

INSPECTION REPORT

St Michael's Roman Catholic Primary School

Clumber Street North Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 7RE

LEA area: Newcastle

Unique reference number:108511

Headteacher: Mrs M Kerridge

Reporting inspector: Mr Bruce MacFarlane
12411

Dates of inspection: 17 February – 19 February 2003

Inspection number: 253385

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

© Crown copyright 2003

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Clumber Street North Newcastle upon Tyne
Postcode:	NE4 7RE
Telephone number:	0191 273 9383
Fax number:	0191 2734637
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev W. Bellamy
Date of previous inspection:	18 – 20 May 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
12411	Bruce MacFarlane	Registered inspector	Science Design & technology	What sort of school it is. The school's results and pupils' achievements. What should the school do to improve further.
11392	Terry Heppenstall	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils' or students. How well does the school work in partnership with parents.
4432	Alan Heinzman	Team inspector	Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils or students.
32588	Angela James	Team inspector	Physical Education English	
6869	Barbara Jordan	Team inspector	Art	How well are pupils or students taught.
20640	Dean Jackson	Team inspector	Mathematics ICT Music	How well is the school led and managed.

The inspection contractor was:

Durham LEA
County Hall
Durham
DH1 5UJ

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

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
 PART B: COMMENTARY	
 HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	 13
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
 HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	 16
 HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	 19
 HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	 20
 HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	 22
 HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	 22
 WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	 25
 PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	 26
 PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	 31

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Michael's Roman Catholic primary school is of average size and has 211 boys and girls in the 3-11 age range, including a nursery class. Though there is overall an equal number of boys and girls there is a considerable imbalance in favour of boys in three of the classes. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (56%) is well above average. The school admits pupils with a range of attainment but most start school with levels below those expected for their age, with about half entering at levels well below. Many children have a limited language, social and personal skills when they start at the nursery. The school admits most pupils from the Elswick area of Newcastle City, which is an area of high unemployment and experiences very high levels of socio-economic disadvantage. The school has 50 pupils from other ethnic backgrounds, 48 of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English. This is well above average. There are 62 pupils identified as having special educational needs, which is above average for a school of this type and size. There are no pupils with statements of special needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Michael's Roman Catholic primary is an improving school providing sound education for its pupils. There is a shared commitment to succeed. The attainment of the pupils in the national tests as they leave the school is well below national averages; however, standards are rising when compared to similar schools. Pupils make particularly good progress in Year 2 and Year 6 due to the consistently good and sometimes very good teaching. In most lessons pupils are achieving well and their attitudes to work are good. Together with the key staff and governors the sound leadership and management provided by the head teacher is supporting improvements in the quality of education. This is an effective school with a good ethos. Taking into account the attainment on entry, the funds received by the school, how these are used to provide a sound education for all pupils and the standards achieved, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The school provides the children with an atmosphere of care and love. The teachers set good examples and so relationships are very good and pupils have positive attitudes to learning
- It provides well for the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development with the result that their behaviour and personal development are very good
- The quality of teaching is good, with some very good teaching in Years 2, 5, 6 and Reception
- Pupils' achievement is good especially in Years 2 and 6
- The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good as a result of the effective teaching
- The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education
- The good progress in developing information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum
- The management and induction of new staff

What could be improved

- Longer term strategies and priorities to raise standards across the school, all teachers need to continue to challenge the potentially higher ability pupils to do better.
- Attendance, which is below the national average.
- The provision in the Foundation Stage to ensure good progress
- The provision for the younger pupils who have English as an Additional Language
- Governors' broader knowledge of the school's initiatives and activities to raise standards

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection in 1998 the school has made satisfactory progress overall, with good improvement in its provision of ICT due the recent purchase of equipment and the strong relationship with a local Beacon school. Over the last five years the standards in the school, by the end of Year 6, have increased at a faster rate than the national average in mathematics and science, and at the same rate in English. Standards in the national tests in all subjects are still below the national average.

The rate of progress by the end of Year 2 compared with national trends is less satisfactory, especially in reading. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are still below the national averages for pupils aged seven.

Standards in ICT, design and technology and geography are now as expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

There has been satisfactory improvement in the planning recently put in place, but it has not been modified to meet the needs of all pupils. Sound assessment procedures are now in place and there is satisfactory use of these procedures at the end of the Key Stages to guide curriculum planning and teaching. The school now identifies pupils with special educational needs at an early stage. Systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are now in place but the use of this information to inform the next year's school improvement plan is still developing. The governing body works well with the head teacher and its knowledge of the school's targets, initiatives and developments in literacy and numeracy is increasing. Its overall knowledge about all areas in the school improvement plan is limited but they have actions in place to address this. There has been significant improvement in the provision of after school care 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			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	
English	E	E	E	B
mathematics	E	E*	D	B
science	D	E*	E	C

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The children's attainment on entry to the nursery is below and often well below average in language, literacy, mathematical and social skills. The teaching is good and so they achieve well and make steady progress in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception classes) but by the time they start Year 1, their language and literacy skills are often still below the expectations for their age.

In the 2002 national tests for pupils at the end of Year 2, the school's performance in reading was very low, well below in writing and below in mathematics. These results were below the trend the school had shown over the previous 5 years. This is because there were twice as many boys as girls in the

class and the majority of the boys were on the school's special educational needs register. The boys' performance was well below that of boys nationally.

When compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils with free school meals, the school's performance was very low in reading, below in writing and above in mathematics.

However, standards are in line in reading, writing and mathematics when compared with those expected nationally for pupils at the end of this current Year 2. Standards have improved due to the sound implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, the adoption of the 'Books and Beyond' initiative, the monitoring of boys' reading in the library and the smaller number of boys in the class.

In the 2002 national tests for pupils at the end of Year 6, the school's performance in English and science was well below average, and below average in mathematics.

When compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils with free school meals, the school's performance was above average in English and mathematics, and in line in science.

However, standards are in line in science, English and mathematics when compared with those expected nationally for pupils at the end of this current Year 6. Standards have improved due to the good teaching in Year 5 and Year 6, the sound implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, and the linking of science planning to the national guidelines. However, the school now needs to develop long term strategies to enhance teaching across the whole school, through building on existing good practice. The school met its targets for improvement last year and has set realistic targets for improvement in English, mathematics and science standards for Years 3 to 6.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils like coming to school and are enthusiastic and willing to take part in the work provided. They are proud of what they achieve. They are sensitive to each other's needs.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils, know what is expected of them respond well to the high expectations and behave well, both in lessons and in the play areas. They are courteous, know right from wrong and are supportive of each other.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are taught to respect themselves and others and are encouraged to mix and work together. The link between Year 6 pupils and nursery children is particularly effective and helps to create a sense of community. The School Council is taken seriously and fosters a sense of maturity
Attendance	Poor. A major initiative is in place and, although showing recent improvements, attendance is well below average.

The very good relationships and personal development are a result of the commitment of the staff and the caring environment around the school. Pupils are developing sensible and mature attitudes to both their work and others. Through the New Deal funding the school has extra educational welfare officers to support attendance and punctuality.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. There have been significant changes in staff in the past few years. As a result, teaching is now good. Good teaching is found in all year groups with more consistently good, and sometimes very good teaching in the reception class and in the Year 2, Year 5 and Year 6 classes, with some that is outstanding in Year 6, which is helping pupils to make good progress in their learning. Overall, teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. Teaching in nursery is satisfactory and occasionally good. The good teaching in the reception class by the temporary teacher is now giving children a good start to their learning. However the progress made since the beginning of the year is broadly satisfactory. This is partly due to a succession of supply teachers and to the lack of designated leadership for the Foundation Stage, which has resulted in little development towards a coherent key stage identity. Teaching in the Year 2 class is mainly very good and this is enabling the pupils to make good, often very good progress. The deployment of the support teacher's time to work with pupils who are at an early stage of learning English in Year 1 and Year 2 does not actively support the raising of standards, since time has been used to audit provision. Teaching in Year 3 and Year 4 is mainly satisfactory with examples of good teaching in a few lessons in each class. The small amount of unsatisfactory teaching is due to the work set not being well matched to the abilities of the pupils. As a result the task does not contribute to raising attainment or to the development of pupils' skills and so the learning is insufficient. The strengths in teaching include the use of questioning and the way the teachers manage the pupils' learning and their knowledge of the subject. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school and so they make good progress over time. Teaching for pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory overall. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are being taught satisfactorily throughout the school. Pupils are able to apply their literacy skills in other subjects of the curriculum. Provision for more able pupils is variable, being good at the end of each Key Stage where the work set matches the abilities of the pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides a satisfactory range of extra curricular activities. ICT is now in place and used well to support work across the curriculum
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The school identifies pupils with special educational needs very early in their school career. A part-time teacher and the head teacher now take responsibility for co-ordinating special educational needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. The provision is variable because of the lower quality of support in Key Stage 1; pupils make satisfactory progress in Year 3 to 6 and unsatisfactory progress in Years 1 to 2 during the school's audit. The caring and inclusive nature of the school helps all pupils to develop personally and play a full part in the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Spiritual development is good and at the heart of this church school. There are good opportunities for the pupils to take turns to share their feelings and ideas. These are actively used for teaching the skills and attitudes they need to handle life. The school's programme for personal, social and health education is effective, helping pupils to make good social and moral development
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. All pupils to play a full part in school life and there are good procedures to ensure that pupils with a wide range of needs are taught in the classroom alongside their peers. The school provides good personal support and guidance to all pupils. Many systems for assessing pupils' progress are now in place and monitoring academic performance is satisfactory.

The school has a satisfactory partnership with parents, who are pleased with many aspects of the school. The standard of pastoral support is good; pupils are shown how important they are and how much they are cared for, which in turn encourages them to work hard and learn.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. Leadership and management are satisfactory, with some strengths and a few areas for development. The head teacher works well with the governing body to set the direction for the school. There is a clear direction for the school but this is not evident in all subject plans or implemented through the one-year school improvement plan. The head teacher continues to develop the role of the co-ordinators in monitoring and evaluating the curriculum.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are conscientious and are beginning to know the school. Through the presentations by head teacher and deputy head teacher the governors have an input into the direction of the school. They have a sound understanding about what the school is doing for literacy and numeracy. They recognise the need to develop a similar awareness of all issues related to the school improvement plan and an understanding of the impact of what they are doing. The monitoring procedures by the governors have developed since the last inspection
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory The school is beginning to develop sound procedures for the analysis of performance data. In some cases it takes adequate steps but it does not always implement the outcomes of this evaluation of data early enough
The strategic use of resources	Good. There is a good match of teachers and support staff to the curriculum; teaching assistants are well deployed. The management of resources is good to meet the curriculum needs and the school is just beginning to use pupils' data to influence teaching and provision.

