

INSPECTION REPORT

COCKFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Cockfield, Bishop Auckland

LEA area: Durham

Unique reference number: 114114

Headteacher: Mrs S Baum

Lead inspector: Stuart Dobson

Dates of inspection: 9th – 11th February 2004

Inspection number: 255848

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 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	117
School address:	Front Street Cockfield Bishop Auckland County Durham
Postcode:	DL13 5EN
Telephone number:	01388 718263
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Hobson
Date of previous inspection:	28 th September 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school serves the community of Cockfield near Bishop Auckland in County Durham. Attainment on entry to school is below average overall though a few children have good verbal skills. The school has a very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs which includes a significant number with statements of need. Only one pupil needs any additional support for English as an additional language.

The school is a smaller than average school and the number on roll is falling significantly due to demographic changes in the area. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals (26%) is well above average. The school offers family learning programmes and links closely with Sure Start¹. It is part of the national Healthy Schools Initiative².

¹ A national initiative to support children and families pre-school.

² A national programme to encourage schools to look at pupils' physical, social, emotional and intellectual health.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school which gives good value for money. The educational provision is good overall and is improving. Teaching is mostly good or better and the remainder is satisfactory. The pupils achieve satisfactorily across a broad range of subjects and the current year 6 are likely to reach above average standards in English and mathematics. The pupils reach very high standards in their personal development and the very positive ethos of the school is a significant aid to learning. Leadership and management are good.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- There is a very positive ethos in the school to which the staff, the pupils, the parents and the community have responded very well. The leadership of the headteacher and the governors is good but subject co-ordinators do not monitor teaching and learning as much as they should.
- The teachers have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes and the pupils behave very well and show a great sense of responsibility towards others.
- The overall management is good and pupils are cared for and educated well.
- Teaching in the Foundation Stage³ is very good overall and is particularly strong in the reception class.
- Teaching in years 1-6 is good but overall the teachers do not use assessment as effectively as they could, especially in the foundation subjects.⁴
- The pupils achieve much better standards in reading than they do in writing. They do not reach satisfactory standards in music.

There has been good improvement since the last inspection and almost all of the ten issues identified have been addressed. However, aspects of marking remain weak and the development of music has not yet been addressed satisfactorily. The leadership of the school is now very effective in creating a positive whole school ethos and the parents indicate that they are much more closely involved with their children's education.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

The results vary widely from year to year. Small numbers of pupils in each year group means that the results are often an unreliable indicator of the school's success. Also, there are very high numbers of pupils with special educational needs. Although results in 2003 were disappointing, the vast majority of the pupils had reached their targets.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 , compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E	A	D	D
Mathematics	C	A	E	E
Science	A	D	D	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 achieve well in the Foundation Stage and the majority is **likely to reach the early learning goals⁵** in all six areas of learning⁶ by the end of the reception year. **Pupils achieve satisfactorily throughout the remainder of the school.** Pupils with special educational needs achieve well but the small number of higher achieving pupils is sometimes insufficiently challenged

³ Nursery and reception years

⁴ Design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, music, physical education and religious education.

⁵ Nationally agreed targets for the end of the reception year.

⁶ Personal social and emotional learning, communication language and literacy, mathematical learning, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development, physical development.

in the foundation subjects. The current year 6 pupils are likely to reach standards which are above the national average in English and mathematics and close to the national average in science. This is satisfactory achievement based on their good performance at the end of year 2. Pupils in years 3-6 achieve higher standards in reading than in writing. Pupils in year 2 achieve satisfactorily in reading, writing and mathematics given their starting points. In other subjects, pupils achieve satisfactorily and are likely to reach the levels expected nationally by the ends of years 2 and 6, though they do better than this in physical education and do not do so well in music.

Pupils' personal development is very good and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also very good. They behave very well at all times and from the nursery onwards they show very positive attitudes towards school work and towards people. They show care and respect for each other. The level of pupils' attendance is similar to that found nationally.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education overall. The quality of teaching is good or better in 75 per cent of lessons and is satisfactory in the remainder. Teachers have very good relationships with the pupils, know the subjects well and deliver lessons interestingly. The teaching of children in the nursery and reception classes is consistently very good and they learn well. **The curriculum overall is of satisfactory quality.** It is planned well and skill development is assured in English, mathematics and practical science. There is insufficient focus on the progressive development of skills in the foundation subjects other than physical education. Learning is significantly enriched by opportunities beyond the classroom. The school has a very positive working relationship with parents and is a central part of the local community. The pupils are very well cared for and supported.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The governing body gives good support to the school. The headteacher has established very positive working relationships between the staff, the pupils, the parents and the community and the school is now very well placed to embark on the programme of improvements which it has set for itself. The current school improvement plan raises appropriate issues but does not make the most effective use of subject co-ordinators.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The school has very good links with parents and the community. The parents and pupils are very positive in their views of the school and are particularly pleased that this is now a school where they feel welcome and they have a part to play. They indicate that this is a recent improvement.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the use made of assessment* so that:
 - Targets for pupils are set, reviewed and changed if achieved so that they know what they need to do to improve;
 - Work is marked more effectively so that pupils are reminded of how to improve;
 - Teachers more closely consider what they know about their pupils when planning work which meets their learning needs, especially in the foundation subjects.
- Make use of all possible opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills.*
- Develop the use of the school improvement plan and ensure that subject co-ordinators make a stronger contribution through monitoring teaching and learning.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Teach the full range of the music curriculum throughout years 1-6.*
- Consider ways in which the children in the reception class can have improved access to the outdoor learning environment.*

* *Items already included in the school's existing plans for development.*

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Children **achieve well in the nursery and reception classes** and **satisfactorily throughout the remainder** of the school. There are significant variations in results from year to year because of small numbers in particular year groups and high numbers of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Standards are mostly similar to those expected nationally by the end of year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children start school with below average levels of skills but make good progress in the nursery and reception classes in all areas of learning.
- Pupils make satisfactory progress in English, mathematics and science. The current year 6 pupils are a particularly strong year group and are likely to reach standards which are higher than the national average.
- Many of the pupils could sometimes make better progress in a number of subjects if they were made fully aware of what they need to do to improve.
- Pupils make good progress in physical education as a result of specialist teaching and very good provision.
- Pupils do not reach expected levels in music.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.5 (28.5)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	25.2 (28.5)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	27.8 (27.5)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 23 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. The above results indicate a decline in standards in 2003 when compared with 2002 but this was a result of the particular group of pupils. The overall trend of improvement has not been as high as the national trend over the last four years. The school is aware of this and is working hard and successfully to reverse the decline.
2. The standards achieved by pupils in the current year 6 are above those expected nationally and, as last year, are particularly high in reading. These pupils achieved very well at the end of year 2 and despite some turbulence in staffing in the intervening years, have kept up their standards in English and mathematics. They have made satisfactory progress over the four years in science, but are now making good progress due to good teaching and a practical approach to the subject. The current year 2 pupils are likely to achieve standards which are at least similar to those expected nationally and are therefore better than those achieved in 2003 in reading, writing and mathematics.
3. Children in the nursery and reception classes make good progress from below average starting points. This is because the teachers plan well for their learning, give a stimulating range of opportunities for development and make good and accurate assessments of what the children need to do next in order to improve. The teachers follow the national guidance for the Foundation

