

INSPECTION REPORT

PARKHEAD COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Blaydon-on-Tyne

LEA area: Gateshead

Unique reference number: 131466

Headteacher: Mrs B Poulson

Lead inspector: Mr C T Hemsley

Dates of inspection: 21st – 23rd June 2004

Inspection number: 257154

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:	315
School address:	Park Lane Winlaton Blaydon-on-Tyne
Postcode:	NE21 6LT
Telephone number:	0191 4335618
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr A Stevens
Date of previous inspection:	No previous inspection

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Parkhead Community Primary School is a larger than average primary school, educating 315 boys and girls aged three to eleven, including 77 children educated part time in the school Nursery. It was opened in 1998 and took pupils from existing infant and nursery and junior schools in the same buildings. The school is in Winlaton, an area of Blaydon-on-Tyne in Gateshead. Most pupils come from the areas around the school. These areas vary in character, with some social and economic disadvantage and areas of current urban renewal. The number of pupils who change schools is about average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is declining but is currently still 31 per cent, an above average figure. The school records show that no pupil is registered as being other than white and only one is registered as having a non-British cultural heritage. No pupil is learning English as an additional language. Standards on entry to Nursery or to Reception class are well below average. The proportion of pupils in school with special educational needs, at 34 per cent, is above average, but the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs, at 0.9 per cent, is below average. The school holds a Basic Skills Quality Mark and a Healthy Schools Award. There is a Children's Centre on site, which provides family support, adult education and training.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1609	Mr C T Hemsley	Lead inspector	Science History Geography
11468	Mrs J Menes	Lay inspector	
32094	Mrs J Bennett	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Art and design Music
21060	Mr G Brown	Team inspector	English Design and technology Physical education Religious education
28772	Mrs B Hudson	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Personal, social and health education Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The **overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory**, and there are many important strengths. Achievement is satisfactory overall and good in some significant areas because of overall good teaching but there are some weaknesses in the achievements of older pupils, where teaching quality varies too much. The very good ethos leads to very good attitudes, with good behaviour and personal development. Good leadership and management have ensured that parents and pupils are very pleased with the school's good approach to inclusion. Links with parents are very good and with the community are good. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The very good ethos is a result of the good caring atmosphere of very good relationships promoted by the school leadership and supported by a high commitment to extra-curricular provision and involvement.
- Children make good progress overall in the Nursery and Reception classes, with very good progress in their personal and social development. Pupils achieve well by Year 2 in mathematics, information and communication technology (ICT) and music. By Year 6 they currently achieve well in English and mathematics and very well in music.
- By the end of Year 6 pupils are not achieving enough in science and ICT.
- Teaching is good overall and there is some very good teaching for pupils of all ages, but the quality of teaching of older pupils varies too much.
- Very good links with parents and good links with the community are effective in ensuring relationships and helping parents to support their child's education.
- Higher ability pupils are capable of achieving more, even though their achievement is overall satisfactory currently.
- Attendance rates are too low despite the school's very good efforts.

The school has not been inspected previously so no judgement is made about progress.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Achievement is satisfactory overall with some aspects where it is good. Although the school has many strengths, it is not having a consistent impact on the achievement of pupils in all aspects of their work. Children in Nursery and Reception make good progress overall, and very good progress in their personal and social development. In communication, language and literacy and mathematics, despite satisfactory achievement, standards remain well below average because opportunities for improvements are sometimes missed. By Year 2 achievement is satisfactory overall, although standards are still well below average, having fallen in recent years. Pupils do particularly well in mathematics, music and ICT. Year 6 results in national tests in 2003 were around average. Although standards are now below average, current Year 6 pupils are achieving satisfactorily, and they are doing well in English, mathematics and especially music. The school continues to work hard to maintain standards in national assessments in English. Year 6 pupils are currently not achieving as

much as they should in science and ICT because of weaknesses in teaching. Across the school, boys' and girls' achievements are close to each other but higher ability pupils are capable of higher standards. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are being well developed. Attitudes are very good and behaviour is good. Attendance is too low despite the very good efforts by the school. Relationships are very good. These strengths reflect the school's efforts and ethos.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall **quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is good** overall, but for older pupils it varies between outstanding and unsatisfactory with a consequent effect in learning. There is some very good teaching for pupils of all ages and a strong ethos of learning, leading to good achievement in areas identified above. Good use is made of adults other than teachers across the school. The curriculum is good and well planned for the nature of the school's organisation in which most teachers concentrate on a small number of subjects across a range of classes. Care, support and guidance are good. Very effective links with parents and other good links, for instance with the Children's Centre, are supportive of learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. Good leadership from the head teacher and senior staff ensures good vision and teamwork; they provide very good role models for staff and pupils. The school runs smoothly. The work of the governing body is good and the chair of governors provides particularly good leadership in supporting the school through some difficult decisions. The school has some good systems to check how well it is doing but its plans for improvement to raise standards and its financial planning are only satisfactory overall. There are some gaps in the statutory information for parents.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils are very pleased with the full range of what the school does. Parents raised no significant concerns. They feel welcome and believe that the head teacher and staff work in partnership with them. Pupils are proud of their school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards achieved overall, but especially by Year 6 in science and ICT, by reducing weaknesses in teaching.
- Provide more challenging work for higher ability pupils.
- Further develop strategies to improve attendance.

