

INSPECTION REPORT

MILL LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Stockton-on-Tees

LEA area: Stockton-on-Tees

Unique reference number: 111539

Headteacher: Deborah Wray

Lead inspector: John Foster

Dates of inspection: 23 – 25 February 2004

Inspection number: 256917

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	194
School address:	Wellington Street Stockton-on-Tees
Postcode:	TS18 1QX
Telephone number:	01642 860055
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Shaneem Akhter (Acting chair)
Date of previous inspection:	1 March 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school, with 194 pupils, is about the same size as the average primary school. This is slightly smaller than at the previous inspection when there were 209 pupils at the school. There are 46 children in the nursery, all attending part-time. The school is situated in the centre of Stockton-on-Tees and is in an area of high social deprivation. Most of the pupils are from the area close to the school. Though there is a range of ability, the general level of attainment of children when they start school is very low when compared to that expected nationally. There are 65 pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, with 57 of this group not having English as their first language. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average at 44.6 per cent. Almost 28 per cent of pupils have special educational needs. This is above the national average, and of these pupils 1.4 per cent have formal statements of special educational need. This is average. There is a high level of pupil mobility at the school. The school is involved in national initiatives relating to the "Leadership Development Strategy for Primary Schools", "Sure Start", "The Single Regeneration Budget", "The Children's Fund" and "Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder".

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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27053	Sheila Bewick	Team inspector	Special educational needs Information and communication technology Geography
21243	Lynne Moore	Team inspector	English as an additional language
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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	17
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	19
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	32

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school that provides good value for money. Standards overall are low, particularly in English, mathematics and science. However, pupils make good progress throughout their time in school having started with very low attainment levels at the beginning of nursery year. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The headteacher gives a good lead to the school and the governors are fully aware of the school's strengths and where improvement is needed. The many pupils from minority ethnic groups are well supported and enjoy full inclusion in all school activities.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are well below average in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils achieve well because the quality of teaching is good.
- Pupils have good attitudes to their work and they behave well.
- The headteacher gives good leadership and is well supported by the senior management team.
- Governance is good. The governors are knowledgeable about the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- There is good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Attendance levels are poor and there is a small group of pupils who consistently arrive at school late.
- The co-ordinators do not consistently monitor teaching, learning and standards well enough in all subjects.
- Assessment information is not used well enough to plan future work.

Since the previous inspection the school has made good progress in addressing the issues identified in that report. Whilst standards remain low, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected levels in the national tests at Year 6 has increased substantially. The curriculum for information and communication technology and religious education is now well embedded and standards are rising in these subjects. A new computer suite has been established. The governing body is now aware of what is happening in the school and takes a positive role in formulating the school development plan.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

The table below shows the standards achieved by pupils in the Year 6 national tests. The results are based on average points scores.

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

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.

NB: the E* grades shown in the 2002 results indicates that the pupils' attainment was in the bottom five per cent of all schools nationally.

Pupils achieve well. They enter school with very low levels of attainment. They are taught well overall throughout their time at the school and because of this they make good progress in their learning. However, as the table above indicates, they attain standards that are well below the national average in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6. In the national tests for 2002 the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level 4 in English and mathematics was 28 and

40 respectively. By 2003 these figures had risen to over 50 per cent for both subjects. The children in the nursery and reception classes make satisfactory progress though very few reach the expected Early Learning Goals before they start in Year 1. In other subjects where judgements have been made, pupils achieve well and generally attain the expected standards for their age. The exceptions are in religious education at Year 2 and in information and communication technology at the end of Years 2 and 6.

Pupils develop their personal qualities well. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils have good attitudes and they behave well. There are good relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults. Attendance is poor. A small number of pupils are consistently late arriving at school. The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is good. The quality of teaching is good overall.

Pupils learn well because they are taught well. The quality of teaching during inspection was never less than satisfactory and at its best it was excellent. The teachers mark pupils' work carefully, giving them clear information about how well they are doing and how they can improve.

Pupils are cared for very well. There are very good systems within the school for supporting and helping the pupils. Child protection procedures are good. The curriculum is appropriate for the ages and abilities of pupils, though there are limited opportunities for activities beyond the normal school day.

The school has good links with the community and with other schools in the area. There are good links with the receiving secondary school. Staff from that school visit Mill Lane and the pupils visit the secondary school for some lessons and to become acquainted with their new surroundings.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and this is shared by the senior management team, the staff and the governing body. The governance is good. Governors are active in promoting the school and in formulating the school development plan to shape the school's future.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents are happy with the school's provision. Pupils are proud to be part of the school. However, the results of the parents' questionnaire indicate that there is a small minority who are not happy with some elements of its provision. Notable amongst the areas of dissatisfaction are the facts that they would feel uncomfortable in approaching the school with concerns and that they believe that their views are not taken into account enough.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards further, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
- Extend the effective monitoring of teaching, learning and standards to include all subjects.
- Use assessment data more effectively in planning learning.
- Further improve attendance and punctuality.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Children start at the school with standards of attainment that are very low when compared to other children of similar age. Throughout their time at the school they make good progress overall and by the end of Year 6 more than 50 per cent of pupils reach the expected levels for their age in national tests. By the end of the reception year very few children achieve the expected Early Learning Goals.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are well below average by the end of Year 2.
- Standards in English and science are well below average and in mathematics are below average by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils are taught well between Year 1 and Year 6 and this enables them to make good progress in their learning.
- Where it is possible to make a judgement in other subjects, pupils attain standards that are broadly in line with those expected for their age and ability, despite their low starting point.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	12.0 (13.3)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	12.0 (12.8)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	13.2 (13.1)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 26 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.0 (22.2)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	24.9 (23.4)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.0 (26.3)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 20 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

1. The results in the above tables show the standards achieved by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 to be substantially below those attained nationally.
2. The national test results for 2003 indicate that at the end of Year 2, the pupils attained standards that were:
 - Very low in writing and in the bottom 5 per cent of all schools in reading and mathematics.
 - Very low in reading, writing and mathematics when compared to the results of pupils from similar schools.

The similar tests for pupils in Year 6 indicate that pupils' performance was:

- Well below average in English, mathematics and science when compared to all schools.
- Below average in English and average in mathematics and science when compared to similar schools.

