

ERRATUM

Please note that the correct Unique Reference Number for STEPHENSON MEMORIAL PRIMARY SCHOOL is **108597**.

INSPECTION REPORT

STEPHENSON MEMORIAL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Howdon, Wallsend, Tyne and Wear

LEA area: North Tyneside

Unique reference number: 108579

Head teacher: Mr B Esland

Reporting inspector: Mr D Hardman
17794

Dates of inspection: 13th – 16th January 2003

Inspection number: 251716

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Martin Road Howdon Wallsend Tyne and Wear
Postcode:	NE28 0AG
Telephone number:	0191 2007365
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C Taylor
Date of previous inspection:	June 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17794	Mr D Hardman	Registered inspector	Religious education	What sort of school is it?
			Information and communication technology	The school's results and pupils' achievements.
			English as an additional language	How well are pupils taught?
				How well is the school led and managed?
				What should the school do to improve further?
19443	Mrs N Walker	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?
32138	Mr T Plant	Team inspector	Science	
			Music	
			Education inclusion	
22881	Mr G Halliday	Team inspector	English	
			Physical education	
			Special educational needs	
23375	Mr J Hicks	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Design and technology	
			Art and design	
			Citizenship	
12631	Mrs M McLean		Geography	
			History	
			Foundation Stage	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Stephenson Memorial Primary School is a larger than average sized school situated in the suburb of Howdon, Wallsend in Tyne and Wear. The area around the school is one of high unemployment and social deprivation. There is a broad social mix in the school and, although the full range of ability is represented, the school's initial assessments of children's attainment when they start school show that many have very poor skills, especially in their language, communication and social development. There are 159 boys and 153 girls currently on roll and a further 52 children attend the nursery on a part time basis. There are very few pupils who need to be taught English as an additional language and very few from ethnic minority groups. There are 142 pupils eligible for free school meals, which is well above the national average. Forty six pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, this is above the national average and two have statements of special educational need, which is broadly in line with the national average. Most pupils with special educational needs have moderate learning difficulties and a small proportion have behavioural difficulties. In addition, the school has identified a significant proportion of pupils who have speech and communication difficulties in each year group. There is a high turnover of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the normal entry dates. The school is part of an Education Action and Health Action Zone.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Stephenson Memorial Primary School is a new primary school that is effective in creating an atmosphere in which pupils feel secure and are keen to learn. It has gone through significant changes recently because of this move from a First School to a Primary School: a significant amount of building work, a number of staff changes and the organisation of the planning needed to manage the expansion of pupil numbers over the last two years. The head teacher and staff, well supported by the governors, are managing these changes well. For example, the school has a family atmosphere and relationships are excellent. Pupils develop very positive attitudes to learning and behave very well. Although the attainment of pupils is well below average in English and below average in mathematics and science, the school has a high percentage of pupils who join or leave the school at times other than the normal entry dates and this, coupled with the number who have special educational needs or speech and communication difficulties, affects its results. However, all pupils make at least satisfactory and sometimes good progress and learn effectively. The costs of the school are about the same as most primary schools and the quality of education provided means that the school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The leadership and management of the school by the head teacher, deputy head teacher and key staff, and the quality of teamwork between staff and governors, are good.
- The provision for children in the nursery and reception classes, is very good.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good.
- Provision for pupils' personal development is very good. As a result, relationships and pupils' enthusiasm for school are excellent.
- The provision for pupils' social education is excellent, it is very good for their moral development.
- The curriculum is enriched through good links with the community and a good range of visits and visitors. The school works hard to promote links with the parents.

What could be improved

- Pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science.
- The opportunities for co-ordinators to observe the quality of teaching and learning in their

subjects.

- The information provided in teachers' annual reports to parents on pupils' attainment and progress in all subjects of the National Curriculum.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Stephenson Memorial school has changed to a primary school since the last inspection. This means that as a new school there can be no evaluations of improvements since the last inspection.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				<i>Key</i>
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	N/A	N/A	E	E	well above average A
mathematics	N/A	N/A	E	E	above average B
science	N/A	N/A	E	C	average C
					below average D
					well below average E

There are no results available for previous years because 2002 was the first time the school had pupils aged 11 taking the National Curriculum tests. Therefore, it is not possible to make any judgements on trends over time. The table shows that in the 2002 National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds the school's results were well below average in English, mathematics and science. When compared to other schools that have a similar number of pupils on free school meals, pupils' performance was well below average in English and mathematics but average in science. The attainment of the present 11 year olds is well below the level expected in English and below the level in mathematics and science. A major cause of these low standards is the high percentage who have special educational needs or speech and communication difficulties. For example, for pupils who were at the school and completed the National Curriculum tests as infants in 1998, there has been an improvement in their attainment in 2002 showing at least satisfactory and sometimes good progress during their time in school. There are signs of improvement in all subjects because of the emphasis the school has placed on improving pupils' reading and writing skills but this has not yet had time to raise standards higher. The standards achieved by the present Year 2 pupils are well below average in English and mathematics and below average in science. The school's assessments of this group of pupils from their entry into the school show that they have made satisfactory and sometimes good progress in most subjects.

The recent establishment of a computer suite has greatly improved the opportunities for pupils to use up to date resources and is having a positive impact on their attainment. Good teaching in the suite is improving pupils' skills, which are now in line with those expected for their age in Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in religious education are in line with expected levels throughout the school. Children in the nursery and reception classes make a good start to their education, although many start school with poor skills, especially in language, literacy and communication and in their personal and social development. Very good provision is already having a positive impact on their attainment. The small number of higher attaining pupils throughout the school are often provided with work that extends their

learning and they are achieving at levels higher than expected for their age. The school has set challenging targets and, because of the commitment of all staff, is likely to achieve them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to school and their work. Most enjoy coming to school and their enthusiasm for school life is excellent and improves their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils know what is expected of them and their behaviour is very good. Pupils are polite and courteous towards one another and adults. There has been one temporary exclusion from the school in the last year.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development and relationships are very good. Most respond very well to the school's encouragement to take responsibility for their actions and relationships are excellent.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory for this school year, it is close to the national average. The school procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good.

Pupils' very good attitudes result from the school's positive, caring, family atmosphere. Most pupils are considerate of others when they move around the building, use the dining hall and play at break times. Pupils have excellent relationships with each other and with staff. They respond well to the trust and respect they are shown. For example, older pupils are "buddies" and "prefects" and they give assistance to any pupil requiring help. In discussions with the school council, pupils explained the importance of discussing all issues and then voting to make sure the eventual decision was fair and represented the majority view. This type of activity makes a very positive contribution to pupils' awareness of the importance of others' views and to their growing understanding of citizenship.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The quality of most teaching is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. There were very few instances of unsatisfactory teaching seen during the inspection. Some good teaching was seen throughout the school, particularly in the Foundation Stage and in information and communication technology. The teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is good and sometimes very good because teachers use the results of assessments well in their planning to ensure that children are given activities matched well to their varying abilities. This is a major factor in their improving attainment and learning. Children needing additional support are identified early and they make the same progress as other children, because they are supported well by adults.

Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum is satisfactory. Teachers' planning in English and mathematics is clearly linked to the guidance of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and this leads to better teaching and improving standards. Although there are good group targets set to improve pupils' attainment, the school is aware that these are too general and has plans to refine the system and set more specific individual or group targets for pupils. In the best lessons, tasks are organised to challenge different groups in classes and pupils make steady and sometimes good progress. However, this is not always the case and some teachers do not expect

enough of their pupils and learning slows in these lessons. Planning for all other subjects follows national guidelines or the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus for religious education. The school has only been fully established for just over a year and teaching staff have made many adjustments to cope with the demands of a primary school curriculum. For example, there has been significant work undertaken in the analysis of the results in National Curriculum tests and weaknesses have been identified for development. However, because so many systems are new, the school is not yet using assessment data sufficiently well to guide teachers' planning of lessons or series of lessons. The school is aware of the need to fully implement the marking policy and so provide information to pupils so they understand how well they are doing and what they must tackle next to further improve. Classroom assistants give effective support to individuals and groups of pupils when they are working with them. Staff value all pupils equally, whatever their needs, and work hard to make sure they get the best from their time at school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. There is a wide range of learning opportunities for all pupils. The school has adopted the most recent national guidelines and teachers are following these in their planning to ensure that all pupils have a varied and interesting curriculum. Particular strengths are the good range of visits and visitors, links with the community and other local schools, which enrich the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers and support assistants know the pupils well, ensure that they participate in the same activities as their classmates and this makes a positive contribution to their attainment and learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Most pupils for whom English is an additional language have a good grasp of English and staff work with them to make sure they join in all the activities available. When they are withdrawn for specialist help pupils make good progress because of the high quality of the teaching.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good. It is very good for their moral development and excellent for their social development. The provision ensures that a positive climate for learning is established which makes a significant contribution to the positive attitudes shown by most pupils. This provision makes a very good contribution to promoting the school aims.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress but the results of these are not yet used effectively to guide teachers' planning. In addition, the effective marking of pupils' written work is an area for improvement.

The curriculum meets statutory requirements and goes beyond this to include several features that enrich it considerably. For example, there is considerable effort put in to visit places of interest and a range of visitors give pupils a wide experience and help them learn. The school puts a great deal of effort into the links with parents and the community which makes a good contribution to pupils' learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	The head teacher, deputy head teacher and key staff provide good leadership and management, which gives a clear educational direction for the school. The quality of teamwork by all staff is good and fosters a positive family atmosphere in which all pupils are valued and their efforts well supported.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body is committed to helping the school to continue to develop. Governors make an effective contribution to the running of the school and are committed to raising standards further.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school has faced considerable changes in recent times and has adapted well in many areas. It is now in a position to review and assess how effective the new procedures and systems are working. The head teacher and staff are rightly proud of the social development of all pupils and they are clearly identifying other areas for improvement. For example, the key focus this year is to improve pupils' language, writing and presentation.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school uses the resources available well. Support staff play an important role in the life of the school and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. The accommodation is very good and very well maintained. The library is satisfactory and used effectively to support pupils' learning in all subjects. The school's finances and administrative procedures are good.