and to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that the gaps in information for parents are rectified.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is satisfactory. Achievement is good by the end of the Reception year, although standards for these pupils are below average in most areas and well below average in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Achievement is satisfactory by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in the core subjects (English, mathematics and science) are well below average overall at the end of Year 2, but below average in mathematics, where pupils are achieving well. Standards are around average in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 and pupils currently achieve well in these subjects, although the 2003 mathematics test results showed underachievement. Pupils start school with low standards in English particularly in their speaking and listening skills and the school has to work hard to help pupils achieve satisfactorily in the national assessments. Achievement in science by the end of Year 6 is unsatisfactory and standards are below average. The achievement of boys and girls is similar to each other. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Although their achievement is satisfactory overall, pupils of higher ability are capable of achieving more than they do.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The achievement of children by the end of the Reception class is very good in personal and social development; it is good in knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development.
- Pupils achieve well in English by the end of Year 6, in ICT by the end of Year 2, and by both ages in mathematics. The school has worked successfully to improve standards in mathematics since the 2003 assessments.
- Achievement in music is good by Year 2 and very good by Year 6 because of the teaching, which is sometimes outstanding.
- Pupils do not achieve as much as they should by Year 6 in science and ICT and there are weaknesses in geography and history because of weaknesses in teaching.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of good support.
- Pupils with higher ability are capable of achieving more than they do, even though they make satisfactory progress, because they are not given hard enough work in a minority of lessons.
- Pupils' skills in literacy and speaking and listening are often weak.
- Although achievement is satisfactory, children in the Foundation Stage do not learn as much about communication, language and literacy and mathematics as in other areas of learning because of missed opportunities.

Commentary

Foundation Stage

1. Children start school, in Nursery or Reception classes, with standards well below average. They usually make good progress as a result of good teaching and well-planned activities. The school's success in improving their personal and social development reflects the whole school's approach to developing a positive learning ethos in which children, families and all staff are valued. It has been more difficult to raise standards in communication, language, literacy and mathematical development; there are missed opportunities to develop reading and writing skills and mathematical understanding. Progress in these areas is currently limited by the imbalance of skills for teaching. Because of the work with adults, including that of the Children's Centre, parents are increasingly aware of how to help their children.

Key Stage 1

- Standards by Year 2 in the national assessments carried out by teachers in 2003 were well below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science and have fallen over several years. The school's provisional assessment results for 2004 indicate that this year will be similar to 2003. These standards represent satisfactory achievement overall given the low starting base. 2003 standards were around or below those of other schools with a similar number of pupils with free school meals. Inspection shows mathematics current standards overall to have improved now to below average, a good achievement. This is because the teaching is making good use of national developments.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	12.0 (12.3)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	11.7 (11.7)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.1 (15.4)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 42 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- Standards in other subjects vary from above to well below expectations. The current good achievement in ICT, with standards being above expectations, is because there has been a good basis for learning in the Foundation Stage and the teaching of ICT skills in Years 1 and 2 is good. Good achievement in music, with pupils reaching nationally expected standards, is partly because of the real commitment made by the school to develop the subject well within and beyond the school day. Achievement in other subjects inspected is satisfactory overall. Standards are below those expected nationally in art and design. Standards in religious education are around those expected by the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Although it was not possible to make full judgements in other subjects, indications from sampling are that standards are well below expectations in geography and history.

Key Stage 2

- Standards in national tests in Year 6 in 2003 were overall average, but below average in mathematics. Standards vary each year but have risen in line with the national trend. The 2004 teacher assessments indicate that standards are likely to be below average overall. Inspection evidence is that pupils are reaching broadly average standards in English, but with few pupils reaching the higher level (level 5). Provisional national test results for 2004 indicate that pupils may not have reached the standards that were expected of them. Pupils currently reach average standards in mathematics and below average standards in science. The standards achieved in 2003 were overall below those of pupils in schools with similar prior attainment; there was a particular weakness in mathematics. The achievement of pupils currently in Year 6 is now good in English and mathematics but unsatisfactory in science; the achievement in these subjects clearly reflects differences in the quality of teaching, the organisation of groups having been changed since 2003.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.8 (25.0)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	25.6 (26.2)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.0 (28.2)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 36 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

5. Standards in other subjects vary from above expectations to well below. Standards in music by Year 6 are above expectations and this is a very good achievement, linked to teaching that is sometimes outstanding. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in ICT are below expectations, an unsatisfactory achievement for these pupils. Standards in art and design are around expectations, with pupils achieving satisfactorily. It was not possible to make full judgements in other subjects but indications from sampling are that there are weaknesses in the achievements of older pupils in geography and history. While standards and achievement have been reported above in relation to the end of Year 6, pupils in Years 3 and 4 achieve well in much of their work.
6. Governors set targets for standards in Year 6 for 2003; these were met only for the proportion of pupils reaching level 4 in English. Targets were missed by a long way in mathematics and few pupils reached the higher level (level 5) in either subject. Targets set for English and mathematics for 2004 are suitably challenging.