Stage and plan to help pupils progress. In the current reception class, the vast majority of children are likely to reach the Early Learning Goals⁷ by or before the end of the reception year.

4. The achievement of pupils in years 1 to 6 is satisfactory overall, though good in physical education and unsatisfactory in music. In most of the subjects, pupils make steady progress and good teaching helps to ensure that they consistently make gains. In physical education, well planned lessons, a well structured and progressive curriculum, and the use of specialist facilities means that pupils make better than average progress and achieve standards which are higher than those expected nationally. In music, pupils do not sufficiently cover the curriculum and therefore they do not reach the expected standards.
5. The pupils' progress across a range of subjects tends to be restricted because assessment information is not used as well as it might be. This is particularly pronounced in subjects other than English and mathematics. The teachers make assessments of pupils' work regularly but they do not use the information gained sufficiently in planning the next lesson or series of lessons. The marking of pupils' work does not sufficiently inform them of how to improve, thus, whilst the pupils work hard, their energies are often directed more closely to spelling and handwriting rather than to subject specific skills. The obvious exception is pupils with special educational needs who have individual learning plans. These pupils are clearly aware of what they need to do to improve and they achieve well.
6. There is very little difference in the achievements of boys and girls.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and to each other. **They develop very well** spiritually, morally, socially and culturally as a result of the rich curriculum. All staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils show great interest in all that the school offers.
- The pupils are eager to learn and willing to take responsibility.
- The school climate for learning supports pupils in developing very positive and supportive relationships with others.
- The school supports pupils in developing their self-esteem and they make good gains in confidence.
- Pupils' enthusiasm for school supports their improved attendance and their good punctuality.

Commentary

7. Throughout the school day, pupils are seen joining in eagerly with the lessons and other activities. In science lessons for example, pupils are keen to undertake experiments and investigations but nevertheless show a very good level of self-control as they take turns when working as a part of a group.
8. Many of the pupils take responsibility willingly and effectively. It is particularly noticeable that the older pupils take great care of the younger ones in the playground and at lunchtime, and some of the oldest and most mature boys and girls give very good, caring support for pupils with significant special educational needs. Collectively, the class councils feel that they are able to make a real contribution to the school, for example making suggestions about developments and how they might raise funds to support them.

⁷ Agreed targets for the end of the reception year.

9. There is a very positive climate for learning which is led by the headteacher and supported by all of the staff and pupils. The pupils know that the school is there to support them and they are encouraged to believe that everything is possible. The headteacher is particularly keen to support the pupils and their families in having the highest possible expectations. The pupils respond through their willingness and eagerness in all situations.
10. Opportunities to perform, to lead and to work as part of a team are offered regularly. Pupils in all classes are very willing volunteers and they have the confidence to support others as well as take on new challenges. The pupils are confident when talking with visitors to the school.
11. Within lessons and club activities, pupils are asked not only to contemplate the quality of their work but also to consider their contribution to the team work of groups. This helps them to develop an understanding and appreciation of their role in the school society. The pupils' spiritual development is very good. Prayers, moral stories and hymns of thanksgiving encourage the pupils to consider spiritual aspects of life. The staff model fairness and equality of opportunity and the pupils have developed a very strong moral code to which they adhere. The staff have built many exciting visits into the curriculum for pupils of all ages and they provide clubs, for example French, after school. This very well supports the pupils' cultural development.

Attendance

12. Attendance is similar to that found in most schools and unauthorised absence is low. This is an improvement. There have been no exclusions.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.7	School data	0.1
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.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education is good. The teaching is good and often very good and the quality of the curriculum is satisfactory; it is significantly enriched by visits, visitors and after school clubs.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good or better in 75 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in the remainder.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good because the teachers match the work very well to the needs of the children and make it very challenging. Teaching is particularly strong in the reception class
- All of the teachers encourage and engage the pupils well and support them in their efforts to learn
- All of the teachers pay good attention to the needs of the pupils with special educational needs and these pupils make good progress
- The teachers have very good relationships with all of the pupils
- In most classes, assessment is not used well enough to give the pupils a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve
- In some of the foundation subjects work is not sufficiently matched to the needs of the pupils

Commentary

13. As can be seen in the table below, over 40 per cent of the teaching seen was very good. The majority of the lessons seen were English and mathematics lessons and these were mostly well planned and effectively organised. In these subjects, the teachers have a good understanding of the ways in which skills build and they were able to challenge the pupils appropriately. In some of the very good lessons there was a sense of urgency to learn, pupils were very clear about what they needed to do and the teachers built well on the positive working atmosphere which pervades the school. The teaching which was judged to be satisfactory did not have the same good pace throughout the lesson and although all pupils learned, some of pupils worked slowly and made only limited gains.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 32 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	13 (41%)	11 (34%)	8 (25%)	0 (0%)	0 (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.