The governing body meets its legal requirements apart from the omission of some information in the governors' annual report to parents and school prospectus. The school improvement plan is broad but does not yet indicate how the school will know whether what they have done for the pupils has been successful or not in order to help the school to continue to move forward.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school is liked by the pupils Teaching is good The staff are easy to approach The pupils are expected to work hard The school helps pupils to become mature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The amount of homework provided More information about how well their child is doing A greater range of activities outside the lessons

The inspection team found that the parents' positive comments about the school were justified. The team does not agree with the areas that parents would like to see improved. The information provided to the parents about how well their children are doing is satisfactory, information is also provided on

helping pupils at home. The amount of work provided by the school for pupils to do at home is also satisfactory. The range of activities that happen outside lessons has increased and is satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter the nursery at levels below those expected for their age, with about half entering at levels well below in all the six areas of learning recommended at the Foundation Stage. These children have poor social skills, narrow experiences and limited language development. They make satisfactory progress through the Foundation Stage. In the lessons observed in reception, the good progress they make is due to the good teaching of the temporary teacher. Recorded evidence of the pupils' work over time indicates that progress overall in reception is sound. The school works hard to support children in their personal, social and emotional development and as a result the majority will reach the learning goals identified for their age. From the low starting point particularly in speech and language, and their steady progress through the Foundation Stage most children will not attain the learning goals except in physical development and mathematics by the time they transfer into Year 1. All the children develop good attitudes to their learning.

2. Since the last inspection standards in the end of Year 2 tests have been variable. The good rise in standards in mathematics, matching the national averages in 2001, has been sustained through the greater attainment of girls than boys. There has been little change in standards of reading. The overall rising trend in the standard for writing was reduced due to the results in 2002, which were well below the school trend over the previous 4 years. This overall variability in the results may be due to the size of Year 2 classes and the ratio of boys to girls. The performance of boys is overall below that of national expectations.

3. In the 2002 national tests for seven year olds, standards were very low in reading, well below in writing and below in mathematics, compared to the national averages. These results reflect the poorer performance of boys in the school and in this class the number boys was greater than girls by nearly two to one. When compared with schools with a similar number of free school meals, the school was well above average in mathematics, very low in reading and below average in writing. Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment in science were very low. The school recognises that their main priorities for the last two years have been Years 3 to 6.

4. Inspection findings indicate that pupils' standards by the end of Year 2 are in line with what is expected of this age in reading and writing due to the good and sometimes very good teaching in Year 2. Pupils are beginning to read with expression using a range of strategies to read words they do not recognise and can describe characters and setting. Standards of speaking and listening are satisfactory, although listening skills are better developed than speaking skills. Year 2 pupils show understanding of what a sentence is and are beginning to use capital letters and full stops correctly. They are able to reread writing for grammatical sense.

5. Pupils' standards in mathematics have been improving gradually over the last three years. Standards in Year 2 are in line with the expectations for their age. Throughout Years 1 and 2 pupils' increase their confidence in using numbers. Most children can add and subtract to 20 and beyond; they know about place value, simple fractions such as halves and quarters, time and simple two and three - dimensional shapes

6. At the end of Year 2 standards in science are in line with the expectations of pupils aged seven. In Year 2 they know what constitutes a fair test and can make predictions about liquids and solids cooling. Pupils are learning how materials change and are developing sound skills in observing growth. In Year 2 they are learning about electricity through the good use of investigation skills.

7. The standards of pupils with English as an additional language are below expectations for their age in reading and writing at the end of Year 2. The additional support for these pupils has been targeted towards an audit over the last few months and as a consequence the pupils have not received the active support that would have helped them to make satisfactory progress in their learning. In a group session with these pupils on descriptive writing, the focus was upon spelling and not upon developing vocabulary. The session ended up concentrating on developing pupils' ICT skills rather than literacy skills, and not all pupils could see the keyboard because of the size of the group. As a result of this poor focus upon the aims for learning and unsatisfactory teaching from the assistant from the support service the pupils did not make satisfactory progress in the lesson.

8. Since the last inspection in 1998, standards at the end of Year 6 have risen at least in line with the national trend in English and at a higher rate in mathematics and science. In the 2002 national tests for pupils at the end of Year 6, standards in English and science were well below the national average and below the national average in mathematics. Performance was in line in mathematics when compared with the standards the pupils achieved when they were in Year 2. The results in science and mathematics in 2002 were below the school trend due to the number of poorer attaining girls that year. When compared with their previous learning in English and science pupils' attainment was below average. When compared with schools with a similar number of free school meals, standards were above average in English and mathematics and were in line in science. The trend for the performance of boys over the last 5 years has been below that expected nationally, and this has considerably reduced the school's performance levels.

9. On the basis of current work, pupils attain standards in line with what is expected in both reading and writing by the age of 11. Throughout the school, standards of speaking and listening are satisfactory, although listening skills are better developed than speaking skills. This is because many pupils enter the school with limited communication skills. Listening skills are well developed in all lessons and most pupils listen attentively to the teacher and each other and can interpret and carry out instructions. Pupils in Year 6 are expressive readers and can discuss characters. They are able to explain the strategies they use for choosing a book and talk about how they would locate information in a library. Research skills are more variable, but better in Years 5 and 6. In Years 3 to 6 the allocation of time outside the literacy hour for pupils to read is helping to raise standards. Pupils in Year 6 can compose correctly punctuated and well-constructed sentences. They are able to present a balanced argument when writing a report. They organise their writing for different audiences and pupils writing includes reports, play scripts, stories, instructions and poetry. Standards of spelling and handwriting are in line with expectation for pupils aged 11. Standards in Key Stage 2 have improved since the last inspection.

10. Standards are improving at Key Stage 2 in mathematics and by the end of Year 6 are average for the pupils' knowledge and understanding but at times below average in problem solving. There is still a significant minority of pupils in most year groups who work below the standard they should be and some find it difficult to work independently. In all year groups, learning is at its best when teachers plan interesting and well-matched tasks for pupils to do. The standard and quality of written work is variable. In some classes, there are books with low amounts of work evident, and often it is unfinished and lacks any constructive comments by the teacher. At times pupils are not sufficiently challenged by some of the work required of them and some of the mathematical strategies usually used to stretch higher ability pupils, such as investigations, are not a regular feature of every teacher's planning. This results in little opportunity for them to develop their problem solving skills or to apply their mathematical knowledge. Overall standards have improved since the last inspection.

11. In science, standards are average for pupils' knowledge and understanding and also for the skills of investigating and experimenting by the time they reach the end of Year 6; this is an improvement since the last inspection. Year 6 pupils can clearly label directions on force diagrams and

are developing knowledge about vaccination through reading articles about Jenner's research. Pupils understand the states of solids, liquids and gasses and some can describe boiling, evaporation and condensation. Pupils' written work varies and this reflects the limited challenge planned for more able pupils and not all skill areas are consistently addressed. Pupils participate in a wide range of scientific enquiries and the school is beginning to identify strategies to address the development of specific skills in this area of science.

12. The improvement in standards results from the national strategies for literacy and numeracy being soundly implemented across the school, the emphasis on these skills in Years 3 to 6 and the improved quality of teaching. There are a number of reasons why standards, although rising, remain around or below the national averages. There is a lack of coherence throughout the Foundation Stage on raising literacy skills at the beginning of the children's education in the school. Mathematics lessons are not planned to provide enough time for independent work resulting in little opportunity for pupils to develop their problem solving skills. Whilst Year 6 pupils develop an average knowledge and understanding of science too few pupils attain the higher levels in science and this is because very few opportunities are provided by the teachers for the pupils to develop higher order concepts, for example, understanding of why a material is used rather than just the knowledge of which materials are used in a house. The school recognises the issue of the lower attainment of boys in the tests each year and hopes to resolve these through its special educational needs targets in the school improvement plan. However, the plan does not include initiatives in relation to improvements in boys' achievements and the development of more able pupils.

13. Most pupils in Years 3 to 6 who are at an early stage of learning English are receiving additional support on an individual basis from the support teacher and are attaining standards that are broadly in line with expectations by the age of 11. They are making satisfactory progress, especially with their writing skills.

14. Standards in ICT are in line with those expected nationally at the age of seven and 11. Standards are improving rapidly, with some work currently being carried out by pupils in Years 2, 5 and 6 classes exceeding the standards expected. This improvement is due to the excellent leadership and management of the subject, the recent purchasing of high quality hardware and software and the strong relationship that the school has built up with a local Beacon school. The combination of these factors has had a very good impact upon standards since the last inspection and has led to substantial improvement in the school's provision of ICT. The school has made good progress in developing the use of ICT across the whole curriculum. The interactive whiteboards are an integral part of all literacy and numeracy lessons in Year 5 and Year 6 and are used well by teachers and pupils. The Internet is used in all classrooms to support teaching and learning with pupils, for example, for carrying out research, using on-line lessons or revising previously taught topics. There is effective use of ICT in science, history, design and technology, music, mathematics and English.

15. At the end of Year 2 and year 6 standards are satisfactory in all other national curriculum subjects. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

16. Pupils make satisfactory progress from entering the school to the beginning of Year 1, good progress to the end of Year 2 and satisfactory progress to the end of Year 6. Good progress is more evident in Year 2 and Years 5 and 6. This variable rate of progress is mainly due to the insufficient long-term strategies in place to impact on teaching across the whole school. The school, in conjunction with the Local Education Authority has set appropriate targets for literacy and numeracy. Progress made by higher attaining pupils is less evident due to the similar diet of curriculum provided to all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress against the targets in their individual education plans. The teaching assistants in the classrooms generally support them well. When teaching assistants are deployed well to enhance the learning of the pupils they have a positive effect on that subject; they have good subject knowledge and a range of strategies for motivating pupils and keeping

them focused on their tasks. The school is setting realistic targets for improvement in English, mathematics and science standards for Years 3 to 6.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

17. The pupils like coming to school and this pleases parents. Their attitudes to work are good. Pupils are taught that their contribution is valued. This has a positive effect on their confidence and self-esteem, and helps them to develop a sense of responsibility. Pupils benefit from a positive climate for learning in which all adults have their best interests at heart. Lessons are interesting. Most pupils take pride in their work, and their enthusiasm and willingness to participate in their work were observed across a range of subjects and year groups.

18. The pupils respond very well to the school's high expectations of good behaviour. Pupils' behaviour is very good in and around the school. For example, the behaviour of Year 5 and Year 6 pupils returning, on foot, from the local swimming pool was excellent. There is a calm atmosphere in the school hall during lunch. Furthermore, the pupils are courteous, for example, they open doors for adults as a matter of habit, they are trustworthy and they treat the buildings with care. Staff manage behaviour well and this results in an orderly community, which helps the pupils make good progress. No exclusions were reported in the last academic year. Parents are satisfied with the standard of behaviour.

19. The pupils are sensitive to the needs of others and they display caring attitudes. For example, the discussion in a Year 5 personal, social and health education lesson, concerned with friends who had a reason to be sad, gave a clear indication of an understanding that others could have a need for care. Newcomers to the school are accepted well and they make friends easily. Several charities are supported. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds are fully integrated into the school community and there is an acceptance of pupils with difficulties. The pupils' attitudes allow the school to be inclusive and this ensures all pupils are fully involved in its life and work. Relationships in the school are very good. The pupils like their teachers and find them helpful.

20. The pupils respond very well to opportunities to take responsibility and show initiative, and personal development is very good. They can work independently in lessons and they deal confidently with adults. Classroom monitors perform their tasks with enthusiasm and prefects and house captains show maturity as they carry out their duties. Similar comments apply to a scheme where Year 6 pupils help children in the nursery. The School Council provides opportunities for pupils from most year groups to make a contribution to school life. This opportunity is taken seriously. Parents are well justified in their view that the school helps their children to become mature.

21. Attendance is well below the national average and it has been poor since the previous inspection. A major initiative to improve this situation is in place but it has not yet produced the expected results. Holidays in term time and extended holidays by some Asian pupils are part of the explanation but the underlying difficulty is a failure by some parents to promote a culture of good attendance. Unauthorised absence is broadly in line with the national average but there are difficulties obtaining information from some parents. This distorts the data because there can be long delays in authorising absence.