Other features of standards

7. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress. This is because teachers plan tasks suited to them and adapt materials to help them learn well.
8. Almost every pupil is from a white British cultural heritage. No pupils from any school-identified minority are achieving significantly differently than the majority.
9. The school has identified that in recent years boys have tended to reach lower standards than girls and teachers have paid attention to this. Although there is still some indication of different standards, statistical and inspection evidence indicates that boys make at least equal progress to girls between Years 3 and 6 and possibly more, and are reaching equivalent standards overall in their current work.
10. The National Curriculum assessments in Years 2 and 6 show that usually fewer pupils than average reach the higher levels. Some of this is a reflection of the nature of pupils in school and the socio-economic context. However, pupils with higher ability are capable of achieving more, even though their achievement is overall satisfactory. This is because in a minority of lessons teachers are not planning well enough to provide harder work for these pupils.
11. Despite the good progress that is being made to improve the standards of English, pupils still have difficulties with their skills. The school is well aware of this and uses a variety of approaches aimed at improvement. Numeracy has also been targeted for improvements and there are good opportunities in a range of subjects, leading to pupils using number work satisfactorily. ICT is evident in the long-term planning for subjects but is not embedded in subjects, despite the regular timetabling of the ICT room, and as a result standards in ICT across the curriculum are not high enough by the time pupils leave school.
12. Parents are very pleased with the progress their children make. They did not identify to the inspection team any limitations other than that there was not a full-time teacher in each of the Nursery and Reception classes.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have **very good** attitudes to school and to the activities provided for them. Their behaviour is **good**. Attendance is **unsatisfactory** but improving. Relationships are **very good** and the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The positive and inclusive ethos in the school encourages all pupils to work hard and do their best.
- Children in Nursery and Reception are well placed to achieve early learning goals in personal and social aspects of the curriculum, showing very good progress.
- The quality of relationships and behaviour in school supports pupils' learning and personal development.
- Levels of pupils' attendance are below average, despite the very good efforts of the school which have led to a recent significant improvement.
- Performing arts activities in the school involve all pupils and are of high quality so that they have a positive impact on pupils' social and cultural development.
- The school does not make sufficient provision to prepare pupils for living in a multi-racial society.

Commentary

13. The head teacher and staff have created a strong community ethos in the school, in which every individual is valued and encouraged to participate fully in all aspects of school life. This supports a good climate for learning in which pupils are willing to work hard and 'have a go', even when they are not confident of success. Parents are very pleased with this approach.
14. Children develop positive attitudes in Nursery and Reception and are encouraged to grow in maturity and confidence as they move through the school. They listen to instructions, work independently and co-operate well, and are eager to join in after-school clubs and other activities. They are willing to help and take on responsibilities around the school. Older pupils participate in a buddy system to ensure others have someone to turn to if upset or on their own.
15. Relationships throughout the school are open, friendly and very good. Teachers are good role models for pupils in the way they work together as a team and treat everyone with courtesy and respect. Pupils learn the difference between right and wrong, and respond well to clear expectations that they will behave appropriately at all times. They often behave very well in lessons and get on with their work purposefully and without distraction. A few pupils have difficulty in achieving these standards and the school is participating in the Behaviour Improvement Programme in partnership with a secondary school to provide added support. Pupils and parents agree that bullying is not a problem in the school and is effectively dealt with when it does occur. Exclusions are rare. The total number of pupils marked in the table below for the last school year is higher than the current school roll because the number of pupils has fallen.

Exclusions

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	354	1	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0

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

16. Pupils learn to value and respect different beliefs through the religious education curriculum. They can express their feelings and imagine those of others, and look at issues from someone else's point of view. There is an emphasis on the importance of the family and each child's place in the family. This is strengthened by a grouping within the school called 'Family and Friends' which includes brothers and sisters and cousins, and a teacher who stays with the group from year to year. The school gives all pupils opportunities to participate in high quality

performances through class assemblies, concerts for parents and other events. This gives pupils a strong sense of pride and belonging, as well as a great deal of enjoyment. Opportunities for pupils to have cultural experiences outside school are limited and the school does not make sufficient provision to prepare pupils for living in a racially and culturally diverse society. While this is difficult in a school where there is a small range of cultures, it is important for pupils as they prepare themselves for the next stages of education.

17. Pupils' attendance is below national levels and there is a small amount of unauthorised absence. Most parents are conscientious in informing the school when their children are absent through illness. The school works very hard to monitor and follow up pupils who have high rates of absence, and promotes good attendance through communication with parents and rewards for pupils. These efforts have achieved a significant improvement of 1.5 per cent in the current year.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.9	School data	0.3
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 provided by the school is **good**.

Teaching and learning are **good**. The curriculum is **good**. Care, guidance and support, involving students, and partnership with parents, other schools and the community are **good**.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good**. Assessment is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very motivating and creative teaching is raising standards in subjects such as music and mathematics and supporting pupils' personal development.
- The strong ethos of learning and the good relationships are based upon mutual respect and lead to good behaviour.
- Well-planned and prepared lessons make good use of time and resources and use good methods.
- The quality of teaching is too variable in Years 5 and 6 and the weak and unsatisfactory aspects are holding back achievement.
- Higher ability pupils are not given hard enough work in a minority of lessons.
- The quality of learning in the Nursery and Reception classes is affected by the variation in the skills of the staff involved.

Commentary

18. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage, for children in the Nursery and Reception classes, are good overall; this makes a particular difference to children's personal and social development in which achievement is very good. Activities are well planned and teaching assistants contribute effectively. Consistency of learning is not maintained, however, and

opportunities for learning are missed. This is particularly so in the development of reading and writing and in mathematical development.

19. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 and 4 is overall good. It is too variable in Years 5 and 6 where it includes both outstanding and unsatisfactory practice. Where the teaching is of high quality it is having a clear effect on the standards achieved, for instance within music. The school recognised in 2003 that it needed to improve standards in mathematics at the end of Year 6 and it has done so because of the quality of the current teaching, which is often imaginative and challenging. The quality of singing in music lessons, assemblies and extra-curricular practices, which include a high degree of participation and enjoyment, reflects the very high expectations of teaching and very hard work of the teachers.