14. In the Foundation Stage teaching is very good overall. The teachers understand the curriculum very well and provide a good balanced range of adult-led and child self-directed learning opportunities. In the reception class the teacher has very high expectations of the children and learning is fun from the start to the end of the day; children simply do not realise that they are working hard. The teacher has created a very good quality learning environment within a classroom which is far from ideal. Children show great interest in going inside the 'giant tree' which the teacher has cleverly created in the corner of the room and from there they bird-watch, discuss their ideas, write notes of their observations and co-operate well with each other. This type of activity significantly enhances their learning. The teacher does the best she can to compensate for the lack of opportunity for outdoor learning.
15. The nursery is very generously staffed and all staff give good support to the children. Photographic evidence shows that the teacher plans a very wide variety of opportunities to make visits to extend the children's learning. Again the nursery classroom is far from ideal but the staff try to provide a good range of learning tasks. However, the room is rather cluttered and children do not always have best access to the whole range of resources, although good use is made of the outdoor area.
16. All of the teachers have very good working relationships with the pupils and give them the very best possible personal support. No raised voices were heard in the school and pupils respond to this by trying hard to behave well. The staff are particularly well aware of the pupils with special educational needs and make every effort to fully include these pupils in everything that the school offers.
17. Scrutiny of work and discussion with pupils and staff indicates that assessment is the weakest area of teaching. Regular assessments are undertaken and teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously but the information gained from this is not used sufficiently to set targets for pupils. Most of the pupils work hard but they do not have sufficient knowledge of what they need to do to improve and therefore they do not learn as rapidly as they might. This is particularly the case for the most able pupils in the foundation subjects. Similarly, whilst pupils know that they need to improve their writing, they do not always know which aspects of their current work are the weakest.
18. Currently teachers are following schemes of work rigorously but they are not sufficiently adjusting the work to meet the needs of the pupils. The current planning for learning pays close attention to the content of subjects but not enough attention to the subject skills which the pupils need to

develop. However, there are some examples of very good practice, for example in a year 5/6 history lesson pupils were using their information and communication technology (ICT) skills, their written recording skill and were developing skills of historical enquiry, as they researched work on Ancient Greeks. All of the pupils were building on their existing skills.

The curriculum

The curriculum has satisfactory breadth, and is enriched by a good variety of popular learning opportunities outside the school day. Accommodation, resources and staffing levels adequately meet the demands of the curriculum and the diverse learning needs of the pupils, although there are some weaknesses.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum reflects the school's strong commitment to ensuring that all pupils get the most out of their education.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs is very good.
- Pupils participate well in a good range of out-of-school and extra-curricular activities.
- Unsatisfactory features of the accommodation for the nursery and reception classes restrict learning opportunities for these children.
- Not enough is done to develop and use links between subjects, in particular to extend pupils' skills in writing.
- The music curriculum is not delivered in full.

Commentary

19. The curriculum is interesting and relevant to pupils, and it meets all requirements except for music. It is nevertheless better than when the school was last inspected. The use of nationally approved schemes gives better balance and coherence to work in most subjects. The school has strengthened its strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy, but has not yet extended them well enough to other subjects. Whilst pupils have many good opportunities to read for interest and information in a range of situations, their opportunities to extend their writing skills to support different kinds of learning are relatively weak in range and quality, especially for the more capable pupils. Most pupils' limited writing skills impede their learning in many subjects.
20. By contrast the curriculum for the nursery and reception classes is well planned and organised and covers all of the areas of learning. Because the teachers use assessment information well, the curriculum is shaped to meet the learning needs of the pupils.
21. The school has been slow to respond to a few of the minor issues identified by the previous inspection. The development of pupils' library skills has only recently become a priority. Improved library resources and weekly lessons now offer better support for these skills, but unsatisfactory library accommodation still limits progress. Opportunities for pupils to compose and perform their own music remain unsatisfactory. Provision for ICT is better than it was in all respects, but the limited number of classroom computers restricts the frequency of pupils' chances to practise and extend their skills through work in other subjects.
22. Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHEC) is good. New and imaginative improvements reflect the school's view that this area is central to its mission.
23. Curriculum planning for pupils who have special educational needs is firmly rooted in their very good individual education plans (IEPs). Classroom assistants are well briefed on the targets and activities for these pupils in each lesson in English, mathematics and science. There is a range of special programmes, such as 'early' and 'additional' literacy support, that strengthens essential skills where they are identified as weak. The very good quality of this provision is a

strength of the curriculum because it gives the many pupils who have special educational needs full access to all learning opportunities.

24. An extensive range of extra-curricular activities makes a good contribution to pupils' personal and social development as well as to their attitudes to school and learning. The oldest pupils benefit from residential visits to Howtown in the Lake District and the Earls Orchard field centre. Day visits to Eden Camp and York, or more locally to Raby Castle and Cockfield Fell, enrich the learning opportunities for all year groups. Visiting artists, performers, Buddhist monks and many other visitors help to widen pupils' horizons. After-school activities include a French club, football coaching and the Sport Co-ordinator Programme. These extend to the arts when the school uses opportunities presented by events such as the Christmas concert, the arts week and joint ventures with the local church or Community Lights association. As in all areas of its life, the school enables all groups to access these opportunities, which are strongly appreciated by parents and pupils alike.

Care, guidance and support

The school's **very good** provision for the care, welfare, health and safety of its pupils is one of its **major strengths**, and shows an improvement since the previous inspection. Adults in the school provide **very good** quality advice and guidance for those in their care, and make **very good** arrangements to seek and act upon their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are careful and sensitive arrangements for the care, protection, health and safety of pupils.
- The school's intimate knowledge of each individual is based on very good relationships.
- The improving consultation with pupils makes them feel valued because they know they are being taken seriously.

Commentary

25. Regular tests of alarms and equipment, well rehearsed evacuation procedures, training for all staff in child protection and first aid, and rigorous attention to school security provide an atmosphere of calm and wellbeing that makes pupils feel safe and well cared for.

26. The sensitively managed induction into the nursery class starts the process of welcome and integration into the school family. The school gets to know its pupils and their families very well so as to make the optimum provision for pupils' care and education. Even the registration period is utilised to gauge the mood of pupils. As they enter the classroom each pupil can put his name-card under a particular heading that matches his mood. Thus, if a child feels very sad the teacher will be able to comfort and reassure him. A behaviour, social, and emotional record is kept on each child and is updated at least annually, so as to monitor and promote personal development. Personal, social, health and citizenship sessions, circle time⁸ and assemblies are effectively used to promote the high standards of behaviour, respect and personal responsibility that the school expects from its pupils.

27. Personal targets and aspects of personal and social development are included in pupils' annual reports, so that parents can remain fully involved in all aspects of their children's education. The success of the school's strategy has resulted in very good behaviour and relationships. It can also be seen in the care shown among pupils for one another. A year 1 pupil in the dining hall, for example, saw that a classmate was struggling to carry his glass of juice on his lunch tray without great risk of a spillage, so he kindly lifted the glass from the tray and took it to the table. More formal arrangements for involving pupils in the provision of care and support for their peers

⁸ An opportunity for pupils to discuss their views and concerns with the class group

include the 'Buddy' and monitor systems whereby older pupils pass onto younger ones the care given to them by adults in the school.