3. The above results for Year 6 pupils are a significant improvement on the previous year's results. In 2002 the percentage attaining the expected level 4 or better was 28 per cent in English and 40 per cent in mathematics. The respective figures for 2003 were 50 per cent for both subjects. When the very low levels of attainment on entry are taken into consideration, this displays good progress by a significant number of pupils.
4. Inspection evidence indicates that at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils attain standards that are well below average in English and science. In mathematics they attain well below average standards at Year 2 and below average at the end of Year 6.
5. In the nursery and reception classes the children make satisfactory progress based on the satisfactory teaching they receive. Nevertheless by the time they start in Year 1, very few are close to achieving the expected levels identified in the Early Learning Goals as they start school with very low levels of attainment.
6. When pupils begin in Year 1 they experience good quality teaching overall for the rest of their time at the school. This results in good learning and pupils making good progress.
7. In English the higher attaining pupils write thoughtfully when posed the question, "Is homework necessary?" They are beginning to read well and use their skills in their writing and in discussion. In mathematics the more able pupils recognise how shapes can be reflected through different quadrants and, using laptop computers, they produce the reflected shapes. In science pupils are beginning to plan experiments for themselves. They predict the results and check to see if they are accurate in their predictions.
8. In other subjects pupils achieve well and make good progress. It was not possible to make secure judgements in all subjects because of time and timetable limitations, but in design and technology and history at Year 2 pupils attain expected levels and in religious education, art and design and design and technology and history at Year 6 they also attain expected levels. Since the previous inspection the school has concentrated on improving standards in religious education and information and communication technology, as these were identified as major issues at that time. The school has been successful in achieving this.
9. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well from their own starting points. These pupils, and those in the speech and language unit make good progress. Gains in their learning build up across their time at the school. The school has focussed on literacy and language to meet the specific learning needs of pupils with special educational needs well. Progress in speaking and listening and some aspects of writing, for example, writing instructions for making pancakes, is very good in Year 1.
10. The achievement of pupils for whom English is an additional language is similar to that of most other pupils in the school. The school's analysis of the results of national tests at the end of Year 6 for the past three years indicates that pupils with English as an additional language attain lower standards in English, and significantly lower in writing than other groups of pupils. Standards in mathematics are slightly higher than other pupils, with those in science being slightly lower.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance is poor.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school monitors attendance carefully and uses effective strategies to improve attendance.
- The school's behaviour policy and awards systems are effective in promoting good attitudes and behaviour.

- Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and around school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.
- Attendance is poor. It is well below the national average.
- Pupils do not always arrive at school punctually.

Commentary

11. Pupils' attitudes to school are good. Most like coming and arrive in a positive frame of mind, willing to take full advantage of the opportunities school offers. Behaviour in lessons is good overall and sometimes very good because the teachers have high expectations of pupils and the pupils react well to these expectations. Pupils settle down to their lessons quickly and sensibly although some, especially younger ones, find it difficult to settle after playtime. Pupils are mature in their self-organisation, approach tasks willingly and work well both in pairs and on their own. They help hand out books and tidy up at the end of lessons well. The school has successfully created a calm and purposeful atmosphere where high expectations of behaviour and consideration for others result in an orderly community. Very few children have been excluded.

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	72	2	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

12. A minority of parents are concerned about behaviour and bullying. The school makes every effort to sort out disagreements between pupils, many of which are based on external influences over which the school has no control. Very thorough records enable staff to monitor the situation and they feel that most instances are effectively resolved. Concerned parents have been invited into school to observe behaviour first hand. Although behaviour in the playground at lunchtime and break times is noisy and boisterous, pupils are well supervised and generally play well together. They queue up and enter school in an orderly manner. Pupils are encouraged to use knives and forks correctly and develop good table manners. The 'top table' reward, where pupils are rewarded for good behaviour at dinnertimes, is very popular and children strive to be chosen.

Attendance

13. Attendance is poor, although the school has been recognised within the local education authority for the most improved attendance rates. The figures for authorised absence are still well below national averages. One particular reason for this is the number of parents who take their children on holiday during term time, often to visit relatives overseas. The pupils are given disposable cameras to take on their visits to record how people live. The photographs they take are used when they return to school to help other pupils to develop their understanding of different cultures. A further reason for high absence rates is that there is a small group of children who regularly miss school because of severe illness. However involvement in the "STARS project", where good attendance is rewarded and absences followed up, has had a positive effect on improving attendance. Most parents inform the school if their child is absent and so unauthorised absences are in line with national figures. Whilst most pupils come to school on time, a small number are persistent latecomers.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	7.5
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.4
National data	0.4

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

14. The moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good, because teachers plan well for these areas within the curriculum. Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong and understand the standards of behaviour that the school expects of them. Teachers are good role models for their pupils and help them to create the good ethos that exists in the school. There are good relationships throughout the school between pupils and between pupils and adults. Pupils' social development is good because the good relationships mean that pupils play well together in the playground. Older pupils, in particular, take their responsibilities seriously in carrying out their various duties. They run the school shop, act as "Buddies" to the younger children and help to set up the hall for assemblies. The school encourages good behaviour at lunchtimes, which are seen as good opportunities for developing acceptable social behaviour. The multi-cultural nature of the school means that pupils are developing a good awareness of their own and others' beliefs. This is supported by study of the six world faiths in religious education. Recently Divali, Eid and Christmas have all been celebrated. Visits out of school extend pupils' knowledge of the wider community. All pupils, irrespective of ability, are fully included in all aspects of the school.
15. Spiritual awareness is satisfactory. Pupils are encouraged to reflect during assemblies and enjoy opportunities to sing. Through opportunities given for pupils to sit and discuss matters of importance in the world, the allocation of responsibilities and use of rewards, the school places a strong emphasis in developing the self-confidence and self-esteem of these pupils. Pupils raise money for charities such as "Comic Relief". However, this area of provision is not planned for as well as it is for pupils' social, moral and cultural development.
16. The school has a policy of making sure that all pupils are fully included in all activities provided. The result of the successful implementation of this policy is that there is little difference between the attitudes and behaviour of any particular group of pupils. The pupils' questionnaires indicate that most pupils are proud to be part of the school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The curriculum is satisfactory overall, though there are limited activities provided beyond the normal school day. Links with the community are good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers make lessons interesting and this motivates pupils to learn.
- The teaching assistants are used well to support pupils' learning.
- Homework is used well to extend learning beyond the school day.
- Teachers' marking is good and gives pupils information about their strengths and how they can improve their work.
- The teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and the pupils react well to these expectations.

- The quality of assessment is satisfactory overall. The data obtained from assessment could be used better in planning future work.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 33 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (3%)	5 (15%)	15 (46%)	12 (36%)	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.

17. The quality of teaching and learning overall is good. The table above shows the range of teaching the pupils experience, from satisfactory to excellent. At its best, the teaching motivates the pupils to learn and successfully enables the pupils to make outstanding progress as noted below:

Example of outstanding practice

An excellent mathematics lesson for Year 5 and 6 pupils. This was the top set of three and the pupils were being taught about reflective symmetry.

From the outset of the lesson it was clear that it was special, and the pupils were to experience an outstanding learning experience. The classroom was bright and welcoming, encouraging the pupils to settle down to their work. The teacher enthused the pupils from the start with a lively session of mental maths. The resources for the main part of the lesson were all ready and of the highest quality. The teacher used information and communication technology in an excellent way to help stimulate the pupils' learning. The pupils were encouraged to participate in the lesson and were not afraid of ridicule if they gave a wrong answer. All they got was help, both from the teacher and other children, because the relationships were excellent. As the lesson progressed, the pupils became more involved in learning, using laptop computers and superbly presented worksheets. By the end of the lesson all pupils had made significant progress in their learning and were able to explain and demonstrate how a shape can be reflected within four quadrants, around the vertical and horizontal axes.