Example of outstanding practice

In an excellent Year 5 and 6 mathematics lesson the pupils were inspired and motivated throughout by problem-solving work designed as a simulated class 'Olympic Games' competition.

The class was divided into teams and the pupils completed a range of problem-solving tasks, which they scored as individuals and then, later in the week, they would work out the team scores. The pupils completed a wide range of tasks including counting on and counting backwards in 0.2, 0.3 and 0.4, followed by revision of the meaning of prime numbers, factors and multiples. They used this information to place a given set of numbers into a Venn diagram of the five Olympic rings. This was followed by a series of problems related to athletic competitions using addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of decimal numbers as these numbers related to the time taken to complete a race or the length covered in field events. The teacher's planning and preparation were superb, the work was very well matched to the pupils' differing mathematical ability, and the activities were excellently introduced and changed at an appropriate time to maintain the pupils' interest, concentration and desire to achieve.

20. The weaknesses in teaching also affect standards achieved, as shown in the more mundane and unsatisfactory aspects of some teaching in Years 5 and 6. The school's organisation, in which individual teachers take responsibility for teaching a limited range of subjects across pupils in three or more mixed age classes, is beneficial in making good use of particular expertise but results in any weaknesses affecting all classes in those year groups.
21. When the learning by pupils in lessons is good it is because the teachers expect pupils to work hard, to be involved, and to behave well. In most lessons pupils concentrate well and have a positive attitude to their work. They know what they have to do and why it is important. In the better lessons they develop skills to work independently. In a minority of lessons pupils were not given opportunities to do this; this affects both their learning and response to the lessons.
22. Teachers are helped in the preparation of their lessons by the good curriculum planning which contains detailed information and advice about each subject. Many lessons include interesting and enjoyable activities and involve pupils well. Teachers make good use of resources. The governing body allocates a higher than usual amount of the school's finances to pay for teaching assistants and nursery nurses and teachers make good use of them. Further support from outside, such as an adult from the Behaviour Improvement Programme in a science lesson, helps pupils to keep their concentration.
23. Assessment is satisfactory overall with good features. The school is trying to ensure consistency through some standardised approaches that are improving practice. In the Nursery and Reception classes assessment is satisfactory in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development and good in other areas. Assessment is good in most aspects in Years 1 and 2. It is good in English across the school, where it has helped to identify specific targets for overall improvement. Effective assessment of pupils with special educational needs helps identify the support needed. Recent work on assessment in ICT is positive although records are only just beginning to be built up. There are weaknesses in the assessment of older pupils in science, history and geography; this is when the marking of work is ineffective in helping pupils know how to improve.

24. Teachers try to take account of individuals. They spend time in lessons considering how pupils are responding. They use the assessment system to set targets in core subjects and pupils are involved in considering their own individual targets. Pupils complete an annual personal record of achievement. Parents say that they are aware of this process and what their child has to do to improve. Much of the day-to-day marking is effective and pupils are praised for their efforts and given ways to make their work better, although this is not as consistent as the school expects.
25. The concern for individuals is reflected in the ways in which work is matched to the needs of pupils with special educational needs. A result of this is that these pupils usually make as good or better progress than others. However, the school's assessment system had not fully recognised the differences in the achievements of higher attaining pupils nor the changing achievements of boys. Work has begun on identifying the more able pupils and what their needs are but in a minority of lessons teachers are not giving hard enough work to them.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 48 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
3 (6%)	8 (17%)	19 (40%)	15 (31%)	3 (6%)	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.

26. The head teacher identified the variability of the quality of temporary teachers as being a barrier to improvement. During the week of the inspection the school was able to be supported by teachers who knew the school and its systems well, in order to cover for the absence of two staff.
27. Parents and pupils think that teachers do a good job. They comment positively on all of the extra things that teachers do and the attention they give to individuals. Inspectors found these things to be true.

The curriculum

The curriculum provided by the school is **good**. Opportunities for enrichment are **good**, in particular the extra-curricular activities. Accommodation and resources are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides pupils with a good curriculum that meets statutory requirements.
- There is good provision for personal, social and health education.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- There is very good provision for after-school clubs, led by teachers, teaching assistants and nursery nurses.
- Accommodation and resources are well used for the pupils and the community.
- There is a temporary staff imbalance in the Nursery and Reception classes.

Commentary

28. The curriculum is good and appropriately organised and planned to meet the needs of the pupils and the school's system of organisation. Pupils receive a wide range of good learning opportunities.
29. Teachers' good planning ensures that the curriculum includes all of the skills relevant to each subject. Where possible teachers try to ensure that appropriate links are made across the

subjects; for example, in Years 3 and 4 work on ICT control is linked to work on shapes in mathematics. In some classes the curriculum is made very relevant and enjoyable to the pupils; for example, one teacher dressed up as a Brigante Queen to help pupils understand life in Roman times.

30. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Their difficulties are identified early in their school life, and teachers produce detailed individual plans to support their learning and ensure they take full part in all activities. This is why pupils make good progress. Gifted and talented pupils are identified in English and mathematics and individual plans for these pupils have been developed but the impact is not yet strong enough across the curriculum.
31. The teachers and teaching assistants provide a good range of after-school clubs including sports, arts and other opportunities. Pupils enjoy these clubs and very actively support them through regular attendance. The clubs provided by the school staff complement those provided by the Children's Centre where breakfast and after-school care are available.
32. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. Pupils' personal development is promoted in all aspects of school life and pupils become secure and confident. Many pupils are very willing to show off their skills and will offer to take part in productions, sing solos and say their multiplication tables to the whole class, although they are sometimes less confident in their English work. Pupils contribute well to the school council and staff consider their ideas carefully. Pupils are taught and encouraged to play together and this results in pupils being very well behaved around the school buildings although behaviour sometimes fall short of the school's expected high standards when teaching is not as secure. Some good collaborative work was observed in lessons. The curriculum, however, does not have sufficient emphasis on preparing pupils for living in a multi-racial society. While individual subjects such as religious education cover some aspects of multi-cultural education there is not an effective overall approach to developing this aspect of school life.
33. Health education is addressed well and the school has recently gained the Healthy Schools Award. Provision for sex education, and drugs and alcohol education, is appropriately met by teachers with support from the school nurse and other agencies.
34. The school's accommodation is good and is effectively used for the pupils and the community. Display is used very well to support the school's ethos, provide an interest and link into the teaching. The room used to teach much of the ICT suffers from problems of ventilation and overheating which affect pupils' concentration. Overall learning resources are good. They are very good for mathematics, art and science; however, resources for physical education, religious education and ICT are adequate. Staffing is at a good level and usually well deployed; however, there are temporary arrangements in the Nursery and Reception classes that the school recognises the need to improve. The current overall staffing level is being maintained by the use of balances from the previous year's school budget.
35. The school grounds have been enhanced recently by the development of an attractive outdoor area with good opportunities for exploration, but currently the Nursery garden is not used sufficiently well.
36. A small number of parents commented that they were unhappy at one aspect of the accommodation, the quality of a playground, and this is commented on in the next section of the report.

Care, guidance and support

Care of pupils in the school is **good**. The school provides **good** support and guidance for pupils and involves them **well** through seeking and acting on their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Induction arrangements are very good so that pupils settle into school quickly.
- Staff develop secure and caring relationships with pupils and are sensitive to the needs of individuals.
- The school provides good care for pupils so that they feel secure and can concentrate on their work.

Commentary

37. The school takes good care of all its pupils and provides well for their health and safety. The building is well cared for and breaks and lunchtimes are well organised and supervised. The school has well-established procedures in place for child protection, although plans to update information to more recently appointed staff have not yet been implemented. Pupils are given guidance on living a healthy lifestyle, and, for example, keeping safe on the roads and the consequences of abuse of drugs. A minority of parents expressed a concern about the cleanliness of the infant school yard and the school has marked the issue as an aspect for improvement in its development plans. A small number of parents mentioned their desire to have a road crossing patrol. The inspection team is not able to comment as to whether a crossing is needed but noted the school's and the governors' positive actions in trying to make changes. Inspectors pointed out one parking arrangement that the school could influence.
38. Early contacts with parents through the Children's Centre and home visits by Nursery staff help the school to get to know pupils and their families well from the beginning, and so to have a good understanding of their needs. The school extends a warm welcome to parents and they feel able to approach teachers and share information and concerns about their children. Parents feel that they are helped to support their children more effectively through this communication. Pupils get to know several teachers well each year through the organisation of the school into units and they feel there is someone they can go to for help if necessary.
39. There are very good procedures to introduce children to Nursery which are supported by the close links with the Children's Centre and pre-school provision on site. Links with other Nurseries and Reception classes ensure support for children transferring to and from other schools at this stage. Children are invited to visit with their parents and are introduced gradually to Nursery. When it is time to move through to the Reception class a member of staff moves with them, to help them feel at home. This practice illustrates the close attention the school pays to the care and support of pupils, and it is repeated as pupils move from Reception to Year 1 and from Year 2 to Year 3.
40. The school provides some very good personal support for individual pupils through small 'nurture groups' to help their confidence and ability to learn.
41. Pupils know their personal targets, which are also shared with parents. The school has begun to identify how gifted and talented pupils may be supported but in a minority of lessons pupils of higher ability are not given guidance and support to move on further. Marking is usually helpful to pupils and provides guidance to help them know how to improve, but the quality is not consistent.
42. The school values pupils' views, and provides opportunities for them to contribute to the development of the school through meetings of the school council and questionnaires. There are also opportunities in lessons for pupils to discuss aspects of school life and express their views.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has worked hard to develop **very good** links with parents and **good** links with the community and other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very well pleased with the school and the education it provides for their children.
- Excellent provision for family learning enables parents to help their children with work at home and contributes to the raising of aspirations in the community.
- Parents appreciate the very good information about the school; however, some statutory requirements on information are not met.
- The school works in a very close relationship with the Children's Centre on the school site.