28. Pupils with special educational needs, including the high proportion who have statements of special educational need, benefit from very good care, guidance and support. Well-written individual education plans form the basis of this support. They are informed by careful assessments and reviews. The school works closely with the local educational support services to obtain, when necessary, expert assessments and advice. Teachers and support staff tailor learning activities to individual needs so that each pupil consistently experiences success and plays a full part in school life.
29. This school listens to its pupils. The opportunity to represent peers on the class councils, previously restricted to older pupils, is soon to be extended to other year groups. Representatives take their work seriously and know that they in turn are taken seriously by the school. It was the class councils, for example, that authorised pupils to write comments on the state of the toilets at various times of the day. The result will determine whether changes are needed to the cleaning arrangements. Individual pupils too know that their views are valued, and as a result they have the confidence to express them.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The **very good** partnership with parents and with the community, **much improved** since the previous inspection, is now an **area of strength** for the school in helping to raise educational standards. Links with other schools are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides very good quality information to parents.
- There is strong parental support and involvement in initiatives.
- Very active community links have raised the school profile and promoted citizenship.

Commentary

30. Much improved annual reports on pupils' progress now include a section on personal and social development, and space for parents and pupils to add their comments. They also identify areas for further effort. A very readable and informative newsletter keeps families well informed about academic, social, community and fundraising events. The governors' annual report to parents and the prospectus comply fully with legal requirements. New starters to nursery are visited at home and receive an induction pack. Additional information for parents is available on school notice boards, or by contacting a member of staff or a governor.
31. The overwhelmingly positive responses to the parents' questionnaire, and the warm comments at the parents' meeting reflect the improving partnership between school and home. The improved attendance, the support provided by parents in ensuring homework is completed, the direct involvement of parents in the school and the proposed re-launch of the Friends of Cockfield all point to a very effective partnership between home and school that helps greatly to support pupils' learning. Some parents have taken part in better reading and family learning projects so as to contribute more to their children's learning.
32. The school's partnership with the community such as the Church, the Community Association and the Lights Association is now so well established that they are bidding for joint funding for shared projects in the community. Involvement in dance festivals, football clubs, a family video project and Rural Rangers, as well as attracting funds for school, also supports pupils' education as future citizens. This school is a caring community, and pupils show their care and concern for the disadvantaged in society by raising considerable sums of money for charities such as the local hospice, 'Jeans for Genes', 'Blue Peter' and Cockfield Community Lights.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher leads the school **well** and has created an effective and purposeful school team. **Governors fulfil their roles well**. The school is **managed well** and runs smoothly and effectively.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has worked hard to improve the status and image of the school which is now respected by the local community.
- The headteacher has high aspirations for the pupils and a clear sense of purpose which is shared by the staff. This has created a very positive ethos.
- The staff are an effective team who are now in a position to learn from each other and to support school improvement, but they currently do not sufficiently monitor the quality of teaching and learning.
- The school improvement plan focuses on entirely appropriate issues but too many items run concurrently to be effectively managed in this small school.
- The head and staff are fully committed to inclusion; the school does its utmost to ensure that all pupils can participate fully.
- The school is efficiently run; governors and managers ensure that finances are managed well for the benefit of pupils.

Commentary

33. Since taking up the post, the headteacher has worked very hard on developing improved relationships throughout the school: between the staff, the pupils, the parents and the community. This is acknowledged by both staff and parents and relationships are now very good. She has done this by taking a very open and honest view of the school, by recognising and acknowledging the school's strengths and areas for improvement, and by recognising and publicising the achievements of the pupils. The parents are now very willing participants in their children's education and feel that they have a part to play. This has supported an ethos of hard work and enjoyment and willingness on the part of the staff to strive for higher standards and an improved curriculum. The school is now very well placed to improve further.
34. The staff are effective as a team. They have very good knowledge of the pupils' personal development and all of them share the same high expectations of the behaviour of the pupils. This contributes to the learning atmosphere of the school. They are beginning to share their expertise as subject co-ordinators and they have a satisfactory overview of their subjects. However, other than in English and mathematics, they do not sufficiently monitor the quality of teaching and learning and therefore are not best placed to help their colleagues to improve.
35. The leadership and management of provision for special educational needs are very good. The co-ordinator has a wealth of experience, knows her job very well, is a very good role model for staff and keeps meticulous records. The co-ordinator ensures that support assistants are trained, and work is organised efficiently so that staff time has maximum impact on pupils' learning. She maintains rigorous attention to detail in reviewing targets and keeping colleagues, resources and practices up to date. As a result, this area of provision is more effective than when the school was last inspected and pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
36. The head, strongly supported by senior staff, teachers and governors has drawn up a school improvement plan based on the local authority's recommended model. The process has given the staff an entirely appropriate agenda for school improvement, but in a small school such as this, the number of initiatives is unrealistic.
37. There have recently been a number of significant changes to the governing body for reasons beyond the school's control but the new governor team is developing well.

38. One of the main strengths of the school is its understanding and implementation of strategies to include everyone in all school activities. This school has a very high level of pupils with special educational needs and it is a great pleasure to observe the many ways in which pupils and adults encourage and support each other in getting the best from the school day. Steps are taken to ensure that financial and personal circumstances have the minimum effect on participation.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	416380	Balance from previous year	26211
Total expenditure	407128	Balance carried forward to the next	35463
Expenditure per pupil	2750		

39. The school finances are used effectively. There is planned use of the funding carried forward to support the development of the Foundation Stage accommodation. The school is involved in a range of initiatives, which brings benefits to the pupils and the community, especially in the area of out of school provision for children. On a day to day basis, the school runs well and staff, parents and pupils know the routines; little time is wasted. All statutory requirements are met. Financial management is good and the head and school secretary are addressing the issues which were indicated in the last auditor's report.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision is good, despite the accommodation which is barely satisfactory. There have been many improvements since the last inspection. The teachers plan and implement a good balance of adult directed and child self-initiated activity. They make accurate assessments of what the children can do and take account of this in their planning for learning. The teachers create a stimulating learning environment which the children enjoy but there is restricted access to the outdoors for the reception class.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is organised so that children are interested and excited participants in learning.
- The children are supported in developing very positive relationships with adults and other children.
- Children make good gains in confidence.

