometimes poor.
113. Teaching is good. Techniques are carefully taught and then pupils are given freedom to experiment and practise using them to produce original and personal responses to challenges. For example, in Year 1 pupils are creative at using materials such as textiles to provide solutions to problems posed by their teachers. In a very good Year 1 art lesson the children were able to produce accurately woven, colourful and varied textured fabric as a sample suitable for a coat for 'Barnaby Bear' on his trip to the North Pole. In a topic in which pupils learned about paper and its qualities as a material, pupils were able to produce their own paper, some enhancing it with other materials such as glitter. Teachers manage lessons very well, organisation is good and resources are carefully considered to provide pupils with a wide choice for their work.
114. Pupils' attitudes are very good. They are confident to offer their own suggestions. They are given good levels of responsibility to organise their own resources and to make decisions about colour and texture.
115. The school has ensured that the curriculum includes varied opportunities for working in three dimensions in response to an area for development identified in the previous inspection. In the Year 3 and 4 classes, for example, pupils all have the opportunity to work with clay as part of their topic on the Romans. They are able to use examples of Roman sculpture to inspire their own interpretations of Roman gods. The results show good attention to detail and indicate that pupils have understood the properties of the material with which they were working
116. The school has worked hard to provide many pupils with opportunities to broaden their understanding of art and design. The community and business are used effectively as an additional resource in projects such as enhancing the school grounds and the outdoor environment. A good example was seen in the colourful railing decorations that had been designed and painted by the children. An art club is very well attended and this provides good opportunities for many pupils to extend the skills they learn in lessons.

117. The management of the subject is good overall. The curriculum co-ordinator has very good specialist knowledge and has ensured that resources are good. Appropriate units of work have been chosen from the nationally approved guidelines. However, although she monitors teachers' planning and is broadly aware of the quality of work by observing outcomes, the school has no systematic way of monitoring teaching and learning or assessing pupils' attainment in art. Although there have been limited opportunities for staff development in recent years the present school development plan provides for a period of activity in further developing the subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

118. It was only possible to see one lesson in design and technology (DT) but work in pupils' planning books and on display around the school shows that pupils attain in line with national expectations for age at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. Pupils learn steadily throughout the school and by the time they leave, they are able to design and make products using a range of materials
119. The school is using units from the nationally approved guidelines as its scheme of work and this is ensuring that skills are developed progressively as children move through the school. In Years 1 and 2, for example, pupils learn effectively about mechanisms that provide movement. In one project they made a winding mechanism for moving 'Incy Wincy Spider' up and down the spout while in Year 3 they learned about more complex mechanisms to make moving parts for children's books. From early in Year 1 pupils are taught to look critically at products that already exist as a starting point for their own designs. Good examples were seen in a project where they had looked at a range of finger puppets before making their own in Year 2. In Years 3 and 4 they were able to evaluate the success of a good variety of children's picture books with moving parts as a starting point to creating books for children in nursery and reception classes.
120. Teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good. The best teaching helps children to learn particular skills effectively which they then use creatively in producing original solutions to the tasks provided for them. For example, in a class of Year 3 and 4 pupils, the teacher had taught a number of variations to the technique for achieving moving parts by using levers of various lengths and at different angles. Pupils were given time to practise their new skills before deciding which would be most appropriate to their needs. Tasks provide good levels of challenge for higher attaining pupils but a lack of some materials and time means that they are unable to realise their designs without major revision. Sometimes these same tasks are too daunting for less able pupils without a great deal of support and reassurance. Occasionally teaching does not provide sufficient opportunity for originality or the chance to make a product to a high standard of finish.
121. Most pupils respond well to the good levels of responsibility they are given to make their own decisions. They work together on projects very well. They have high levels of commitment to their work and can sustain good levels of concentration when they are engaged on practical work. Their behaviour in lessons is very good.
122. The management of the subject is sound. Resources are appropriate for the present topics and teachers are well supported by the present scheme of work. Opportunities to monitor teaching, learning and standards are presently mainly informal but the subject leader has a sense of the progress being made by her examination of pupils' work throughout the school