22. Registration periods start promptly but there are latecomers at the beginning of the day. There is a core of pupils who have difficulty attending on time. The school has in place educational welfare officers to support this element through New Deal funding.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

23. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. The proportion of good and very good teaching has increased and the proportion of less than satisfactory teaching has decreased. Good teaching is found in all year groups with more consistently good, and sometimes very good teaching in the reception class and in the Year 2, Year 5 and Year 6 classes. The good teaching in the

reception class by the temporary teacher is giving children a good start to their learning and they are making good progress in lessons. However the progress made since the beginning of the year is broadly satisfactory. This is partly due to the succession of supply teachers, and the lack of designated leadership for the Foundation Stage which has resulted in little development towards a coherent key stage identity. The nursery and reception classes are beginning to establish consistent expectations of children and a common approach to the two- year curriculum across all the areas of learning, planning and assessment. Teaching in the Year 2 class is mainly very good and this is enabling the pupils to make good, and often very good progress. Teaching in Years 3 and 4 is mainly satisfactory with examples of good teaching in a few lessons in each class. Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is mainly good with examples of very good teaching in both classes and outstanding teaching in Year 6, which is helping pupils to make good progress in their learning. The very small amount of unsatisfactory teaching by the newly qualified teacher in Year 4 and by the support teacher in Year 2 is due to the work set not being well matched to the objectives of the lesson or to the abilities of the pupils. As a result the task does not contribute to raising attainment or to the development of pupils' skills and so the learning is insufficient.

24. Teachers use a range of teaching methods in lessons. They gain the attention of the pupils with a good introduction to the lesson and through this focus them upon the objective for the learning. For example, at the beginning of an English lesson with a Year 5 class, the teacher helped the pupils to understand the writing task clearly and how it built upon the planning they had done the previous day. Teachers use questioning effectively, often in revisiting what the pupils have already learned, to assist their understanding of new ideas. In a very good ICT lesson with Year 6 pupils, the teacher made very good use of the technology available, including laptop computers and an interactive whiteboard, to engage the pupils with control technology. There was a good balance between direct teaching and intervention, which kept the pupils learning at a good pace. The teacher provided opportunities for pupils to practise their skills and demonstrate their understanding by presenting their ideas to other pupils. Pupils made very good progress in their learning as they thought about ways of amending their programs.

25. Teachers develop good relationships with pupils, which help them to manage behaviour very effectively. In a well-taught Year 3 personal, social and health education lesson about sharing, the high expectations of good behaviour, together with considered responses to pupils' questions ensured that the teacher reinforced pupils' self esteem and promoted good learning. In most lessons the pace of learning is good and this helps pupils to concentrate well.

26. Basic literacy skills are taught satisfactorily throughout the school. These skills are taught effectively in literacy lessons. In many lessons opportunities are provided for pupils to extend and develop their vocabulary. This is seen in the successful use of a range of reading texts, which are modified and improved by the pupils. Teachers also develop vocabulary through the demonstration of effective writing. Opportunities are provided for pupils to enhance their speaking and listening skills, often in the closing part of the lesson. For example, in Year 5 literacy lesson a pupil with special educational needs confidently took the 'hot seat' to answer questions about the monster in the legend she was writing. She was able to respond appropriately, with occasional support, to the questions posed by other members of the class. In some classes good use is made of time outside the literacy lessons to develop basic skills. In Year 2 the first 20 minutes of the day were spent on reinforcing the sounds 'ar' and 'or' in a well planned spelling activity. Basic numeracy skills are also taught satisfactorily throughout the school. Pupils are challenged to do the working out for number work mentally, which they manage successfully most of the time. Good use is made of a range of mathematical games to consolidate understanding. In a good mathematics lesson in Year 2 the game of sequencing numbers with 10, then 100, and finally 600 enabled pupils to show initiative and judgement in their choice of placement on the number line and promoted good understanding. Further links to numeracy were made in a geography lesson, also in Year 2, when the pupils were asked to help Barnaby Bear remember how many times he had been on a plane.

27. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach is good in most subjects. There is some very good teaching, which shows strength in the teachers' understanding in English, mathematics and ICT. This is particularly the case in the teaching in reception, Year 2, Year 5 and Year 6. Since the previous inspection, staff have participated in training in literacy, numeracy and special educational needs. As a result they make more effective use of their aims for pupils' learning and the appropriate choice of activities to match the objectives. The school is making use of the pilot materials for the 'intensifying support project' and is piloting the use of unit plans in mathematics. This participation in projects with the national strategies is bringing greater coherence to the curriculum, raising standards and improving the confidence of teachers in these subjects. Staff have participated in ICT training which has had a very positive impact upon the quality of teaching in this subject. Use of ICT to enhance the subjects is seen in English, mathematics, science, history and design and technology. In-house training, led by the deputy head teacher, and support through the school's partnership with a Beacon school have also contributed to the school's improvement in standards in ICT.

28. Teachers' planning has improved since the previous inspection and is satisfactory throughout the school. The use of national guidance in all subjects is beginning to ensure that staff have a common framework on which to base teaching and learning. Learning is its best when teachers plan interesting and well-matched tasks for pupils to do. The standard and quality of the work recorded in pupils' books is variable. In some classes at Key Stage 1 and 2, there are books with low amounts of work evident, and often it is unfinished and lacks any constructive comments by the teacher. At times some of the mathematical strategies usually used to challenge higher ability pupils, such as investigations, are not a regular feature of every teacher's planning. In science planning does not always take into account higher order concepts and at these times all pupils are not challenged enough. Teachers identify the aims for learning in lessons and in the best practice this is shared with the pupils at the beginning of the lesson. Most lessons finish with a useful review of what has been learned or an activity, which consolidates the learning identified in the objectives. This is supporting pupils in their learning and helping to keep them motivated.

29. The use of assessment to promote pupil learning is satisfactory. The use of reading records and marking are variable across the Years 1 to 6. The best use of marking to inform pupils' progress is seen in Year 2 and 6, where teachers mark pupils' work regularly and positively. Assessment information is not always being used consistently to improve the match of work to individual pupils needs, particularly the more able.

30. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school and so they make good progress over time. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. This is because of good teaching and the support they receive in lessons. The quality and appropriateness of the individual education plans has improved considerably over the last twelve months and they now contain a limited number of achievable targets for each pupil. Classroom assistants are very experienced and some have additional qualifications related to supporting pupils with special educational needs. This results in classroom support which is well focused, but which does not prevent pupils from developing independence. The Code of Practice for these pupils is implemented satisfactorily. The school identifies at an early stage those pupils who need additional help and puts in place individual learning plans that are appropriately detailed to meet the identified needs of individual pupils.

31. The use of the support teacher's time to work with pupils who have English as an additional language is not effective in Year 2. Too much time is spent conducting the audit and this is not assisting with the raising of standards for these pupils. The time spent coaching individual pupils in Year 6 is having a positive impact upon their standards of writing and they are making satisfactory progress in their learning of English as an additional language.

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

32. The school curriculum is broad and balanced and effectively promotes the intellectual, physical and moral development of all pupils. There is a satisfactory range of extra curricular activities, which enhances it. Improvements have been made since the last inspection with policies in place and all subjects now being systematically planned for all years. ICT is now in place across the school. The curriculum is regularly monitored, which ensures coverage and entitlement as well as providing a stable basis for curriculum development. It meets all statutory requirements including those for children in the Foundation Stage while taking into account the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. Most pupils have equal access to the full curriculum although in some lessons they did not have tasks appropriate for their abilities to enable them to progress effectively.

33. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is firmly linked to the early learning goals identified for this age group. Children are satisfactorily prepared by learning the necessary skills for their work on the National Curriculum at the beginning of Year 1. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they are well supported by a good range of strategies, which enables them to progress well across the school. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been soundly implemented and are making an important contribution to raising standards. However, in literacy, these need to be implemented consistently across the school and there is insufficient partnership with parents for home school reading.

34. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are taught systematically and satisfactorily across the school. Policies are in place for all subjects and the school is successfully using national guidance and teaching materials. Teachers' planning is often good but further work needs to be done to ensure that the requirements of all ability groups and individuals are met. It does not yet reflect systematically enough what has been learned in lessons so that work can be adapted to meet pupils' needs. Planning is now on line so that it can be monitored by the co-ordinators and there has been classroom monitoring of literacy and numeracy lessons with further work planned for ICT and science. The governing body takes an active interest in the curriculum and has appointed governors for literacy and numeracy. Further work needs to be done to ensure that all governors have a full understanding of the whole curriculum.

35. There is a satisfactory range of extra curricular activities including swimming, football, drama, music, clog dancing and a homework club. Pupils obviously enjoy these activities, which are mainly for the older ones. Gifted and talented pupils can take part in a Summer School organised by a local catholic secondary school. Some strategies have been introduced to address the issue of the lower attainment of boys in tests each year. Some boys are given additional support in the classroom, good role models identified and staff who relate well to boys moved to teach in the upper part of the school. However, more systematic work needs to be done, including more focussed activities to support their learning and their impact monitored.

36. The school's good links with the wider community make a good contribution to the pupils' learning. Many classes visit a range of interesting places including the local church, museums, Newcastle and the coast with extended activities to develop learning. Links with the local swimming pool are particularly good. There are visitors to the school including the local clergy, artists, firefighters, paramedics and members of the Chinese community. There is a well-organised residential visit to an outdoor centre in Allendale. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have opportunities to develop their skills and succeed in fell walking and map reading as well as studying the history of the lead mining industry and local rivers. There is a close relationship with the main receiving secondary Catholic high schools and the arrangements to transfer pupils are very good. There are useful relationships with two

Beacon schools, for example, help is being provided to develop computer-based target setting procedures. ICT is also promoted through links with Newcastle United Football Club. Work placement opportunities are provided for students and teacher training is normally undertaken, although not currently. Also, St Michael's is a member of a group of schools participating in a community-based initiative to improve attendance and behaviour. The personal, social and health education policy and scheme has been recently reviewed and there is now a well planned and taught programme, which includes drug education and citizenship. Pupils have opportunities to discuss a range of issues that affect their lives including self-esteem and personal responsibility.

37. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Spiritual development is good and is at the heart of this church school. This is an improvement since the last inspection. There are very good links with the local parish church. Prayers are a regular feature of school life and are said at the beginning and end of each school session. The use of a lit candle to emphasise that this is a special time is particularly effective in focussing the attention of the pupils. There are good opportunities in lessons for pupils to reflect upon a number of issues that affect their lives, such as how to be a good friend.

38. Moral development is good. The school actively promotes the principles of the Christian faith at this Catholic school. Pupils are praised and rewarded for demonstrating good moral behaviour. The behaviour policy encourages good conduct and staff work consistently to apply it. Consequently pupils behave very well in classes and around the school. The principles of right and wrong are encouraged as are honesty, fairness and respect. Each class has developed its own set of rules and why they should be applied. Relationships in the school are good between pupils and with staff. All adults who work in the school provides good examples of the behaviour and attitudes the school wishes to promote. Pupils also have many opportunities to explore moral values in many lessons including personal, social and health education sessions.