Commentary

40. Children in the nursery are given many opportunities to work in groups or as individuals, and they are given the opportunity to make choices when working in the classroom or outside. For example, the children work together well with adults in the 'travel agents' or share the toys in the sandpit. In the outdoor area, children mostly co-operate when they have to take turns with the wheeled toys.
41. Children in the reception class continue to develop very well. They have a very good range of learning opportunities. The teacher has set clear expectations for them and they concentrate well for their age in whole group situations, mainly because the teacher makes learning fun. When given the opportunity to make choices, they access resources for themselves from the range on offer and act responsibly, caring for equipment.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In the reception class the children are making good progress in learning to read and to write whilst developing their verbal communication skills.
- Children in the nursery are encouraged to talk and to enjoy books and early writing; they too make good progress.

Commentary

42. The teachers are well aware that most children need to develop their spoken language skills and they encourage them to discuss, to explain, to request and to answer at every opportunity. They do this in the nursery by providing a wide range of activities and a very high level of adult 'presence' to prompt and model language, for example in the role play area. In the nursery there

is a good range of books, though they are not all easily accessible, and there are opportunities to write, for example, when making Valentine cards.

43. Very good language provision is a feature of the reception class. The whole class lesson seen was very stimulating and inclusive. Through very good technique on the part of the teacher, the children were taught about how to attack reading using the range of clues which are available such as pictures, context and familiar letters. All of the children worked hard for an extended period. Their efforts were reinforced by a very interesting and worthwhile set of independent activities. The stimulating activities in the reception class constantly support talking, reading and writing.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teachers in nursery and reception classes provide a good range of practical activities to support children's learning.
- The children are helped to develop good counting skills through a very good range of action songs and rhymes and practical learning activities.

Commentary

44. In both classes, the teachers focus well on aspects of mathematical development and children make good progress. In the nursery class, children were helped to learn about space and pattern when the nursery had a 'stripes and spots' day. Parents had been asked to support this and many children turned up for school wearing striped jumpers etc. They were enchanted to see the staff's efforts at dressing for the occasion and the theme of the day made a significant impact. Many of the activities involved children in experimenting with pattern, for example with straws. In the nursery, there are many opportunities for children to develop their early counting skills.
45. In the reception class children learn to count, to add and to subtract and, because of particularly good teaching, reach good skill levels in these operations. In one lesson, children were singing with the teacher and were learning to subtract as teddy bears 'disappeared'. All of the children found this activity hilarious and, as a result, maintained a high level of concentration. In this class, the game only continued when the children had counted the correct number or had subtracted one. The teacher cleverly used the opportunity to check the understanding of most of the children.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In the nursery, children have a good range of opportunities to explore the world through visits to places of interest and through being able to go outside regularly.
- Activities in the reception class extend the children's knowledge of the world but there is no outdoor provision during lesson times.

Commentary

46. The themes and activities in the nursery and reception classes support children very well in this area of learning. Many visits are organised outside the school: to the seaside, the park, a farm, Raby Castle to see Father Christmas and many more. Through these experiences, children's knowledge of the world around them and the history of the area develop well. In addition, school

based activities such as making soup, washing and drying dolls' clothes and burning candles begin to develop children's understanding of physical processes. They also have regular access to computers and to construction materials. In the outdoor area they grow plants and experience the changes in the weather.

47. In the reception class the teacher continues the visits and classroom experiences through, for example looking at birds and plants, through sand and water activities and through continued use of the computers, including using the Internet. However, there is no ready access to the outside and though the teacher tries to compensate for this, this is an area for future development.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers in both nursery and reception classes pay good attention to the development of fine motor skill development as well as large body movements and they provide a very good range of opportunities despite the accommodation.

Commentary

48. In both classes there is a range of activities throughout each day which requires children to make fine body movements and improves their hand/eye co-ordination. Small-scale play activities such as using the farm, computer games and using hand lenses in the reception class, help children to develop these skills. In addition there are many opportunities for children to practice writing and develop pencil control skills as they use clipboards and pencils during their explorations or when working in the writing area. Similarly in the nursery class, there are always opportunities to 'write', to paint, to manipulate tools and materials in sand or with malleable materials. In both classes, children are supported in developing their large body movements either through outdoor play in the nursery or dedicated physical education lessons in the reception class.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is very well organised and opportunities are regularly offered for children to develop creatively through painting, sculpting, drawing and musical activities.

Commentary

49. In both classes, the staff encourage the children at all times to talk about their ideas, thoughts, aspirations and concerns. The quality of talk develops well and children are creative in their use of language, for example when hiding in the 'tree' as they pretend to be ornithologists. They have practical opportunities in both classes to be creative in the painting areas, with malleable materials and with sand and water and adults give good support in helping them to improve upon their efforts, for example when making birds with feathers and dough.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The many pupils who find literacy difficult achieve well because of the very good provision for their needs.
- In reading pupils achieve well and reach well above average standards by the time they leave, but in writing progress has been slow during years 3-6 and standards in year 6 are not high enough, particularly for the more able pupils.
- Teaching and learning are good overall.
- The management of English is strongly focused on improving provision to raise standards. The use of assessment is better than in some other subjects but is still making too little impact on standards.

Commentary

50. Attainment in year 2 is average overall; in year 6 it is above average. This is higher than at the time of the previous inspection. However, this comparison means little as standards fluctuate greatly from year to year in relation to the national average. This is largely the result of significant variations in the proportion of pupils with special educational needs in small year groups. These pupils achieve well in relation to their learning difficulties, but many do not reach the levels expected for their age. Although fluctuations in standards complicate the picture, one important trend is very clear. In years 3-6, progress is much stronger in reading than in writing, and the difference in performance between these areas becomes very wide by the end of year 6. In the national tests in 2003, 57 per cent of pupils achieved the higher than expected level in reading as opposed to nine per cent in writing.
51. Current standards in year 6 are well above average in reading, but average in writing. Pupils throughout the school achieve well in reading because good systems and improved resources support the development of pupils' skills, interests, attitudes and practices. The groundwork is firmly laid by good teaching in years 1 and 2 and reinforced by good weekly routines and learning opportunities. The good use of books and detailed records moves pupils on at a good rate of learning. In years 3-6, reading remains an important and often demanding part of daily learning. It is used effectively to support learning in other subjects. By year 6, pupils are quick to see how, in an unfamiliar story opening, the author's use of language offers different layers of meaning and changes the way the reader sees the character. They respond equally well to a non-fiction text, readily identifying its typical features.
52. In writing, good work in the infant classes establishes the basic skills, and standards in year 2 are average. Consistent attention to handwriting, spelling and punctuation helps most pupils to reach the standards expected for their age in these aspects and pupils in year 6 present their work neatly and correctly. However, in other aspects of writing progress stalls in years 3-6 and many pupils underachieve. The school recognises this and is tackling it as a priority by providing better resources and improved procedures for marking work and setting targets. These would make more impact if they were used consistently, but many pupils do not know their targets or how to improve their writing. The school's methods for analysing test results and pupils' work help it to know the extent of the problem more than to understand its causes. Factors that contribute to good achievement in reading do not apply equally to that in writing. In particular:
- The level of challenge presented by writing tasks does not stretch the more able pupils to achieve at their best.
 - Pupils have too few opportunities to practise and extend their taught skills by writing at length and independently in other subjects.

