

INSPECTION REPORT

BLAYDON WEST PRIMARY SCHOOL

Blaydon on Tyne

LEA area: Gateshead

Unique reference number: 108349

Headteacher: Mr S Bangs

Lead inspector: Mrs Clare Lorenz

Dates of inspection: 15 - 17 March 2004

Inspection number: 255539

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	261
School address:	Blaydon Bank Blaydon on Tyne Gateshead Tyne and Wear
Postcode:	NE21 4PY
Telephone number:	0191 4143286
Fax number:	0191 4990680
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Judith Watson
Date of previous inspection:	29 June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a larger than average-sized primary school for children aged three to 11. Most of the pupils live locally. There has been significant demolition of housing in the area which has led to a reduction in the number of pupils on roll. Nearly all pupils are of white ethnic background. Very few pupils have a minority ethnic heritage and there are no pupils learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is about 37 per cent which is above average. Children's attainment when they start school is well below average. Forty-two pupils (16.1 per cent) are on the list of special educational needs, which is broadly average. One pupil has a Statement of Special Educational need which is below average. The school serves a socially and economically deprived area. Most of the pupils receiving additional help have dyslexia, moderate learning difficulties, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and hearing impairment. There are two children in public care. The number of pupils joining or leaving the school other than the usual times is about average. The school received an Achievement Award in 2001 and 2002. In 2003, the school received an Activemark award, a Healthy Schools Award and a Smoke Free School Award. The school is a member of the Comenius Project. The school is an Investor in People and it is involved in a mini Education Action Zone (EAZ) set up as part of an Excellence in Cities project.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school with some very good features. Pupils achieve well because teaching is good, well organised and makes learning interesting and enjoyable. Standards achieved are above average in English, mathematics and science by the time the pupils leave at the end of Year 6. The school is well led and managed. The school has below average income, achieves good standards and provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Good teaching throughout the school helps pupils to achieve well and reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6.
- Standards in reading are below the expected level by the end of Year 2
- Children in the nursery and reception classes are very well taught through an exciting, imaginative curriculum and this helps them to achieve very well.
- Provision for pupils' personal development is very good and has a high priority so that pupils have very good attitudes to learning and their behaviour is very good
- The school cares for its pupils very well and the partnership with parents is very good.
- The headteacher leads the school well and he is assisted ably by the deputy headteacher, senior staff and governors.
- Although the school improvement plan is satisfactory, time scales are too long and criteria for checking its success are not rigorous enough.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good. All the key issues have been successfully dealt with. Standards are higher in writing and are now above average. Standards, resources and teachers' knowledge and understanding in information and communication technology (ICT) are better. Work is planned well to build on pupils' prior learning. The provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved. Significant improvements have been made to the buildings and grounds.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	D	E	B	D
mathematics	C	C	C	E
science	A	A	C	E

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Pupils' achievement is good. All groups of pupils achieve well, including boys and girls and pupils with special educational needs. In 2003, standards in National Curriculum tests in Year 2 were above average in writing and mathematics but well below average in reading. There has been a strong focus on the teaching of writing which has led to the good standards attained throughout school. The work seen during the inspection indicates that children in the nursery and reception classes achieve very well and are on course to reach the goals children are expected to reach by the time they move into Year 1. During the past year, good teaching, influenced by good methods of assessment, has enabled pupils to achieve well in Years 1 to 6. Standards, in the current Year 2, are above average in writing and science, in line for mathematics, but, although improving are still below average in reading. Pupils also achieve well in Years 3 to 6. In this year's Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are above average. Pupils now achieve well in ICT to reach the nationally expected levels.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. They show very good attitudes to their work; behaviour and relationships are very good. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good overall and often very good. Pupils learn at a good rate because teachers know how to challenge them well, have high expectations and a good knowledge of subjects. Teachers use a good range of teaching methods to actively engage pupils in their learning. The school has good systems for assessing pupils' learning. Work is planned well for different groups and individuals which helps to ensure that pupils' learning builds on what they already know. Teaching and learning in the nursery and reception classes are very good. Children thrive on the wide range of stimulating and exciting activities provided for them. Since the last inspection there has been a strong focus on the teaching of writing throughout the school and as result standards have risen. The school has begun to address weaknesses in the teaching of reading in Years 1 and 2 by introducing better teaching methods which are helping to improve pupils' achievement.

The good curriculum is enriched well through interesting activities and a good range of activities available outside lessons. The ethos of the school puts pupils first and, as a result, standards of care and welfare are very good. The school's involvement of pupils in its work through the school council and its supporting role is very good. The partnership with parents is very good. Links with the community and other schools are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides good, purposeful leadership and is assisted ably by the deputy headteacher and other senior staff. The governance of the school is good. Management systems are good and effective but criteria for assessing the success of the school improvement plan are not clearly defined. The governors' annual report does not include all the necessary statutory information

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are highly satisfied with the school and the education it provides for their children. They have no significant concerns. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They say the best thing about school is learning new things and the teachers are helpful and make lessons interesting. When asked to sum up their school they say it is 'fun, exciting and fair'. They have no concerns about bullying and feel the 'Playground Buddies' do a good job in sorting out any problems they might have.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Continue to raise standards in reading by the end of Year 2.
- Add sharper success criteria and clear time scales in the school improvement plan.

And to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that the governors' annual report to parents contains all the required information

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' achievement, including those with special educational needs is good in Years 1 to 6. Children achieve very well by the end of the reception year. Standards are above average in the current Year 6, which represents a good improvement since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are above average by the end of Year 6 and this is good achievement
- Standards in writing are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6
- Pupils' achievement is good in Years 1 and 2; however, at the end of Year 2 standards are below average in reading.
- Children achieve very well in all areas of learning by the end of the reception year.
- In information and communication technology (ICT), standards are average by the end of Year 6, which is a good improvement since the last inspection.