18. At the previous inspection the quality of teaching was identified as good overall, with particular strengths in the nursery and in Year 6. The report identified weaknesses in teaching and learning in information and communication technology and religious education. In the intervening period the teaching in these subjects has improved well and is now satisfactory overall.
19. In the nursery and reception classes the quality of teaching is satisfactory and the children make sound progress in their learning. The early skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well when direct teaching occurs in these classes, but the activities planned for children to choose their own learning are restrictive. Pupils are not given a wide enough range of activities, nor are they challenged well enough at times. The teachers do not plan well enough for a range of outdoor activities to develop the children's skills, particularly their physical skills.
20. In Years 1 to 6, the quality of teaching and learning is good. In these classes the teachers plan so that the pupils' learning is based on what they know, understand and can do. In literacy and numeracy the teachers use the format recommended within the national strategies and this helps the pupils to make good progress in their learning, in spite of the very low standards they have when they start school.
21. The teachers give good challenge to their pupils. They question them well to encourage them to identify with what is being taught. The pupils react well to this and are very keen to take an active part in learning. The teachers use good procedures for managing the pupils. The teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and the pupils react to this well. They know the boundaries set and stick to them. The relationships between the teachers and the staff are very good and this encourages the pupils to work well for their teachers.

22. In marking the pupils' work, the teachers make them aware of what they are doing well and how they can improve the quality of their work. This extends to the good quality homework given to the pupils, whereby they extend their learning beyond the normal school day.
23. Teachers use the teaching assistants within their classes well. Though the quality of support varies from class to class, the assistants give some high quality support. In a Year 2 class, for example, in both the literacy and numeracy lessons, the teaching assistant was very aware of the pupils' needs and reacted well to support their learning. The teacher and the teaching assistant worked very well together, with the assistant being involved in planning for learning.
24. Throughout the school the many pupils whose first language is not English are well supported in their learning. The school has provided bi-lingual staff to support this group of pupils and some teachers have a basic knowledge of the pupils' first language.
25. The quality of assessment is satisfactory overall. The teachers assess how well the pupils have done at the end of each half-term or unit of work. However, the data gained from the assessments are not utilised as well as they could be to ensure that pupils' learning is fully based on their earlier knowledge and understanding.
26. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is good.
27. The good quality teaching for pupils with special educational needs allows pupils to improve their skills. The partnership between teachers and teaching assistants is very good. Teaching assistants provide high quality support at just the right time for this group of pupils. This boosts pupils' confidence and helps them enjoy learning. All staff encourage pupils to try hard and pupils respond well to this. High quality skills displayed by the staff in managing behaviour ensure that pupils with behaviour, emotional and social difficulties learn to manage their own behaviour.
28. For pupils for whom English is not their first language, the teachers plan work that is well-matched to pupils' needs and tasks are explained clearly. This helps pupils to understand what they need to do and ensures that they are appropriately successful and achieve well. Good quality support is provided for this group of pupils by a skilled team of teaching assistants. They help pupils to understand the content of the lesson and support them well with their work. All staff use praise and encouragement well to help maintain pupils' interest and enthusiasm. This helps to ensure that pupils behave well and try their hardest. Pupils with English as an additional language have full access to all subjects of the national curriculum, as they are taught with other groups and are not withdrawn from class for individual or small group work.

The curriculum

Curriculum provision is satisfactory overall. Accommodation is good. Resources to support the curriculum are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils are fully included in every aspect of the curriculum.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good.
- Accommodation is good and is used well.
- There are good curriculum links to the local secondary school.
- Prior to moving, the Year 6 pupils make several visits to the receiving school.
- Limited opportunities exist for curriculum enrichment beyond the school day.

- There is no formal policy to guide teachers in providing for pupils' personal, social and health education.

Commentary

29. The curriculum is broad, balanced and meets statutory requirements. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when weaknesses were identified in information and communication technology and religious education. The purchase of a good range of resources and more detailed planning using the locally agreed syllabus now ensure that all areas of religious education are being taught. Some subjects such as art and design and design and technology, as well as history and geography, are not taught continuously throughout the school year, but the school devotes blocks of time to ensure that there is full coverage of these subjects. The school holds daily collective acts of worship in line with statutory requirements. Whilst these are mainly of a Christian nature, the school includes celebration of other world faiths, making good use of the support given by members of other faiths within the local community.
30. There are limited, planned opportunities for the curriculum to be enriched beyond the school day. There has been some provision for revision classes after school but the uptake of these has dwindled over time. At Christmas there is a school choir but this is not extended beyond that time. The school does make good use of the local professional football club, who visit the school for two of the three school terms to help develop pupils' football skills.
31. Pupils with special educational needs and those in the speech and language unit have full access to the National Curriculum and religious education. However information and communication technology is not used as well as it could be to help pupils to practise their new spelling, reading, writing and number skills. Most of the time teachers prepare work and support for pupils with special educational needs well. As a result pupils with special educational needs work alongside the other pupils in the classroom and make good progress. Individual education plans are reviewed each term and new targets set.
32. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory. Teachers have received appropriate training and each class has regular lessons during which pupils can share feelings and discuss relevant current issues. Pupils display responsible attitudes in lessons and around the school and relationships between pupils are good. At present there is no policy in place to guide teachers in providing for pupils' personal, social and health education. The school is aware of this concern and action is planned in order to address this.
33. All pupils have an equal access to the curriculum. This is a strength of the school's work when considering that many pupils having special educational needs or have English as an additional language. Teachers are often well supported in classrooms by support staff to ensure that all pupils have a full access to the curriculum. Teachers make very good use of these good support assistants and other helpers.
34. Accommodation is good. The school is well kept, cheerfully decorated and appropriate for delivery of the curriculum. There are two halls, a library, a special educational needs unit, and a recently developed information and communication technology room. However some of the classrooms are small and the open plan arrangement means that people have to walk through them whilst lessons are taking place. This does not distract pupils from their work. The entrance hall doubles as a dining area and this arrangement is not ideal, though there is little that the school can do about this. Children play in two playgrounds and the whole site is securely fenced. Considerable litter accumulates in the school grounds but the caretaker cleans it up each day. There is an adequate range of resources overall to support teaching and learning, though resource provision in English, mathematics and science is good.
35. Good curricular links have been made with the local secondary school, particularly in mathematics, science, design and technology and information and communication technology.

During the inspection Year 6 pupils visited the secondary school where staff

jointly taught science with a focus on "forces". There are good procedures in place to prepare the Year 6 pupils for the next stage of their education. Pupils make several visits to the receiving school prior to transfer.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' personal support, advice and guidance is good. The school provides very well for the care, welfare, health and safety of its pupils. The school is beginning to involve pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is very thorough monitoring of health and safety issues.
- Child protection procedures are in place and thorough.
- The school places high priority on monitoring pupils' welfare.
- Good support and advice is given; pupils know who to turn to when they need help.
- The school is aware that there has been no recent training in child protection for staff.