- Worksheets often provide better opportunities for reading than for writing.

53. In speaking and listening, attainment is below average in year 2 and average in year 6. Achievement is satisfactory and improving and attitudes are good. The spoken English skills of many infant pupils impede their learning, though staff make every effort to foster more confident use of spoken language. A whole-school effort to develop better methods to promote higher skills in this area is helping pupils to offer reasoned explanations for their ideas and to solve problems together. A very good lesson in year 5 showed what could be achieved. Excellent use of role play by the teacher enabled the pupils to interpret textual clues about a minor character in a story and to learn to use open questions to probe inner values and motives. The talk process excited and challenged all pupils. It both improved their reading skills and taught them how to see and use traits in order to write an effective character study. The school recognises that progress in this area cannot be assumed, but there is a relative lack of procedures to assess speaking and listening, and few targets are set to help spoken English keep pace with the demands of the curriculum.
54. The quality of teaching and learning is good, with very good features in years 2 and 6. The most significant strengths are :
- Very effective teamwork between teachers and support staff. Their joint use of IEPs and shared understanding of strategies such as 'Talkwrite' and the 'Better Reading Partnership' ensure that pupils who have special educational needs or are underachieving get the right support for their difficulties;
 - The good tone teachers set for learning. They encourage pupils so that they sustain interest and do their best to achieve the standard set.

These strengths are consistent across the school. Other strengths seen in the more effective lessons are less evident elsewhere. There are serious inconsistencies of practice in important areas such as:

- Using assessment to inform marking and targets so that pupils know what to do to improve their work;
- Setting work at the right level of demand for the more capable pupils so that they achieve well;
- Keeping the learning intentions in view throughout the lesson and using them to check new learning at the end;
- Making good use of writing opportunities.

55. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator has strong expertise in English and takes a leading role in school improvement. She is very focused on raising standards, and her work shows vision and a capacity to achieve change through team effort. The broad priorities for action are the right ones and the initiatives taken are good. However, these initiatives tend not to include the higher attaining pupils, and they do not always address the main causes of underachievement in writing.

Language and literacy across the curriculum.

56. The school is well aware of the need to make better use of opportunities for language development in other subjects in order to raise standards in English and improve the quality of learning across the school. Several lessons showed the good effects of the school's initiatives to raise standards in speaking and listening. Reading activities and resources are used more consistently across the school to achieve different learning purposes. In writing, however, more opportunities are missed than used. Overall, English and the rest of the curriculum do not support each other as fully as they should. Opportunities are not shaped by a clear overall plan or matched consistently to pupils' actual language needs.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory throughout the school.
- Most of the teaching is good; some is very good.
- The setting arrangement for pupils in years 5 and 6 has a positive impact on raising standards.
- Pupils are not set targets and the marking of their work does not give them sufficient direction on how to improve.
- Some aspects of subject leadership could be improved.

Commentary

57. Most pupils' attainment on entry to year 1 is average and they achieve satisfactorily to reach average standards by the end of year 2. Most pupils learn to add and subtract numbers up to 100 correctly. Through practical experiences they learn to measure lines in centimetres and tell the time in hours. Because the curriculum is thoroughly planned, the pupils make satisfactory progress in all aspects of mathematics and by year 2, some pupils have started to multiply numbers such as 2×4 , though others are less confident.

58. In the current year 6, standards are above average though this particular group had reached above average standards by the end of year 2. Most have achieved satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment despite disruption to learning caused by several changes of teachers during their time in years 4 and 5. Pupils successfully manipulate numbers, using brackets when calculating with multiplication and addition. Pupils are also familiar with decimals and fractions, understanding for instance, what it means when a fabric contains 25 per cent wool. They have covered all elements of mathematics and understand negative numbers, ratio and proportion and how to use charts to express data. Standards overall have improved since the last inspection.

59. Most of the teaching is good and some is very good; this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Some very good teaching was observed in a mixed age class of pupils in years 2 and 3 and good teaching was noted in years 5 and 6. The very good teaching generated high levels of pupil involvement because there was a high level of challenge. Pupils were very well supported and all managed to make sound judgements on whether they would use addition or subtraction to tackle the questions. The teacher guided the pupils very well by stressing the importance of tackling the problem in a systematic manner.

60. The oldest pupils benefit from the setting arrangements and enjoy the opportunity to work at a pace better matched to their capability. One pupil commented, "the work is harder and the maths is fun". However discussion with pupils confirms that they are not set mathematics targets and, as a consequence, they are not clear about how to make the best improvement. Scrutiny of pupils' books reveals that marking does not provide sufficient direction on how to improve.

61. Subject leadership makes a satisfactory impact on standards. The headteacher has observed mathematics lessons and provided feedback but this aspect of monitoring is not undertaken by the subject co-ordinator who is therefore restricted in her view of how the subject might improve.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. Model construction in design and technology is a good example of the way mathematics is being taught through other subjects. In a lesson for pupils in years 5 and 6, the pupils used their measuring skills well to make the components of a model car accurately. Their understanding of a mathematical sequence developed when they wrote instructions on a computer to control the car's movements.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Throughout the school there is a very good focus on experimental and investigative science.
- Teachers have good knowledge of the subject and the co-ordinator is helpful and supportive.
- The very positive working atmosphere in the school supports the practical work.
- On almost every occasion, pupils are asked to record their findings in their own words. However, too often teachers too closely prescribe the manner in which pupils will record and therefore limit the challenge, especially for the most able pupils.