Commentary

43. The school believes that partnership with parents is an important aspect of school life and has taken very effective action to encourage them to become involved in the school and their children's learning. Parents feel most welcome in school, and there are opportunities for them to attend class assemblies and performances, as well as an open week when parents can visit school and see the work their children are doing. Written information for parents is of good quality, and they receive very helpful guidance when their children join the school. The school provides useful information about the curriculum and school events through regular newsletters and notice boards in school. However, the content of the prospectus and governors' annual report does not fully comply with statutory requirements because some information, for instance about national test results, is not included.
44. Provision for family learning through the Children's Centre and the school is focused on helping parents to prepare their children for school, and to understand how the school teaches, for example, mathematics or reading, so that they can help their children effectively at home. Class teachers take some courses, for example in family literacy, where children join in with their parents. There are opportunities for parents who wish to pursue their learning further and some go on to train as classroom assistants and volunteer to work in school as part of their training. Parents run a very effective fund-raising group. In addition four parents created and now run a story bags scheme for the school, and are invited to visit other schools to talk to parents who wish to do something similar. Others run a pre-school group in the Centre.
45. The Children's Centre has grown from an Early Excellence Centre established as part of the school within its site, and teachers are still involved in many aspects of its work, although it is now managed through Sure Start within the local education authority. The school links to the attractive and welcoming environment of the Centre and the services and support for families in the wider community, such as a facility for before and after-school care, a family listening service and family days out. The Centre runs courses such as ICT and salsa classes, in the school buildings, in partnership with a local further education college. A holiday programme for children is also housed in the school. The school makes an important connection to the community through the Centre, but wider links to support pupils' learning through visits and visitors to school are more limited. Nevertheless, parents at the pre-inspection meeting described the school clearly as part of the local community.
46. The school has established good links with other schools and colleges. Liaison with secondary schools to help pupils prepare for transfer to Year 7 includes curriculum developments and support for pupils with special needs. The school participates in the local link to the national Behaviour Improvement Programme centred on the local secondary school, with the aim of improving attendance, and behaviour at lunchtimes. Attendance has shown recent significant improvement. There are good links with other early years providers.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. The **good** leadership has created the basis of a successful school in which teamwork is valued in a very good ethos. **Good** management identifies strengths and weaknesses and ensures the school runs smoothly. The governance of the school is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The head teacher and other senior staff are influential in their work and provide good educational drive and direction.
- There is a strong sense of teamwork and a positive desire to move the school forward, despite any barriers that work against its development.
- Governors are well led, are very supportive and make a good contribution to school life.

- The school is becoming more adept at evaluating its own performance and using the outcomes to establish new developments but needs to focus more clearly on the effect of its priorities on standards.
- Some aspects of financial control and management are not strong enough.

Commentary

47. The head teacher and two deputy head teachers share a common and positive view about the aims of the school and provide strong leadership to this end. The deputy head teachers managed the school very effectively during the inspection, the head teacher being absent. The senior team also acts as a positive role model in helping to support and inspire others. There is, for example, a strong commitment to all aspects of pupil development, including the desire to raise standards and achievement. This vision is expressed in the keen sense of teamwork that has become integral to school life. Roles and areas of responsibility are well defined. The result has been to create a school that places the needs of its pupils at the heart of its activities. This is clearly recognised and appreciated by the great majority of parents and pupils and helps produce a harmonious place for learning founded on very good working relationships and good educational principles.
48. Central to school development is a very useful five-year strategic plan with eight strands for growth and improvement. These have been compiled jointly by all staff and governors and continue to be monitored by various working groups. More detailed plans exist for each area of growth, although it is not always clear what has been achieved in each area before embarking on the following year's developments. In addition, the needs to raise standards and improve further the quality of teaching and learning, are not always expressed as high enough priorities. However, the chosen approach has undoubtedly sharpened the corporate identity of the school and given all people involved a sense of ownership as to its current and future educational direction. In this respect, the views of parents and pupils are well acknowledged.
49. There is a strong 'middle management team' that helps maintain the nature and quality of the curriculum together with the upkeep of resources and new ideas. The various subject leaders have a good working knowledge of needs and priorities in their own areas and offer helpful support to colleagues and pupils. Most are involved with careful subject audits and the setting of annual plans and priorities for further improvement. Particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, the suggested areas for subject improvement reflect a good understanding of pupils' needs based on careful monitoring of their ongoing work, set alongside teachers' planning.
50. Over the past three years in particular, the school has become more successful in its self-evaluation process, although a total overview of what has been achieved is sometimes missing. Some important data relating to the past performance of pupils is analysed and the results shared widely with staff. It is not always clear, however, what precise course of action is being recommended when weaknesses or trends come to light. For instance, the strategic plans do not include actions to deal with current acknowledged weaknesses in teaching. Monitoring of the curriculum is now good and the consideration of the impact teachers have on the work of their pupils (performance management) is a satisfactory feature of school life. Where weaknesses exist, the action taken has not always resulted in improved provision, but this is rightly seen as an ongoing priority and staff development is generally handled well. New members of staff, including newly qualified teachers, are supported very effectively. The school has built up a good reputation for its support of teachers in training and has placed good emphasis on the need for well-qualified teaching assistants and nursery nurses across age groups.
51. Governors are very committed to the school and its pupils. The chair of governors, in particular, has a wealth of valuable experience that he brings to school administration, ensuring that policies and procedures are well known to the governing body. There is a particularly strong bond between staff and governors brought about by joint working parties to discuss and

monitor strategic planning. Apart from a few omissions in the school prospectus, governors meet their statutory requirements and are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Together with staff, there is also good awareness of the impact barriers can have on school improvement and how these can be tackled. The various committees of the governing body ensure good, effective use of governors' time. The monitoring of staffing matters, special educational needs and matters relating to equal opportunity, are generally handled well.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	751,211	Balance from previous year	56,848
Total expenditure	742,670	Balance carried forward to the next	65,389
Expenditure per pupil	2,231		

52. The school makes satisfactory use of its annual budgets and various grants. However, the most recent school audit from the local education authority required improvements in procedures for financial control to be made and management continues to put these into effect. The various balances that are brought forward are not always expressed in the clearest manner to ensure that governors are fully aware of the impact of their decisions. In the most recent financial year the school recognised financial difficulties developing and, following consultation with the local education authority, reduced the number of teachers. The large balance carried forward to the current financial year includes a significant sum to ensure the school's preferred staffing level. Governors recognise the need to have a better view of school finances and to develop longer-term financial planning. Finance needs to be linked more strongly to intended levels of achievement, staffing and other priorities expressed in the school improvement plan. The head teacher and governors are aware of the importance of securing best value from available staffing, financial and educational resources. The school's income per pupil is below average and taking into account the school's use of its finances and the resulting achievement of pupils, the value for money is satisfactory.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