Commentary

1. In 2003, the school's results in the National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds were better than the national average in English and were close to national averages in mathematics and science. The school has been working to improve its results in English, because the historical trend showed that test scores in mathematics and science were usually better. Although the school's results compared favourably with those of schools in similar social and economic settings, they show that in 2003 the pupils did not make as much progress as they might have done from the end of Year 2 to the end of Year 6. One of the reasons for this apparent anomaly lies in inaccuracies in the past in assessing the pupils' levels of performance and, consequently, measuring how much progress they have made. This has been resolved. Currently, pupils in Year 6 are reaching above nationally expected standards in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' achievement is good owing to the good quality of teaching throughout the school.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.2 (24.9)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.0 (27.3)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.9 (30.5)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 34 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. The school has successfully dealt with the key issue from the last inspection of raising standards of attainment in writing. There has been a major focus on the teaching of writing and as a result standards have improved and pupils' achievement throughout school is good. Standards of attainment in writing are now above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. The setting of individual targets for pupils in writing is used to good effect and works well to improve pupils' learning. Pupils write with imagination and standards of presentation are high. As can be seen from the following table, the results in the national tests in 2003 at the end of Year 2, improved in writing while at the same time declined in reading. This has been the trend since the year 2000 as standards in reading have fallen from above average to well below average. During the same period standards in writing have remained well above or above average. New

methods of teaching reading are helping pupils to achieve well but they are not yet reaching nationally expected standards in reading by the end of Year 2.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.4 (14.7)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.5 (15.0)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.0 (16.9)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 38 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- Children start school in the nursery with well below average levels of attainment. The achievement of children throughout the Foundation Stage is very good because of the high quality of teaching. As a result children meet the expected standards in all areas of learning by the end of the reception year.
- At the time of the last inspection pupils were not reaching the nationally expected levels in ICT by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Good improvements in the teaching of ICT and resources have led to pupils developing their skills at a faster rate than previously. Pupils' achievement in ICT is now good and they reach the nationally expected standards for their age.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have very good attitudes towards school and to learning; their behaviour is very good and the school makes very good provision for their personal development. The school's overall provision for developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also very good. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils develop self-confidence, are very keen to learn and enjoy thoroughly all aspects of school life;
- The school has a very calm atmosphere where high standards of behaviour are expected and achieved and relationships are strong;
- The development of pupils' social skills is very good and they learn a lot about their own culture and the cultural traditions of others;
- The school has good systems to promote and monitor attendance and punctuality.

Commentary

- Pupils are very keen to learn and to play a full part in the school's life. In lessons, pupils are very well motivated by the teachers' encouraging approach and enthusiasm. This gives them confidence to ask questions and allows them to share their ideas. They are keen to do well but are not pressurised to do so in any way. Pupils enjoy learning because the teachers make it fun and interesting. They have a good work rate whether they are working independently or in small groups. Pupils with special educational needs also have very positive attitudes to work. This is because of the good quality of teaching and the way they are helped to take a full and active part in lessons. Pupils' good attendance at the wide range of extra-curricular activities illustrates their enthusiasm for school. During the inspection the drama club proved to be a really happy occasion and was very well attended and liked by both boys and girls.
- In lessons, pupils behave very well and this helps create a positive atmosphere for learning. Pupils gain a good understanding of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and are

managed well through the teachers' praise and encouragement. Staff lead by example and the outcome is that children are very well behaved. The school has very good systems for encouraging good behaviour that promote high standards of self-discipline. This leads to high mutual respect between adults and the pupils and among the pupils themselves. Parents are happy with the high standards of behaviour and like the way their children contribute to the school rules. Pupils say that bullying occurs occasionally but they are quick to add that any incidents arising are promptly dealt with by the headteacher or a member of staff. They like the way that they are able to approach the playground buddies who are always around to help sort out any minor problems that arise in the playground.

Exclusions

- There has been 1 fixed period exclusion during the last year and this was as a result of extremely unacceptable behaviour. The need to apply serious sanctions such as exclusion rarely occurs.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	155	1	0
Mixed-White Asian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British-any other Asian background	1	0	0
Parent/pupil preferred not to say	104	0	0

- The development of pupils' social awareness is given great importance and has helped to establish very strong relationships throughout school. The atmosphere around the school at lunchtime is very positive. Pupils are very well behaved in the dining room and chat sociably together. Teachers challenge pupils well in lessons to work collaboratively either in pairs or small groups to talk things through and learn from each other. Pupils have open, relaxed but respectful, attitudes towards adults. They are friendly and welcoming and, on their own initiative, offer assistance to visitors, either opening doors or chatting about their school. Pupils are encouraged to take on responsible roles in school, beginning with classroom jobs to older pupils taking on more influential positions, such as school councillors, pupil mediators or head boy and head girl.
- Pupils respond very well to the trust that their teacher places in them. Teachers make positive comments and suggestions to help pupils learn and this develops their self-esteem and confidence. Assemblies are well planned to strengthen pupils' appreciation of why it is important to distinguish between right and wrong. For example, a comforting assembly tackled a recent bombing in another country very sensitively. The school promotes racial and cultural awareness very well through various aspects of the curriculum and school life. The school is a part of the Comenius Project and this enables pupils to connect with other cultures extremely well through relevant and meaningful experiences. Pupils have a strong feeling of fairness and tolerance and show a very good level of respect for the values and beliefs of others.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2002-03 (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.8	School data	0.2
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

10. The school runs an attendance project with the help of the local education authority. The systems for promoting and monitoring attendance are successful and have had a positive impact on improving the attendance levels during the last two years. The promotion of good attendance is given a high profile in school and individual and class achievements are celebrated well. Attendance figures are reported weekly to parents in the newsletter. Absences are carefully monitored and the school makes first-day absence calls if no explanation is received. This ensures early detection of any dips in pupils' attendance and cuts down on the amount of time pupils are absent from school. The level of unauthorised absence is well below the national figure and is mainly due to a small number of pupils. These pupils are rigorously pursued by the school with very good support from the educational welfare officer. Most pupils arrive punctually but there are a few persistent latecomers who often miss the introductory sessions of lessons.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education. Pupils achieve well because teaching is good in Years 1 to 6. Teaching and learning are very good in the Foundation Stage and children achieve very well. The curriculum is good and interesting. Assessment systems are good in English, mathematics and science and very good in the Foundation Stage. The information is used well to plan future learning to meet individual needs. The school provides very well for the care, health and welfare of all pupils and parents think highly of the school.