GEOGRAPHY

123. By the end of Year 2 and Year 4 pupils attain standards that are broadly in line with those expected nationally. All pupils make satisfactory progress.
124. Pupils in Year 2 study the Mexican village of Tocuaro. Discussion with pupils reveals that they have a sound understanding of the differences between this locality and their own. They improve their understanding of how places change as a result of economic development and that the people in each locality have different lifestyles and cultures. By visiting a farm they improve their understanding of how land can be used to grow food and sustain animals. They use stories about places to make comparisons between their own and other localities.
125. Pupils in Year 4 have a sound understanding of the features of a river and know that the River Tyne flows through contrasting countryside and industrial areas. They have some knowledge of how rivers are used for transport, for bringing goods into the country and for fishing. They know, through their study of Holy Island, what makes some areas attractive to tourists and how this might impact on local people and the environment. They have a growing interest in environmental issues such as conservation and how the local area might be made more attractive.
126. Pupils in both key stages are familiar with world and national maps. They can locate the places they are studying and have a growing understanding of where places are around the world. For example, they plot the progress of 'Barnaby and Betty Bear' as they travel from place to place. Pupils know where to look for information and have a sound understanding of the importance of books, photographs, maps and the Internet when carrying out a geographical enquiry. A good example of pupils using these skills was seen during the inspection in one classroom where pupils had sorted and made decisions about the origins of food and other items and placed these on a world map. However, evidence in books and around school suggests that since the previous inspection pupils, particularly the higher attaining, still have too few opportunities to work independently to make decisions about the method of research and how findings will be recorded and presented.
127. Overall teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have made satisfactory progress since the previous inspection in identifying more specific learning outcomes for their lessons so that pupils now know what it is they are going to learn. Teachers use their subject knowledge to provide an interesting and varied range of activities that are enriched by visits to support pupils' learning. They make successful links to other areas of the curriculum such as history and art using Northumberland to provide a wealth of information about the past as well as for the study of a locality. They give pupils the opportunity to write about the visits they have made and what they have enjoyed but do not use writing opportunities sufficiently well to support geographical enquiry. Recorded work is limited in quantity and sometimes unfinished or poorly presented. This means that pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to add to a well-presented permanent record of work, making it difficult for teachers to give written feedback and plan the next step in learning.
128. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the topics that are taught in each class through the monitoring of teachers' planning. The school is beginning to develop a systematic way of assessing pupils' attainment in geography and therefore the co-ordinator is gaining a better understanding of the standards pupils achieve.

HISTORY

129. By the end of Year 2 and Year 4 pupils attain standards that are in line with those expected nationally. Pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
130. Pupils in Year 2 have a sound knowledge of the events that led up to 'The Great Fire of London' and can give reasons for why it spread so quickly. They know that it happened a long time ago and that people used the river to escape from the flames. They show good attitudes to this subject when they talk about life at the time of the plague and know something about the importance of Samuel Pepys and his diary.
131. In Year 4, pupils clearly enjoy their work and can put the periods of history they have studied in chronological order. They talk enthusiastically about their study of the Romans and a recent visit to Vindolanda. They have an appreciation of the differences between the lifestyle of a soldier in the army and that of rich a Roman. They write taking on the role of Boudicca and begin to interpret historical evidence about her.
132. Pupils at both key stages know where to look for information and have had some experience of carrying out simple research tasks. A very good example of an enquiry-based activity that challenged all pupils, particularly the higher attaining, was seen during the inspection. It posed the question, "Is this a Roman shoe?" Pupils were expected to examine an old shoe, look for evidence and apply what they had learned about the Romans to make a decision. The majority of pupils know how to use information sources such as books, video material and the Internet but are sometimes given information rather than researching it for themselves. Therefore, since the last inspection satisfactory progress has been made in giving more emphasis to enquiry-based tasks and providing more challenge for higher attaining pupils.
133. The school's long-term plan ensures that there is appropriate coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study. Insufficient direct teaching was seen to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching overall but other evidence from pupils themselves and work around school suggests that teaching is at least satisfactory. Teachers provide an interesting and varied range of activities and are keen to include visits to places relevant to the topic they are teaching. They make successful links to other areas of the curriculum such as literacy and art. Examples from displays show that pupils write about the importance of the River Nile to the Ancient Egyptians and paint a large-scale representation of a Roman soldier. There is an emphasis on giving information and encouraging discussion and this is a successful strategy for stimulating interest and motivating pupils to learn. However, it sometimes leads to insufficient planned opportunities for pupils to add to a permanent, well presented record of key pieces of work, making it difficult for teachers to make diagnostic comment, track progress and use outcomes to plan the next step in learning.
134. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is very aware of which topics and skills should be taught in each class and ensures that the work is completed through the monitoring of teachers' planning. The co-ordinator is developing a greater understanding of the pupils' achievements by using the recently introduced school system for assessing the standards pupils achieve in history.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