Commentary

63. In all lessons seen there was a strong practical element and it is clear from the work in pupils' books that experimental work is a key feature of all their learning. Through this high level of involvement in practical tasks, pupils have very good recall of the work that they have undertaken and as a consequence have made some good gains in scientific knowledge. In discussion, pupils in year 6 can remember practical work they undertook in years 5 and 4 and can recall the scientific significance of, for example, the conditions necessary for plant and animal growth.
64. The quality of teaching is variable but is good overall and the teachers are able to rely on the co-ordinator for help and advice. Mostly the teachers have a good working knowledge of science and are therefore able to ask pupils suitable questions to challenge their thinking. This was seen, for example, in a very good lesson on reversible and non-reversible changes using heat, where the teacher was able to relate the work easily to everyday applications – for example in cooking.
65. In a lesson with year 2 and 3 pupils, the teacher encouraged the pupils to make fair tests of the suitability of materials for making bags to carry particular weights. This type of work builds pupils' confidence and capability. The atmosphere of work and support throughout the school supports science well. In the year 6 lesson involving heating and burning, the pupils showed a great respect for the potential dangers of the situation. They had been extremely well briefed by the teacher but accepted the need to wear eye protection, set up safe experiments and take turns and support each other. The pupils learnt a great deal about health and safety as well as fair testing and the effects of heat and burning.
66. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows a good range of themes have been covered. Pupils are expected to describe experimental work in their own words but they are not sufficiently encouraged to apply their existing knowledge in recording their work. They do not decide how or what to record and this is a missed opportunity for teachers to assess how well pupils can apply their developing knowledge. Teachers make generally accurate assessments of pupils' knowledge in science but do not use this information to give pupils targets for improvement.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Due to timetabling arrangements, no teaching was observed during this inspection and therefore no overall judgement can be made about provision. However, a year 5 and 6 design and technology lesson that included an important ICT component was observed and discussions were held with pupils in years 2 and 6 as they used workstations.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy using computers to find information for work in other subjects and to control models they have made in design and technology.
- Resources for learning are gradually improving.

Commentary

67. Pupils enjoy using computers to research information and most have learned how to use the shortcuts available on the toolbars around the window. By the end of year 6 most pupils can research information using the Internet to develop their work in history. Pupils have learnt to use the computer as a tool for independent work including writing. They enjoy changing the appearance of their work by altering the font and colour and print their completed work by selecting the correct printer. Through a range of work, pupils become sufficiently confident to be able to phrase questions carefully to target the information they require as they develop research techniques.
68. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Since then, more emphasis has been given to ensuring pupils use computers to control actions and this aspect is now satisfactory. In a design and technology lesson, pupils in years 5 and 6 had learned how to write a simple sequence of operations into software devised to issue commands to a motor. Most pupils know the importance of writing precise instructions and how to link these commands together into a sequence. Using knowledge gained in science, they carefully linked the terminals between the computer and the vehicle motor prior to testing whether their commands were being successfully transmitted into movement of their model vehicles.
69. The headteacher has worked hard as subject leader to improve the resources for ICT, and in the past year five new workstations have been brought into use. Further finance is allocated to improve ICT resources when the building remodelling has been completed. The headteacher is working closely with LEA officers to maximise funding opportunities as the school embarks on the programme of extended provision set out in the school improvement plan.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70. The staff seek opportunities to develop pupils' use of ICT to support other subjects, using the Internet for research and other programs to practice developing skills, for example in mathematics, science, history and English.

HUMANITIES

Religious Education

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The locally agreed syllabus is taught satisfactorily and quality and standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
- Lessons in religious education are used well to help pupils to acquire literacy skills.
- The tasks pupils are expected to do are not always appropriately matched to their ability.

Commentary

71. Teachers cover all of the locally agreed syllabus fully and scrutiny of pupils' work, only available from classes in years 3 to 6, shows standards by the end of year 6 to be broadly similar to those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Most pupils can incorporate religious themes into their

writing such as composing a story with a moral. These themes are sometimes linked to citizenship; for example pupils have expressed their ideas on what it means to be a good neighbour.

72. The planning for religious education gives sufficient coverage of Christianity as well as traditional practices of world religions. In years 3 to 6, the programme covers knowledge and understanding of Christianity, Judaism, themes such as human rights and, through links with history, knowledge of the contribution to society by particular historical characters. By the end of year 6, most pupils have made satisfactory progress in their learning and are able to compare, for example, the significance of the altar, font and chalice in Christianity with Hanukkah candles in Judaism.
73. Discussion and writing are strong features of lessons and as such make a significant contribution to the acquisition of literacy skills. This was seen in a lesson for a mixed age class of pupils in years 5 and 6. The lesson planning satisfactorily covered revision of the Gospels and an analysis of different forms of writing. Pupils worked in pairs to sort text extracts into categories such as poem, lyrics, persuasive writing, narrative writing and instructions. Most pupils worked well together, more able pupils making steady progress towards completion of the task. However, as the same extracts were provided across the ability range, the least able pupils found the work too hard and consequently made much more limited progress. The pupils do not know what they need to do to improve their work further.

History and Geography

74. In history and geography, work was sampled. Inspectors examined pupils' work and observed three lessons, one in history and two in geography. Whilst this does not form a basis for firm overall judgements on provision, the following points can be made:
- The standards achieved by pupils in years 2 and 6 are typical for their age in both history and geography. Achievement is good and interest is strong.
 - Both subjects have high status in the school's curriculum and are a focus for much enterprising work which expands pupils' horizons and extends their learning skills.
 - Both subjects make a strong contribution to pupils' social and cultural development through well-planned investigations of different civilisations and ways of life. Some opportunities for discussion work are missed.
 - A very good range of educational visits to places such as Eden Camp, Arbeia Roman Fort and the Jorvik Museum reinforces this learning well and provides very good opportunities for first-hand experience and fieldwork. Arrangements for these visits reflect good planning to capture pupils' interest and promote their learning in a variety of eras, topics, places, peoples, skills and resources.
 - Both subjects encourage innovative planning. This was evident in the stimulating use of resources, including the European Union website, to extend pupils' knowledge of Europe in a lesson with the middle-junior class.
 - Some worksheets miss opportunities for pupils to extend their learning by expressing it independently and at length in writing. Most worksheets are undemanding for the higher attaining pupils.
 - The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons seen was good. In one lesson, in which pupils in year 6 compared the ancient and modern Olympic Games, the quality was very good. An exceptional strength of this lesson was the quality of challenge for all pupils to use a range of skills and sources of evidence to help them to answer their own questions about the games in Ancient Greece. The investigation was driven by a strong surge of interest that was as much about extending independent learning skills as about gathering historical information. As a result, all pupils achieved well.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Physical Education

Provision in physical education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is structured well and teachers give pupils opportunities to build on their existing skills.
- All aspects of the physical education curriculum are taught thoroughly.
- The school makes very good use of local sports facilities to enhance the learning opportunities of the pupils.
- Activities outside the school day, sometimes involving a local football club, further enhance learning opportunities and the development of games skills.