39. Social development is good within the curriculum and lessons. The school provides opportunities through its extra curricular activities and visits in the wider community. Visitors to the school and residential experiences offer further occasions for good social development. There are good opportunities for pupils in Year 6 to take responsibility by acting as monitors at playtime, in the library and at dinner time. There is also a very good partner system between Year 6 and the nursery each week. The effective playground system allows older pupils to support younger ones at playtime to ensure that they are happy and safe. Pupils take these responsibilities seriously and are eager to be involved. The School Council meets regularly and is currently in negotiations with senior staff about providing games at playtime. Pupils are encouraged to raise funds for a range of charities including the Good Shepherd Fund, Little Sisters of the Poor and the St. Dominic's 'drop in' Centre.

40. Cultural development is satisfactory with some opportunities planned within the curriculum. In addition, pupils are able to experience other cultural events through artists, musicians and the Chinese dragon. There are occasions when classes visit museums such as Beamish and Segedunum as well as the Centre for Life. While pupils are made aware of different countries and cultures beyond Europe, planned opportunities for multicultural awareness need further development across the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The school has a strong caring ethos and it is safe and secure. Care extends to the whole school community. For example, high levels of support are provided for pupils with difficult behaviour problems so that they can be included in school activities. A newly qualified teacher also receives very good support so that the problems of starting a new career in a new school are dealt with very well. The school is inclusive and has good procedures to ensure that pupils with a wide range of needs are taught in the classroom alongside their peers. The school also tries very hard to accommodate pupils with significant behavioural difficulties and has successfully obtained additional money to support this

work. The school works in close partnership with other specialised provision within the local education authority and has good links with a range of services such as speech therapy and educational psychology to ensure that pupils' needs are fully met.

42. The procedures to ensure pupils' welfare are satisfactory overall. Health and safety arrangements satisfy legal requirements, although the policy is very brief with respect to health and safety matters. In practice, the local authority policy is used as the guide but this is not formally acknowledged. Governors are involved in health and safety arrangements and the caretaker plays an important role, but their efforts are not co-ordinated. Lunchtime supervision arrangements are satisfactory and the pupils respond well to the care. The supervisors have received some training and they are familiar with the requirements of their job. There are effective child protection arrangements, which include a policy, a designated teacher and recent staff training.

43. Improving attendance is an important issue for the school and rigorous efforts are made. However, the procedures are only satisfactory because there is no evidence, as yet, of their effectiveness. The school is part of a community-based scheme to improve attendance, which allows dedicated staff considerable time to deal with this matter. A recent innovation has been a first day response to absent pupils from a target group. The scheme has also provided rewards and other inducements for good attendance. Registers satisfy legal requirements and there are effective administrative procedures to deal with relevant day-to-day matters. Some parents do not support these procedures well.

44. Assessment procedures have improved since the last inspection and the school now has good systems in place to monitor pupils' attainment and progression in English, mathematics, science and ICT. The school analyses test results carefully to identify weaknesses and this information is effectively used to set class targets. Good use is made of regular assessment weeks to determine individual pupil targets. Pupils are successfully involved in the setting of their own targets. Effective links have been established with a Beacon school, which has supported the recent implementation of the target setting system. The school provides teachers with a breakdown of pupils' prior attainment. Assessment information from the day to day checks made on pupils' progress in lessons is not always being used consistently to improve the match of work to individual pupil's needs, particularly the more able.

45. Following an extensive review of special educational needs provision in the school, carried out in partnership with the Local Educational Authority, the school now sets targets which are very precise and carefully graded to ensure that these pupils make steady progress. The school assesses and records the progress of pupils with special educational needs within the levels set by the National Curriculum. This is reported back to the (special needs) coordinator who decides upon further action. Progress of the pupils is, therefore, carefully monitored at two different levels and, as a result, the rate of progress made by these pupils has increased since the last inspection. The individual education plans are formally reviewed every six months. Parents are always invited to the review meetings but attendance by parents, a requirement of the new Code of Practice, is unsatisfactory. The head teacher and governors are aware of this issue and are constantly trying to address it. The school also needs to further develop its procedures for reporting to parents about the progress and success of its policy for special educational needs and the progress it is making in improving accessibility, as it is legally required to do.

46. There are good, successful procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour. Rewards, such as house points, and sanctions are used to reinforce rules, which are on display. The staff have high expectations of good behaviour and they act accordingly. Also, the school is a member of a community initiative to improve behaviour and it provides support for pupils with behaviour difficulties. The pupils understand the system and value the rewards. Success in the reward scheme is celebrated

in assemblies and by public displays of pupils' names. Lunchtime supervisors satisfactorily use a separate but related system of behaviour management.

47. The caring ethos and good relationships between staff and pupils ensure that pupils get good support for their personal development. However, it is not monitored by any formal procedure other than a need to provide brief comments on the pupils' annual progress reports. Monitoring is satisfactory but it relies on the teachers' personal knowledge, which means that the information is not readily available to other members of staff.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. Parents like the school very much. They are particularly pleased that the school is easy to approach, is liked by their children, helps their children to mature and has high expectations and good teaching. Parents believe the least satisfactory features of the school are the range of out-of class activities and the amount of homework. Inspectors agree with the parents' positive views and judge out-of-class activities and homework to be satisfactory.

49. The school makes good efforts to develop links with parents. For example, a much appreciated, open-door policy operates; there are three parents' consultation evenings; a "book-look" provides opportunities for parents to be with their children in the classroom and there are invitations to a range of school activities such as performances and church services. There is also a "Friends of St Michael's" organisation. However, these efforts to develop links have had only limited success. Parents give good support to school activities that directly affect their children, and they provide help for one-off events such as school outings. In contrast, there is little interest in providing support for the day-to-day work of the school. For example, there are very few regular parent helpers in classrooms and the response to invitations to provide information for the inspection was poor.

50. Information provided for parents is satisfactory overall. There are regular and informative newsletters and the school prospectus and governors' annual report are useful and well-presented. However, both the prospectus and report fail to meet requirements regarding their contents. The omissions have been acknowledged. Information is provided on helping children at home and about the curriculum but in both cases, only at the foundation stage. Pupils' progress reports are satisfactory. They satisfy requirements and most give a clear description of what can be done. However, few reports indicate areas for development and none give specific steps for improvement. The reports give a target but they tend to be very general statements, which are of little practical use.

51. Parents' support for their children's learning at home varies considerably. Some pupils read to their parents but reading at home is not a well-established practice for all pupils. There are difficulties with the home reading partnership because many parents do not contribute as required and homework requiring parental input tends not to be completed.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. Leadership and management are satisfactory, with some strengths and a few areas for development. Through the school's aims and her personal style, the head teacher has developed a strong, caring atmosphere in the school. This is reflected in its ethos and its general day-to-day activities. The teachers are good examples, nurturing the pupils' well being and treating them with real consideration; for example, in the Year 3 personal, social and health education lesson on sharing, the theme was developed well through the story of the 'Last Supper'. The pupils respond well to this approach, are considerate of others and, as a consequence, their behaviour and attitudes are good.

53. The head teacher works very closely with and provided an excellent induction for the recently appointed deputy head teacher. The latter has been given responsibility for assessment. This aspect of the school has improved since the last inspection, and the head teacher is now using data to produce individual pupil targets. Tracking of the academic progress of the pupils is beginning to take place but it is too early to assess the impact on raising standards.

54. The head teacher and deputy head teacher have identified literacy and numeracy as the main areas for development and the direction for the school; these broad areas are included in the one year school improvement plan. There is little information within the school improvement plan as to how the pupils will benefit from the tasks to be carried out. The head teacher continues to develop the role and responsibilities of the co-ordinators and each year they are asked to prepare subject development plans. Not all of these plans take into account the school's main priorities of literacy and numeracy. The plans do not contain strategies for developing teaching and learning or rigorous success criteria which would allow them to measure how well they are doing.

55. The governing body has identified difficulties in recruiting sufficient governors and this has had a knock on effect on the impact on all the roles and responsibilities of the governing body and its knowledge of the school. At the beginning of each year, the head teacher and deputy head teacher share the school's analysis of the key stage tests with the governing body. Through discussion and consultation with the head teacher and LEA advisers, the governing body receives a broad outline of the school performance in English, mathematics and science, and is involved in setting targets. The members of the governing body have an input in the direction for the school through discussion. At present, the monitoring carried out by the governors is limited to reviewing literacy and numeracy areas. The broad nature of the targets and non-specific success criteria in the school improvement plan do not provide the governors with rigorous criteria to test their observations against. The governing body recognises the need to monitor other subjects and other areas of the school improvement plan, to identify actions that have worked. This monitoring will provide the governing body with a more rounded picture of the school and how well it is meeting the needs of the pupils.

56. The head teacher formally monitors and evaluates the quality of teaching through one lesson observation per year; training has been provided for co-ordinators in monitoring lessons and offering feedback. With the exception of literacy and numeracy, there is little evidence of how the outcomes of these evaluations have yet to influence teaching and change pupil activities in the classrooms.

57. The school improvement plan identifies a broad range of priorities taken from an analysis of pupils' levels attained in mathematics and English, and the previous report, which included issues for special educational needs and assessment. In addition, the annual statistical information provided for all schools shows that over the past four years boys do not perform as well as girls in the school but the school improvement plan does not contain any clear targets for raising the attainment of boys. The school recognises that the nursery baseline assessment 'aspects' indicate a low level of literacy skills, but the improvement plan does not indicate how the pupils' literacy skills will be boosted in the early years of their schooling. The school has recently introduced, and plans to evaluate, one teaching style called 'brain gym'. This has not been in place long enough to have had an impact on pupils' achievement, and it is unclear where this lies in the school's teaching priorities. The school improvement plan for this year does not contain rigorous success criteria and is not specific about how to raise attainment. The success criteria are not specific about meeting the needs of individuals although some co-ordinators recognised the need for better matching of activities to pupils. All the above weaken the potential of the improvement plan to effectively raise standards across the school.

58. There has been an improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. There has been some good use made of the support systems through the Beacon Partnership to enhance teaching and the curriculum, especially through ICT assessment. The school has met the literacy and numeracy

targets for 2002 through the very good teaching at the end of Key Stage 2. There are few whole school strategies in place to promote good teaching in every year.

59. All staff share a commitment to help the pupils learn but there is variable understanding about how this is achieved by the school; many staff indicate the recent purchase of resources for their subject areas but there is little information in the school improvement plan how these resources will be used to improve pupils' learning and raise standards. The school has recently produced portfolios of subject objectives and pupils' work across the school; this is to be developed to provide the teachers with an overview of the work pupils are covering in all the stages and enable teachers to measure standards against agreed levels.

60. The induction and support for new staff is very good and this is reflected in the very positive comments from the newly qualified teacher. The deployment of the staff and teaching assistants within the school is good and the permanent nursery nurses attached to the Foundation Stage have a positive benefit on pupils' learning. The school has also identified the need for extra support for specific classes, for example, the Year 3 class which has a large number of pupils who did not achieve expected levels in Year 2. When this happens, the teacher and classroom assistant work very well together to the advantage of the pupils' personal development.

61. ICT is a high priority and finances have been made available for the purchase of both hardware and software for use by pupils and staff. Good use is being made of the school's computer network. This is effective in supporting the role of the co-ordinators in monitoring subject planning. The recent adaptation of the assessment information system has made available useful performance data about pupils to all staff.