Teaching and Learning

The quality of teaching and learning from Years 1 to 6 is good and in the nursery and reception classes it is very good. Teachers provide interesting lessons and learning is enjoyable. Assessment of pupils' learning is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the nursery and reception classes is very good and ensures that learning is developed systematically and creatively
- Teachers' insistence on high standards of behaviour contributes to a purposeful learning atmosphere.
- Teachers have a good understanding of the subjects of the National Curriculum, which helps them to plan lessons that promote pupils' good achievements.
- Assessment procedures are good in English, mathematics and science. Marking is inconsistent so pupils are not always sure what they need to do to improve.
- Individual targets for pupils in writing have helped them to improve their work

Commentary

11. Teaching and pupils' learning are good overall. Teaching has improved since the last inspection and no unsatisfactory lessons were seen.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 39 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (3%)	19 (49%)	13 (33%)	6 (15%)	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

12. Teaching in the nursery and reception classes ranges from good to very good. The proportion of very good teaching is much higher than elsewhere in the school. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection. Consequently, most children learn and achieve very well. As a result of outstanding planning and the efficient use of time, most children maintain a very good pace in their learning and show good levels of interest and concentration as they become totally involved in their activities. The children make rapid strides in their learning because the staff have a very good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and how young children learn. The nursery nurse and classroom assistant are an integral part of the planned provision and bring much enthusiasm and skill to the children's learning. The adults' high expectations typify the very good teaching for the children in the nursery and reception classes. The staff have high levels of energy and vitality and ensure learning is a joyous experience for the children. Assessment in the Foundation Stage is very thorough and significantly contributes to raising standards. Regular assessments and observations of the children's responses to tasks and detailed records in the children's profiles are exemplary. These give a clear indication of the provision needed to help the children progress and also to set targets for their achievement. Language targets are also set for each child, which the children can understand, and records are sent home to parents to keep them in touch with how well their children are doing.
13. A major reason for pupils' good achievement in Years 1 to 6 is teachers' high expectations of their conduct and involvement in lessons. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good because teaching ensures all pupils are actively involved throughout lessons. A good atmosphere is created by teachers' high expectations and clear guidelines which help pupils to appreciate how to behave. As a result, pupils are able to concentrate on learning without disruption and lessons proceed at a good pace. Teachers have very good relationships with the pupils. They use touches of humour to attract and hold pupils' interest and to engage them in their work. Pupils say that learning is often fun and that teachers make it easy for them to understand new work.
14. Teachers have a good understanding of the subjects they teach and how pupils learn. This helps them to plan good introductions to lessons, structured question and answer sessions and meaningful activities which help develop pupils' knowledge and skills well. For example, the time given to developing pupils' skills in mental calculation at the start of lessons is used well and challenges pupils to think for themselves. Teachers plan their lessons well so that activities build on previous work. The activities are matched to the pupils' different abilities so that all are suitably challenged and achieve as well as they can. Teaching assistants are used well in lessons especially for literacy and numeracy, to help pupils with special educational needs and this enables them to achieve well. In Year 6, less able pupils benefit from additional help from an Education Action Zone (EAZ) teacher working alongside pupils in a small group.
15. Progress has been made in developing systems for assessing and recording pupils' achievements. The information is used well to plan learning to meet the needs of a range of abilities. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are provided with useful targets in writing and this helps them to understand how to improve their work. Pupils' involvement in setting their own targets and assessing whether they have reached them has not yet been extended to other subjects. The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent across subjects. There are some very good examples which provide helpful comments to

guide pupils' future learning but sometimes teachers do not point out to pupils how their work can be improved.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good. It is very good in the Foundation Stage. The introduction of Spanish and French lessons and a wide range of after school activities make learning interesting and allow pupils to achieve well. The school's good accommodation and resources improve the quality of learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good provision for English, mathematics and science enables pupils to reach good standards.
- The provision for pupils to be taught Spanish and French excites pupils and widens their outlook on the world.
- Thorough curriculum planning makes subjects stimulating and interesting.
- The good range of opportunities to achieve in sports, the arts and music outside lessons enables pupils to develop interests and talents.
- The provision for gifted and talented pupils is insufficient

Commentary

16. The quality of the curriculum has improved since the last inspection and is now good. The school meets the statutory requirements for collective worship, teaching the curriculum and the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies work well. This has resulted in good achievement in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
17. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is very good and effectively meets the needs of the children. Curricular enrichment is very good. The curriculum is securely based on national guidelines and includes all the required areas. Planning is sharp and well focused. The very detailed plans outline very good links across the areas of learning through a central theme. Staff work together as a team and this is a strength of the planning process. The aim to promote a positive and enthusiastic attitude towards learning through the development of confidence and independence has a significant effect on the practices in the nursery. The curriculum is based on practical experiences and encourages enquiry skills at a level appropriate for these children.
18. The recent curricular emphasis on raising writing standards has worked well, but despite recent improvement there is still insufficient emphasis, particularly in Years 1 and 2, on developing a curriculum which accentuates reading and puts it at the centre of school life. Able readers commented that there is not a wide enough selection of books for "free readers".
19. The linking of subjects, such as using computers for historical research, broadens pupils' understanding. Teachers also ensure that pupils understand the work through good use of questions and by allowing pupils to develop their understanding of the subject by working together in small groups.
20. The school has re-worked the curriculum in recent years to allow for innovation. It now timetables three subjects in the morning which gives greater freedom for longer periods of teaching foundation subjects in the afternoon. This has, for example, allowed a local artist to take long afternoon sessions with pupils which allow them the time to learn at depth.
21. The provision of Spanish and French lessons for a short time each week across the school is very successful and highly popular with pupils. It runs alongside the school's decision to participate in the Comenius project which links primary schools across Europe. Blaydon West is paired with schools in Italy and Spain. To ensure a high level of language tuition, a teacher at

Blaydon spent a year working in a Spanish school and, as a result, pupils are forging ahead, speaking basic Spanish with good accents, accuracy, great confidence and utter enjoyment.