135. In both key stages, attainment is in line with what is expected nationally for pupils aged seven and nine. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Many pupils have access to computers at home and this contributes to the progress they make in this subject. The school has recently purchased new laptop computers but there has been insufficient time for this to make an impact on pupils' attainment and the integration of ICT into other subjects. The staff are receiving suitable training and the school has part-time technical support. The plans to replace old computers and the enthusiasm of staff and pupils means that the subject is in a good position to move forward, accelerating pupils' learning and progress.
136. Attainment is in line with national expectations and pupils' achievement is generally satisfactory. The youngest children in the Foundation Stage spend time usefully at the computer in the nursery and reception classes extending their knowledge and understanding of the world and developing their ICT skills, such as greater control of the computer mouse, by creating simple pictures. They have access to programmable toys though there are some significant gaps in the range of software available to them for language, literacy and communication.
137. By Year 2, pupils use a limited range of programmes to draw, write and amend text with increasing skills and confidence. Pupils follow on-screen instructions well and in one lesson, demonstrated some understanding of how computers operate by constructing a binary tree – simple questions requiring a yes/no answer.
138. By the age of nine, pupils continue to use a limited range of programmes. In mathematics lessons pupils use a suite of programs from 'Rapid Maths' to practice and consolidate their number skills. They confidently load programs and move between screens without help from adults. In literacy and as part of their work in DT, pupils demonstrate their good application of skills whilst using publishing software to produce posters for the school's 'Bun Day'. They make extensive use of the 'menus and wizards' provided in the software to create attractive designs. There are no opportunities for pupils to use sensing or data-logging equipment and attainment in these areas is below expectation for their age.
139. Two lessons were observed and the quality of teaching was satisfactory. In Years 3 and 4 the teacher had researched and planned the lesson well to ensure that she demonstrated the main features of 'Publisher' that pupils would need to produce their posters. The demonstration was limited by the use of a standard monitor, which was too small for a whole-class presentation and pupils at the back of the group could not see details on screen. Despite this, pupils were very enthusiastic and well behaved and combined with the very good relationships in the class, the quality of learning in the lesson was satisfactory. Pupils were thrilled at the effects that the computer created from simple commands. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher skilfully built upon pupils' previous learning to help them frame their questions. The result was a lively, but well managed discussion that enabled pupils to begin to organize and classify their work. At this point learning would have been enhanced if pupils had been given the opportunity to record some of the outcomes of their discussion.

140. Pupils develop an appropriate range of ICT skills. They have the opportunity to communicate by e-mail. As yet pupils have not had the opportunity to use sensing equipment to support their geography, mathematics and science. Low-achieving pupils and those with SEN generally complete less work but their progress, as for other pupils, is good overall because of the good support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants.
141. The curriculum is suitably planned and the subject is effectively led and managed. The co-ordinator has sound subject knowledge and works hard to advise other teachers. He has made a significant contribution to the development of the subject since the previous inspection. He has begun to prepare plans to use e-learning credits and grants from the National Grid for Learning to improve the range of ICT resources. However, more needs to be done to plan opportunities to use ICT in other subjects to further improve pupils' language, communication and number skills. More resources are needed to enable teachers to make more effective use of ICT in their teaching and to ensure opportunities to use sensing and data-logging equipment are provided, especially in Years 3 and 4.

MUSIC

142. Pupils throughout the school attain standards expected for their age and enjoy music-making activities. The tuition provided by the co-ordinator and visiting specialist teachers for keyboard, guitar, steel drums and recorder and choir ensembles enhance the provision for interested pupils. Pupils who play musical instruments perform confidently in lessons and assemblies. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection where listening to and appraising music were judged to be good.
143. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 sing well showing good control of pitch and rhythm. They compose and perform simple pieces using un-pitched percussion instruments, for example when improvising sounds to accompany singing a song about 'Jenny' in a Year 1/2 class. They listen to a variety of music, such as 'rainforest pieces' recognising changes in dynamics and giving sensible descriptions of how different moods and effects are created by the instruments.
144. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have good biographical knowledge about composers such as Gustav Holst. They know about his music and offer well-informed opinions about their favourite pieces. For example, one pupil described 'Pluto' as her favourite piece because it made her feel "relaxed", another that he liked 'Mars' because it was "exciting". Pupils recognise the different elements in a piece of music and talk confidently about pitch, tempo, rhythm and volume. In a Year 3/4 lesson, pupils created pictures in pastel to represent the moods conveyed by the music. Their response to the music was very imaginative, one girl describing calm sections in "blues and greens" and the exciting sections with "hot and spiky colours of red and orange".
145. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. Lessons are well prepared and resources are used effectively to keep pupils interested and on task. Pupils' response is always good and frequently better. They listen attentively and make valuable contributions to discussion and performances in front of their classmates. They use instruments carefully and follow instructions conscientiously. Teachers model and use the correct subject vocabulary confidently and this has helped pupils develop a sound understanding of the different elements in music.