The good leadership and management provided by the head teacher and governors are major factors in the quality of teamwork and positive atmosphere in the school. The good strategic management of the school is evident in the way that literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology have been given priority for development during the change to Primary status. The school uses funds designated for particular purposes well. For example, the use of funds provided through the Education Action Zone initiative are used very well to support the running and organisation of the "Breakfast Club" which is having a very positive impact on its participants. Governors and the head teacher keep a close eye on spending to ensure that they follow the principles of "best value" well. For example, they examine the detailed analysis of assessment results, including comparisons with similar schools, to target spending to bring about improvements in standards. The apparent higher than average amount of money unspent in the budget last year came from the increasing size of the new school and the time delay in the grants being spent on new resources meant that not all expenditure was shown in the end of year figures. The present budget has a small contingency which is well within the recommended guidelines.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and are making good progress. • Teaching is good. • They feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems. • The school expects children to work hard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of information about their child's progress.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The way the school works with parents. • The school helps children to become more mature and responsible. • The school is well led and managed. 	
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Most parents consider that they have a good partnership with the school and express satisfaction with the majority of its life and work. Inspection findings confirm the positive views expressed by parents. Parents are kept well informed about school events through regular, informative newsletters. The inspection team agrees with the concerns of parents that the information provided about their children's attainment and progress is unsatisfactory because teachers' annual reports do not give sufficient information on what each child has achieved in all subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 In this school the Foundation Stage is made up of one nursery and two reception classes. The provision is very good and a strength of the school. The school's assessments of children's attainment show that many enter the Foundation Stage with levels of attainment that are very poor when compared with those of most children of the same age. As a result of the good teaching, children achieve well and by the time they leave the reception class they have made good progress although attainment remains well below that expected for their age in all areas of learning. A significant number of children are identified with speech and language difficulties. This impacts on standards in the reception year. Standards in personal, social and emotional development are improving well. This is because of the emphasis placed on promoting this area of learning.

2 The standards attained by 11 year olds in the National Curriculum tests in 2002 were well below average in English, mathematics and science. When compared to schools with a similar level of free school meals, pupils' performance was well below average in English and mathematics and average in science. Although the attainment of pupils in the present Year 6 is well below average in English and below average in mathematics and science, the school has a high percentage of pupils who join or leave the school at times other than the normal entry dates and this, coupled with the number who have special educational needs or speech and communication difficulties, adversely affects its results. These factors also had a detrimental affect on pupils' attainment in the 2002 National curriculum tests. There are signs of improvement in all subjects because of the emphasis the school has placed on improving pupils' reading and writing skills but this has not yet had time to raise standards further. The school sets challenging targets and, because of the commitment of all staff, is on line to achieve them.

3 The standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 in the National Curriculum tests in 2002 were below average in reading, average in writing and well above average in mathematics and science. These results were a significant improvement on 2001, mainly because the school is now more settled and teachers have placed emphasis on improving pupils' reading and writing skills. The standards achieved by the present Year 2 pupils are well below average in English and mathematics and below average in science. The large proportion of pupils who have speech and communication difficulties is one of the main reasons for these low standards. However, the school's assessments of this group of pupils from their entry into the school show that they have made at least satisfactory progress and sometimes good progress in these subjects.

4 By the age of seven and 11, pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is in line with the level expected for their age. This represents good progress and is the result of good teaching in the computer suite, better resources and increased confidence amongst the staff. In religious education pupils' attainment, by the age of seven and 11, is in line with the level expected in the Agreed Syllabus, although their language and literacy difficulties restrict higher attainment. In all other subjects, pupils' attainment is in line with the level expected for their age. In geography there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement for Year 6 pupils, because only history was taught last term and geography is planned for this term. At the time of the inspection, these pupils had received only one lesson.

5 During the inspection, no significant variation was noted in the attainment of boys and girls in any subject. Although there are good group targets set to improve pupils' attainment, the school is aware that these are too general and has plans to refine the system and set more specific individual or group targets for pupils to ensure that all pupils are appropriately challenged in all lessons. There are

no results available for previous years because 2002 was the first time the school had pupils aged 11 taking the National Curriculum tests. Therefore, it is not possible to make any judgements on trends over time.

6 Other subjects of the National Curriculum make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, for example, through discussions in history and geography, recording their visits to places of interest and producing graphs in science. Provision for pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language is good throughout the school. These pupils are identified at an early stage and all staff are committed to supporting and encouraging them. The additional help given to pupils who are taught English as an additional language in individual or small groups is good and makes a significant impact on their learning. Each pupil with special educational needs has an appropriate plan that is kept under review. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language is satisfactory in lessons. The school is aware that the setting of more specific targets for all pupils is the next required stage of development to improve pupils' progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7 Pupils have very good attitudes and standards of behaviour and so they benefit from everything that is on offer to them at Stephenson Memorial Primary School. Consequently, they grow into sensible and confident young people who respect others and cope very well with responsibility.

8 Pupils have very good attitudes towards school and their learning and parents confirm that their children enjoy coming to school. In lessons, pupils are very keen to join in discussions and get involved in activities. They want to learn and they are pleased to be given a challenge. For example, in a mathematics lesson when the class teacher explained what they were going to be working on, many pupils looked to one another and said a muffled but delighted "yes" and punched the air with pleasure on hearing their task. Pupils are equally pleased to be given homework and even prompt the class teacher to set some for them. However, pupils' very good attitudes are not reflected in the presentation of their work. They do not take sufficient care and often produce untidy work. Some of the younger pupils struggle to concentrate for any length of time but they are not disruptive and they respond well to teachers' skilful methods of maintaining their attention and ensuring all are involved.

9 Pupils' very good attitudes are further reflected in the school's attendance figure which, at just over 94 per cent, is similar to the national average. Very many pupils achieve attendance in the high 90 per cent bracket and even 100 per cent, it is only a minority of around 20 pupils whose poor attendance significantly reduces the school's overall attendance figure. The school's unauthorised attendance figure of 0.6 per cent is just slightly higher than the national average but this is not due to truancy on the part of pupils but due to a small number of pupils who are regularly absent for no apparent reason.

10 Behaviour is very good throughout the school. Pupils know the school rules and what is expected of them. They are polite and well mannered to each other and to adults and they move around the school in a sensible and orderly way. Consequently, there is a calm and pleasant atmosphere throughout the school where everyone can work, learn and feel comfortable. Incidents of inappropriate behaviour are very rare and there has been one temporary exclusion in the last year.

11 Pupils' personal development is very good. From entering the school with few social skills and low self-esteem, they gain confidence and, because of the praise they receive, they try very hard to do their best. In particular, they learn to take on responsibility and to play a full part in the school community. For example, prefects are very pleased and proud to have a number of jobs around school and pupils who have been elected as School Council members are very sensible and serious about their roles. Excellent relationships exist amongst pupils and with their teachers. Pupils want to

work and play together and to receive recognition from their peers for their achievements. There is no hostility towards one another regardless of colour, creed, ability or social circumstances and they support one another extremely well. A very good example of this was seen when a Year 4 pupil was asked to answer the telephone in the classroom, without being asked, the rest of the class immediately stopped what they were doing to ensure quiet was achieved. No one reacted in such a way as to embarrass the pupil when she put on her best telephone voice and she was most efficient in the way she dealt with the task.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12 The quality of teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is good and sometimes very good. The teachers have a thorough understanding of young children's needs and the curriculum they require to make good progress. There are well focused, teacher led activities as well as opportunities for children to learn from structured, purposeful play. All adults are good examples for children to follow because they treat everyone with care, courtesy and respect. They make sure that all children have access to all activities and children know that they are being treated equally and fairly. The classroom assistants contribute effectively to children's learning and the achievements they make.

13 Throughout the school, the majority of teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good. Discussions with teachers and analysis of pupils' work show that the quality of teaching is improving, especially in English, mathematics and science. Some of this improvement has resulted from the observations undertaken by the head teacher, deputy head teacher and Literacy co-ordinator. They observe colleagues teaching and check to ensure that pupils are learning effectively. They provide feedback in order to improve the quality of teaching. There are plans to include other subject co-ordinators in these observations and so improve the quality of teaching in all subjects. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented and pupils' standards are gradually improving in virtually all subjects by Year 6. Teachers regularly use a range of tests, including statutory and optional National Curriculum tests. The information available from these tests is used satisfactorily to identify pupils' weaknesses and to guide teachers' planning, for example, by setting general targets to improve pupils' attainment. However, because teachers' marking does not show pupils what level they have achieved and precisely what they need to do to improve they do not take as much responsibility as they could for their own progress and improvement.

14 The teaching of basic skills in English and mathematics is satisfactory. Teachers' planning is clearly linked to the requirements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. However, because their planning of lessons is taken from national guidelines, there is often insufficient attention paid to the varying abilities in each class or set. As a result, all pupils are given similar tasks which those of lower attainment find too hard and those capable of higher achievement find too easy. There is a need for teachers to refine their planning of lessons or series of lessons to show more clearly the objectives for pupils of differing abilities and so ensure that all are challenged appropriately. Pupils have excellent relationships with teachers and adults in the classroom, which has helped to improve the quality of pupils' learning. Teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour and effort are very good and pupils are expected to do their best. This was seen in a Year 6 English lesson, when pupils improved their knowledge and skills of how to construct a balanced argument. They listened attentively to others' contributions to the discussions. The brisk pace of the lesson and the sensible attitude of pupils led to very good learning and pupils' improving skills in the recognition of a balanced argument. Teachers use the Numeracy Strategy effectively, for example, in a Year 1 mathematics lesson, pupils joined in enthusiastically counting forwards and backwards to thirty. They improved their knowledge of how to record simple calculations using addition and subtraction to find answers.

15 Most teachers have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the subjects of the National Curriculum. There has been a great deal of training for all staff as the school has changed to a Primary School. The school recognised that teachers' skills needed to be improved, especially for older pupils, in information and communication technology and training courses have been undertaken. As a result, teachers are using the computer suite well and pupils' attainment is improving. Teachers know and manage their pupils very well and provide good support for different activities. The excellent relationships between staff and pupils create a secure climate in which to learn. However, teachers do not always use their daily observations of pupils' work to set challenging tasks. For example, in practical science activities, pupils all conduct the same experiments and are not given sufficient opportunities to select the equipment needed or to devise their own experiments to test a theory. The school has an established homework policy that most teachers use consistently and, as a

result, the amount of homework given is about right for pupils' ages and has a positive effect on their learning. The school has a good policy for the recent initiative to ensure all pupils are treated equally. Teachers follow it well to ensure that all pupils follow the National Curriculum but because teachers' planning of lessons does not always show how different ability groups will be challenged, not all pupils have the opportunity to extend their learning.

16 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, it is often good when they are withdrawn for specialist help. It is a similar picture for pupils who are taught English as an additional language. Teachers make early identification of pupils with special educational needs or who have English as an additional language. They work closely with the available support assistants to plan work for these pupils that is matched to the work of other pupils in their class. All staff have a positive attitude towards these pupils and this enhances their learning. Class teachers, the special educational needs co-ordinator and support staff all work very effectively together ensuring pupils take full part in the curriculum and make satisfactory progress. The provision for special educational needs is well organised throughout the school. All adults working with pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language are enthusiastic in their approach and keen to recognise and praise success. This effectively encourages pupils and helps them develop confidence.