22. Planning matches learning to pupils' varied capabilities well. Pupils have equal access to the curriculum. However, the small group of pupils who have very recently been identified as in the gifted or talented category have, as yet, little offered for them. The school, in its new improvement plan, intends to rectify this. Despite the budgetary enforced cuts in support staff, pupils with special educational needs receive good provision throughout the school.
23. Provision for activities outside lessons is good and pupils are keen to take part in the wide range of activities offered. The school's clog dancing group performs at both the Blaydon races and local festivals. The breakfast club is well attended and allows pupils who need to leave home early, time to eat and play before school. Good links with the local church and library enhance learning and develop a sense of belonging to the wider community.
24. Good quality resources and the expertise and enthusiasm of all staff make an important contribution to pupils' learning. The accommodation is good overall and it is in a satisfactory condition but roomy and cheerful. Despite the difficulties offered by the strong slopes in the yards, all aspects of physical education are delivered either on the school site or the field. The school hopes to build a flat all-weather games area very near the school shortly.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are very good. The school provides pupils with good personal support, advice and guidance and involves them very well in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is a happy place where pupils are cared for very well and helped to mature.
- The staff provides good support for pupils' personal and academic development and this helps them to achieve well.
- Pupils' views are sought, valued and acted upon. They contribute greatly to the development of the school.

Commentary

25. Pupils are safe and secure at school and, as at the last inspection, the very good attention paid to their care, welfare and safety allows them to concentrate on learning. Records are kept of regular inspections of the buildings and problems promptly dealt with. Child protection procedures are very good and the staff know what to do if they have concerns about children's welfare.
26. Pupils are very well supervised and trusted by the staff, who have very high expectations of them. Pupils offer very good help to others. There are "buddies" for those who are new to the school or who find playtime difficult. Some are trained to mediate between pupils when problems arise and others are trained to help dyspraxic pupils to develop motor skills. The school council is highly active and has organised the raising of large sums of money for charity as well as for the purchase of playground games for break and lunchtime play. As a result of the staff's very high expectations, pupils are caring and thoughtful, fully involved in most aspects of school life and very willing, as they mature, to take increasing responsibility for others. Pupils with difficulties are very confident that if they turn to staff a problem will be sorted out.
27. Information about pupils' academic achievements is used well to guide future learning. Individual targets are set in writing and this has resulted in a rapid rise in standards. Pupils

were involved in setting their targets and thus knew how to do better work. In other subjects, targets are not based on individual needs and are sometimes too general to pinpoint what needs to be done to achieve more. Pupils' work is marked, but teachers' comments do not always guide pupils on what to do to improve further.

28. On entry to the school, children are gradually introduced in to nursery and reception classes. Teachers make home visits prior to the children's entry to the nursery. There are very good records of progress in the nursery and reception classes. Records for pupils with special educational needs are good and guide the help that they will receive.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership with parents is very good and the link with the community and other schools is good. This contributes well to pupils' learning and good achievement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is very good partnership with parents whose views are sought and acted upon. The resulting trust between school and home makes a good contribution to children's learning and achievement.
- Good links with other schools and the local community enhance curricular opportunities for pupils.

Commentary

29. Since the last inspection, the partnership with parents has strengthened and is now very good. Parents especially like the welcoming atmosphere at school and that action is promptly taken if a problem arises. Teachers and support staff are always available to parents to discuss concerns and help them to understand the work their children are doing.
30. The school communicates well with parents through a wide range of information about the school, the curriculum and children's progress. Sessions about the curriculum have been held to explain what children will learn in school and at home. Parents are clear about the importance of the regular reading homework, which they are expected to oversee, and most ensure that it is done on time, thereby contributing well to their children's learning. Parents of children in the nursery and reception years are welcomed into the Foundation Stage classrooms at the start of the day to see what is taught. Parents with children who have special educational needs receive good information about progress through the regular review and target setting programme.
31. Annual written reports are satisfactory. However, they are inconsistent in reporting the standards and progress pupils make. Some teachers do this well, others describe what has been covered in a year rather than what has been achieved. None report the national levels reached in English, mathematics or science except where statutorily required in Years 2 and 6. Open evenings give parents an alternative opportunity to find out about their child's progress.
32. The school uses local resources well to widen pupils' learning. There is a wide programme of visitors to the school and pupils visit many interesting local places to enrich their curriculum. The school is currently in the process of developing links with the new secondary school to which many pupils will move in September. At present, the academic links for pupils with other schools, mainly through the efforts of the Education Action Zone, are satisfactory. Year 6 pupils, for example, take part in occasional master classes and sports events which they find stimulating. For teachers, however, there are regular curricular discussion meetings between the staff of local schools which make them aware of innovative ideas to raise achievement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and governance of the school are good as they were at the time of the last inspection. The headteacher provides good purposeful leadership. The leadership of senior managers as a whole is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher inspires and encourages all staff to develop their leadership qualities and has created a strong sense of common purpose and direction
- The deputy headteacher makes a very good contribution to the work of the school, particularly in her teaching
- Arrangements for checking the performance of the school are good and play an important part in raising standards and pupils' achievement
- The governors know the school very well and offer very good challenge and assistance to the headteacher and senior managers
- Finances are well managed and the school checks its spending carefully