53. When children enter Nursery their range of attainment is broad but overall standards are well below those expected nationally, particularly in communication, language and literacy, and personal and social development.
54. By the time they are ready to enter Year 1 standards overall are below those expected for children of this age. This represents good progress.
55. Teaching is good overall. Staff use methods which are well matched to the age of the children and teaching assistants and nursery nurses contribute effectively to the progress that children make. Staff plan activities that motivate and inspire children. As a result children's attitudes to learning are very good. Activities are well planned to make effective use of space both indoors and out; however, the Nursery garden is not used sufficiently well to extend learning in all aspects of development.
56. Induction procedures and support for parents are very good. These aspects of school life are promoted very effectively. Links with the Children's Centre ensure that the development of family learning is supported through the school.
57. All staff work together as an effective team that is well led. However, the governing body decided to reduce temporarily the number of teachers deployed within the Foundation Stage and one teacher is currently covering both the Reception and Nursery classes, with the support of nursery nurses and assistants. There is currently an imbalance of skills of staff and this leads to children not receiving consistency in the quality of their learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make very good progress as a result of very effective teaching.
- Children have very positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour is good.

Commentary

58. Children make very good progress. By the end of the Reception year they are achieving the standards expected for children of this age because staff have established clear routines and procedures that contribute well to learning. For example, Nursery children know where the snack is served, how to select their milk and snack, and what they must do when they have finished. Reception children join in with the songs at the beginning of the day, co-operate with each other and know how to take turns at circle time when objects are passed around the group.
59. Relationships are very good. All staff have consistently high expectations of children's behaviour and they use questioning well to draw out the children's ideas. As a result children grow in confidence because they know that their contributions are valued.
60. Children work with interest and concentration. They use their time well and they try hard. This is because staff plan activities that interest children and they provide play activities that are well resourced and organised which allow children to make choices and to grow in independence.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities to extend children's speaking and listening skills.
- The school misses opportunities to extend children's reading and writing skills.

Commentary

61. Children make satisfactory progress overall. By the end of the Reception year they are attaining standards well below those expected for children of this age. Teaching is satisfactory overall.
62. Children make good progress in speaking and listening. This is because staff use questioning well to ensure that children understand new words and to encourage them to explain their ideas. For example, at story time, Nursery children are asked to explain what is happening and what they think might happen next. The teacher's enthusiastic delivery builds suspense and maintains the interest of the children as they begin to make links between cause and effect.
63. There are some good opportunities for children to use writing for a purpose in their play. For example, children make lists and menus in the role-play café using some recognisable letter shapes. However, children do not make as much progress as they could in reading and writing because too many opportunities to extend their learning are missed, and there is not a clearly established system for developing writing to ensure that skills are built upon across the Foundation Stage. For example, Nursery activities do not consistently extend more able children, nor do they effectively promote handwriting or composition skills. In the Reception class, staff do not always ensure that children understand what is expected from independent activities in order to challenge their thinking. Resources to promote and extend reading and writing skills are not available widely enough.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities for children to develop counting skills.
- There are too many missed opportunities to extend learning.

Commentary

64. Children make satisfactory progress and so by the end of the Reception year are attaining standards that are well below those expected for children of this age.
65. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Staff plan good opportunities for children to develop their counting skills as part of daily routines. For example, as Nursery children self-register by placing their picture on the board they are encouraged to count the number present. Similarly, as Reception children investigate floating and sinking they are encouraged to count the number of pebbles taken to sink the boats. However, too often opportunities to extend children's learning are missed. For example, play activities are not consistently planned and resourced to challenge more able children and some lessons progress too quickly to allow children to consolidate mathematical understanding and skills before moving on to the next activity.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-planned activities develop knowledge and understanding by interesting and motivating the children.

Commentary

66. By the end of the Reception year children are attaining standards below those expected for their age. This represents good progress. Teaching is good because space and staff are deployed well to provide a good range of learning opportunities both indoors and out. For example, children learn about the life-cycle of the butterfly at first hand by observing the changes in the caterpillars that they have been keeping in the classroom as they pupate and subsequently 'hatch'. Nursery children use glue effectively as they make 'bear' masks, and these skills are built upon in the Reception class as children think about the joining methods they will need to assemble 'baby bear's chair'.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-planned activities develop children's physical skills both indoors and out.
- There is no clear and consistent approach to the development of handwriting skills.

Commentary

67. By the end of the Reception year children are attaining standards below those expected for their age. This represents good progress. Teaching is good because staff plan a good range of opportunities for children to move in a range of ways and to develop control of tools. For example, Nursery staff encourage children to use large dice to identify different ways of moving around the garden. Staff model and encourage different movements, such as jumps and hops. In the Reception class children are encouraged to move with streamers in response to taped music as they work outside, and to use tools such as hammers with increasing control. However, there is not a clear approach to the development of handwriting therefore children's skills are not consistently built upon. As a result children do not achieve as much as they could in this aspect of development.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-planned activities motivate and interest children.
- There is good use of specialist teaching.