Commentary

36. The school makes every effort to ensure that pupils work and play in a safe environment. All adults are safety conscious, checking on potential risks and reviewing systems regularly. Good procedures are in place to identify pupils who may be at risk. Although not all staff have received in-service training for child protection they are all aware of the correct procedures to follow if they have a concern. Systems for recording accidents and delivering first aid are very well established and thorough. Standards of care are good, ensuring that the school is clean and pupils are not put at risk. Relationships between staff and pupils are good. Although there are no formal systems for recording pupils' personal development, the staff know their pupils well and are sensitive to their needs. Consequently, children have access to good support and guidance and know whom to turn to for help. The good support they receive helps the pupils to achieve well. Pupils are encouraged to live healthy and safe lives.
37. Very good relationships between pupils with special educational needs and their teachers and teaching assistants helps to prepare pupils for learning and rising to the challenge of new work. The school uses advice and reports from visiting staff such as the learning support teacher very well in planning lessons. The school supports all groups of pupils well. The staff ensure that all pupils are included in all activities. There is good support for pupils with English as an additional language, those who have special educational needs and there is no difference in the support given to boys and girls. The school has not identified any pupils who are gifted or talented.
38. The school monitors pupils' academic performance satisfactorily. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' work through the use of a range of standardised tests and by checking on what pupils know and can do at the end of each half term or unit of work. The headteacher maintains the records of pupils' achievements but these are not used as well as they could be for setting individual targets for pupils. The results and the data are not passed on to the teachers consistently, in order that they may use them when planning pupils' work.
39. At present pupils have some opportunities to express their views and shape their school. However the school is aware that more work needs to be done in this area. In Year 6 pupils post anonymous notes into a box and the whole class discusses the comments raised through the notes. The school has plans to create a school council, but this has yet to be formally established.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has established satisfactory links with the parents and they make satisfactory contributions to their children's learning. There are good links with the local community. Links with other schools are well established.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The effective use of the community liaison auxiliary, who runs the "Family Learning Group" and works with the community.
- The school works hard to liaise with parents and keep them informed about what is happening in the school.
- Parents' views are sought through questionnaires and an open door policy.
- There are effective arrangements for the transfer of pupils to secondary education at the local secondary school.
- A significant minority of parents expressed negative views about the school.

Commentary

40. Links with parents are satisfactory. Most parents say that their children enjoy school and praise its work. However a significant minority are less than satisfied and a good relationship with these parents has not been effectively established. The information parents receive through, for example, the brochure and newsletters is relevant, informative and helpful. There are good opportunities for parents to come into school and find out how their children are getting on. Staff make every effort to contact those who do not attend consultation meetings. At the start of term teachers send out detailed information about what will be studied. This, together with home loan schemes in the nursery and reception classes and regular homework enables parents to play an active role in their child's learning. However the school is aware that more needs to be done to engage fathers in their children's education.
41. The links with parents ensure that all parents are given appropriate information about their children's progress. The school ensures that all parents are well supported and the bi-lingual staff are used well to help parents who have little command of English to understand how their children are progressing. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the production of their children's Individual Education Plans and are kept well informed of the progress they are making towards achieving their targets. This is particularly the case for the pupils in the Speech and Language Unit. The pupils benefit because both school and parents are involved in their learning.
42. Parents are given regular opportunities to express their views through daily contact with staff, consultation evenings and questionnaires. The results of surveys are analysed and relevant action taken to address concerns expressed. Whilst the majority of parents feel that teachers are accessible, a significant minority say that they do not feel that they can approach the school with concerns. The school has worked hard to overcome the parents' concerns.
43. Links with the community are good. The liaison auxiliary works enthusiastically in establishing, for instance, a "Family Learning Scheme", health information sessions and workshops. Whilst there is currently no formal parents' association, members of the family learning scheme, supported by staff, are becoming increasingly involved in fundraising activities. The school provides a resource for community groups such as youth clubs, adult education classes and ballet classes. Donations from local businesses have enabled the school to reward pupils for good attendance and celebrate their achievements. The headteacher provides support for the community through her involvement in the "Stockton International Family Committee" and as chairperson of the "Neighbourhood Management Board". A number of visitors into school and visits out serve to increase pupils' understanding of the wider community and enrich their learning. Year 6 children talk enthusiastically about

the trip they made to Eden Camp when they were studying the Second World War. The school makes every effort to become involved in local and regional events such as carol singing with the Tees Valley Music group at the Thornaby Pavilion.

44. Links with other schools are well established. There are many opportunities for pupils to attend educational events and taster days at the high school before they begin there. Staff from the secondary school visit Mill Lane and attend parents' evenings so that parents and pupils are familiar with them before transfer. This school enjoys good links with neighbouring primary schools. The "cluster" system enables headteachers and staff to meet together and discuss issues relevant to their schools. Pupils play in inter-school sporting competitions. These events give them a chance to meet pupils from other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

School governance has improved substantially since the previous inspection and it is now good. The leadership of the head teacher is good. The leadership and management of staff with curricular responsibilities are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and the senior management team have a clear vision for developing the school.
- Governors have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and where it needs to improve. They play an active role in supporting its work.
- Management is satisfactory, but there are too few strategies in place to monitor pupils' performance and ensure that educational programmes help raise standards.
- Inclusion is successfully nurtured in the school.

Commentary

45. The head teacher has a positive effect on the way the school operates. She seeks to ensure that all who work in it give of their best. Strategic planning is well established and reflects the school's drive for improvement. Analysis of the school's work is realistic and rigorous and the head teacher knows what needs to be done to raise standards. The vision and planning for the school are communicated to the senior management team who implement the strategies to achieve the vision. School management is satisfactory overall. Whilst the headteacher and senior management team manage the school well, there are some shortcomings in the management of subjects. The co-ordinators do not all have enough time or opportunities to monitor teaching, learning or standards well enough. Though there are some good areas, notably English and science, this does not extend to all subjects.
46. Governors play an active part in the life of the school and are fully supportive of the head teacher and the staff. Though there was no chair of the governing body at the time of the inspection because of resignation, the governors were led by the vice-chair. The governors were due to appoint a new chair shortly after the inspection. The governors have a great diversity of skills and challenge the school in what it plans to do to ensure that decisions benefit all users. They offer good support to the headteacher and senior managers. They are clear that the school is there to serve pupils from all walks of life and encourage teachers to provide a good education for any child who wishes to join. Governors have a very clear understanding of all aspects of the school's work and plan well to get the best value from resources available. Although the carry forward is slightly above the recommended figure, the governors have identified appropriate use of these funds within the school development plan. Governors actively seek additional funding. School spending decisions relate to priorities for improvement and benefit all pupils and the governors and headteacher endeavour to gain the best value when purchasing goods and services. They are equally rigorous in making

decisions about new resources for information and communication technology as they are

about staffing to ensure that pupils who do not speak English at home are well supported in school.