Commentary

33. The good and purposeful leadership of the headteacher gives the school a clear sense of direction so that all staff know what they are working towards. This inspiration has created a climate in which all staff and governors can work successfully, as a team, to help all pupils achieve well. Good leadership and management have led to improvements in standards and the quality of education. Parents strongly agree that the school is well led. The good delegation of responsibilities to staff at all levels ensures that everyone now participates in decision making. The senior management team is effective because it brings together all parts of the school equally and plays a key role in setting the school's future direction. Several members of the team are improving their leadership skills by taking a national leadership qualification and this is contributing to whole school improvement. Subject co-ordinators work effectively to assist other teachers. They have a good understanding of the needs of their subject, its development and standards and this contributes well to pupils' good achievements
34. The deputy headteacher has made a very good contribution to the school's improvement, with her expertise and enthusiasm, providing a very good role model for staff and pupils. She has played an important part in the development of the provision for nursery and reception children while also managing her role as English co-ordinator well.
35. The school uses data well to compare its performance against national figures and the results of similar schools but it is only since the autumn of 2002 that information has been available to make comparisons with local schools. At this point, it was realised just how high the level 3 scores at the end of Year 2 were compared to the local situation, and the level 5 targets for 2004 for the end of Year 6 were the highest in the local authority. The senior managers were concerned that in the 2003 national tests for Year 6, pupils' standards were very good against schools with similar free school meals context, but well below against pupils' prior attainment. The headteacher took immediate action and appointed a member of the senior management team to take responsibility for assessment, record keeping and planning processes throughout the school. This year there has been a much greater level of liaison between the teachers administering the tests at the end of Year 2 and the senior managers. The school has information to show pupils' achievement is good across the school. Any gaps in the knowledge of assessment have been addressed by in-service training.
36. The governing body supports the school well and ensures that most statutory requirements are met. It does not ensure that all aspects of statutory requirements are reported to parents in its annual report. The school has a policy to ensure racial equality, which is monitored appropriately. The expertise of individual governors is used to successfully help the school in

challenges it faces, such as recent budgetary difficulties. Governors visit the school to meet subject co-ordinators and go in to classes thereby helping them to gain a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development. Meetings are held regularly and governors receive good information from the headteacher about all aspects of the school. They challenge his perceptions and discuss their concerns until they are clear about how they wish to proceed.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	594,653
Total expenditure	657,688
Expenditure per pupil	2,799

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	46,036
Balance carried forward to the next	-16,999

37. Financial planning is good. The school budget is well managed to support the school's priorities for improvement and is regularly monitored, with the help of a bursar, to ensure that spending levels are within the agreed targets. Last year, the school was faced with an unexpected, significant cut in its budget allocation due to the restructuring of teachers' pay and additional pension contributions. The governors took wise decisions about reducing the staffing levels last year. As a result, the prudent management of finances has reversed a deficit budget into a surplus. The school improvement plan identifies appropriate priorities for development but the time-scales are too long and criteria for checking its success are not rigorous enough or linked clearly to pupils' learning and standards achieved. The principles of best value are applied well ensuring all resources are used efficiently to meet the priorities of the school. The school has made good use of a part-time teacher funded through the Education Action Zone to help raise pupils' achievements. The school is successful in securing additional funds to assist its development.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **very good**. The children start their nursery experience following their third birthday. They join the reception class in September following their fourth birthday. Initial assessments indicate that on entry to the nursery the children's attainment is well below the level that is typical for children of their age. By the end of the reception year, children attain the goals set for them in all the areas of learning. This is a significant achievement and reflects the high quality of teaching and support the children receive. Teaching ranges from good to very good and is mostly very good. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection. Consequently most children learn and achieve very well. Assessment in the Foundation Stage is very thorough and significantly contributes to raising standards.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children's attitudes to learning and their behaviour are very good.
- Relationships are very positive and play a significant part in children's learning.
- The children demonstrate high levels of confidence and self-esteem.

Commentary

38. There is a purposeful and busy atmosphere in the classrooms and the children are happy and settled at school. They are stimulated and excited by the many well-planned and imaginative experiences offered. The children find learning fun and show great enthusiasm and delight in what they do. In the nursery, the children were totally committed to helping *Farmer Fred* sort his animals when the naughty pig let them out of the field. The children show good levels of self discipline at this young age. Children soon recognise that good behaviour is expected and they respond very well. For example, in the reception class each child is a member of a 'Job Squad' and they willingly and sensibly respond to requests to tidy areas of the classroom because they know this is expected. Whole-class discussions are used very well to develop the children's confidence to participate as a member of a large group. As nursery children passed the puppet around the circle, almost all readily described a favourite part of a recent farm visit. In the reception class, the teacher helped children to be prepared to speak by saying, "Remember to put an idea in your head" and, as a result, all children contributed to the discussion. A strong sense of community typifies the nursery and reception classes and each child is treated as a valued member. The children develop warm friendships and seek partners to share an activity. The staff have worked very hard to create an environment which promotes independence. They value the children's ideas sensitively and communicate respect for their work by displaying it attractively and often displaying photographs of the children at work.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good range of activities to stimulate the development of the children's speaking and listening skills.
- The development of language and literacy is integral to all activities
- Early reading and writing skills are developed through purposeful tasks.

Commentary

39. The development of speaking and listening is planned and central to all activities. The children are systematically introduced to a range of new words and the staff assess the children's abilities to use this vocabulary. This was very effective, for example, when directional words such as 'forward' 'backwards' and 'sideways' were introduced through physical activities. The staff are very sensitive towards children who have less confidence to speak and prompt those who understand but have yet to develop the skills to express their ideas. The children are very enthusiastic, always busy and they enjoy their activities and, as a result, they want to talk about what they do. The children are eager to write because there are reasons to do so. Some children used early mark making skills to contribute to a class book, others wrote orders in the *Pet Shop* and at the *Vets' Surgery* prescriptions were written for the animals even for those the children said had died! In the reception class the teacher effectively used bullet points to show children how these help to sequence events. The staff generate a high level of interest and enthusiasm for reading, a love of books and the early skills needed to start reading. The children are encouraged to read by the provision of comfortable, inviting and well stocked reading areas.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are of a high quality.
- Learning is made relevant to the children.