62. The fabric of the school is cared for and well kept. Its position close to a city centre means that there is no access to grassed play areas. Space in the reception class is only just sufficient though there has been an addition to the nursery, which will improve the children's access to the playground.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. In order to improve the quality of education further the head teacher, staff and governors should:

Produce longer term whole school strategies to raise attainment for all pupils, that include approaches to:

- sharing and building on existing good practices to consistently match the work and expected results to the needs of the pupils in all years and subjects;
 - using assessment information(data) more effectively to plan the next steps in learning for all pupils, whatever their ability(boys and girls);
 - continuing to consistently review targets for individuals and share how they may be reached with parents and pupils.
- Encourage all parents to appreciate the link between good attendance and good achievement.
 - Ensure the school improvement plan has greater impact by:
 - including and conveying annual and longer term strategies for whole school development with greater clarity;
 - identifying what the whole school should be doing to raise attainment;
 - developing approaches to achieve the targets identified;
 - identifying what will be the result for the pupils' development.
 - Continue to work with the governing body to encourage more governors to develop a fuller overview of the school's curriculum and the areas for development in the school improvement plan and provide governors with a clearly identified focus for their visits.

Minor issues

- Improve children's progress in the Foundation Stage through the development of consistent expectations and a common approach to teaching and learning, planning and assessment in all the areas of learning.
- Improve the provision of support for pupils with English as an additional language at Key Stage 1.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	65
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	8	27	27	2	0	0
Percentage	1.5	12	41.5	41.5	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 and a half percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	Y R– Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	19	192
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	123

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	Y R– Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	62

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	50

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.0
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	17	10	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	10	16
	Girls	8	9	10
	Total	15	19	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	56 (83)	70 (89)	96 (83)
	National	84 (84)	86(86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	11	14
	Girls	9	8	4
	Total	17	19	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63 (83)	70 (89)	67 (94)
	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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	15	14	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	9	11
	Girls	11	11	13
	Total	18	20	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	62 (62)	69 (38)	83 (59)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	9	10
	Girls	12	12	14
	Total	19	21	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (62)	72 (47)	83 (59)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	0
Indian	3
Pakistani	34
Bangladeshi	8
Chinese	0
White	144
Any other minority ethnic group	0

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.8
Average class size	27.4

Education support staff: YR – Y7

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	140

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2
----------------	--------

	£
Total income	533027
Total expenditure	530299
Expenditure per pupil	2600
Balance brought forward from previous year	41415
Balance carried forward to next year	44143

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	2

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	211
Number of questionnaires returned	28

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	29	7	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	46	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	46	4	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	50	4	7	4
The teaching is good.	64	32	0	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	50	11	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	39	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	43	0	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	39	50	7	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	46	39	7	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	50	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	32	11	4	11

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

64. The provision for children in the nursery and reception classes is satisfactory. The children attend nursery class full time and spend at least three terms there. Almost all transfer into the reception class. A number of children from other early years settings join the school at the start of the reception year. When they enter the nursery children's attainment is below what can be expected for children of this age in all areas of learning. About half the children enter the nursery with attainment that is well below expectations. These children have poor social skills, narrow experiences and limited language development. The nursery is well organised and managed to meet the needs of these children. The teaching in nursery is satisfactory and occasionally good, for example when children were making their own ice lollies. Children make sound progress throughout nursery. The nursery teacher has been recently moved into the nursery class after teaching in Key Stage 2 and is still gaining familiarity with the curriculum for the Foundation Stage. This, together with the lack of a designated co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage has resulted in there being little development towards a coherent key stage identity with consistency of expectations and approaches, a clear two year curriculum, common planning, methods of assessment and ethos.

65. In the reception class children are making good progress due to the good teaching of the temporary teacher. Some very good teaching and learning takes place in literacy lessons. From the recorded evidence and from what children know and can do however, progress overall is sound. As a result of the low starting point from which they start, particularly in the area of speech and language and their steady progress through the Foundation Stage, most children will not attain the learning goals identified for their age in language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. Although children are well supported in their personal, social and emotional development throughout their time in the nursery and reception classes, many will not reach the learning goals identified for this aspect of development by the time they reach the end of the reception year. Most children in the reception class are likely to attain the goals for physical development and mathematical development by the time they transfer to Year 1.

66. Teachers and support staff work effectively together, but as two separate teams. The nursery nurses take a full and effective role in teaching the children and are having a positive impact upon the children's learning. Children with special educational needs are being identified at an early stage and are supported well by all the staff. This effective support means that these children are making good progress in relation to their earlier learning although attainment remains well below expectations for their age.

Personal, social and emotional development

67. This area of learning is promoted well in both the nursery and reception classes. The children know the routines of their classrooms well. They are confident moving around the classroom space using all the designated areas and interacting with adults and each other. All staff work hard at ensuring children participate in good routines such as hand washing, tidying up and listening to instructions and there is steady progress in these areas. Children have good attitudes to learning. Staff manage to divert and re-focus children very well when they need to engage the co-operation of those who have poorly developed social skills. Children are helped to take responsibility through the jobs they are asked to do at various times and through being nursery or reception helpers. Kindness and helpfulness are rewarded and this encourages children to be thoughtful. Behaviour and relationships are good. Children are treated with genuine respect and consideration and this is helping them to

manage their behaviour and to begin to understand other people's points of view. Partner time in which nursery children are paired with a Year 6 pupil for sharing activities such as reading books, working on the computer and role play with puppets, is effectively developing the children's personal skills and providing them with good role models for behaviour.

Communication, language and literacy

68. At the end of the foundation stage children are below expected standards in these areas, particularly writing. Insufficient attention to early learning of letters and sounds in a structured form, together with many children's limited speaking and listening skills, is inhibiting progress in early reading and writing. Children have many opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills through the curriculum, and staff are skilled at encouraging children with poor speaking skills to engage in discussion or to answer questions. In both the nursery and reception classes, however, too many children have not learned to listen carefully to staff or to each other, except when being taught in a small group, and this is slowing progress in all areas of language and literacy development. Overall, teaching is satisfactory.

69. In the nursery, children are successfully encouraged to enjoy books. The nursery book areas enable children to share books with staff or visitors and to look at books independently and they often do this well. The children respond positively when they are read to. For example, when they listened to 'Handa's Surprise', they enjoyed holding the animals, made comments about the illustrations and showed understanding of the story and one child said, "I eat all the fruit up". In a good literacy lesson the reception children participated well in reading along with the teacher and in this lesson made good progress. They recalled the story of the 'Gingerbread Man' correctly. In their individual reading pupils are using their knowledge of sounds and pictures in books appropriately to help them read words but many of them are still at a very early stage of reading independently. Parents are encouraged to share books with their children at home. A few parents contribute to their child's reading diary and this, with the Nursery Home-School library, is helping the school and helps encourage children to read at home.

70. Opportunities are given for children to develop their writing skills. In the nursery children can use the office area to 'write' their observations about the weather and in the role-play area, which is a travel agency, they make bookings and fill in tickets. Few children are able to include recognisable letters in their 'writing'. The more able children in the reception class know and can write letters to match their sounds, including the letters that relate to the middle sounds in simple three letter words. They know that sentences end with a full stop. There is little evidence of children's own attempts at writing and there is a limited range of writing experiences and this is slowing progress in early writing. In literacy lessons children in the reception class are learning to compose and write simple sentences based upon the 'Gingerbread Man'. Skilled teaching is ensuring that they are gaining confidence in copy writing and the children are enthusiastic and well motivated. The nursery nurse provides very effective help with reading and writing to a range of ability groups.

Mathematical development

71. Children in the nursery and reception classes are developing an awareness of mathematics through a good range of experiences and activities and most will reach the expected levels at the end of the reception year. This is due to the good teaching and well-planned mathematical activities and interventions by the staff.

72. In nursery there is an appropriate range of resources. Staff teach number recognition using the teddy bears and take every opportunity to reinforce counting skills. Nursery children can recognise circle, triangle and square shapes. In both the nursery and reception classes, staff ensure that children are taught the correct mathematical language such as 'large/small', 'tallest/shortest' and use displays and the role play in the 'Bears' Cottage' to consolidate these concepts. In an activity in the water tray

nursery children were challenged to find out “How many milk bottles does it take to fill that container?” Children responded well and concentrated in this small group activity and tried hard to express their understanding.

73. The reception class teacher made good use of the guidance from the National Numeracy Strategy to enable children to count in tens, recognise 1p, 2p, 5p, and 10p coins and learn the vocabulary of addition in a good mathematics lesson. The children made good progress, using money fans, in recognising coins because this activity was well matched to their capabilities. Effective use was made of the class puppet to reinforce counting skills and to develop listening skills. Reception children can count to 10 successfully and in the lesson the teacher skilfully built upon this knowledge to introduce ‘how many?’ using simple addition. Many children demonstrated an understanding of how to combine two small groups of objects together correctly. Throughout the Foundation Stage, teachers ensure that children have opportunities to use their mathematical knowledge and skills in activities such as action songs and number rhymes. Children also use play-dough to make recognisable shapes.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

74. In both the nursery and reception classes children are provided with opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world through a range of well planned themes, such as ‘the weather’, experiences and activities. Children make sound, and sometimes good, progress but the poor language skills of many of the children limit their ability to express their ideas and understanding and as a result most children will not reach the level expected by the early learning goals at the end of the reception year. Overall, teaching is satisfactory.

75. A range of interesting activities and visitors is planned for nursery children, including a parent who showed the children the kind of clothes that would be worn in Pakistan. Songs are used effectively to develop nursery children’s ideas about the weather, warm and cold. As part of their topic the children made iced lollies by freezing milk shake mixture. They were very excited and enthusiastic about this but showed good control when making the mixture. One child said “Not too fast or it might spill all over”. Good questioning focused children upon the smell and colour of the milk shakes, which they described successfully. They knew that the liquid had to go into the freezer to turn it into lollies. This activity built upon their previous knowledge of freezing and melting very well. When the children ate the lollies the staff encouraged them to use terms like ‘freezing/melting/ ice’. One child explained melting as “It’s dripping because we’ve got juice all over our chin”; while another described the effect of the lolly on his lips “They turned to blue”.

76. In both classes children make sound progress in using ICT and work confidently on the computer. Many have acquired some basic skills and can, with support, click on different areas of the screen or move objects on the screen using a mouse. The reception children have the opportunity to bake, which reinforces their scientific understanding as they predict how their gingerbread people will change in the heat of the oven. They know, with prompting, the ingredients of the cake mixture and are learning the names of the baking tools.

Physical development

77. In outdoor play and in formal sessions in the hall the teaching is at least satisfactory and often good. During the inspection nursery children could not use their usual outdoor play area because of recent re-surfacing, nonetheless the outdoor activities were well planned to enable children to play together in playground games, move freely around the space or ride on wheeled toys. The staff supervise activities closely, sometimes leading a singing game and are careful to impress upon the children the need to share equipment and behave sensibly.

78. Children make good progress in their physical skills and by the end of the reception year are likely to meet the expectations for their age. In a good physical education lesson in the hall reception class children moved about the space confidently. They ran around lifting their knees high and following the introduction of new vocabulary they demonstrated moving forwards, backwards and sideways successfully. Effective use of demonstration by the teacher ensured the full participation of all pupils. In both classes the children use tools appropriately when they paint, glue, cut paper and work in the water and sand. Overall, teaching is good.