47. Good use has been made by the school of designated funding for pupils with English as an additional language. One part-time teacher and one full-time bi-lingual assistant have been employed using these funds. The hours worked by the teacher have been increased to full-time by the addition of funds from the school's budget. The bi-lingual assistants are used well to support mainly younger pupils, who have the most need of interpretation as they get to know school routines and begin to learn English.
48. Leadership by the special educational needs co-ordinator is good. She supports staff well with ideas for their planning and teaching. The strong special educational needs team review pupil progress and help staff to adapt their teaching and resources.
49. The school has begun to collect performance data. The headteacher is clear about systems and procedures; she has guided staff to analyse and use the information to improve planning, teaching and staff performance. This is beginning to have an impact on standards in the school. In all classes data are being collated. However, the gathering of information is in its infancy and there is inconsistency in its use. In some subjects, co-ordinators are clear about the strengths and weaknesses and have drawn up relevant action plans to improve standards by improving planning and setting for pupils, but this is mainly confined to English, mathematics and science. The school is not using the data to highlight differences in achievement by different groups of pupils and to challenge staff about the progress pupils in their class make.
50. The school has established sound procedures for performance management and this has led to the identification of specific training needs for the staff. The needs identified are closely linked to the priorities within the school development plan.
51. Many pupils come to the school from the Asian community and the school makes immediate and lasting efforts to ensure that they can take part in lessons, employing several bi-lingual assistants who speak several languages and provide translations for everyday and technical subject related words.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	591,598
Total expenditure	573,889
Expenditure per pupil	3,068

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	26,238
Balance carried forward to the next	43,947

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall with some good features.

Children enter the school with very low levels of attainment. They have limited experience and understanding. A large percentage of children do not speak English at home and staff work hard to provide many opportunities for them to develop their speaking and listening skills. All staff are very caring role models and work well as a team to ensure that children make steady progress towards the early learning goals. Bi-lingual teaching assistants work well with staff to support children as they learn. The indoor curriculum takes account of each area of learning, although some activities are not stimulating enough. Planning for outdoor learning has begun, but the school has yet to develop a wide enough range of activities from which children can choose so that learning can cover all six areas of learning. Assessment procedures have been greatly improved and are used well in medium-term planning. Resources overall are satisfactory. Opportunities for children to engage in independent learning are limited due to the lack of time allocated to free choice.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment is well below expected levels.
- Children make good progress, develop personal independence and settle well because staff encourage and support them every step of the way.
- Children are well behaved and learn how to play together because adults are good, caring role models.
- The range of activities from which children can choose is sometimes limited and does not always have a clear learning outcome.

Commentary

52. The quality of teaching for this area of learning is good. Teaching gives good emphasis for children to develop their independence. Children are encouraged to fasten their coats and to manage their clothes and fastenings. Relationships are good and staff are good role models encouraging and supporting children as they play. Children share the musical instruments and equipment, such as rolling pins, well. Staff praise children often and encourage them in all they do; this helps to develop the children's self-esteem. Staff interact sensitively to help the children to improve their concentration. At times children have to sit in groups that are too large and so they become distracted. Children show great interest and excitement in their learning during practical activities, such as role-play in the house outside. Activities that are planned and led by staff are interesting and motivate children well but the activities from which the children are given free choice are less exciting and often lead to a loss of interest. Many children have established friendships and they play very well together in small groups. Adults have high expectations of children's behaviour and because of this it is good. The children are clear about right and wrong. They follow rules and routines very well, lining up sensibly when moving around the school. Staff always listen carefully to what children have to say. Most children are confident and are comfortable in adult company.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment is very low in relation to expected standards.
- Staff give good attention to developing children's listening skills.
- The teaching of key vocabulary does not feature enough in plans.
- Writing activities do not always inspire children.

Commentary

53. Teaching is satisfactory for this area of learning. Children enjoy learning letter sounds and make steady progress. Teachers plan well to give children many worthwhile experiences to develop listening skills such as when they use the tape recorder and listening to stories on the computer. Activities to develop children's vocabulary, however, are not planned well enough. For example, both reception and nursery classes have similar indoor role-play scenarios, so skills and vocabulary are not developed well enough through play. Children show great interest in books and identify their favourite stories. Staff teach children how to care for books and parents are encouraged to share books with their children at home. Children begin writing by expressing their ideas in paintings and drawings; older and more able children learn to write a few letters from memory and copy words, sometimes being influenced by stories they enjoy. Though children use a range of implements to develop their writing skills, such as felt pens and crayons there are too few inspiring play activities to encourage early writing. By the end of the reception year, most children have very limited writing and language skills.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers give good attention to counting and number symbols and make these sessions fun.
- The activities from which the children can choose for themselves are not planned well enough to encourage learning.

Commentary

54. Teaching is satisfactory overall with good emphasis on developing children's knowledge about numbers and counting. Teachers make learning fun when they work directly with the children. When the children are given free choice activities, however, these are less inspiring and slow down the rate of progress the children make. Teachers encourage children to count and understand the concept of "one more" in fun ways by singing songs, or using puppets. Numbers are well displayed in the nursery and reception classrooms to ensure that children are aware of their importance. Teachers help children to count in every day situations. In the nursery they know only five children are allowed to play in the role-play area at any one time. In the reception class teachers support children well when playing stimulating games such as ordering large number tiles or using dice to encourage children to count a certain number of jumps. A minority of above average children record simple addition. Children know the names of a few shapes and sometimes make patterns with paint and beads. However, in spite of the support they receive, most children attain very low standards by the end of reception.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the reception class stimulates children to investigate and explore through a range of exciting experiences.
- Standards in information and communication technology are good.

Commentary

55. The quality of teaching is good overall in this area of learning, but it is particularly good in the reception class enabling the children in that class to achieve well. Staff plan a range of opportunities for children to explore and investigate. They make simple telephones with funnels and tubes and use balloons to see sound waves. Children examine materials when modelling with a range of materials and play with wet and dry sand and water to investigate similarities and differences. Children examine fruit, talk about texture and taste and express preferences. Reception children use computers confidently and show good control of the "mouse" when creating landscape and seascape pictures. The use of the area outdoors is limited so children miss opportunities to explore the natural environment throughout the year.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve satisfactorily and have regular access to the school hall and the equipment.

Commentary

56. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory and because of this the children make satisfactory progress. The nursery children go out to play each day and have many chances to use the available equipment. In their physical education lessons the reception children develop control of their bodies and change speed and direction confidently. All children learn to balance and climb and to move under, over and through apparatus. They enjoy riding tricycles and pushing wheeled toys. Teachers support children well and encourage them to be adventurous. Children become aware of healthy living when they drink milk each day and have fruit to eat. They all know the importance of washing their hands. The children are given many opportunities to develop their skills by playing with dough, threading beads and using paint brushes, felt pens and glue spreaders.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality and range of activities lead to satisfactory progress.
- There are too few activities available for children to develop their creative skills.