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

17 The curriculum is relevant and balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school is beginning to introduce a comprehensive system for regularly and systematically reviewing all aspects of the curriculum including, for example, how classrooms and displays are organised to support learning in all subjects. Curriculum planning is based on the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies and on national guidance for the other subjects. This is providing a clear structure for the curriculum of each subject so that the necessary elements of each are covered in different classes. However, there is not always enough attention paid to teachers' planning for lessons to meet the needs of pupils with different levels of ability and higher attaining pupils do not always make the rapid progress that they should.

18 The National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies have been implemented satisfactorily to maintain the levels of attainment pupils have when they enter the school. However, some lessons do not allow sufficient time for pupils to practice what they have learned. This means that pupils' standards remain consistently below or well below the expected levels for their age in English and mathematics. With a few exceptions, the school does not make good links between different areas of the curriculum and this results in time and opportunities being wasted. Where this is done well, as in a Year 2 design and technology lesson where pupils design and make Joseph's coat of many colours, there are good links with their work in religious education and the study of materials in science.

19 For all other subjects the school uses national guidance for teaching the National Curriculum. Planning for art is linked to national guidance but with adjustments to suit local circumstances. These national guidance materials are in an early stage of development and teachers are still adapting them to better meet the interests and needs of pupils at this recently formed primary school. A new computer suite is used well to increase the amount of time pupils spend learning and practicing their information and communication technology skills and this is beginning to have a positive effect on progress. The school is still making the transition to a full primary school and the curriculum for Years 5 and 6 is still being developed and resourced.

20 The provision for supporting pupils with special educational needs is good, especially in English, and they make similar progress to other pupils. It is equally as good for pupils who are learning English as an additional language. Teachers identify these pupils who need additional help, for

whatever reason, at an early age and use classroom assistants and other resources to support their learning well.

21 There is a very good range of additional activities that add essential richness to the basic curriculum experienced in classrooms. These activities support areas such as the arts, through a steel band, recorders, a choir, theatre visits and visits by storytellers, authors and musicians. Sports and physical activities such as football, basketball and country dancing are popular after school activities and pupils also develop their information and communication technology skills in an after-school club. Clubs of all different kinds are well attended and enjoyed by boys and girls of all ages although most of the activities are aimed at older pupils. Some extra-curricular activities involve external staff paid for by the school but many teachers show dedication and hard work in organising and running most of these activities. Pupils clearly enjoy these clubs and other experiences and benefit greatly from these valuable extensions to their work.

22 Citizenship, personal, social and health education are planned and taught systematically. This helps to raise pupils' self-esteem and make them more aware of the needs of others. Sex education is mainly dealt with as matters arise but the school nurse teaches a regular programme of lessons that are carefully structured to meet the needs of the pupils. Pupils also learn about drugs education and other health related issues within the science curriculum supported by talks and the use of drama by external staff with special expertise in these areas. All teaching staff has completed drugs awareness training and so support this learning effectively. The school has good links with other places of education and particularly with a local secondary school. As a result, pupils from Year 6 benefit from a number of visits throughout their final year and so their anxieties about starting secondary education are reduced.

23 The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Staff and visitors use assemblies well to set the school's spiritual ethos. They develop weekly themes carefully to give pupils insight into fundamental beliefs. For instance, in one assembly the leader followed up telling a humorous story with time to reflect on its meaning and to: "Ask God to give us the spirit to do what is right". The school has good links with the local parish church. The vicar makes valuable contributions to assemblies and pupils visit the church for services, for example, at Christmas. In religious education lessons, and especially in personal and social education lessons, teachers give pupils good opportunities to develop their inner selves. Thought provoking and high quality reference points in the entrance reflect the spiritual ethos of the school: a plaque in memory of ex-teachers and pupils who died in the Great War, "Let us be worthy of their sacrifice", and a tapestry with the caption, "Children are like snowflakes, each with their own pattern".

24 The school's provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Staff work very hard to teach pupils the difference between right and wrong and place great emphasis on maintaining very high standards of behaviour. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' attitudes and the progress they make in lessons. Staff show they care for pupils and take time to reason sensitively with those who step out of line. They teach pupils the benefits of values such as reason, honesty and fairness. They use assemblies well to promote such values, for instance, demonstrating that "little things add up" and challenging pupils to make positive contributions to school life in their everyday activities.

25 The school's provision for pupils' social development is excellent. This stands out as a school priority and, as a result, relationships are excellent. The school provides pupils with numerous opportunities to develop their sense of responsibility. All pupils are expected to undertake duties, such as keeping the classroom tidy. They are invited to make contributions to a "Suggestion Box" that is checked regularly by members of the School Council. As they get older, pupils are expected to take on more duties. In Year 4, pupils help tend the school garden. Pupils in Year 5 run a tuck shop twice a week. In Years 5 and 6, pupils act as "buddies" at playtimes, particularly to help younger pupils. As

prefects they make a good contribution to keeping the school running smoothly, for instance, in the dining hall at lunchtime. Pupils from Year 1 onwards send representatives to the School Council and make minuted resolutions, which teachers take into account when making decisions. The school's personal, social and health education programme makes a very good contribution to the development of pupils' social skills. In these lessons, teachers give pupils many opportunities to discuss issues. The school lays great emphasis on developing pupils' social behaviour and attitudes and rewards pupils with recognition in a weekly "celebration aware assembly".

26 The school's provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Teachers plan numerous visits and visitors. For instance, pupils visit a theatre, a museum, a farm and sing at a local old peoples home at Christmas. They enjoy visits from an author, a storyteller, musicians and a theatre group. They learn about their own culture and others in lessons such as geography and religious education. Pupils explore their own area to learn about local features. Pupils study the legacy of George Stephenson in history lessons and in displays of framed pictures of the man and his achievements. Although pupils of all ages study the work of a range of artists from different countries there is very little beyond European culture which represents missed opportunities for pupils' multi-cultural development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

27 There is a good level of care for pupils and so pupils are happy to come to school. Parents confirm that their children are happy and pupils describe the school as "brilliant". The school's child protection arrangements are good. Staff are familiar with the signs of possible abuse and they report concerns without hesitation. Staff take a keen interest in pupils and welcome them each day into their classrooms. Routines are well established, teachers are calm and patient and so a pleasant atmosphere is created where all feel secure and comfortable and get on with their learning.

28 The school uses money from the Education Action Zone grant to provide a breakfast club; the 40 pupils who attend get a good start to the day whilst learning useful social skills. Lunchtimes are orderly and pupils are very well behaved. There is a number of staff in school with expertise in first aid, pupils are well looked after if they are ill or injured and there are good and safe procedures for the storage and administration of medicines. The school building and grounds are very new and there is a high standard of maintenance. The caretaker ensures high standards of cleanliness in all areas. However, although there are regular evacuation practices, the school has not yet implemented the requirement for regular health and safety inspections. Two minor potential hazards were reported to the head teacher. There are no procedures to ensure a formal written risk assessment is carried out before pupils are taken on visits to different venues. The school is aware of these weaknesses and has plans to address them promptly.

29 The school has very good procedures for improving and keeping a check on pupils' attendance and punctuality. For example, the Education Welfare Officer is alerted twice each week to any concerns about attendance and visits to pupils' homes are subsequently made to offer help and advice to the parents. Through using a computerised registration system, administration staff send letters home each fortnight, where necessary, informing parents of how many minutes of education their child has missed through being late. As a result, the vast majority of pupils with the support of parents have established regular and punctual attendance patterns. There are very good procedures for promoting good behaviour and eliminating bullying. All staff, including non-teaching staff, have high expectations of behaviour. There are clear classroom rules and teachers are consistent in what they expect. They use praise to encourage pupils and do not accept inappropriate behaviour. Consequently, excellent relationships exist throughout the school. Incidents of bullying are extremely rare and all allegations are dealt with immediately and fairly involving all parties, including parents. There are very good procedures for supporting pupils' personal development. Teachers work hard to encourage pupils and foster a belief in their own personal abilities. They praise them for their efforts

and they make them feel valued. As a result, pupils gain in confidence, self-esteem and social skills and so they are in a good position to take advantage of opportunities presented to them.

30 Support for pupils who have special educational needs is good. The school makes good use of those services which are made available, such as those supplied by an educational psychologist. The school has good procedures for assessing and identifying pupils' needs at an early stage. Teachers use these assessments well to provide good support in English. However, the use of assessment is not consistently effective in other subjects and this is evident in lessons where occasionally work is too hard for pupils who have special educational needs.

31 The recently appointed assessment co-ordinator has carried out a thorough review of assessment procedures. Assessment and recording are seen as a tool to raise standards and the school has developed comprehensive procedures for assessing pupils' academic attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science. Statutory and optional tests are used and the results are recorded and carefully analysed to identify attainment by different groups of pupils and areas of underachievement.

32 A key initiative is the introduction of a commercially produced assessment package in Years 1 to 6 in the current school year. This will assess pupils' performance in English, mathematics and science in even greater detail and enable individual targets to be set. It will replace the present practice that sets targets for classes and ability groups. Effective marking of pupils' written work is an area for improvement. Pupils' work is checked and ticked regularly but teachers' comments are supportive statements rather than advisory ones, which would tell pupils what they had done well or how their work could be improved. The implementation of a new marking policy is identified in this year's school improvement plan and contains the following advice, "Ticking serves its purpose, comments and questions provide opportunities for individual feedback".

33 The school identifies pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language but not those who are gifted and talented. Pupils' individual needs are met, in part, by grouping older pupils in Years 4 to 6 by ability for English, mathematics and science but there is limited evidence of differences in the work being given to pupils within these sets. In other areas of the curriculum information about pupils is not used well enough to inform teachers' planning of lessons and provide learning opportunities at different levels of difficulty to suit the needs of all pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

34 The school has worked hard to build good relationships with parents. Consequently, a good partnership of education now exists and parents support the school well. For example, the vast majority ensure that their children attend regularly and on time, they support the school's policy on school uniform and on behaviour and a few parents regularly help in school listening to pupils read. Parents are beginning to take a greater interest in the school, for example, a group of parents known as "The Friends of Stephenson Memorial Primary School" have started to meet regularly and discuss issues and make suggestions pertinent to the school.