Creative development

79. Children in both classes have opportunities to take part in a range of creative activities including drawing, painting, sticking, modelling, music making and role play. The children's learning in this area is satisfactory but many are unlikely to attain standards in line with those expected in the development of their creative skills by the end of the reception year. Teaching is satisfactory in this area. Children in reception choose from a range of activities in their creative session. Those who chose painting used ready mixed colours, had poorly developed brush skills and made very simple representations in their paintings. Some imaginative play took place in the water tray using the sea creatures but this was not developed into a co-operative activity. The children who made wooden spoon puppets with the staff made good choices of materials and successfully attached them to the spoon. These children sustained their activity well and were motivated to complete the puppet. In other activities, for example, making play dough pizza with mushrooms children showed initiative and related well to each other in the group. There are good opportunities in both classes for children to act out roles, for example, 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears', and create imaginary scenes. Children in both classes often sing together. Reception class children sang tunefully with the class teacher at morning prayers. Nursery children learn a range of songs connected to their 'weather' topic. They are successfully learning to sing loudly and quietly and to link actions to words.

ENGLISH

80. Standards by the end of Year 2 are in line with what is expected of this age in reading and writing. Pupils in Year 6 attain standards in line with what is expected in both reading and writing. Standards in Key Stage 2 have improved since the last inspection. In lessons where work was well matched to pupil ability, and pupils were effectively supported by a classroom assistant, the pupils with special educational needs made satisfactory progress. Extension activities were not provided consistently to ensure good progress by all higher ability pupils.

81. Throughout the school standards of speaking and listening are satisfactory, although listening skills are better developed than speaking skills. This is because many pupils enter the school with limited communication skills. Listening skills are well developed in all lessons and most pupils listen attentively to the teacher and each other and can interpret and carry out instructions. In Year 2, pupils are able to discuss story settings and give examples - 'In little Red Riding Hood the story is set in the woods.' Their skills are developed through effective teaching and very good use was made of an ICT project on digital photographs to promote their speaking and listening skills. Pupils in Year 6 can express their ideas with confidence although they make grammatical errors when speaking. They can articulate their view and present a good argument about whether Goldilocks was right or wrong in entering the Bears' house.

82. Pupils with English as an additional language did not make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, the activity and resources did not appropriately support the development of their early literacy skills.

83. Pupils aged seven are satisfactory readers. The Year 2 class is able to read aloud the text from 'Brer Snake' and can describe characters and setting. The teaching of basic reading skills in

Year 2 is good and pupils understand sounds within words and can use this knowledge to help them to decode unfamiliar words. Pupils' attitudes to reading are good. They enjoy reading and are happy to talk about their favourite book. Pupils in Year 6 are expressive readers and can discuss characters. They are able to explain the strategies they use for choosing a book and talk about how they would locate information in a library. In Years 3 to 6 the allocation of time outside the literacy hour for pupils to read is helping to raise standards. Attainment in Year 3 is poor and this has been recognised by the school. The class has a full time assistant who is effectively supporting the pupils' acquisition of reading skills. In Year 4 pupils read texts fluently and accurately but their knowledge of authors is poor. Pupils are offered the opportunity to visit the library each week but this is optional and as a consequence they are not able to locate information using research skills. An effective strategy to encourage reading, 'Books and Beyond', has engaged pupils and is beginning to involve parents in supporting their child's learning.

84. Resources have been invested in the library, which has been greatly enhanced since the last inspection. It is attractively presented with a good range of fiction, non-fiction and reference books. The library is underused for developing pupils' research skills.

85. The introduction of a new planning system linked to national guidelines is improving the quality of the teaching of writing. By the end of Year 2, pupils are attaining standards in handwriting and spelling in line with expectations. In Year 2 pupils are able to write a description of a story setting from an illustration using an interesting range of vocabulary. They demonstrate good understanding of basic punctuation, capital letters and full stops. They are able to reread writing for grammatical sense, identify errors and suggest alternative constructions, for example, one pupil read, 'Ann and Tom is going to school' and provided the correct plural. Pupils in Year 2 spell words such as smoking, lamp and jelly accurately. The attractive Year 2 classroom environment supports the teaching of literacy. Common vocabulary is displayed along with adjectives chosen by the pupils and used in their writing.

86. Standards of spelling and handwriting are in line with expectation for pupils aged 11. Pupils in Year 6 compose correctly punctuated and well-constructed sentences. They are able to present a balanced argument when writing a report. They organise their writing for different audiences and pupils writing includes reports, play scripts, stories, instructions and poetry.

87. The teaching of English in Years 1 and 2 is always satisfactory with some very good teaching in Year 2. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory with examples of good teaching in Years 5 and 6. In the good lessons, teachers' planning is effective and they share the aims of the lesson with pupils. This helps to promote good learning because pupils know what is expected of them. In the most effective lessons teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge, for example, in a Year 2 lesson, questions were used effectively to help pupils understand the text. In most lessons, time was used effectively to help pupils consolidate their skills. Pupils are well managed in all lessons. Teachers foster good attitudes towards English through high expectations, the enthusiasm they show in their teaching and the positive encouragement they give to pupils. Pupils work well collaboratively and individually. Good relationships ensure good behaviour and as a result pupils concentrate well on their task.

88. Teachers mark work regularly and use constructive comments to support pupils' learning in line with the school marking policy. At the present time teachers do not always use the results of assessments to ensure that work is matched to the needs of individual pupils. In the best lessons different work was provided to meet the needs of all ability levels and this ensured all pupils made good progress. Exemplification of levels in writing has been effective in supporting the consistency of writing assessments.

89. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has ensured that all teachers are covering the curriculum. She monitors the standards in English using a range of

strategies including analysing test results, checking planning and observing lessons. This gives her a clear view of strengths and weaknesses but this information has not been effectively transferred into targets within the school improvement plan. The school does not have a long-term plan for raising attainment in English. The school makes good use of a range of strategies to improve pupil attainment and these now need to be used consistently across the whole school. Resources in English are good and the resources available in each classroom have improved since the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

90. Standards in mathematics at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with expectations for pupils of that age. Standards at the end of Year 2 have risen consistently in the last few years.

91. By the age of seven, most children can add and subtract to 20 and beyond; they know about place value, simple fractions such as halves and quarters, time and symmetry. In Year 2, pupils were introduced to complex mathematical vocabulary such as 'clockwise', 'anti-clockwise' and 'rotation' and were expected to use these terms in their explanations to the teacher. In Year 1, a classroom assistant worked well with a group of pupils to help them calculate the missing numbers in simple number addition and subtraction problems.

92. By the age of 11, pupils are able to multiply and divide decimals by 10 and 100, with some of the more able children extending this to 1000. They are able to use a range of different written methods when multiplying and subtracting large numbers and have a good mental recall of their multiplication tables. Mathematical skills are often successfully demonstrated in a real life context, such as when Year 5 used pizza menus to find the cost of a meal when the different prices for different toppings are included.

93. There is still a significant minority of pupils in most year groups who work below the standard they should be and some find it difficult to work independently, although that number is decreasing each year. In all year groups, learning is its best when teachers plan interesting and well-matched tasks for pupils to do and keep the pupils active and working quickly by giving them appropriate time limits in which to complete the task. Year 2 pupils enthusiastically used "Sing-a-Song-of Sixpence" to decide what fractions of the 'blackbird pie' should be fed to the King. Where the work given to pupils is aimed at the whole class some find it too easy and others find it too hard and so progress is a lot slower. Higher ability pupils achieve well when sufficiently challenged by work requiring them to use some of the mathematical strategies usually used to stretch more able pupils, such as investigations and problem-solving activities. These are not a regular feature of every teacher's planning. When investigations are used well, such as in Year 6 where pupils recorded the classroom temperature at various times of the day and then used the data in charts and graphs, then mathematical learning is good. The quality of the work recorded in pupils' mathematics books is variable. In some classes, there are books with low amounts of work evident, and often it is unfinished and lacks any constructive comments by the teacher. Where marking is good, such as in Year 5, the teacher's comments encourage the pupils to work tidily and finish the task set and often offer advice for the next lesson. However, this is not done consistently across all classes.

94. The teaching of mathematics is generally good. The improvements in mathematics reflect the teachers' sound implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and the use of the national guidance for planning mathematics lesson. The aim of each lesson is made clear to the pupils at the start of each session and is constantly referred to during the course of the lesson, which helps the pupils to sustain a focus on their mathematical learning. Where teaching is very good, such as in a Year 2 lesson on tens and units place value, a high level of challenge was presented to pupils of all abilities. While one group worked with numbers within 20, another group was using numbers of up to 600 to complete the task. The expectation was that they would all succeed and contribute enthusiastically to the lesson. Teaching at the beginning of Key Stage 2 is less good in lessons where

little direct teaching of groups takes place and the teacher instead attends to individual pupil's problems around the classroom.

95. Most pupils throughout the school make good progress in mathematics, although the higher ability pupils make less progress than they are capable of. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and teachers are particularly aware of the short-term progress targets set for these pupils. The pupils have a very positive attitude towards mathematics and are clearly enthusiastic about the subject. Many are eager to learn and weekly homework tasks are completed and handed in on time. High quality classroom assistant support is targeted accurately at the classes where it is most needed and has a very positive influence on the learning that takes place. There is a small number of pupils who are easily distracted and occasionally present challenging behaviour. For the most part, this is well managed by the teachers and classrooms assistants using a range of strategies and does not affect the learning of other pupils. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress.

96. ICT is increasingly used well to support the teaching of mathematics through the school. The use of the interactive whiteboards as a teaching tool in Year 5 and Year 6 is very good and greatly enhances both the teaching and learning in these classes. The pupils are also confident users of the interactive whiteboards when presenting solutions to mathematical problems. The technology is used well by teachers to raise standards in mathematics and will have an even greater impact when two more classes receive interactive whiteboards soon. All classes use well-chosen software to complement the teaching and increasing use is made of digital resources on the Internet to enhance the pupils' learning. Year 6 use the BBC "Revise Wise" Internet site to find out more about the topic they are studying in preparation for the National Curriculum tests. In classrooms where a digital projector is not available, some pupils find it difficult to see the small screen when the teachers demonstrate work and, as a consequence, the concepts being explained are less well understood by those pupils.

97. The leadership and management of mathematics are good and the coordinator is having a positive impact upon standards within the school. By working alongside the Newcastle Local Education Authority's mathematics consultant, scrutinising the pupils' workbooks and watching all the other teachers, the coordinator has an accurate overview of the strengths and weaknesses of mathematics in the school, which will enable her to develop the subject still further. The school is starting to use the data it receives from national and optional tests well and is able to set year group and individual pupil targets based on this data, although some of these targets are not sufficiently challenging for the more able pupils. The mathematics development plan is, however, not precise enough and lacks the detail needed to impact strongly on standards in the school. It does not identify the specific strategies, teaching methods, pupil groupings and resource issues needed to lift standards in particular classes and does not state how the school will know when it has reached its targets. Monitoring of mathematics by the governing body is satisfactory and a programme of governor visits to watch the teaching of mathematics is in place. Resources for mathematics are satisfactory and meet the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy. Mathematics is also well displayed on notice boards around the school, showing the range of work carried out by the pupils.

SCIENCE

98. Standards in science are in line with those expected for seven and 11 year old pupils. This is an improvement for 11 year olds since the last inspection. The teachers' assessments for seven year olds indicate that over half the pupils attain the expected level but few pupils attain the higher level. Standards in science rise during Years 3 to 6 because the teaching continues to develop the skills of scientific investigation and builds on the satisfactory standards of pupils' knowledge found in Year 2. The science curriculum plans have not been adapted to contain sufficient work directed towards enabling pupils to apply what they have learned to other investigations and to challenge the higher attaining pupils. For example, in Years 2 and 3, pupils are able to talk about which materials are used to build a house but very few were able to use this information to say why a specific material is used.