Commentary

57. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory. There is a range of creative materials available, but these are not always readily accessible to children so that they do not

make as much progress as they could. Children learn the technique of mixing paint. They sometimes paint spontaneously, using pre-mixed colours. They create collages using a range of materials. Role-play opportunities are limited because there are too few activities planned to encourage creative play. Children happily dress up and pretend. They enjoy singing and playing the instruments they make. Outdoors, nursery children engage in "hospital" role-play and this helps to extend their vocabulary well.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English by Year 6 are well below average. However, achievement is good considering the very low level of attainment on entry to the school.
- The quality of handwriting and presentation of pupils' written work is not good enough.
- Teaching and learning are good; teachers and assistants ensure that all pupils are fully included in lessons.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language are well catered for.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good.
- Links with parents to support their children's learning in English are under-developed.
- The subject is well led overall, but monitoring of teaching and learning is inconsistent.

Commentary

58. Standards in Year 2 are very low, when compared to national levels of attainment. Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. By Year 6 standards have improved but are still well below national averages. Considering the very low attainment on entry to the school, pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well.
59. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and incorporate all the aspects well in their planning. Teachers share the learning objectives with the pupils thus enabling them to understand their learning and to know what is expected of them. As a result, pupils make good gains in new knowledge and develop their literacy skills well. This was seen to good effect in Year 5, where pupils achieved well when they wrote their own poems in the style of "The Highwayman". In Year 6, pupils responded well to the high expectations the teacher had of them and the challenge given, when writing thoughtfully and maturely, when posed the question, "Is homework necessary?" Good use was made of information and communication technology for teaching and learning in these lessons.
60. Teachers and teaching assistants give good support and guidance to pupils who have special educational needs and to those whose first language is not English. As a result of very good planning and very good teaching of phonics in a Year 3 lesson, pupils with special educational needs made good progress, achieving well against targets set in their individual education plans. Very good support by a teaching assistant in Year 2, enabled pupils who have special educational needs and those with English as an additional language to take an active part in discussions through "talking partners". As a result, the pupils made good gains in developing their very poor speaking and listening skills.
61. The quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation is poor. The school has adopted a new handwriting scheme in order to remedy this weakness but this has not yet had any impact.

- Teachers give good guidance for pupils to improve their grammar, punctuation and content but do not always insist on high standards of presentation.
62. Pupils generally display positive attitudes in their English lessons and their behaviour is good overall. They apply themselves well and work very well individually, in pairs or in groups. The positive relationships in the classroom enable good teaching and learning to take place.
 63. Parental involvement in their children's learning, particularly in reading, is under-developed. Reading standards throughout the school are well below expected levels. Teachers focus mainly on helping pupils during guided-reading sessions in literacy lessons. Teachers record progress and achievement during these sessions though this is not consistent throughout the school.
 64. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy. As a result, the good quality of planning and teaching using the strategy ensures that pupils make satisfactory progress in building up their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.
 65. The subject is well led by the experienced and knowledgeable co-ordinator. She teaches enthusiastically and is a good role model for colleagues. Opportunities for managing English, through monitoring teaching and learning and measuring the impact of any initiatives in the school are limited.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

66. Writing skills are developed in a limited number of subjects of the curriculum. Following design and technology work in Year 6, pupils produced thoughtful written work about the felt slippers they had made. Independent writing in religious education lessons, when pupils write about the different traditions of world religions gives opportunities for writing skills to be used and developed. Pupils have some opportunities to use technical vocabulary in writing accounts of the work they do in science.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well below those found nationally.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall.
- The curriculum is well based on the National Numeracy Strategy.
- Teachers mark pupils' work carefully giving good guidance about how the pupils can improve their work.
- Pupils have good attitudes to their work.
- There are inconsistencies in assessing pupils' attainment and analysing their work.

Commentary

67. The results of the national tests for pupils in Year 6 in 2003 indicates that the pupils' performance was well below the national average, though when compared to the results of similar schools it was average. In the similar national tests for pupils in Year 2, pupils attained levels that were in the bottom five per cent of schools when compared to the national results and well below the average of similar schools. The pupils start school with very low levels of attainment and, because they are taught well, they make good progress throughout their time in school. Evidence indicates that the Year 6 pupils who took the tests in 2003 and had been in the school from the end of Year 2 tests in 1999, made at least satisfactory progress, with about 20 per cent of this group making better than average progress.

68. The quality of teaching varies but overall it is good. At its best it is excellent and never less than satisfactory. Throughout the school the pupils have good attitudes to learning. They are very well managed by the teachers and a mutual respect is shown. This encourages the pupils to listen well and take an active part in lessons, thus helping them to make good progress. Teachers' planning is based on the National Numeracy Strategy and is effective in identifying what they need to do for the pupils to make progress. Whilst most teachers plan for pupils' individual needs, this is not always the case and at times all pupils are set similar work. Within these classes the lower ability pupils are given extra support to complete their work. The quality of marking is good throughout the school and pupils are given clear information about how well they are performing and good guidance about how they can improve their work.
69. Procedures for assessing pupils' work are satisfactory. The school uses a range of tests to check on progress, but the data obtained are not always used well enough to identify what needs to be taught next. Whilst the headteacher maintains records of the tests given, there is insufficient information on following how well individual pupils have performed throughout their time in school. The school uses the information it has to set challenging targets, but these are predominantly for groups of pupils rather than for individuals.
70. The subject is led satisfactorily. The co-ordinator undertakes lesson observations to determine the quality of teaching and learning, but this is not within a planned sequence. There is no programme for regular analysis of pupils' work to ensure that the co-ordinator is fully aware of standards throughout the school. Mathematics is organised in Years 3 to 6 by setting pupils in ability groups. These are organised for pupils in Years 3/4 and in Years 5/6. This arrangement is having a positive effect on pupils' learning as, within these groups, the teacher for each set plans appropriate work for that group to enable them to develop their mathematical skills.

Mathematics across the curriculum

71. Mathematics is used satisfactorily in other subjects. In science, for example, pupils create graphs to illustrate their findings and in design and technology they measure card and material ready for cutting. Pupils use mathematics skills in information and communication technology when they input data into the computers.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching is good and has improved since the last inspection.
- Standards remain well below average because assessment is not used well enough in planning.
- Pupils find difficulty in explaining their ideas, because of their very limited vocabulary.
- Teachers' marking clearly shows pupils what they have done well and how they can improve.
- The curriculum is covered well so that pupils improve their skills and understanding.