35 The school is keen to involve parents more effectively in a partnership of education and are in the process of finding more effective ways of keeping them informed. Although good information is provided on the daily life and events of the school and on what is being taught in lessons each term, there is no whole school approach to informing parents of their child's progress on a regular basis. For example, home/school reading records are used almost entirely as a list of books that each pupil has read. They are not used to tell parents what words or other elements of reading their child needs to concentrate on and so parents cannot help their child or see how they are progressing. Similarly, homework books are used in some classes but not in others and so not all parents can see how their child is doing. Nevertheless, the school operates an "open door" policy and parents confirm that they

feel very welcome to approach staff and ask questions if they wish. Teachers also use the opportunity at the end of the day to speak with those parents who collect their children themselves and so there is an exchange of information in this way. There are two parents' evenings each year when parents can discuss their child's progress with class teachers but the end of year reports are unsatisfactory in Years 1 to 6. In all subjects other than English and occasionally mathematics, they report only on what has been covered in lessons and the pupil's attitude but not what each individual pupil has learned, understood and can do. In addition, they have no individuality but are simply a list of statements taken from a word bank.

36 The parents of pupils who have special educational needs are informed at the earliest stage of identification and are kept fully informed of their progress. The school reviews pupils' individual education plans regularly and encourages parents to take part in reviews.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

37 The head teacher, deputy head teacher and key staff provide good leadership and management. Together they have established a family atmosphere in the school, which has a positive effect on pupils' learning. The head teacher's good leadership is shown in the way the school has successfully met the significant challenges faced during the last few years because of the move from a First School to a Primary School. There have been many changes of staff during this time and those not experienced in the primary curriculum have been very well supported through the implementation of a series of professional courses intended to improve their expertise. In addition, there has been considerable re-organisation of responsibilities in the school and staff in senior roles have undertaken management roles in the audit of their subjects, changed the curriculum and monitored the effects of teachers' new planning to ensure that all subjects receive sufficient time. During this time it is to the credit of the leadership and management skills of the head teacher, deputy head teacher and key staff that pupils' very good attitudes and excellent relationships have been maintained.

38 Governors make a good contribution to the effective running of the school and are committed to raising standards further. The senior management team work very closely with governors and have produced a good improvement plan and all concerned are involved in regular discussions to assess the progress being made to meet the needs of the school community. The observation of teaching and learning by the head teacher and key staff is a relatively new initiative and the findings are regularly discussed with governors who are well aware of the school's strengths and areas for development. However, the changes in recent years, including the building of the new premises on the site, as well as the increased number of pupils who join the school at times other than normal entry dates, are having a detrimental effect on standards. The school has recognised the fact that pupils' attainment needs to be raised further, especially in the core subjects, and so is targeting pupils' writing and reading skills which is beginning to have a positive effect, especially for pupils in Year 2 as their National Curriculum test results showed in 2002. In addition, senior staff are aware of the need to refine teachers' planning and to set targets for individuals or small groups rather than general class targets. The head teacher and key staff give a clear educational direction for the school which is slowly raising pupils' standards. For example, the school has used the analysis of pupils' results in National Curriculum tests to explain the latest results. This information is being used by staff to target writing because it is a weaker part of pupils' language skills. The information also shows clearly that pupils with special educational needs perform well when compared to their previous attainment and many reach the lower levels of national expectations by Year 6.

39 The governing body has a good committee structure that works effectively to support the school. For example, the governors receive reports on how the school improvement plan is progressing and they check on the progress of curriculum initiatives undertaken by the school. The roles and responsibilities of all staff have been under review and evaluation because of the implementation of the "performance management" initiative. The roles of the subject co-ordinators

are now clearly defined and the literacy co-ordinator has opportunities to observe and evaluate teaching and learning. The school has plans for the training of other co-ordinators so that this observation of teaching and learning will be further developed. Subject co-ordinators are well placed to review the recent changes in the planning of their subjects because of audits undertaken at the end of each term. The co-ordinator for special educational needs gives good support to staff. The co-ordinator also plays an important part in assessing pupils' difficulties when they are first identified as needing additional help. The school policy is detailed and reflects the school's current practice taking into account the new national guidance for pupils with special educational needs.

40 The head teacher and governors work together closely and are managing recent changes well. For example, the school used the available grant and money from previous years' contingency funds to provide a computer suite that is used effectively to improve pupils' learning in information and communication technology. In addition, the Chair of Governors regularly works with pupils in classes and so has first hand knowledge of how pupils are learning. There is clear direction for the work of the school, ensuring that strategic decisions determine the financial and educational development. The head teacher and governors work together to ensure that all decisions relating to the budget are closely linked to the improvement plan, are manageable and that the principles of "best value for money" are applied rigorously. The staff meet regularly, both formally and informally, to discuss curriculum matters and to evaluate the progress being made in all aspects of school life.

41 The head teacher, staff and governors are all involved in preparing the school improvement plan. This working document is fully discussed before being adopted as the action plan for future years. It is an effective document, which clearly identifies the priorities and targets to be tackled and guides the work of the school. It takes into account the changing nature of the school and the mobile school population, educational priorities are closely linked to financial planning. For example, the school is successfully developing links with other local schools and the community. The school knows its strengths and areas for development and has a good grasp on how to improve. All staff work hard to improve their own performance and the educational opportunities presented to pupils. There are clear targets for improvements. For example, the school is aware that further resources are required for language development and for the library to improve the range of materials available to help raise standards.

42 The school has sufficient teaching staff and they are well deployed. High staffing ratios enable almost all classes to have small numbers of pupils and so they get more individual attention. Support staff play an important role in the life of the school and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. There is a designated senior management team with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. For example, all curriculum subjects have a co-ordinator. Procedures for the induction and support of new teachers are good. Teachers new to the school are well supported by all members of staff. Staff training is linked to priorities in the school plans for the future, which has focused recently on the development of literacy and numeracy. Arrangements for performance management are in place and meet statutory requirements. The school administrative staff make a valuable contribution to the efficient running of the school.

43 The school accommodation is very good. There is a dedicated computer suite as well as individual computers in classrooms and this is making a good contribution to pupils' information and communication technology skills. The school benefits from a small library and there are two large halls, one is a good size for physical education lessons and large enough to accommodate the whole school for assemblies and other collective gatherings. There is good disabled access into and throughout the school and good disabled toilet provision.

44 Resources for learning are satisfactory. They are good in history and science and very good in information and communication technology, helping to improve pupils' attainment. Resources in the Foundation Stage are good, although more outdoor apparatus is needed for the reception children in

order to develop their imaginative play and physical development. Money is spent wisely and is linked to the school's priorities for development. The head teacher and governors apply the principles of "best value" well. For example, they examine the detailed analysis of assessment results, including comparisons with similar schools, to target spending to bring about improvements in standards. There is good leadership and management and excellent relationships in school. Expenditure is about the same as the national average and the quality of education provided in classes means that the school gives satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

45 In order to further improve the quality of education, standards and progress in the school, the head teacher, staff and governors should:

- A. Raise standards in English, mathematics and science by:
- ensuring that teachers' planning for lessons or a series of lessons identifies clearly what pupils of differing abilities are expected to learn;
 - using the information from the analysis of pupils' attainment to set achievable individual or small group targets;
 - ensuring that teachers' marking of pupils' work shows how well they have achieved and what they need to do to improve;
 - ensuring that all teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve;
 - improving pupils' presentation of their work.
(Paragraphs 5, 8, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 30, 32, 68, 73, 77, 79, 85, 86, 87, 101, 106, 118)
- B. Provide more opportunities for co-ordinators to check the quality of teaching and learning in their subject and share good practice with all teachers.
(Paragraphs 13, 38, 81, 92, 102)
- C. Improve the quality of information about pupils' attainment and progress in teachers' annual reports to parents.
(Paragraph 35)

46 In addition to the key issues above, governors should include the following minor issue as part of the action plan:

Develop formal, written procedures for risk assessment both in school and when pupils go on visits.
(Paragraph 28)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

74

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

47

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	12	26	33	2	0	0
Percentage	1	16	35	45	3	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	312
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		142

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		46

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	8

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	26
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	31

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	14	21	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	14
	Girls	20	20	21
	Total	30	30	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86% (69%)	86% (80%)	100% (78%)
	National	84% (84%)	86% (86%)	90% (91%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	14	14
	Girls	20	21	21
	Total	30	35	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86% (78%)	100% (78%)	100% (76%)
	National	85% (85%)	89% (89%)	89% (89%)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	28	26	54

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	16	22
	Girls	17	14	20
	Total	28	30	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	52% (n/a)	56% (n/a)	78% (n/a)
	National	75% (75%)	73% (71%)	86% (87%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	17	22
	Girls	21	14	22
	Total	38	31	44
Percentage of pupils	School	70% (n/a)	57% (n/a)	81% (n/a)

at NC level 4 or above	National	73% (72%)	74% (74%)	82% (82%)
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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	304	1	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	2	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

Financial information

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	24

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	149

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	35
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

Financial year	2002
	£
Total income	719,326
Total expenditure	705,906
Expenditure per pupil	2,028
Balance brought forward from previous year	30,640
Balance carried forward to next year	44,060

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	363
Number of questionnaires returned	25

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	20	0	0	8
My child is making good progress in school.	72	20	4	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	36	0	0	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	64	0	0	8
The teaching is good.	60	36	0	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	28	56	12	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	28	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	28	0	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	28	60	4	4	4
The school is well led and managed.	64	28	0	4	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	32	0	0	12
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	44	40	0	0	16

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

47 The provision for children in the Foundation Stage (nursery and two reception classes) is very good. The children spend up to three terms in the nursery class and then transfer to the reception classes. Each class has a full time nursery nurse and they are deployed very well to take a full and effective role in teaching the children. All staff have a very good understanding of the learning needs of young children and this enables them to provide a very good environment for learning.

48 When they enter the nursery, children often have limited experiences to help them gain an understanding of the world around them and their physical skills are not well developed. The children's attainment covers a broad range but is often poor for their age, particularly in language, literacy and communication and in their personal and social development. Nearly one-third of the class have very poor language skills and children have very limited vocabulary. They often find it difficult to share their ideas or to talk with each other in their play activities. Many children have speech problems and this makes it difficult for them to be understood.

49 Children make good progress through the Foundation Stage because teaching by all staff is good. About one-third of each reception class is identified with speech and language difficulties. This impacts on standards by the end of the reception year resulting in attainment which is often well below that typical for their age. Standards in personal, social and emotional development are better because of the emphasis placed on promoting this area of learning.

50 The co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the learning needs of children under five. The curriculum is planned well and manageable records are kept of children's assessments. Teachers use the results of assessments well in their planning to ensure that children are given activities matched well to their varying abilities. Children needing additional support are identified early and they make the same progress as other children, because they are supported well by adults.