Commentary

40. The children become familiar with numbers through counting rhymes, singing games and daily opportunities to use counting such as during registration. In the nursery, children learn to recognise numbers and in reception, the children write numbers for simple calculations and to label groups of objects. Mathematical skills are very successfully developed through practical activities and linked to mathematical language. Reception children developed their skills to use language related to mass in a very well constructed activity which used an extensive range of suitcases and bags to enable children to compare mass. Staff reinforce learning very well. In the nursery counting skills were practised when the children counted the fruit pieces used to illustrate the story. All staff are involved in the planning so that everyone who works with the children are clear about what is to be taught. Activities are well planned and ensure learning is in interesting ways. Nursery children used their knowledge of number when they stopped at the *Petrol Station* and the teacher maximised the learning by spontaneous intervention, for example, when a child said '50' she responded by saying, "You must be going on a long journey!" indicating this was the reason for the large petrol order.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Enrichment of the curriculum through visits, visitors and very good use of resources.
- Activities are very interesting and practical

Commentary

41. The staff organise interesting visits to broaden the children's experiences and extend their knowledge of the world around them. A visit to a farm by the nursery children was used very effectively to inform learning when the children were back in the classroom. In the nursery, during an assessment activity, the children confidently named animals and their young and the foods they provided. The children's learning is further extended through opportunities for the children to participate in activities with visitors who lead activities such as African dancing. The children's understanding in science develops as they see how materials change when they make scones in the nursery and make healthy 'Smoothie' drinks in reception by choosing fruits to blend. Children enjoy using computers and controlled devices such as the Roamer. This is successful because the learning has purpose. For example, the children programmed the Roamer, decorated as a tractor, to take food to groups of different animals. This required a high level of skill and, through the encouraging support of the nursery nurse, most children succeeded.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Regular and well planned opportunities to develop a good range of physical skills.
- Increasing use and improvements in the use of outdoor areas

Commentary

42. The nursery children learn quickly and achieve well in their skills of co-ordination, control and movement because they have frequent access to energetic outdoor activity and weekly physical development sessions in the hall. Reception children also use these facilities to their advantage. In addition, the children have access to the school's large indoor equipment. This regular provision significantly contributes to the children's very good achievements. The children show great enthusiasm, energy and confidence as they use the equipment. The children's skills improve through direct teaching and the full involvement of the staff. Reception children show good control and balance as they move over and under the equipment with confidence. Nursery children were a delight to watch as they joined in a movement session in the hall and tried so hard to attempt new skills, such as skipping.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children have access to a very good range of creative experiences

Commentary

43. Although only one creative development lesson was observed during the inspection, planning and work on display reflect standards are in line with those expected. The staff plan very well to ensure that children have a wide range of opportunities to exercise their imagination and benefit from creative and expressive experiences. Both classrooms are organised effectively to provide opportunities for creative development. The children are encouraged to retell stories and take on roles in the role-play areas. Their artwork is displayed attractively to promote self esteem and brighten the classrooms. Displays reflect that children use a wide range of materials and techniques. for example, Batik and weaving work.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

The provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Year 6 are reaching standards that are above the national average
- Teaching and learning are good and enable pupils to achieve well throughout the school.
- By the end of Year 2, pupils' reading skills are below the national average and not yet as good as those in writing.
- Leadership and management are good and have a positive effect on the standards that pupils attain.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject, which contribute well to the good progress that they make.
- Planning and assessment procedures are thorough and help to ensure that language and literacy skills are used well in other subjects.

Commentary

44. Standards in writing are above average for pupils in Years 2 and 6, which shows the school has successfully dealt with the key issue from the previous report of raising attainment in writing. Standards in reading for pupils in Year 2 have been well below average for the last two years but action taken by the school has led to improvement and so most pupils currently in Year 2 are reaching levels just below those expected for their age. Pupils have good speaking and listening skills throughout the school.
45. To improve writing, there was a major review of the curriculum that resulted in a range of initiatives being put into place. These included pupils being given opportunities to write in a wider range of genres across the curriculum and to be given more time to write at length. Training was provided for teachers so that the writing lessons were better taught, and individual targets for improvement were set. This work has borne fruit and pupils now write with imagination, with their standards of presentation being high. During this period, standards in reading declined for pupils in Years 1 and 2. This was due to a combination of the emphasis given to writing and the lack of consistency between classes in the approach to teaching basic skills. The school has spent a lot of money on purchasing books for guided reading sessions, and parental involvement in listening to their children read at home has improved. Standards are now improving, mainly as a result of the good quality leadership and management of the co-ordinator, who has been the driving force behind a variety of improvements, including developing teachers' skills in teaching phonics so that pupils can better identify unfamiliar words.
46. Teachers plan their lessons well so that activities are well matched to the pupils' different abilities so that they are suitably challenged and achieve as well. At the start of lessons, the teachers carefully explain to pupils what they are to do, in order that they are clear about what they are to learn and what is expected of them. However, on occasions, pupils are kept sitting on the carpet a bit too long before beginning independent activities and they start to lose concentration. Pupils are given many opportunities to discuss ideas and give their opinions on a range of issues, which develop their speaking and listening skills well. In a Year 2 lesson, the chosen text provided suitable challenge for all pupils to develop their reading skills. The session was interactive with a good balance of contributions from the teacher and pupils. In writing lessons, the teachers are proficient at modelling the behaviour of good writers, which motivates the pupils to improve their own skills. This was exemplified in a very good lesson for pupils in Year 3, in which they made very good progress in their knowledge and understanding of how to use different tenses and connectives in their writing. Teaching assistants give

valuable support and play an important role in the progress made by pupils, particularly those with special educational needs.

47. Pupils obviously enjoy their literacy work, responding very positively in all lessons. Their behaviour is very good and enables them to concentrate on their activities and have a high work rate. The presentation of their written work is very good, showing that they take pride in what they do. The school's planning arrangements are good and ensure that all pupils are given work that matches their ability and, because of this, are able to progressively develop their learning. Similarly, assessment procedures are good, enabling teachers to have a clear view of their pupils' attainment. Individual writing targets set for pupils have helped them to improve their performance.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

48. There are good opportunities for pupils to use their skills in reading, writing and discussion in other subjects. For instance, in science they write detailed reports about their investigations, along with creating accurately labeled scientific drawings. In geography, they have used their note making skills well to research life in the Indian village of Chembokoli. Pupils develop language well through pair, group and whole-class discussions. In a Year 6 lesson, good use was made of reading partners to develop reading skills. Throughout the school a wide range of imaginative displays is used well to create a word-rich environment that helps develop pupils' reading skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved in mathematics by the end of Year 6 since the last inspection.
- Lessons are well planned and organised and assessment information is used to plan future work.
- Pupils learn through a good range of practical activities.
- Challenging levels of work in Year 6.
- Pupils do not have individual targets to help them understand how to improve their own work.