Commentary

75. The curriculum for physical education builds well on what the children achieve in the Foundation Stage and there is a good emphasis on the improvement of skills. Teachers' planning shows that there is good progression of skill development in dance, in gymnastics and in games lessons, and by the time the pupils reach the ends of years 2 and 6, their body control is better than that found in many schools.

76. The school pays good attention to the developing needs of all of the pupils, for example offering the 'football club' activity to younger pupils when it is their turn. The school is committed to the development of good skills, and each week groups of pupils visit the sports centre where they learn to swim and to develop their gymnastic skills. This is clearly very good provision and it helps pupils to reach high standards.

77. Club activities, for example, involving staff from Sunderland Football Club, add greatly to the development of pupils' skills and abilities, in part through what they learn and in major part because it develops in them an eagerness to participate fully and to be the best that they can. This is another example of very good inclusion as pupils of all physical abilities are encouraged to join in.

MUSIC

Provision in music is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The music curriculum does not meet statutory requirements.
- Pupils achieve satisfactory standards in singing.
- Pupils accessing specialist instrumental tuition make secure gains when learning to play an instrument.

Commentary

78. By the end of year 6, although pupils have listened to and formed opinions of some musical extracts, their knowledge and understanding of several aspects of music, including composers or the skills needed to compose their own music, is unsatisfactory. With these important aspects of provision insufficiently taught, the music curriculum is, at present, unsatisfactory. As

composition skills were a weakness when the school was previously inspected there has been unsatisfactory progress in this subject since that time.

79. Currently there is no subject co-ordinator for music. However the present weaknesses are acknowledged by the headteacher and addressed in the school improvement plan where there are clear targets to appoint a subject co-ordinator and to improve teachers' skills through a staff training programme.
80. Pupils accessing instrumental teaching provided by a visiting specialist achieve appropriately as they gain in confidence and extend their repertoire satisfactorily. These pupils take their lessons seriously, behave very well and improve their understanding of pitch and rhythm.
81. Teachers make efforts to support music, and standards of singing are broadly satisfactory. In school assemblies pupils sing sweetly and tunefully; through regular singing of well known pieces most have learned the lyrics and can combine actions. Pupils are improving their ability to control sound satisfactorily through percussion-based tasks as seen in year 1 where they clapped and marched as their teacher directed them to a rhythm.

Design and technology

Provision in design technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The design and technology curriculum is good and includes good links to knowledge and understanding in other subjects.
- Pupils collaborate very well when working together to make products.

Commentary

82. Scrutiny of portfolios of pupils' work across the past two years in all year groups shows that satisfactory attention is given to the planning of topics to avoid repetition for pupils in mixed age classes and standards are as expected for the pupils' age.
83. There is good variety in the design and technology curriculum and, by the end of year 2, most pupils have learnt the skills to design and make a pop up book that incorporates an aspect of movement. They have learnt to use tools well and can use scissors, card and adhesive tapes to construct the book. Through this work they satisfactorily develop manipulative skills and learn how to fix components together. By the end of year 6, most pupils have satisfactorily improved their knowledge of materials and have worked together on more ambitious projects. Some good work with visitors supports learning, for example, pupils in years 5 and 6 worked with a visiting engineer and learned how to construct a pyramid with art straws. This improved their mathematical and scientific understanding of the strength of triangles. Pupils improved their knowledge of the Second World War by building an air raid shelter and then assessing how it could be improved.
84. The design and technology curriculum provides a good variety of experiences that covers each stage of the planning, making and evaluating process. Pupils are challenged to think about making products that meet prescribed criteria. Pupils in year 2, faced with a task of designing an activity playground, used straws and card to make model play equipment and then took decisions to move it into the best location. Their work on 'moving monsters' similarly shows good attention to all elements of the design and make process. In teams, older pupils made a moving vehicle that would be powered by a motor and controlled by a computer.

85. Discussion with older pupils confirmed the sheer enjoyment and sense of achievement that had resulted from pupils' working together to use their design and making skills in an activity that strongly promoted their social development and ability to work collaboratively.

Art and Design

86. No lessons could be observed in art and design and no firm overall judgements can be made on provision or standards. On the evidence of pupils' work and discussion, the following points were noted:

- The range of opportunities for pupils to experiment with design, colour, medium and technique varies a lot from class to class.
- Pupils have limited opportunities to study the work and varied styles of past and present artists.
- Recent work produced by year 1 and 2 pupils on the theme of frost is impressive in its controlled use of different techniques, materials and 'cold' tones to illustrate their very good 'frost poems'.
- An imaginative project in the year 3-4 class has prompted a wide range of independent explorations of the use of symbols, materials, techniques and abstract designs based on the idea of a journey. The process involved a very good use of sketch books to experiment, evaluate and develop ideas about how to get away from 'telling the story'.
- Good initiatives to establish an arts week, and to make stronger use of visiting artists and of art-based projects in the community, reflect the school's desire to increase and enrich the role of art in pupils' learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses.

- The school attaches great importance to this area.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Recent developments are raising standards.

Commentary

87. The school effectively promotes pupils' personal, social and health education in a variety of ways. Most importantly, it permeates the culture of the school because the development of self-esteem, moral values and inter-personal respect and understanding is paramount in all its work. Assemblies make these principles explicit, and strategies for older pupils to take responsibility for others make them work. More formal provisions are already established for visitors, such as the school nurse, to lead sessions on sex education and drugs awareness. Moves towards more formalised whole-school programmes are developing around the 'healthy schools initiative'. The introduction of formal lessons reflects the school's very strong commitment to strengthening its community. Sessions of 'circle time' and the 'class council' now alternate in the timetable for every class. Recent staff training underpins work in both areas. Sessions of both kinds were observed. The teaching was good because the learning was strongly affirming for all pupils. These lessons showed that pupils are beginning to understand and use the principles of social order and democratic process involved in gathering views on issues that concern them and negotiating agreed positions. This is laying strong foundations both for the work of the imminent school council and for the introduction of a taught programme of citizenship.

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	4
Pupils' achievement	4
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	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
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	2
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	4
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).