51 The staff work hard to develop a very good partnership with parents. Parents are visited at home before children enter the nursery, and throughout the Foundation Stage parents are regularly invited to meetings to discuss their child's progress. There is helpful guidance for parents about how they can help their child's learning at home. Children regularly take books home to share with their families.

Personal, social and emotional development

52 Staff give a high priority to providing a safe, secure and stimulating environment that supports children's personal, social and emotional development very well. This enables children to make very good progress from a very low starting point. They settle quickly into routines and achieve well. By the time they reach the end of the reception year standards are likely to be typical for children of this age. Good teaching ensures that children gain in confidence as they work in their classes or enjoy outdoor play. Children are managed very well within very good relationships where the staff are excellent examples for children to follow. From starting in the nursery, children are taught the difference between right and wrong. Behaviour is very good. For example, one child told the others "Don't fight, the teacher said", when children in the nursery were all eager to use the computer. Children say "please" and "thank you" to each other without being prompted.

53 A strong emphasis is placed on developing children's independence. From starting in the nursery, children are encouraged to be independent. At the start of each nursery session children

decide which activity to work on. Coming into the classroom they collect their own photograph card and take it to self-register their attendance. They take turns putting straws in the milk bottles and putting name tags on the bottles. In the reception classes, children know where resources are kept and often quickly and efficiently tidy away at the end of lessons. They work for short periods of time without adult support. In one physical development lesson, children were undressed and ready for physical education in minutes. This was without any adult help and showed how sensible they responded to the challenge.

Communication, language and literacy

54 These areas are often taught well in both the nursery and the reception classes. One lesson was taught very well when the teacher used her excellent knowledge of the children to match questions to their varying abilities. This resulted in very good learning because all the children were challenged to speak and they achieved well. Children's communication skills are often very poor when they start in the nursery and staff in both the nursery and reception classes work hard to develop these. However, standards in communication, language and literacy are well below what is typical for children in the reception year. Learning experiences are planned carefully to encourage children to talk. In the nursery, the teacher asked children what it felt like when they put their hands in a porridge mixture. Most children just held up their hand or said, "On hands". There are good role play facilities in each class. In the nursery, two children dressed up as the bears from the story of Goldilocks and acted eating porridge from bowls, but this was done in silence. Despite these good facilities and activities, limited progress is made because they often play by themselves and only communicate using simple words or gestures. In the reception classes, many children still answer questions in short phrases or else they string words together indistinctly. This often makes it difficult for them to be understood, even by their teachers.

55 Children enjoy books throughout the Foundation Stage. Reading skills are promoted very well and children regularly take books home to share with their family. In the reception classes, most children know that print has meaning and use their fingers to point to words when sharing reading books which they know "by heart". Children enjoy following stories using headphones in the listening area. Only a few children have a vocabulary of known words and they are just starting to take home "reading" books. Even those children not yet reading, imitate the expressive way their teachers read to them. They hold the books away from themselves, so that the pictures can be seen by anyone watching them read. Letter sounds are taught well in many activities and through songs and rhymes. Some reception children match objects correctly to the first letter sound of words. When teachers share the learning objectives with children at the start of lessons, a few more able children suggest words such as "book".

56 Writing skills are encouraged through play activities and, in the nursery, staff encourage children to "write" captions for pictures. These skills are built upon well in the reception classes where children make good progress in writing recognisable letters. Many children attempt to copy write what the teacher has written with reasonable accuracy, although letters are not often formed well. In the reception classes, children with better literacy skills are identified and challenged well, for example, by encouraging the use of a simple word dictionary to support independent writing. However, very few children write recognisable words or phrases independently.

Mathematical development

57 The children's mathematical understanding is often poor for their age when they start in the nursery. Teaching is good. Teaching was excellent in one lesson when the teacher introduced a variety of practical activities at a brisk pace. This was accompanied by excellent explanations of what children were expected to do, which had a very positive impact on their learning. The teacher used assessment of children's abilities very well to question them and this allowed them all to succeed.

Children make at least sound progress but standards are well below what is typical for their age because of the poor communication skills of many children. Staff effectively use a good range of resources to make learning fun. Children respond well and enjoy their activities. For example, in the nursery, children recognise some mathematical vocabulary relating to size, such as “big”, “medium” and “small” when they count out three bears of different sizes. In the reception classes, children use a range of objects to practise counting skills. More able children enjoyed throwing a dice and using objects to count the numbers shown in two sets, then adding them together. They practised writing the numerals, but several children did not form these correctly and sometimes confused “6” and “9”. Children found writing numbers beyond 10 difficult, and sometimes counted these higher numbers inaccurately.

58 Children learn to recognise the names of colours and shapes. In the reception classes, children mix colours when painting self portraits. They use shapes such as circles, squares and triangles to make pictures. In one class, children linked mathematics well when painting pictures of Joseph’s coat of many colours with each side symmetrical. Children make graphs of the different ways they come to school. Children practise mathematical skills in songs and number rhymes. In reception, children sang the rhyme “This old man ...” with enjoyment and practised counting using fingers of both hands. Children enjoy number games, role play and counting and matching games on the computer to improve their knowledge and understanding of mathematics.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

59 Teaching is good in this area of learning and ensures that children make at least sound progress from their low starting point. Children were taught very well when conducting a scientific experiment to find out which model car travelled the furthest down a ramp because they were learning the importance of each test being fair. Many children have a limited range of experiences before starting in the nursery, and their poor speech and language skills often hinder the progress they make in this area of learning. In the reception year many children are well below what is typical for their age.

60 Teachers plan a good range of interesting activities. These include visits, which are linked to topics each term. A dental nurse visited children in the nursery to show them the correct way to clean and care for their teeth. Many children make sound progress in information and communication technology and work confidently with computer programs. They know how to move objects on the screen using the mouse to move the cursor.

61 In the reception classes, children name the different types of transport in the air, on the road, on rails and on water. Their learning is supported very well by the work they have done displaying different kinds of transport. Children learn about the passage of time and have drawn pictures for a “days of the week” number line to show what they do on different days. Religious education is taught regularly in both reception classes. Children are aware of some stories from the Bible. They name the main characters in the Nativity story and know that the three kings travelled to “see the baby Jesus”.

Physical development

62 The children’s physical development is often poor when they start in the nursery. They make good progress through frequent experiences such as cutting and sticking and they have daily access to a good range of outdoor play facilities. Progress is steady in the reception classes, because although they use the school hall, there are fewer opportunities for children to share the nursery outdoor play facilities. The school has identified this, and there are plans to develop an outdoor area with direct access from the reception classes to enable children to continue daily opportunities for

physical development. However, standards are below what is typical for the age of children in the reception year.

63 Children in the nursery show appropriate control as they ride and steer wheeled vehicles about their play area and they gain confidence on climbing apparatus. Children are given a variety of opportunities to use tools to paint, join objects together and to cut and stick shapes from paper. Adults teach well, by giving children time to persevere when they find handling some tools challenging, and guide them well in developing and practising their skills in cutting, folding and sticking. The nursery nurse supported children in the nursery very well in a cutting out and sticking activity to sequence the story of Goldilocks. However, many children had difficulty handling scissors correctly and one child sat enthralled by the “scissor action” of pulling and pushing the handles of the scissors.

64 Children are confident using large spaces to walk, run and skip, although not all children skip well. In a dance lesson, taught very well, the children developed their movements as they interpreted the taped music. The teacher and the nursery nurse joined in and this helped the children to respond safely and sensibly. However, children’s low attainment was evident when many of them copied what the adults were doing because their poor language skills made it difficult for them to understand instructions from the recording. For example, when the teacher stood up to move across the hall to turn off the recorder, several children also stood up.

Creative development

65 Teaching is good and many children make good progress. However, because children enter nursery with few experiences, standards are below what is typical for their age in the reception year. The staff plan a range of stimulating activities for children to explore different media such as colour mixing, rolling and flattening clay. In the nursery class, children’s observation skills were taught well when they looked at pictures of Goldilocks in books and watched the teacher’s demonstration of how to use different coloured paints. However, even with this stimulus, several were unable to paint a recognisable picture. In the reception classes, children use their observation skills well to accurately choose colours to paint pictures of different fruits and vegetables.

66 Children enjoy music making activities throughout the Foundation Stage. The nursery children regularly join in simple action songs and rhymes. The reception children know many songs by heart. There are good opportunities for them to experiment playing instruments such as tambourines. They learn to recognise loud and soft sounds and how to make these using musical instruments. They practise clapping fast and slow rhythms. In one assembly, children in the reception class joined in some of the actions accompanying a hymn being sung by the rest of the pupils in Years 1 and 2. There are good opportunities for children to be involved in imaginary play. Children playing in the “school office” were very engrossed writing letters and putting them into envelopes.

ENGLISH

67 By the age of seven and 11, pupils’ attainment in English is well below the expected levels. This is mainly due to the high percentage of pupils who join or leave the school at times other than the normal entry dates, a larger than normal proportion of lower attaining pupils and a higher number who have special educational needs or speech and communication difficulties. As a result of sound teaching, most pupils do as well as they can and make steady progress. Pupils who have special educational needs, including those with statements, learn as well as others because of the good level of provision and support. Similarly, pupils who are taught English as an additional language learn as well as others.

68 The leadership and management of English are good. These give clear direction to move the subject forward. An analysis of data provides teachers with priorities to aim for in each year group,

with the joint aim of improving pupils' skills in reading and writing. The school's focus on writing skills ensures all pupils practise writing for a suitable range of audiences, particularly in Years 5 and 6. The focus on reading has led to large purchases of books, including those which catch the interest of boys, who have been identified as falling behind girls in attainment. The priority in reading is to improve pupils' main weakness which is their skills in inference. Teachers assess well what pupils know and can do and keep detailed records. However, they are not using the information they gain well enough to plan work to match pupils' varying needs consistently. Consequently, higher attaining pupils often do not learn any more than average attaining pupils. Lower attaining pupils often find work too hard and struggle, even with good help from classroom assistants.

69 By the age of seven and 11, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is well below the level expected for their age. A small minority of pupils express themselves confidently and clearly and use a comprehensive range of vocabulary. However, a significant proportion of pupils do not contribute confidently or willingly to discussions, because they do not have the skills to listen with understanding, or to speak with confidence and clarity. For instance, in Year 1 when the teacher asked pupils to explain what clues had been used to recognise a word in the book, pupils hesitated before a reply of "Cos the picture". Teachers work hard to make lessons interesting, pupils are keen to learn and pay good attention to what teachers and other pupils say.