Commentary

49. Standards in mathematics in Year 2 are average and in Year 6 they are above average. Pupils' achievement is good across the school. In the 2003 national tests for Year 6, results were very good against similar schools but were well below against prior attainment between Years 2 and 6. The headteacher believes this reflects the teachers' inexperience in assessment when these pupils were in Year 2. In three of the last five years, scores in mathematics were above those in English. As a result, English was an area for improvement rather than mathematics. Standards for Year 6 pupils are currently above average and they are on line to reflect good improvement against prior attainment. Boys are achieving as well as girls. In Year 6, less able pupils have benefited from additional support from an EAZ teacher working alongside pupils in a small group. The school is now on course to meet the targets for 2004 with one third of the pupils expected to attain the higher Level 5.
50. The time given to developing pupils' skills in mental calculation at the start of lessons is used effectively and often involves challenging pupils to think for themselves. For example, in Year 2, when adding an extra die meant using addition and multiplication in the same mental calculation and in Year 4, when doubling strategies were used to link the two and four times tables.

51. Good use is made of resources to support learning, especially with the younger pupils, for example in an oral session, each pupil had their own clock and all pupils used whiteboards. Resources are readily available for practical activities.
52. Teaching is good overall with some instances of very good teaching. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers are confident in applying the National Numeracy Strategy. All lessons are thoroughly prepared to meet the needs of the children. Teachers are skilled in gaining pupils' attention in the lively introduction to lessons. Pupils respond well to the challenge and delight in solving mental problems quickly. Pupils work hard in mathematics lessons because the teachers successfully promote good learning habits and an enthusiasm for the subject. Teachers give clear explanations so that pupils know how to proceed. The pupils enjoy working together because relationships are good and they eagerly support each other. For example, in a very good Year 6 lesson, pupils worked well together as they calculated ratios and proportions. Work in Year 6 is well presented and accurate and reflects an interest in and enthusiasm for the subject.
53. Progress in assessment has been made through the introduction of three levels of assessment procedures. The data is then used to plan 'layered targets' for lessons to meet the range of abilities. This is an improvement since the last inspection when insufficient use was made of the information gathered to plan future learning. Marking is mainly thorough but there are some inconsistencies. Where marking is good, teachers write helpful comments to guide the pupils' future learning. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to set individual targets for the pupils so that they have a greater awareness of what they need to do to improve their work further.

Mathematics across the curriculum

54. There are good opportunities for pupils to apply and develop their mathematical skills in real situations in other subjects. For example, they use graphs and tables in science, measuring skills in design and technology and knowledge of pattern and shape in art and design.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average and pupils achieve well.
- Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject enabling them to present lessons clearly.
- Pupils learn quickly because they enjoy the practical approaches.
- The quality of pupils' recorded work in Year 6 is good.

Commentary

55. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above average and pupils' achievement is good. This reflects good improvement since the previous inspection when standards were average. In the 2003 national tests, attainment was in line with national averages and well above average compared to similar schools. However, prior attainment grades show well below average attainment. Current attainment levels indicate this will not be the case in the 2004 national tests. Improvements in standards since the previous inspection are good and this is a result of the developing confidence and skills of the teachers and an emphasis on an enquiry approach in lessons.
56. The pupils benefit from good teaching and they are taught to use an enquiring, critical approach to problems and develop skills in an atmosphere of enjoyment. There is a heavy emphasis on the investigative nature of science and lessons are planned to develop skills such as

observation, prediction, explanation and investigation. Pupils in Year 2 demonstrated a good understanding of fair testing as they worked in groups to find out if plants would grow in different types of liquid. The pupils displayed initiative and the ability to take some responsibility for their own learning. A similar level of interest and skill was seen in Year 6 when pupils set out to devise a test to prove condensation. In both these lessons the teachers had high expectations of the pupils and expected them to think things through for themselves. As a result the pupils' investigative skills developed well.

57. By Year 6, pupils have confidence to work together in small groups to explore ideas. They plan their strategies together and make their own decisions on recording the results. Pupils' written work shows their abilities to use scientific language accurately to describe investigations. The pupils confidently use their own words to explain results and higher-attaining pupils show a high level of skill in prediction and an ability to generate their own questions. A very good example of this was work on interdependence and adaptation. The quality of this work reflects the teachers' understanding of the different types of investigative activities.
58. Since the previous inspection, assessment procedures have improved to ensure information gathered is used to plan lessons that are challenging for all groups of pupils. Planning indicates how the needs of different pupils will be met. The newly appointed co-ordinator is enthusiastic and rightly plans to develop science by continuing to improve assessment procedures and focus on scientific enquiry.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The last two years has seen much improvement in provision with pupils now achieving well and reaching satisfactory standards.
- Leadership and management are good.
- ICT is not used enough in other subjects.
- Pupils have positive views about their work, with their very good attitudes having a helpful effect on the standards they achieve.

Commentary

59. Improvement has been good since the previous inspection, with the creation of an information technology suite and the provision of better quality computers for pupils to use. Training has been provided for teachers to improve their expertise and confidence in teaching the subject. These changes mean that pupils are able to have more hands on experience of computers and are developing their skills at a faster rate than before. They are given work that better matches their ability and so they now make good achievement and reach the standards expected for their age.
60. The co-ordinator has a good view of the subject's strengths and weaknesses, which has enabled her to create a focused action plan for taking the subject forward. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, with new ideas and techniques being explained and demonstrated clearly so that pupils know what they are to learn and what is expected of them. The way that teachers encourage pupils to work collaboratively in pairs on the computers makes a good contribution to their personal and social development. Some teaching is of high quality, as was evident in a lesson for pupils in Year 4 when they were learning how to put information about the number of wings that different mini-beasts have onto a database.

61. Pupils speak with enthusiasm about their activities in ICT, and especially enjoy working on the computers in the suite. They are confident in their ability to work independently of their teacher and show good motivation in so doing. The after-school ICT club and the links with the local secondary school, which provide further significant learning opportunities, enrich the curriculum.