Commentary

72. Standards in science remain well below what is expected. A system of assessments has been introduced showing how well pupils are learning. However, evidence indicates that all pupils carry out the same experiments and the ideas generated are too difficult for some pupils and some do not complete their work because it is too hard for them. The information gained from the assessments is not used well enough to challenge pupils of differing abilities.
73. The teaching of science has improved since the last inspection. In lessons, good emphasis is given to investigation and experimentation. In this way pupils' knowledge improves through

practical experiences. In pupils' books it is clear that they are now developing their investigation skills. Prior to experimentation they are encouraged to make predictions. They observe what is happening, record their findings and draw conclusions. Teachers prepare lessons well and make sure that appropriate resources are in place. They explain clearly and give pupils ample opportunities to express their own ideas. For example, one pupil explained that in a circuit, "...the electricity flows through and makes the light work". Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject and enjoy working together while doing experiments in class. Teachers' marking is good and very supportive. They make comments that help pupils understand what they have done well and how they can improve.

74. A large percentage of pupils do not speak English at home and have limited vocabulary. Planning does not take enough account of this fact and for most pupils the use and understanding of scientific vocabulary is limited. Pupils often find it difficult to explain their conclusions and rely heavily on adult help.
75. The school has improved the curriculum since the previous inspection. It is now broad and balanced and based on national guidelines. In some classes teachers use science to support pupils' knowledge and understanding of other subjects. Pupils use their mathematical skills to make graphs to record data and when learning about the importance of vitamins, Year 5 pupils find out that sailors in Elizabethan times had a spoonful of lemon juice each day to prevent scurvy. This approach helps pupils to see the relevance of science in our everyday lives and help them to make links in learning across the subjects. Good links have been established with the local secondary technology school to support the teaching of science and pupils visit to carry out experiments.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attainment is below the levels expected, though standards are improving.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good.
- Equipment is much improved.
- Leadership of the subject is strong.
- Not enough use is made of the resources in other subjects.
- Pupils' skills and confidence in using information and communication technology are not well enough developed.

Commentary

76. By the end of Year 2 pupils' attainment is well below expected levels and by the end of Year 6 it is below these levels. However some of the higher achieving pupils throughout the school reach the nationally expected levels for their age. Whilst pupils are making satisfactory progress overall, their skills and knowledge are not progressing fast enough. Pupils enjoy working with computers and other equipment.
77. By the end of Year 2, higher achieving pupils use word processing and drawing programs to present their work, which they save and print. Other pupils do this with help from staff. Pupils in the speech and language unit confidently use the computer to load and use reading and spelling programs. Year 6 pupils use the skills of logging on, saving, printing and amending their work well. Most pupils competently use a computer for research and they understand the basics of simple databases.
78. Pupils find it difficult to type. For example, they find locating the letters and symbols on the keyboard difficult and this takes up too much time. They have to look at the keys and then up

to the screen to see if they have selected the correct letter and as a result they often forget what they are trying to write. This slows down the progress they make.

79. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, though in Year 5 and Year 6 it is good. The teachers have had training and have substantially improved their own skills. This has led to better teaching and subsequently improved learning for pupils supported by a well organised curriculum and much better resources. In the lessons observed teaching was good. The teachers had planned their lessons well and provided good challenge for the pupils to improve their skills using the computers. Pupils benefit from class lessons in the computer suite. Teaching assistants support pupils' learning very well, particularly those pupils with special educational needs or who have English as an additional language.
80. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and provides helpful advice and support to his colleagues. He has initiated a range of improvements, which are beginning to have a positive effect on standards. He has a very positive vision about how information and communication technology can be used to help pupils learn skills in other subjects. Effective monitoring of teaching, learning and pupil progress is not yet in place.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

81. Resources for information and communication technology are much improved since the previous inspection. In Years 5 and 6 information and communication technology is used well to support other aspects of the curriculum in, for example, English, geography and religious education lessons. It is used less well by teachers of other year groups. In the speech and language unit pupils practise their recognition of sounds and words using a talking book program. However the computer suite, the laptops with a multimedia projector and classroom computers are not always used well enough to support learning.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The issues from the last inspection have been addressed satisfactorily.
- The curriculum now meets statutory requirements.
- Learning is presented in interesting and varied ways.
- In Years 5 and 6 there is good use of information and communication technology and the Internet to support learning.
- Work does not always match pupils' levels of learning.
- There is not enough monitoring of teaching and learning.

Commentary

82. On the basis of looking at pupils' past work and conversations with them, it is judged that pupils are attaining broadly in line with national expectations. During their time in school pupils cover all the parts of the curriculum. Not enough evidence is available to make a secure judgement on teaching and learning.
83. In the lesson observed, the teaching was satisfactory. Teachers plan a range of practical tasks to help pupils understand about people and places. Videos and pupils' own photographs of a visit to Pakistan are used to make lessons interesting and help pupils to understand the differences between two parts of the world. They go on visits and take photographs and learn

about features of the local area. In Years 5 and 6 computers are used very well to increase pupils' understanding of how water changes the landscape. The analysis of pupils' work indicates that teachers' planning does not match the pupils' learning needs, as everyone is given the same task. This does not meet the needs of lower attaining pupils nor does it extend the more able. Very good quality marking in Years 5 and 6 clearly informs the pupils how well they have done and what they need to do to improve. Pupils' work improves because of the guidance they are given.

84. The curriculum provided and planning for its teaching have improved since the previous inspection. Useful resources have been purchased and the co-ordinator checks that all areas of the curriculum are covered. However, not enough monitoring of teaching, learning, pupils' progress and standards takes place.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved and are at expected levels at Year 2 and Year 6.
- Subject management is satisfactory and there are improvements to the curriculum offered. It is covered well in Years 3 to 6, but is not broad enough in Years 1 and 2.
- The marking of pupils' work is good, but assessment procedures are not sufficiently well developed.

Commentary

85. Since the previous inspection the standards in history have improved and are now at expected levels. Pupils in Year 6 say they enjoy history, they have a sound understanding and speak enthusiastically about the Ancient Greeks and make links between their civilization and ours today.
86. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject. Based on the work produced, it is clear that planned activities ensure that pupils build on their previous understanding and improve their skills of research and enquiry as they move through the school. Classes show interesting displays, but these generally consist of books and posters. There are very few artefacts on display to excite pupils and arouse their interest. In a good lesson in Year 3, the teacher had planned activities to help pupils to re-enact the burial rites of the Anglo Saxon King found at Sutton Hoo. This practical approach to learning has a strong impact on pupils' understanding and enthusiasm for the subject. In Year 5 the teacher used stories well to evoke discussion and help pupils understand the hardships and dangers that voyagers faced in Elizabethan times. Teachers throughout the school encourage pupils to present their work well. Pupils' work has a good range of illustrations, diagrams and drawings, but writing is not used well enough in history. Teachers mark work accurately so that pupils understand what they have done well and how they might improve.
87. Subject management is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has introduced a new scheme of work that is used in Years 3 to 6. This offers pupils a better range of historical experiences. The scheme used in Years 1 and 2, however, lacks breadth and stimulation. Whilst systems are in place to assess pupils' work at the end of topics to check how well they have achieved, these are still in their infancy. The co-ordinator does not monitor the pupils' work or progress well enough.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards for Year 2 pupils are well below expected levels because pupils' literacy skills are poor.
- Standards for Year 6 pupils are in line with expectations and have risen well since the previous inspection.
- The planned curriculum for religious education is good.
- Provision of resources is good.
- Teachers make good use of resources to support teaching and learning.
- Pupils of lower ability make little progress, as work is often not matched to their needs.