70 By the age of seven and 11 pupils' standards of reading are below the level expected for their age. Fewer pupils than in most schools demonstrate a good degree of technical skill and understanding or read with well developed fluency and expression. This is because there is a smaller proportion of higher attaining pupils than in most schools. When reading, most seven year olds use picture clues suitably, but a significant number do not know how to build up words by their sounds and initial letters. As a result, they read hesitantly and slowly and some do not recognise words such as "she", "saw" or "home". Higher attaining pupils build up a comprehensive sight vocabulary and use their good understanding of letter sounds to attempt new words. Most pupils progress steadily as they get older, though this means that many remain below expected levels by the time they are 11. Teachers are confident in their use of the National Literacy Strategy and they provide suitable opportunities for pupils to read. Pupils read a satisfactory range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry books and make regular use of the school library. Most have at least good attitudes to reading, including many who find difficulty with reading. However, a significant number do not know the names of popular children's authors or discuss aspects of books meaningfully, such as character or plot. A significant proportion of pupils do not receive regular parental help and those pupils tend to attain lower standards than others. A minority of pupils use a local library to extend their reading habits. A positive factor which contributes to raising attainment is the early identification of pupils who have difficulties with literacy, including those who have special educational needs. The good support they receive helps them to catch up with others or prevents them from falling further behind.

71 Attainment in writing is well below the levels expected for seven and 11 year olds. In Year 2, higher attaining pupils show good ideas in their stories and use imaginative phrases, such as "higher than the clouds". They write in simple sentences using suitable punctuation and joined handwriting. Many others, however, show little imagination, do not use capital letters, full stops or join up their handwriting and they have a limited vocabulary. Pupils thoroughly enjoy lessons, such as when they learned how the traditional tale Rumpelstiltskin is sequenced, and chorused, "What fine wool you spin, he said", when asked to join in by the teacher. In Year 6, pupils write for an increasingly wide audience. They plan and redraft work, including stories, argument, poetry and letters. Higher attaining pupils write with good understanding of character and plot development and use speech marks correctly when they review books, such as *The Railway Children*. Many pupils, however, find these features of writing difficult. Lower attaining pupils use a limited vocabulary and do not use capital letters and full-stops effectively. They spell simple words correctly, but find words such as "frightened", "something" and "division" difficult. Some do not copy from texts correctly, mis-spelling words such as "pleasant" and "development". Many pupils, including higher attainers, do not

consistently join up their handwriting. Very few pupils write with imagination or flair. For instance, they do not use similes, metaphors and personification in an interesting way when they write narrative and poetry.

72 The quality of teaching is satisfactory and shows some strengths. Teachers' good grasp of the National Literacy Strategy enables them to teach with confidence. As a result, pupils enjoy what they learn and make steady progress. There is a good balance between class, group and individual work in lessons. Teachers have very good management skills and relationships are excellent. This promotes a very good learning atmosphere. As a result, pupils make a good effort to learn and they show a good level of interest and concentration. Some good and very good teaching was seen in lessons. The strength of teaching in the best lessons was the teachers' expertise in building up pupils' knowledge and understanding step by step with enthusiasm and pace. Pupils in Year 6 improved their understanding of how to write a balanced argument very quickly by discussing the issue of fox hunting. Pupils in Year 1 very enthusiastically engaged in role play and repeated together well known phrases such as, "The Gingerbread Man said, Let me out...Run, run, Gingerbread Man". As a result, they all learned how to sequence the story. In Year 3, good teaching in a drama lesson gained a very enthusiastic response. Pupils quickly learned to chant a rap in rhythm and to act it out in groups, because of the teacher's insistence on improvement. Teachers make suitable use of the computer suite to support pupils' work in English lessons. In one such lesson good teaching enabled a group of lower attainers to word process work done in a previous English lesson.

73 There are some weaknesses in teaching which slow the rate of learning. In particular, teachers do not consistently set tasks which present a suitable challenge for all pupils and this limits the progress many make. Higher attainers are not always stretched sufficiently and lower attainers often find work too hard. For instance, in Year 6 lower attainers struggled with the concept of a balanced argument both in discussion and task, because the work was not pitched correctly at their level of knowledge and understanding. Most teachers do not plan enough opportunities to improve pupils' speaking and listening skills. This is a fundamental necessity for many pupils, whose progress in developing these skills is not always good enough. Some opportunities are not fully exploited to improve pupils' reading, for instance to develop pupils' reading stamina in silent reading sessions. Most teachers do not mark pupils' work in a constructive way to show pupils how they can improve. As a result, pupils do not consistently present their work neatly and in joined handwriting.

74 The subject leader has established clear priorities for the development of English. The school has plans to introduce a systematic approach to monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. This, together with good leadership, gives the school the capacity to improve standards.

MATHEMATICS

75 By the age of seven, pupils' attainment in mathematics is well below the levels expected for their age. Standards for 11 year olds are below the levels expected for their age. The school is aware of the need to raise standards and has introduced a number of strategies that indicate a clear desire to bring about improvement. For example, the deputy head teacher gives very good support to a group of Year 4 pupils of lower ability so that their learning about doubling and halving numbers is much improved. The National Numeracy Strategy is used throughout the school and this is providing a sound structure for teaching and learning. The strategy is used best when pupils do not have to spend too much time listening to instructions and have enough opportunities to demonstrate how well they have learned. Pupils between Years 2 and 6 are placed in two teaching groups based on their performance in non statutory tests. This enables teaching to be more focused on pupils' learning needs because the groups do not contain the full range of ability. The school now needs to review its short term planning and teaching to ensure that pupils of different abilities are satisfactorily stretched so that they make the best progress possible.

76 The school analyses pupils' performance in National Curriculum tests thoroughly to find out what they can and cannot do. This information is then shared by all staff and special efforts are made to target groups of pupils or areas of mathematics that need more emphasis. For example, the school is introducing booster sessions for those pupils in Year 6 who could reach the expected level for their age with additional focused teaching in small groups.

77 The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory although, in lessons observed during the inspection, there were examples of good teaching. For example, a Year 4 set were taught about doubling multiples of ten and learned very well because the lesson was well prepared and stimulating and moved at a challenging pace throughout. Standards of teaching and learning seen in pupils' exercise books are not always as good as in the lessons observed and this helps to explain why standards are not as high as they could be. In many classes, pupils do not take enough care with their presentation or set work out neatly. This is because teachers do not consistently emphasise the importance of well presented work to aid clarity and accuracy. Diagrams and graphs are drawn without the aid of a ruler and this sometimes hinders learning because they are not clear enough to interpret accurately. The marking of work is inconsistent and is not used effectively enough to help pupils understand how their learning can be developed. In one class, pupils have a list of general targets for the year in their books but these are not addressed in the marking or assessment of work. In the better lessons, teachers start well with a challenging, relevant mental mathematics session. For example, pupils in the more able Year 6 set had to deal with examples of increasing difficulty when mentally multiplying and dividing decimals. This ensures that pupils learn and practise basic skills such as multiplication tables and number facts on a regular basis. However, in too many lessons there is insufficient emphasis on pupils responding quickly and they do not develop swift recall of these facts. As a result, their speed of progress is slower than it could be. Teachers are usually good at using pupils' contributions and responses to review earlier work and develop important teaching points. For example, in a lesson on factors, pupils in the lower Year 5 set were successfully encouraged to offer their answers and methods so that their self-esteem as budding mathematicians was enhanced. Pupils enjoy mathematics in most classes especially when lessons are interesting, stimulating and relevant to their needs. This positive attitude to mathematics should allow them to make better progress than they do but the negative factors identified in the teaching prevents this.

78 Teachers develop very good relationships with their pupils and, as a result, they manage their pupils very well. This ensures that there is a very good working atmosphere in most lessons and pupils concentrate well on their tasks. Good work is publicly rewarded as when a Year 2 pupil showed great pride when he was given a "Star Pupil" card to take home to share with his parents. As a result, pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress.

79 Teachers plan their mathematics lessons against the National Curriculum framework and with regard to the key objectives pupils need to achieve as they move through the school. However, plans do not take into account what pupils of different abilities already know and understand. As a result, pupils of average and higher ability often do the same work so that the more able are not always sufficiently challenged and do not make better progress than the others. Teachers review their lessons regularly and make notes on key features to help them meet the needs of their pupils better. The best records contain National Curriculum test results from earlier years, scores in mental mathematics and a chart showing individual attainment of key objectives. Because of the variation in approach, pupils' attainment of basic skills is not systematically recorded. This means that teaching is not as well targeted in this important area of mathematics as it should be. There is an agreed marking policy for mathematics but, although work is regularly marked, there is little to show pupils what they need to do next to improve their skills and knowledge. Throughout the school there are pockets of good practice in planning and record keeping. All teachers have planning files that provide useful support for some aspects of planning and assessment. However, there is no effective system for identifying isolated examples of good practice or sharing them with other teachers so that more pupils benefit from their rigour. For example, a teacher in Year 4 has developed a thorough and practical

system for assessing, reviewing and recording the work of pupils that could usefully be discussed and shared as the basis for improving these important features of the subject.

80 Information and communication technology is sometimes used to support mathematics. For example, Year 6 pupils in the information and communication technology suite use spreadsheets to help them calculate the area and perimeter of different rectangles. Information and communication technology is not usually planned for in lessons and opportunities to use the computers in classrooms to develop and enhance learning are sometimes missed.

81 Management of the subject is satisfactory and the co-ordinator is fully aware of the areas that need further development to improve standards. However, the co-ordinator has not yet had an opportunity to check teaching and learning with a view to supporting and developing teachers' expertise further. The National Numeracy Strategy has been carefully introduced throughout the school and has been well received by teachers who appreciate its structure and organisation. The teaching staff are keen to undertake further training in the subject and there is a clear desire to bring about improvement. For example, some have been on an intensive, five day numeracy course to further improve their knowledge and understanding of the subject. Resources for the subject are satisfactory although pupils are not given enough opportunity to use them to get practical experience of important aspects such as measuring capacity, mass and volume. This needs to be addressed because the taught curriculum concentrates heavily on work with number and this, coupled with the lack of direct experience with handling equipment, does not give pupils sufficient breadth of learning to cope well with National Curriculum tests.

SCIENCE

82 Standards in science are improving but are currently below the level expected for their age for seven and 11 year old pupils, this is mainly due to a larger than normal proportion of lower attaining pupils and a higher number who have special educational needs or speech and communication difficulties. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls. The policy and guidance for teachers on what should be taught follows national guidelines for science and has been in use for two years. Teachers also use resources from two commercial schemes to support pupils' work in science. Pupils enjoy science, they have positive attitudes and respond well, sometimes over enthusiastically but they are managed effectively. The lessons seen all had a practical focus and there were good examples of investigative science. However, evidence of work being done over a longer period of time indicates that there needs to be a greater emphasis on scientific enquiry and skills development.