Information communication technology across the curriculum

62. There are only a few opportunities for pupils to develop and use their ICT skills through other subjects within the classroom. The school acknowledges this and has highlighted it as one of the priorities for future development. In music, pupils in Year 4 have used the Internet to find out about different families of instruments, while in science, they have created bar graphs to show information about mini-beasts.

HUMANITIES

In **geography** and **history**, the curriculum is broad and balanced, with emphasis on developing pupils' learning by giving them first hand practical activities.

63. In geography, the pupils explore the local area to find out about the various types of buildings in Blaydon and the different ways land is used. In history, they are given the challenge of using a variety of sources of evidence to investigate and compare different accounts of Boudicca and her struggle against the Romans. There is also good use made of visits to places of educational interest to further extend their learning. A good example of this is the visit of pupils in Year 6 to Hexham as part of their studies into contrasting localities in geography. Pupils have used their literacy skills well in history when writing about how life in England has changed since the Second World War. Similarly, in geography they have used their note taking skills to research life in the Indian village of Chembakoli and then produce a wall chart to present their findings.
64. In two history lessons for pupils in Years 3 and 4, the teachers showed secure subject knowledge that enabled them to ask relevant questions to further pupils' understanding about the marriages of Henry VIII. The activities were interesting and built well on previous work so that pupils could use prior historical knowledge to support their learning. They showed appropriate skills in using historical evidence to find out about life in Tudor England.

Religious Education

The provision for religious education is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
- There are good links with the local church.

Commentary

65. Most pupils in Year 6 reach standards that match the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education, which shows they have achieved satisfactorily during their time in school. The curriculum is well planned to deepen the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith. This enables pupils to gain a secure understanding of the main events in the life of Jesus and of the main characters in the Bible. There are many opportunities for pupils to discuss Christian values and beliefs, including the manner in which they affect people's lives. The subject plays an important part in pupils' spiritual development; for example, in Year 6 they

have composed their own prayers as part of World Peace Day. There is due emphasis placed on learning about the beliefs and traditions of other faiths and cultures, as was seen in a lesson for Year 6 pupils when they were developing their knowledge and understanding of Hinduism.

66. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, with an emphasis on using the pupils' own experiences as the basis for discussion. A good example of this was seen in a lesson for pupils in Year 4 in which they were discussing how the friends and family of Jesus might have felt about his death. Role-play was used well to let them act out the characters of Mary, Simon Peter and Judas. The teacher then asked them how Jesus must have felt when he was betrayed and how they would feel if someone let them down. Pupils talked about their feelings in a sensible way, with the lesson making a good contribution to their personal development.
67. There are good links with St. Cuthbert's Church that help to deepen the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith. The vicar comes into school to take assemblies and work with pupils, while they in turn visit the church to take part in a variety of Christian services and celebrations.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Only one lesson was seen in art and design and physical education. No lessons were seen in design and technology and music. It is, therefore, not possible to give an overall judgement on provision. However it was possible to scrutinise the work on display and listen to singing in assembly.

68. Standards in **art and design** are in line with those expected by the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. There are some good examples of work in printing, observational drawings of plants, and paintings portraying relationships. In a good lesson involving a visiting artist, pupils developed their skills to use a range of metals as a media for sculpture. The involvement of visiting artists also successfully develops teachers' skills to teach the subject.
69. Pupils' achievements in **design and technology** are good and, by the end of Years 2 and 6, most pupils attain average standards. A strength in the provision is a project involving the school and parents to design a bridge to link with International World Peace Day. An extensive range of designs on display and photographs reflect the success of this project. Pupils use a wide range of materials, explore different methods of joining materials and evaluate the strength of the bridges. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' involvement in designing playground equipment helps to develop an understanding of structures.
70. The school is proud of its **music** provision. Singing in assembly and hymn practice was of a high standard. Pupils sing in tune, with feeling in response to the words and with much enjoyment. These high standards are achieved through the skill of the teacher leading the pupils, including the very effective use of her own voice. A particular strength is the pupils' ability to sing in harmony. The school has a large choir who meet for weekly practices. These pupils are highly challenged to improve skills to sustain the notes. The school provides opportunities for pupils to learn to play musical instruments, including violins and recorders. Music clubs are well attended and these contribute to the standards achieved by the pupils. The school provides good opportunities to develop the pupils' skills in performance through school productions.
71. These subjects are well led by knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinators. The subjects have benefited from changing timetable structures which has helped to raise the status of the subjects. Future developments include moving towards more innovative approaches through curriculum enrichment.

72. Leadership and management of **physical education** are good, with the co-ordinator having played a central role in the school gaining the Activemark Gold Award. This was given to the school in recognition of its outstanding commitment to promoting the benefits of physical activity and school sport. His work has led to the curriculum being much improved, with a better balance between the various National Curriculum requirements, and has raised the profile of physical education through the school. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities that include football, athletics and gymnastics, which make a positive contribution to the pupils' personal and social development. There are good links with the local secondary school that provides specialist teaching for pupils in sports such as tennis and hockey. Pupils are also given good opportunities to take part on competitive sports in various Gateshead events. A notable feature of the curriculum is the way all pupils in Years 3 to 6 are able to take part in swimming lessons to promote their awareness of water safety, as well as developing their swimming skills.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

The school develops pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) very well through specific lessons and work across the whole curriculum. However, only two lessons were seen in PSHCE and, therefore, provision cannot be judged overall. In Year 4, pupils learn about healthy food and keeping fit.

73. Citizenship is actively promoted through opportunities for pupils to play a considerable part in helping the school to run smoothly and improve. The head boy and head girl, school council and monitors make a good contribution through carrying out their responsibilities diligently. Playground buddies and pupil mediators help the older pupils to develop a sense of responsibility for others, and younger pupils to understand that there is a means for seeking help from other pupils in resolving minor difficulties at playtime. In a Year 5 drama lesson on citizenship, pupils collaborated very well on their task of acting out a situation which made them think about the lives of other people living in other places who are less fortunate than themselves.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).