99. By the end of Year 2, pupils use appropriate vocabulary to describe electrical conductors and insulators. They are beginning to recognise the need to make simple comparisons to help to identify patterns. They know about the benefits of different types of food to eat and the dangers of eating too many sweets. They understand that different animals may be found in different habitats. Most pupils can identify parts of a plant. In Year 2 pupils are enthusiastic and carry out well-resourced investigations, and are developing an appropriate set of scientific skills through the good teaching methods used.

100. By the end of Year 6 most pupils have developed a satisfactory understanding of fair testing and how to design an investigation. They are beginning to pose interesting questions, for example, about why water evaporates more quickly in different parts of the school. Most pupils can record observations systematically and use ICT appropriately by presenting evidence in a graphical format. A minority of pupils have a good understanding of the need to repeat measurements to support the evidence. They have satisfactory knowledge of the links between solids, liquids and gases and are developing a clear understanding of filtration. In Year 5 and 6 they apply their knowledge to tackle scientific problems. However, the planning of the tasks is not always sufficiently challenging or designed to meet the needs of individual pupils, especially higher attainers. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good and that of the average pupils is satisfactory. Pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.

101. Teaching is at least satisfactory and has improved since the previous inspection. Good teaching is found in Years 2 and 6. Good teaching matches the work to the needs of the pupils through well-organised work sheets as in the Year 2 theme of electrical conductors. Teachers are confident about this subject and this is seen through a range of open questions in the lessons. For example, in Year 6, pupils' thinking was challenged through good questioning about particles and filtration. Pupils developed a good understanding of the process of separation. The classroom assistants support individual groups of pupils to ensure that all are included and make progress in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by the teachers. For example, they are encouraged to understand and use a good level of vocabulary about conductors in Year 2. High achieving pupils are not always planned for in all classes. The teachers manage the learning of the pupils well and provide practical experiences to highlight the concepts they are learning. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning. Pupils with English as an additional language are supported satisfactorily by the teachers and make good progress where the work is matched to their ability.

102. All pupils enjoy the lessons and their attitudes to science are good. Most pupils are aware of the need for precision in their work and language. Pupils are encouraged to use the correct vocabulary and are supported by other pupils to explain the meaning of a scientific word. They listen attentively to the teachers and most set about the activities with sustained effort.

103. The science coordinator provides excellent leadership and management. The subject is well organised and curriculum plans are now linked to the national guidelines. Her enthusiasm and expertise is evident in the recent development of investigational skills. Her comprehensive knowledge of the science curriculum is a support for other staff. This has ensured that the teachers have the knowledge and skills to raise standards. The present subject plan does not contain specific success criteria for raising pupil attainment. The school does not have a long-term plan for raising attainment in science, but staff recognise the need to develop a range of strategies to meet the particular needs of all pupils. Resources in science are good and the resources available in each classroom have improved since the last inspection. The interactive displays, in most classrooms, encourage the pupils to take pride in their work and develop their thinking skills.

ART AND DESIGN

104. Standards in art and design match the expectation of pupils by the end of Years 2 and 6, with some good features in drawing and clay work by the age of 11. All pupils make satisfactory progress in the development of their skills in drawing, painting, designing, textiles and fabric work through the support provided in class. Pupils with special educational needs are given sound support and make good progress. In some instances, as in Year 2, individual pupils with special educational needs achieve very well in lessons. The art portfolio and the displays of art and design in the school show that pupils make steady progress as they move through the school. A variety of activities are not provided consistently to ensure good progress by all higher ability pupils. Pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. All pupils are developing sound observational drawing skills and good techniques for colour mixing, fabric painting, clay modelling and work in the style of a variety of artists.

105. By the end of Year 6 pupils successfully created a design in the style of Mondrian using coloured rectangles of paper. They understood how to produce a pattern based on horizontal and vertical lines and blocks of colour. Pupils were able to select appropriate materials to cover the chairs that they had designed and made. They experimented with fabric, wood, straw and paint in making their choices. Pupils use a variety of methods and approaches in making containers. They worked successfully with clay to make coil pots and they paid careful attention to the techniques needed for making papier-mache, paper and pastry containers.

106. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. For example in Year 3 the teacher not only used his knowledge of Mondrian's life, style of painting and visual resources well to motivate the pupils, but also used the Internet to make available a website that the pupils could consult during the lesson. Teachers ensure that lessons are carefully planned and well resourced.

107. The school has adopted the recommended national scheme of work for art and design but assessment strategies for the subject have not been put in place. The subject is led and managed satisfactorily. The co-ordinator has access to teachers' planning for art and design but little opportunity to find out what pupils have learned. The school is making effective use of the support offered by its Beacon school partner for training teachers in art and design techniques. This is having a positive impact upon the range of activities being offered and, as in Year 1, an improvement in the quality of the pupils' work. The subject development plan does not reflect the key issues of literacy and numeracy identified by the school, and therefore is less effective as a tool for raising attainment. A useful portfolio has also been compiled illustrating a variety of art and design techniques used in school. No work of artists from other cultures, which would reinforce pupils' cultural awareness, is included. Good use is made of the digital camera to support pupils' design work and to record processes and products.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

108. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in design and technology are in line with those expected for seven and 11 year olds. This marks an improvement over the standards found during the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress but not enough emphasis is being placed on the raising of the attainment of pupils who are more able. Pupils with English as an additional language are making satisfactory progress in relation to their ability.

109. Pupils in Year 2 are beginning to think about a design that will enable them to reflect the colours of Joseph's amazing coat. They have completed a project in which they have designed and then constructed a model chassis with fixed and rotating axles. In this work, they constructed their models with careful evaluation of the methods of joining as to their suitability for the purpose. The use of tools for marking and cutting is satisfactory.

110. By the end of Year 6, pupils have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of planning and designing. In the Year 6 project, the pupils work collectively to design slippers to meet their own design brief. This brief has been made from detailed reviews of a variety of slippers and the use and methods of joining the different materials. Some pupils are able to apply their scientific knowledge about materials. Most pupils have a sound knowledge of the basic processes of evaluation. In Year 4 the pupils are developing satisfactory skills in marking, cutting and joining materials through the use of templates. In designing a new layout for the school, ICT was used with more traditional methods to allow pupils to be creative and redraft examples prior to printing.

111. Teaching is satisfactory and in whole class situations pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, understand what they have to do and can complete the tasks given to them. Planning does not always sufficiently challenge the higher attaining pupils, for example, the complexity of the project brief provided is the same for all pupils, whatever their ability. The use of the annotations in the designs does not always allow the pupils to show and explain why they are using specific materials or joining methods. Pupils are motivated by the activities planned and work independently for considerable periods of time. Attitudes and behaviour are good.

112. Leadership and management is overall satisfactory. The scheme of work has been recently completed and the school's procedures are followed to ensure that pupils complete work that is appropriate for the National Curriculum. The subject development plan does not contain success criteria for the raising attainment of the pupils or how design and technology is to support the school aims and is therefore less effective as a tool for raising attainment. The displays around the school provide the pupils with good examples of the skills and knowledge required for this subject.

GEOGRAPHY

113. Standards in geography have improved since the last inspection and now match those expected for pupils at the ages of seven and 11. Progress is now good across the school. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported in many lessons with appropriate tasks and questions that enable them to do well but these need to be developed across all lessons. There is a range of interesting activities outside the classroom to support pupil learning including work in the local area and beyond. Pupils with English as an additional language are actively involved in the lessons and make good progress. Planning is satisfactory and is closely linked to the national guidance for geography. Most teachers are confident with their subject and plan a range of interesting and challenging activities. There is clear progression with the key features of geography including vocabulary, enquiry and geographical and mapping skills. An effective policy has been developed since the last inspection.

114. By the end of Year 2, pupils investigate the local environment of Elswick satisfactorily and are developing an understanding of maps and plans. There is also some good progress in the understanding of human and physical features. Pupils have a good understanding of places and can locate them on a map of the world. They use this information to draw graphs to show the frequency of use of different kinds of transport used by Barnaby Bear. Progress is good when activities are closely matched to the ability of the pupils. They take a pride in their work and respond well to teacher questions.

115. By the end of Year 6 pupils can investigate how weather affects human activity but their progress is variable owing to the tasks not being clearly linked to their ability. They completed satisfactorily a study of the Indian village of Chembakholi, which focuses on homes and lifestyle using a range of resources including maps, plans and photographs. There is also satisfactory progress in their analysis of aerial photographs. However, pupils make good progress in understanding water and its uses and how rivers develop. They worked well on their investigation of various mountain regions using a variety of sources including the Internet. They asked relevant questions to answer key points. Progress in the lesson was good as the teacher engaged the interest of the class through this

challenging activity, effective questioning and a brisk pace. Pupils are keen and eager and want to be involved. They worked effectively in pairs and as a class on this task

116. Teaching is often good. Teachers have clear objectives and clear plans for what pupils will learn. Teaching support staff are well deployed and work confidently with their pupils. There is often effective questioning in lessons to challenge pupils of all abilities. Many lessons are well managed which enables all pupils to access a range of appropriate materials. In some lessons there is a good range of support strategies to enable pupils of different abilities to make progress but this needs to be developed across all classes to ensure appropriate progress for all pupils. Teachers have a range of interesting teaching strategies to challenge pupils including group and paired work.

117. Leadership and management are satisfactory. National guidance has been effectively introduced so that there is now consistent planning across all years. This needs to be further adapted to ensure that there is consistency across all classes in developing strategies to ensure access by pupils of different abilities. The development of the portfolio of work and the monitoring of planning enables the co-ordinator to check the progress of the subject. The subject development plan does not contain criteria related to raising standards or the school aims for literacy and numeracy and is therefore less effective as a tool for raising attainment. Good use is made of the local area for the study of geography. ICT is starting to be used but needs to be further planned across the curriculum.

HISTORY

118. Standards in history match those expected for pupils of seven and 11 year olds. This reflects the good teaching in classes so that many pupils make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs are sometimes effectively supported with appropriate tasks and questions to enable them to do well but this needs to be developed across all classes. Most teachers are confident in this subject and plan a variety of activities that the pupils enjoy, are interested in and want to do well. The variety of tasks and some well-paced lessons contribute to the good progress. Pupils with English as an additional language are actively included in all activities and make good progress. Outside locations including Beamish Museum and Segedunum are used to good effect as a source of information for some of the topics in the history curriculum. Pupils are systematically developing their understanding of chronology and key historical words. There has been good progress since the last inspection.

119. Teachers in Year 1 and 2 resource lessons well and use a good range of historical objects and photographs. Progress is better where the variety of tasks is closely matched to the ability of the pupils. By the end of Year 2 pupils develop skills in observing objects from the Victorian period and are beginning to ask some key questions. Pupils are also developing an understanding of key historical figures and events, including Florence Nightingale and Remembrance Day. They can sequence key events and many can accurately describe the conditions of hospitals in the Crimean War. Pupils enjoy their lessons and want to do well. They listen to the teachers and respond eagerly to teachers' questions. Behaviour is always good.

120. In Years 3 to 6 teachers also present a good range of interesting and investigative activities to challenge pupils. However these activities are not always sufficiently matched to pupil ability and consequently higher attaining pupils do not make such good progress with their work. By the end of Year 6 pupils are developing a satisfactory understanding of Romans and Saxons using a range of evidence. Time lines were used well when they studied the Ancient Egyptians and when they successfully investigated differences between rich and poor in Tudor times. They effectively investigate aspects of the lives of Victorian children and life in the 1930s using a range of carefully selected sources including the Internet, and draw appropriate conclusions. Good links to literacy were made when they studied the 1930s. Pupils are involved in their work and want to do well.