83 In lessons in Years 1 and 2, teaching and learning are satisfactory or better. In all lessons, teachers are clear what they want pupils to learn, and this is shared with them so they can check their own learning. Teachers are well prepared with materials and equipment but pupils sometimes need more specific advice to help them to use things properly. For instance, in a Year 2 class pupils struggled to use crocodile clips in an electrical circuit because they didn't know how to squeeze the clip to open it. Teachers use scientific vocabulary correctly and insist that pupils do the same. Teachers use a good range of questions and prompts to encourage pupils to take part in discussions and they are given good opportunities to talk about their work at the end of the lesson. Teachers know that it is important that pupils are given these chances to develop their speaking and listening skills. Investigative and experimental work is limited. Pupils normally work on the same tasks and this does not meet the needs of pupils with different abilities effectively enough, though there are examples of teachers arranging pupils in pairs so that more able pupils help the less able to complete core tasks. This enhances the learning of lower attainers and enables higher attainers to develop a deeper understanding.

84 Lessons seen in Years 3 to 6, show that teaching and learning are good and pupils are making good progress. Lessons are well resourced and have specific aims, which are shared with

pupils at the beginning of the lesson and this makes a good contribution to pupils' understanding of their own learning and progress. There is more evidence of practical work being done, particularly in Years 4 and 6 but it is a weaker aspect in Years 3 and 5. Pupils understand fair tests and pupils in Year 4 showed that they had grasped the essential features of these, for example, when testing different materials to find out which one would delay the melting of an ice cube most effectively.

85 There is a detailed and carefully planned end of year assessment programme that is used to judge pupils' attainment in science and allocate them to teaching groups in Years 4 to 6. The programme will be enhanced this year when a commercial package is introduced alongside existing measures. Test results are analysed carefully to identify strengths and weaknesses. Teaching pupils in sets reduces the range of ability within each group but lesson planning still needs to meet the needs of individual pupils so that all pupils can do their best and are fully challenged whatever their ability. At present this is not always being done, but although it is inconsistent, there are some good examples of pupils being given more help or different tasks to do. For example the teaching assistant is used very effectively in Year 6 when discussing the structured tasks set for the less able pupils.

86 End of topic tests are used to assess pupils' learning and progress in science and oral questions are used well at the end of lessons. The marking of pupils' work is unsatisfactory. Teachers check work in books and folders regularly and it is ticked to indicate that it has been seen. However, written comments are infrequent and tend to be supportive, for example, "Good work", "Well done", rather than advisory ones which would tell pupils what they have done well or how their work could be improved. There are examples of better practice where teachers give individual pupils useful feedback about their work. Opportunities to use information and communication technology are not being identified consistently to support pupils' work in science. For instance, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils were taking the temperature of water over a lighted candle every thirty seconds, in this situation a temperature sensor linked to a computer could have kept an ongoing record of the temperature changing and displayed this clearly for them.

87 The quality and presentation of pupils' work is often untidy and a lot of worksheets are used by pupils which restricts the opportunities for them to decide their own methods of recording results. Occasionally activities in which pupils copy down the same writing, complete sentences with one word answers or colour and cut out pictures are not sufficiently challenging. The co-ordinator has a clearly defined role and has good subject knowledge that is used well to support other teachers. The checking of teaching and learning is at an early stage. The co-ordinator is aware that a more direct approach is needed and lesson observations are timetabled to begin later this year. The school has identified appropriate areas for development in science that include refining assessment procedures so that individual targets can be set for pupils and there are good plans to provide further in service training for teachers.

ART AND DESIGN

88 By the age of seven and 11, pupils' attainment in art and design is in line with the level expected for their age and there are individual examples of good work throughout the school. During this inspection lessons were only observed in Years 3 to 6. Other evidence was obtained from an examination of pupils' work in their books, folders and displays, collections of work and photographs in the co-ordinator's files and discussions with pupils and teachers.

89 The teaching of art and design throughout the school is satisfactory and is enriched when teachers successfully link the activities with other subjects. For example, pupils studying the paintings of L. S. Lowry gain valuable insight into the history of the region and features of the industrial landscape. Pupils of all ages study the work of a range of artists from different countries although there is very little beyond European culture which represents missed opportunities for pupils' multi-cultural development.

90 Pupils of all ages are taught basic skills such as colour mixing and sketching but the use of sketch books is underdeveloped. Where it is used well, as in one Year 6 example, a talented young artist practised drawing ten examples of the human eye to help get just the right expression in a portrait. Pupils use a wide range of techniques and materials such as painting, drawing, printing, collage, knitting and papier mache modelling. However, they are not given enough opportunities to exercise their own judgement in choosing suitable materials and techniques when planning their work. Pupils use modern technology effectively when they use an art program to produce patterns of colour. For example, pupils in Year 4 used computers effectively to recreate symmetrical patterns after studying the kind of repeating patterns found in Christmas wrapping paper.

91 Teachers clearly value pupils' art and design and use it effectively in attractive displays and collections throughout the school. For example, Year 5 pupils' paintings in the style of Van Gogh are presented in a stimulating and thought provoking way. These bright, lively displays stimulate other pupils and help parents and other school visitors to see how learning progresses as pupils refine and develop their skills. All displays are regularly reviewed and updated to retain their impact and positive effect. This ensures that displays of art and design are used well to maintain an attractive learning environment and encourage a positive ethos. Pupils develop close observational skills when producing their own pieces of art in a similar style to artists like Rembrandt, Picasso, and Mondrian. Pupils have a positive attitude to art and design and enjoy the opportunity to be creative, showing concentration, perseverance and pride in their finished work.

92 Guidance for the teaching of art has recently been reviewed and the school has developed national materials so that they are more closely linked to the needs of pupils at this school. There are too few books about artists such as Rembrandt in the school library to help teachers to do this successfully, although there are plans in place to extend the range of resources. There is no set system to allow the subject co-ordinator to check teaching and learning and so share good practice with all teachers so that standards are raised evenly throughout the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

93 By the age of seven and 11 pupils' attainment in design and technology is in line with the level expected for their age. Pupils have opportunities to make a variety of things but the design and evaluation aspects of their work are not as well developed, partly because of the poor writing skills of many pupils. Lessons were only observed for younger pupils during the inspection. Further evidence was obtained from examination of pupils' work in books, displays, photographs and collections of work as well as in discussions with pupils and teachers and an analysis of their planning.

94 Teachers plan their work carefully based on nationally agreed materials within the National Curriculum and some make good links with other subjects. For example, Year 1 pupils used a slider mechanism to make a fox and gingerbread man to help them retell the story they had learned in English lessons. These young pupils then used their newly acquired knowledge and skills to produce their own innovative designs such as a fly moving into a spider's web. The range of materials and tools used is limited and most of the work seen only needed cardboard, paper, glue, scissors and paint. Nevertheless, pupils in a Year 2 class produced some attractive and well finished wheelee puppets although their poor language skills restricted their ability to write about their work in any detail. This is true of all ages but the school is attempting to structure pupils' designing and evaluation skills by providing guidance sheets for the different age ranges.

95 In Years 1 and 2, pupils use a range of construction kits to develop their skills in handling and assembling different parts. They learn about a good range of different materials and their properties and how sliders, joints and hinges can be used in their models. Pupils enjoy the subject and tackle difficult tasks with perseverance, helping each other when necessary. In Year 5, pupils learn about food technology when they write recipes for cakes and test them by producing a finished product. Year 6 pupils enhance their work in history when they design and make Tudor houses and display them as streets to illustrate what they would look like.

96 The subject is managed satisfactorily and there is sufficient, planned breadth of coverage based on national guidance. Resources are satisfactory and are well stored with art and design materials to encourage a greater range of use. There has been no recent training in the subject and the co-ordinator provides informal support to all staff when required.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

97 By the age of seven and 11, pupils' attainment in history is in line with the level expected for their age. It is satisfactory in geography by the end of Year 2, but there was insufficient evidence to judge standards by the end of Year 6. This is because in Year 6, only history was taught last term, and geography is planned for this term. At the time of the inspection, these pupils had received only one lesson. Most pupils make steady progress in both subjects, but this is variable from class to class because not all teachers plan their lessons with sufficient attention to matching work to pupils' varying abilities.

98 By Year 2, pupils recognise some differences between the past and present. They know that Florence Nightingale lived a long time ago and that there was no electricity in hospitals then "because it hadn't been invented". Pupils complete "time lines" showing developments from George Stephenson's steam engine to present day electric engines. They sequence the main events in the Fire of London and develop an awareness of the significance of Remembrance Day. They know approximately where they live on a map of the British Isles and recognise different types of housing in their locality.

99 By Year 6, pupils know important events and about famous people in different periods of history. They select information from a range of sources and use their knowledge to explain, for example, the English and Spanish viewpoints of the Armada. Pupils distinguish between historical fact and opinion. However, pupils are confused about dates and they lack an understanding of a century. In discussion, pupils guessed wildly as to what century we are living in now and could not suggest what century the Tudor period was. Pupils make satisfactory progress in mapping skills and find information accurately in atlases. However, they are unsure how to use 4 figure co-ordinates to locate places. Pupils express their own views about environmental issues, such as the tanker oil spillage in Spain. They use correct geographical terms, such as "evaporation" and "precipitation" when explaining the water cycle.

100 Teaching is satisfactory. History and geography are planned well for each year group from the national guidance. Teachers' subject knowledge is often good and pupils are managed very well in lessons. As a result, pupils behave very well and are attentive. Teachers plan visits which support pupils' learning well. For example, Year 5 pupils visited Cragside, the home of a famous local Victorian, William Armstrong. They are rightly proud of the word processed booklet they produced about their visit. This visit fired their enthusiasm for this term's topic. Resources, including video extracts and the use of information and communication technology to research the internet, are used well.

101 Teachers' planning for lessons is not good enough. Too often they plan carefully what they intend to teach to the whole class, without planning to meet the needs of all the pupils. For example, pupils are often copying the same words when writing in both subjects, particularly in Years 3 to 5. Marking of pupils' work seldom indicates how they might improve and teachers often have low expectations of how well pupils present their work.

102 The subject co-ordinators have worked hard to plan the curriculum for each year group throughout the school. At present, checking the effectiveness of teachers' lesson planning and the quality of pupils' work is unsatisfactory. However, the school has identified this as the next stage in the development of the subject co-ordinators' roles.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

103 By the age of seven and 11, pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is in line with the levels expected for their age. Pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make good progress and achieve well in lessons. This is largely due to the good teaching and the good quality resources, including the new computer suite. Older pupils understand the use of sensors, for example, in burglar alarms and the control of traffic lights, they know how to program a screen icon to create shapes or move through a maze. Information and communication technology is valued as an essential part of the curriculum. For example, pupils are using information and communication technology to enhance other subjects and to consolidate their computing skills by using classroom based computers to complete research on the Internet, using the digital camera and using spreadsheets to find the perimeters and areas of shapes.