146. The school is well resourced, though as in the previous inspection, it was not possible to see the use of ICT to explore and record sounds. The subject is well managed and the head teacher and co-ordinator provide specialist help and teaching in Years 3 and 4. Specialist tuition provided by LEA peripatetic staff is paid for by parents and offers a good range of experiences for pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

147. In physical education (PE) pupils' attainment is in line with expectations for their age and they make satisfactory progress. During the inspection only games lessons were seen, however, scrutiny of teachers' planning shows that all areas of PE are covered. The school has addressed the issue raised in the previous report regarding the teaching of gymnastics by updating its scheme of work and providing in-service training for teachers. Pupils enjoy their gymnastics, particularly using large climbing apparatus. One pupil commented that she enjoyed "balancing on the apparatus and looking down on her friends balancing on the floor".
148. Insufficient direct teaching was seen to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching overall but from the two lessons seen teaching is satisfactory. In Year 2, pupils passed a bean bag then a ball to each other. Pupils' skills varied but the teacher used pupil demonstration and questioning effectively to encourage them to improve their skills. Staff provide good role models, dressing appropriately and showing an enthusiasm for PE. As a result, pupils show positive attitudes to learning and most respond well to the challenges presented. For example, in a Year 3/4 lesson the teacher demonstrated then joined in with activities to improve pupils' ball-handling skills during a rugby practice. The school also provides opportunities for pupils to learn to swim. The school provides limited extra-curricular activities in football.
149. Pupils thoroughly enjoy these lessons, as most are challenging, conducted at a brisk pace and fun. They understand the need to warm up before activities as the teacher reminds them often what the purpose of the activity is. Pupils co-operate very well in these lessons, working sensibly in pairs and small groups. For example, when sending and receiving a large ball, pupils in Year 3/4 tried to throw accurately so that their partner would be able to catch it. Very good management of pupils by the teachers ensures that these lessons, whilst fun, are well controlled with the pupils showing very good behavior.
150. The co-ordinator has been responsible for the subject for two years but had little opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. The scheme of work is in the process of a further review with the help of the LEA adviser. Resources are adequate. Coaching by Newcastle United FC and in sports such as basketball, complements the teaching in the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

151. No lessons were observed but teachers' assessments and examples of pupils' work were examined. The contributions of acts of collective worship to pupils' understanding of RE were also considered.
152. Standards are in line with expectations and progress is satisfactory at the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 4. Since the previous inspection the school has maintained the standards that pupils achieve in the subject.

153. In Key Stage 1 there is little recorded work but teachers' assessments show that all children have had the opportunity to learn about Christianity by listening to stories about Jesus and by visiting the local church. Most children know about the main features in a church and can explain their use. In assemblies, they demonstrate that they understand the significance of symbols such as the candle in worship. Children are effectively helped to understand the importance of special people and places in our lives. By the time they leave the school pupils have a sound knowledge about a range of world religions. The teaching is successfully helping them to develop an understanding and respect towards the religious beliefs and values of others in Britain and around the world. In their writing, for example, Year 3 pupils were able to write independently about stories that illustrate qualities such as tolerance that are central to Buddhism. They can recall relevant details about the life of Jesus, higher attaining pupils adding thoughts of their own.
154. Although pupils are interested in the subject and show originality and flair in the way in which they write about the topics they are studying, they show little pride in the way in which they present their work. In Years 3 and 4 pupils' writing is often untidy and, when illustrating their work, they do not transfer their good art skills to their work in RE.
155. The subject management is satisfactory and resources are regularly kept up-to-date. The curriculum co-ordinator has recently taken over the subject area. She has had little opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching, learning and the standards reached throughout each key stage but it is a planned development.