121. Teaching is often good. Many teachers plan their lessons well and have clear aims that are made clear to pupils. Lessons are often well managed to enable pupils to access a range of materials and make appropriate decisions. Teaching support staff working confidently and are deployed effectively. There is often effective questioning in lessons with the teacher posing additional questions to enable pupils to progress even further. Lessons are particularly good when the pace is brisk and the teacher calls the class together at the end of the lesson to review what has been learned.

122. Leadership and management is satisfactory. The co-ordinator for history provides effective support and has a clear understanding of how the subject should develop through the portfolio of work and the monitoring of planning. National guidance has been effectively introduced to provide consistency of planning for teachers but this does not yet reflect the needs of all pupil abilities in all lessons. ICT is being systematically planned across all years. The subject development plan is not linked closely enough to the school's key aims of raising standards in literacy and numeracy and therefore does not contribute effectively to raising attainment in these areas

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

123. Standards in ICT are in line with those expected nationally at the age of seven and 11. Standards are improving rapidly, with some work currently being carried out by pupils in Year 2, Year 5 and Year 6 classes exceeding the standards expected. This improvement is due to the excellent leadership and management of the subject, the recent purchasing of high quality hardware and software and the strong relationship that the school has built up with a local Beacon school. The combination of these factors has had a very good impact upon standards since the last inspection and has led to substantial improvement in the school's provision of ICT. Pupils are achieving well and are making good progress. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress as specific resources have been targeted to support their learning.

124. By Year 2, pupils are able to use both the keyboard and the mouse confidently to operate word processing and drawing programs, and can extract information from a CD Rom to put into their own booklets. Pupils select words from the program's word bank to make a coherent sentence about topics in literacy, for example, Cinderella, and select a picture to add to their sentences before printing out. They save their work to a class folder. Year 2 pupils demonstrate good research techniques when using a CD Rom to extract information for the booklet they will make during the week. They successfully use the menu to find relevant information and save their work for future reference. The pupils use drop-down menus and confidently access all the tools on a drawing and painting program. Year 2 pupils exhibited a wide range of ICT skills when they used the digital camera in a topic on "Ourselves". They each took two photographs of a friend's face, edited them on the computer, and then printed out their edited pictures. These were displayed alongside their own writing about their friend. The pupils are well taught by the teacher who presents them with challenging and interesting ICT tasks.

125. By Year 6, pupils exhibit a good range of ICT skills and are, at times, working at above average level as they combine these skills to meet the challenging tasks set by the teachers. In a lesson on control technology, Year 6 pupils used a suite of laptop computers and the control technology kit, Lego RoboLab, to power a self-built buggy around the classroom. Pupils were then challenged to make the buggy move in a circle and then further challenged to increase the diameter of the circle. Pupils confidently used the interactive whiteboard to explain to the rest of the class the control procedures used in this process and displayed excellent technical vocabulary. Data handling programs and graphic modelling programs are used to solve real life problems, for example analysing the constituent parts of different vegetables or redesigning the school. The current lack of a computer suite in school slows pupil progress. In a Year 3 data-handling lesson, the whole class has to gather around a small monitor and a number of children find it difficult to see. Although the lessons are well

taught, some pupils do not get their turn on the computer until later in the week and the impact of the teaching is subsequently diminished.

126. The school has made good progress in developing the use of ICT across the whole curriculum. The interactive whiteboards are an integral part of all literacy and numeracy lessons in Year 5 and Year 6 and are used well by teachers and pupils. Throughout the school, pairs of pupils use computers to reinforce the subject being taught in their class. During a Year 2 lesson on tens and units, two pupils used a software package that enabled them to place tens and units in the correct sequence on screen in order to make a 'plant' grow. Year 6 pupils used the ICT classroom at Newcastle United Football Club over a six-week period to make their own digitally animated short films on a range of issues and then recorded them onto a CD Rom to take home. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 used a music recording program to develop their composition skills and Year 5 pupils used a computer-assisted design software package to plan their classroom of the future. In Year 1, pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress and use an on-screen word bank to make sentences that replicate and support the writing being carried out by the rest of the class. The school has a satisfactory Internet access policy and parents are initially informed of access via a letter and then through the school prospectus. The Internet is used in all classrooms to support teaching and learning with pupils, for example, carrying out research, using on-line lessons or revising previously taught topics. There is effective use of ICT in science, geography, design and technology, music, mathematics and English.

127. The teaching overall of ICT is good and, at times, excellent. The school has made very good progress in the teaching of ICT since the last inspection and the confidence and expertise of the teachers has improved considerably. Lessons are planned well to ensure that pupils get regular opportunities to use the small number of computers in their classrooms. All classrooms have displays showing how to carry out basic computer operations, such as saving work and cutting and pasting, which the pupils regularly refer to and find useful. Very good partnerships to promote ICT have been developed both externally with the High Schools and Newcastle United Football Club and internally between age groups, such as the Year 6 and nursery "Partnership Programme". Part of this programme involved Year 6 pupils word-processing friendship letters to their Nursery "partner" when they left the school in summer.

128. The ICT coordinator provides excellent leadership and management. Her enthusiasm and expertise are evident in all areas of the subject. She has a thorough knowledge of the ICT curriculum and regularly leads and coordinates staff training. Her leadership is the driving force behind the school's recent improvement in standards. The ICT scheme of work is comprehensive and detailed and ensures that the school now meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The ICT assessment procedures have been developed in conjunction with four other schools and are of such good quality that Newcastle Local Education Authority is planning to provide every school in the city with the details. These procedures provide an effective structure for the development and assessment of the pupils' ICT knowledge, skills and understanding. Each teacher now has an ICT assessment folder and a portfolio of pupils' work is maintained by the coordinator to highlight the standards expected in each of the ICT units of work. A highly detailed three year plan for the development of ICT has been produced which clearly highlights the strengths and weaknesses of ICT in the school and states exactly how the school will continue to progress in the subject in line with the local authority's Education Development Plan

MUSIC

129. Standards in music are in line with what is expected of pupils at Year 2 and Year 6. The school's music provision is enhanced by the involvement of the Local Education Authority's music service, which provides two music workshops each year for every class in the school and also supplies a specialist musician to teach recorder playing to the Year 2 class. The progress made by pupils in

music lessons is always satisfactory and is good when the specialist musician teaches the class. Pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. Teachers keep satisfactory records of the pupils' progress, which identify what the pupils can do, which pupils are making slower progress and those pupils who are working at a more advanced level. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

130. By the age of seven, pupils can identify long and short sounds and play a percussion instrument with a steady beat, keeping in time with each other and the teacher. They also concentrate well when listening to classical music by composers such as Vivaldi and Bach, but find it difficult to describe similarities and differences in the style of the two composers. In Year 2, the majority of the pupils can play a simple tune on the recorder and understand how to play loudly or softly, slowly or quickly. They are also able to read musical signs and symbols when performing their tunes. Their error-free performance of "Merrily" and "Twinkle, Twinkle", accompanied by the teacher on the guitar, involved all pupils in the class playing at speed and with great accuracy.

131. By the age of 11, pupils follow a simple rhythmic pattern by accompanying their own singing using a range of un-tuned instruments. They sing enthusiastically as a class and successfully keep a tune when put into groups to sing in rounds. By taping their own singing they are able to critically review their own efforts and offer constructive suggestions for improving their performance. They understand a range of musical terms such as pitch, timbre, pulse and tempo and some pupils use these terms when describing their own performance. Most pupils listen attentively to music and are beginning to develop their aural memory. In assemblies they are given opportunities to listen to a range of recorded music by different composers, which broadens their knowledge.

132. The teaching is generally good and is supplemented by the specialist music consultant from the local authority. Lessons are well planned, include a good range of practical activities, meet the requirements of the national curriculum and challenge and inspire pupils to make better progress in their skills, knowledge and understanding of music. In a Year 5 singing lesson, the teacher skilfully organised the available instruments to ensure that every pupil had the opportunity to accompany the singing. Pupils support each other, join in enthusiastically and sing confidently. In a Year 2 recorder lesson, pupils helped each other to achieve the correct fingering patterns on the instrument and clearly enjoyed making music together. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported.

133. The leadership and management of music are satisfactory. The coordinator has produced an action plan for the improvement of the subject but this could be further developed by concentrating more on actions that address the teaching and learning of music throughout the school. The new music scheme of work will assist teachers in developing the pupils' musical skills in a systematic way and the resourcing of music has improved since the last inspection. The Local Education Authority's music workshops introduce the pupils to a wide range of world music, including traditional African and Indian music, and the school has endeavoured to purchase instruments, which reflect the music of different cultures. Years 3 to 6 pupils have access to musical composition software and the school is looking to further develop this aspect of its music provision.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

134. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils attain the standards expected for their age. The match of task and teacher support ensured that all pupils made good progress. In swimming the tasks provided appropriate challenges to ensure higher attaining pupils made very good progress and activities were appropriately changed to enable the lower attaining pupils to make good progress, for example, one pupil held the side when learning to float on her back.

135. Standards in swimming are high and this is a result of the priority the school gives to the swimming provision. Almost all pupils in Years 5 and 6 are confident in the water, can swim and can

float on their back unaided. Almost half of the pupils can swim front crawl and back crawl confidently, with good technique for sustained periods of time.

136. In Year 2 pupils can link skills and actions to show patterns of high and low on gymnastics apparatus. Pupils in Year 1 use space well and explore and repeat simple actions with control and co-ordination. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 handle gymnastics apparatus correctly, and work co-operatively and safely, to move it. By the end of Year 6 pupils demonstrate satisfactory dribbling skills with a football and most pupils can repeat a set pattern dance to four beats.

137. Teaching is good and pupils make good progress. Effective teaching is a result of good subject knowledge and teachers are able to explain and demonstrate the skills required. Lessons are well structured to include an energetic warm up, a main teaching session with a range of interesting challenges and a cool down. The teaching aims are very clear and appropriately linked to the national schemes of work.

138. Pupils participate enthusiastically and concentrate well in lessons. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and this ensures that they make good progress. By the end of a Year 5 dance lesson, for example, pupils were able to link high and low movements with jumps and turns and they were able to talk about how to improve the quality of their work.

139. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The curriculum is well organised and the school follows the nationally recommended scheme of work which ensures continuity and progression. Planning is monitored by the co-ordinator to ensure curriculum coverage. Assessment in physical education is weak except in swimming. Procedures for assessment are being developed and an effective pupil tracking system is in place in swimming.

140. Resources are good and appropriate use is made of the hall and playground. The playground does not have markings and this is limiting the range of purposeful activities that can be undertaken by pupils at breaks and lunchtimes. The School Council has been appropriately involved in identifying a range of resources for the school to purchase to enhance activity and skill development at lunchtimes. The school is currently planning improvements to the playground provision. An effective partnership has developed with Elswick pool and swimming is a strength of the curriculum. This is an effective and appropriate use of a local resource particularly when the school does not have access to a field. The pool provides free passes for the school to use as rewards in order to encourage pupils to swim out of school.

141. The extra curriculum provision is satisfactory and has been recently extended. There is a swimming club and pupils in Years 3 to 6 can participate in a swimming gala. Pupils have also had the opportunity to participate in football, basketball and cricket. They can also attend a clog-dancing club, which contributes to their understanding of their own cultural heritage.