104 By the age of seven, pupils use computers to write short paragraphs using a simple word processing package. They use an art program well to create a Christmas card to support their work in art and design. Pupils in Year 2 "log on" to the school's network, have improving keyboard skills and are confident in using the computer for simple word processing. Pupils learn the basic skills of how to move the mouse, select the correct arrow key and choose options on the screen. For example, in a lesson with Year 2, pupils followed the teacher's instructions to find their class folders and open a program to begin their word processing exercise. They explained how to print and save their work and showed great enthusiasm when working in the computer suite. Many pupils know that computers are used to control devices such as cookers, video and audio equipment.

105 By the age of 11, pupils make good gains in skills and knowledge and continue to achieve well in lessons. They know how to set up and use simple databases and to interrogate these for information. Teachers use the computer suite well to introduce pupils to spreadsheets to organise and analyse different forms of data. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils understood the use of a spreadsheet and by entering the correct formula they correctly calculated the perimeter and area of different sized squares and rectangles. There are good plans in place to use the limited sensing equipment in the near future and to extend the resources needed for pupils to undertake more sophisticated experiments. Discussions with, and demonstrations by, Year 6 pupils show they understand the use of more advanced control technology and they confidently explain how to give the instructions to create different mathematical shapes on the screen. Pupils understand the importance

and scope of the Internet and use it to locate information. For example, pupils in Year 4 access the Internet to find information for their writing, in the style of a modern newspaper article, on Julius Caesar. In Year 5, they use an encyclopaedia to improve their knowledge of famous Victorians. Pupils of all ages enjoy using computers and treat them with respect. In many lessons, pupils offer assistance to other pupils and are uninhibited when asking for advice from the teacher.

106 The quality of teaching in the computer suite is good. Teachers use their knowledge well to give clear instructions and to test pupils' understanding with skilful questioning. For example, in a lesson for pupils in Year 4, the teacher checked pupils' understanding of previous work on patterns and extended the scope of their work by using symmetrical patterns to create wrapping paper. Teachers' good management of behaviour allows most pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, to work independently and gain confidence. In many lessons, teachers use opportunities to consolidate pupils' spelling and reading skills by linking questions to text that has been read on the screen or created by pupils. Pupils are keen to use computers and this means that they remain focused and persevere with their tasks. Some use of computers was observed in English, mathematics and science, for example, Year 6 pupils explained how they created a presentation using the features of the program to make their sentences "fly" onto the screen from different directions accompanied with suitable sound effects. However, teachers' planning does not show how information and communication technology can be used to enhance other subjects of the curriculum and this is a missed opportunity to develop pupils' skills further.

107 The information and communication technology curriculum is very well managed. The very knowledgeable co-ordinator has produced a very good set of guidelines, good skills recording sheets for pupils and provided all staff with lists of most suitable programs to support different aspects of the curriculum. There are also very good plans to extend the resources in information and communication technology to further complement the good resources already in the school. As a result, the school is well placed to continue the recent good development of the subject.

MUSIC

108 Music is a developing subject within the new school with new provision being made for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Pupils' attainment in music is in line with the level expected for their age. Pupils are given opportunities to play and compose, listen to a good range of music and evaluate their work and that of other composers and musicians. The music policy and guidelines were reviewed last year and the guidance for teachers is now based on the local authority scheme that has been specifically written to support non-specialist music teachers. National guidance for teaching and also materials from two commercial schemes are used to support pupils' music education.

109 A lesson in Year 4 was well linked to pupils' studies in art and design when linking different sounds to a visual image, namely a print of L. S. Lowry's "Playground". The teacher prepared the lesson well and used a good range of percussion instruments including ones from other countries, for example a shell piano and a guiro from Africa. Pupils were very enthusiastic and keen to be involved and they made informed choices about which instruments to use for their task. Specialist tuition is provided in brass (trumpet and trombone) and woodwind (clarinet) and this enables older, more able pupils to achieve well. The school also provides very good extra-curricular activities at lunchtimes and after school. There are a school choir, descant and treble recorder groups and a steel band. The band includes former pupils who are now at the secondary school. The band and recorder groups all play very well and are proud of their achievements.

110 Pupils' singing is developed well during assemblies and hymn practices. Younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 know the words to "He's got the whole world in his hands", and sing tunefully. Reception children who don't know the words join in with the actions. Pupils learn new songs and hymns by repeating lines after the teacher. Pupils sing with a sense of melody and rhythm matched

appropriately to their ages. Pupils enjoy their singing and have positive attitudes to the subject. On one occasion older pupils were singing “The water of life”, and the teacher successfully demonstrated how the tune should go up and down.

111 The co-ordinator is experienced in, and enthusiastic about, the subject and makes a good contribution to the musical life of the school. She is confident about curriculum coverage in music but is only checking the effectiveness of teaching and learning informally. In the school improvement plan the co-ordinator has correctly identified a need to monitor pupils’ progress in music across the school by agreeing a manageable system for assessment and recording. Resources are adequate to teach music through the school with a suitable collection of tuned and un-tuned instruments and recorded music. Information and communication technology is not used effectively to support pupils’ musical studies, for example there is no software to help pupils to compose their own music. However, a recent development gives teachers and pupils access to an on-line music resource that the co-ordinator has plans to develop. The local education authority is developing an enhanced music service that is giving the subject a higher profile in school. There are training opportunities within this package and the school is taking advantage of these.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

112 By the age of seven and 11 pupils’ attainment in physical education is in line with the expected levels for their age. Pupils make steady progress because teaching is satisfactory. Pupils who have special educational needs or English as an additional language learn as well as others. The school benefits considerably from its participation in a “sports co-ordinator programme” based at a local high school. Teaching seen from this provision was at least good and often very good. As a result, pupils in Years 2 to 6 make fast progress in the aspects of physical education covered in the duration of the programme. The school’s provision of swimming lessons for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 ensures that by the time pupils are 11 most reach a satisfactory standard and a minority reach a higher level. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to experience outdoor and adventurous activities at a residential centre.

113 The very high level of expertise shown by sports co-ordinator leaders, who are either teachers or professional coaches, generates very enthusiastic responses from pupils. The teaching inspires pupils towards high achievement and learning in lessons is good. Leaders seek to improve pupils’ performance at every opportunity and keep up a flow of instructions, questions and explanations. For instance, pupils in Year 4 very quickly improved their footballing skills of “dragging and turning” because the leader caused them to think hard and increased their determination to do well. Leaders give exemplary demonstrations, so pupils know exactly what to aim for and they make good use of pupils to demonstrate good practice. Leaders make good use of available time and space and encourage pupils to evaluate their own and others’ performances. In one lesson these features were brought together to very good effect when the leader required those pupils sitting out and waiting their turn, to watch and evaluate the performance of others. This encouraged pupils to observe closely and maintained their behaviour and attitudes at very high levels. As a result, pupils’ performance in dance improved very rapidly as they refined movements to match the mood and rhythm of “Thriller”.

114 The quality of teaching by school staff is satisfactory. All teachers maintain good control and give clear instructions, so pupils know what to do and pay due attention to safety. Teachers give pupils direct help and enough opportunities for them to learn through the examples of both teacher and pupil demonstrations. For example, good teaching in a Year 4 gymnastics lesson enabled pupils to improve their control and balance well. This was because the teacher expected and insisted on improvement and required pupils to evaluate each others’ performance. Consequently, they learned what they were doing correctly and incorrectly and improved quickly. A minority of teachers do not pay enough attention to demonstrations and evaluation of performance. This limits pupils’ knowledge

of what to aim for. In one lesson, where teaching was unsatisfactory, there was insufficient attention given on how to promote improved performance and expectations of what pupils could achieve were not high enough. As a result, pupils worked sloppily and made unsatisfactory progress in performing movement phrases in dance. The school's good provision of extra-curricular activities enables those pupils who participate to improve their performance.

115 The quality of teaching overall is good enough to maintain satisfactory standards. The continuation of the "sports co-ordinator programme" is likely to promote a rise in standards.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

116 By the age of seven and 11, pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with those prescribed by the locally Agreed Syllabus and is in line with those expected for pupils' ages. The provision allows pupils to progress steadily and securely through the interesting learning opportunities planned for them. Teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good. Under the good direction of the co-ordinator, guidelines have been rewritten to take account of the recently revised curriculum needed because of the change to a primary school. The curriculum is broad and covers all requirements well. As a result, the subject makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

117 Teachers use good teaching methods in their lessons. They make good use of good quality artefacts and videos either to introduce new learning or to check on pupils' understanding. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, the teacher discussed with pupils the ideas of the Sikh religion after telling the story of the "Five Ks" and showing pupils the items worn to remind Sikhs to lead a good life. Pupils understand that the religion was founded by Guru Nanak and good questions by the teacher ensured that all pupils understood the different artefacts that are important to followers of the Sikh religion. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils shared their knowledge and understanding of the significance of the story of the "Blind Men and the Elephant" as the teacher explained people's different views of Gods. In this lesson, the teacher followed up the story and explained the three main Gods of Hinduism. Teachers plan lessons well. They link the subject well to other subjects to help pupils' understanding and generate discussion. In Year 1, pupils discussed their thoughts on friendship and what is important in a friend. The teacher made good use of this concept when telling the story of how Jesus made the disciples his special friends. Pupils in Year 3 study the Bible and compare the importance of this special book with the Torah from the Jewish faith.

118 Teachers work together well. They plan lessons so that all pupils have the same experiences. However, assessment is not used sufficiently well to inform planning so that those pupils who are capable of higher attainment do not have the opportunity to work at a more challenging level. A strength of the subject lies in the way that teachers use the personal, social and health education programme to extend learning in religious education. Pupils discuss friendship, responsibility and care for others which links meaningfully to discussions based on the beliefs of Jesus. Teachers share the targets with pupils at the beginning of the lesson and check at the end of the lesson to make sure that targets have been met. In this way pupils are involved in their own learning. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language are well catered for through more simplified activities and with good help either from the teacher or the support staff. In most classes, pupils' good knowledge and understanding is not reflected in their written work, it is often superficial and does not extend pupils' learning sufficiently well. All work is marked regularly and teachers give praise and encouragement to pupils. Opportunities are often missed to suggest how work could be improved. There are satisfactory resources for religious education and these are used well by teachers to enliven the subject.