Commentary

88. Standards for pupils at the end of Year 2 are well below those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. This is largely due to the low level of these pupils' literacy skills. However, teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills in acting out religious ceremonies. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils acted out a Christian baptism. The pupils participated keenly, showing interest and behaving well even though their knowledge and understanding were well below expectations. They did not know, for example, the terms "vicar" or "font".
89. Standards of pupils in Year 6 show a big improvement since the previous inspection and they are now in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. As pupils move through from Year 3 to Year 6 they learn and understand the traditions and practices of a range of world religions including Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Sikhism and Islam. Evidence indicates that pupils have made good progress in learning about the important figureheads at the centre of each faith. Pupils in Year 4 show a good understanding of the different Hindu gods of Vishnu, Brahma and Shiva and in Year 5 pupils show a secure knowledge and understanding of how The Qur'an was revealed to Muhammad. In Year 6, pupils, in their study of Judaism, learn about the Mezuzah and good use is made of their literacy skills when they write prayers. In a lesson observed the Year 6 pupils listened with interest as a representative of the Hindu faith re-told the story of Ganesha.
90. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The teachers' planning gives a clear focus for the work to be undertaken and because the teachers have high expectations of pupils, their good attitudes reflect this in their work. As a result, pupils achieve well. Teachers and support assistants in the school's language unit make very good use of resources in providing for their pupils' needs. Pupils learned about the clothes worn by Muslims and one pupil used sample-clothing to dress up as a Muslim boy in preparation for a visit to a mosque. All pupils learn and understand the importance of the mosque as a place of prayer and they compare it with the Christian church.
91. Lower attaining pupils in most year groups, are given the same tasks as higher attaining pupils. As the work does not match their capabilities they make little progress and their achievements are limited.
92. The co-ordinator is new to the post and her leadership and management is satisfactory. Although the school now follows the locally agreed syllabus and plans accordingly, the co-ordinator does not monitor the quality of teaching and learning.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

93. It was not possible to observe **art and design** being taught during the inspection because it was not timetabled for the period. An analysis of pupils' work, much of which was on display, shows that teachers plan to give pupils opportunities to learn and practise a range of artistic skills using a variety of media. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use pencil, crayon, wax, watercolour and collage to good effect in creating pictures of buildings around their school, self-portraits, magic fish and sunflower heads. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 develop their skills further in using pastel colours in creating pictures of local and world landmarks in support of the work they do in geography. Some of these pictures are of a good standard, showing an appreciation of shape and colour. Other pupils create collages depicting scenes of sea travellers to support their learning in history. These collages show pupils have developed good skills in using textiles in their work. Year 6 pupils extend their artistic skills in using clay effectively to produce decorated Grecian-style urns in a follow-up to their history work. The subject leader is aware that three-dimensional art-work is not developed well enough throughout the school.

Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved and are at the expected levels at Year 2 and Year 6.
- Subject management is satisfactory.

Commentary

94. Standards have improved since the previous inspection because teachers are now following a scheme of work to support teaching and learning. Skills are taught in a systematic way to help pupils to improve as they move through the school. Pupils are encouraged to think about their designs before they begin their work. In the single lesson observed, pupils in Year 2 all worked in small groups, and were well supported. They learned to sew two pieces of fabric together to match their puppet designs. Older pupils in Year 6 talk enthusiastically about the slippers they made to decorate the Christmas tree. They enjoyed designing and making clay pots in the style of the Ancient Greeks. Pupils throughout the school learn to cut and assemble various materials using a range of fastenings in their work. They design and make birthday cards and investigate packages. They learn about hygiene when making sandwiches and consider variations in recipes for bread. Skill development is evident between pupils of different ages.
95. Subject management is satisfactory. Monitoring procedures have just begun. There are new assessment procedures in place, but the information is not yet used sufficiently in planning.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Appropriate activities are planned for pupils' ages and abilities.
- Pupils have good attitudes to their work and undertake activities keenly.
- A good range of activities covers the National Curriculum requirements.
- There is limited monitoring of teaching, learning, planning or standards.
- Teachers manage pupils well enabling them to make progress in their learning.
- The planning for progression throughout the school is inconsistent, using a commercially produced scheme of work.

Commentary

96. It was only possible to observe three lessons, one each for pupils in Year 1, Year 2 and Year 4. In the Year 2 lesson pupils from the speech and language unit joined with the other children. The pupils from the unit were fully integrated and took a full part in the lesson. From the evidence of these lessons and discussion with the co-ordinator, it is judged that standards are broadly in line with those expected for pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6.
97. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed was satisfactory overall. The teachers plan using a commercially produced scheme of work. This does not provide for continual development of skills throughout the school, though the scheme covers all the required elements of the physical education curriculum. Plans are in place for this scheme to be incorporated into the nationally recognised scheme of work recommended by the Qualifications and Curriculum Agency. The school's curriculum is extended satisfactorily beyond the school day through a range of activities, including canoeing and football sessions led by the Middlesborough Football Club's "Football in the Community" scheme. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6 about 85 per cent of pupils are able to swim the recommended 25 metres.
98. The co-ordinator has been unable to monitor teaching and learning owing to time constraints and the emphasis the school has placed on developing English and mathematics. However, the teachers' planning is available for scrutiny to enable her to check what is being taught.
99. It was not possible to observe any **music** being taught during the inspection. It is not possible, therefore, to make secure judgements about teaching, learning or standards.
100. The school uses the local education authority's Tees Valley Music Service to provide the music teaching throughout the school. The plans available and discussion with the co-ordinator indicates that all areas of the music curriculum are taught. The curriculum is enhanced by a range of visitors and groups who perform for the pupils. During the acts of collective worship the pupils sing hymns and songs tunefully and enthusiastically.
101. The pupils are involved in performances for parents and the community at Christmas and at other religious festivals based on the wide cultural diversity of the school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults.
- Pupils have good attitudes.
- Pupils have mutual respect for each other.
- The school promotes inclusion well.
- There are good links with the community.

Commentary

101. The pupils are taught respect for each other and there is no evidence of racial disharmony within the school. The staff are good role models for the pupils and this encourages the pupils to work well together. The school's ethos is good and the pupils are aware of the school as a family.
102. The staff have high expectations about behaviour. The pupils respect this and rarely attempt to go beyond the boundaries set. Pupils' attitudes are good. They concentrate well on their work and endeavour to do their best.

103. The school enjoys good links with the community and with other local schools. The community uses the school for meetings, a youth club and the school organises a "Family Learning Group". This is a good initiative that encourages parents to become involved in their children's learning.

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	6
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	6
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
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	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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