Commentary

68. Teaching is good. Staff plan a good range of activities to promote children's creative development. As a result children make good progress given standards on entry to school,

even though by the end of the Reception year they are attaining below the levels expected for their age. Very effective use is made of a specialist music teaching, which contributes very well to children's learning. For example, excellent subject knowledge was used to plan a very good lesson for Reception children in which they extended their repertoire of songs and practised maintaining a steady beat. The children were motivated to try hard because the activities interested them and they were well supported, therefore their confidence grew throughout the lesson. The ideas introduced during the lesson were well used by other staff, outside the lesson, to consolidate and extend musical ideas.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve particularly well in Years 5 and 6 and reach broadly average standards for their age.
- Teaching and learning are good overall and encourage most pupils to make regular strides in their work.
- Too few pupils reach the higher levels and more could be done to challenge the most able.
- Written English is not used effectively across other areas of the curriculum and is not supported as well as it could be by the use of ICT.
- The subject is well led and managed, ensuring that staff are well supported.

Commentary

69. The inspection confirmed many of the trends indicated by the pupils' past performance in their national tests. Standards are well below average by the end of Year 2, but rise to reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6. Test results in Year 6 in 2003 were average but have varied considerably from year to year. Teachers' assessments and provisional results for Year 6 in 2004 indicate that standards reached in national assessments are likely to be below average; the school has to work hard to support pupils to write effectively in these tests. However, evidence from inspection shows that across the full range of their English work pupils currently in Year 6 are mainly working around the national expectation (level 4), but with few higher attaining pupils. Achievement is satisfactory by Year 2 and good by Year 6.
70. Despite the well below average standards pupils show on entry to the school, most children of infant age achieve at least satisfactorily and improvements are occurring in Years 1 and 2 in both reading and writing. This is due to increased adult provision, improved teaching and a sustained drive to raise standards in writing and reading in particular. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are currently making satisfactory progress, but those in Years 5 and 6 make rapid strides and achieve well by their time of transfer to secondary school. This is due to a well-planned curriculum, good teaching and the effective organisation of the pupils. Despite this, few pupils in Years 2 and 6 reach the higher levels for their age, and the work set for higher attaining pupils needs to be more challenging.
71. Boys have performed better in recent years and there is now little difference between the standards achieved by girls and boys by the end of Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well due mainly to the additional help they are given as part of their individual educational plans.
72. In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve satisfactorily in all aspects of English. Some make even better progress when they are well challenged and where the teaching provides a wide range of opportunities for them to read and write. Several are reluctant to speak out or lack confidence

when answering, but many have satisfactory listening skills and work hard to improve their work. Presentation skills are relatively weak, as is the ability to produce well-structured written sentences or accurate spellings. Most pupils are unable to write imaginatively or at great length, although a few are able to use powerful adjectives when describing their special memories or writing about their favourite 'Old Bear' characters. While many pupils show average skills when reading familiar and even new words, many also struggle to fully understand what they have read, and find it difficult to enlarge on the characters or predict accurately what might happen next.

73. In Years 3 and 4 pupils achieve satisfactorily but the work is not always at the right level to move them on at a faster rate. Expectations are not high enough in respect of general presentation of work and how best to develop an acceptable standard of handwriting. Some of the best progress in these year groups is made by lower attaining pupils when discussing humour in poetry and its relation to rhyme and syllables. Older pupils show good ability to express their moods in poetic form. Significant numbers of pupils in Years 5 and 6 lack confidence when explaining their work or debating their views. However, the same pupils are successful when writing a series of persuasive sentences for and against playtimes or the potential loss of school field areas for extra housing. Pupils are given a wide range of starting points for 'extended writing' during their literacy lessons, but there are insufficient opportunities in other subjects to write in different styles and for a range of purposes. By the end of Year 6, many pupils read with reasonable accuracy and confidence but lack inference skills or the ability to skim read texts to extract the main strands of information. There is also scope for pupils to use more ICT in English, for example to draft and re-draft their creative or extended writing.
74. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, with particular strengths in Years 1 and 2 and Years 5 and 6. Lessons are mainly well planned and are imaginative and enjoyable for the pupils. For English, pupils are taught in one of three or four sets depending on their overall ability. One teacher tends to take all the sets in any one year group and this allows him or her to target individual pupils without trying to balance learning across a wide range of attainment levels within any lesson. This has a positive impact on standards and achievement. Middle and lower attaining pupils fare best under this arrangement, but some of the work set for higher attaining pupils is not challenging enough. Resources are plentiful and attractive and used well. Teaching assistants are available to assist pupils' learning and their individual skills and experiences are used to good effect. Pupils' work is marked well and individual targets are raised by the use made of accurate assessments.
75. English is well led and managed. The school has a firm grasp of the needs of the subject based on careful monitoring and a planned programme for subject development.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

76. Older pupils in particular understand the need to adopt different styles of writing depending on its purpose. During English lessons, teachers encourage pupils to write in diary form, to write letters to friends giving accounts of visits and to make a list of instructions as to how to play a particular game or to make a sandwich. Too few opportunities are given in subjects such as religious education and history to write imaginatively and in different styles. However, some teachers are more adept at introducing subject-specific vocabulary such as may be used in mathematics.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall, pupils achieve well because of the strong focus the school places on developing their numeracy skills.
- Pupils currently in Year 5 and Year 6 are achieving very well in their lessons because of the very good and excellent teaching.

- Teachers provide pupils with good mathematical knowledge.
- Subject leadership is very good.
- Teachers do not always rigorously challenge the more able pupils in Years 1 to 4.

Commentary

77. In the 2003 national tests pupils at the end of Year 2 achieved standards that were as good as those in similar schools although they were well below the national average. Standards have fallen in recent years but have varied considerably between individual year groups. Pupils in the current Year 2 group are reaching below average standards, but this is a good achievement. Although many reach the expected level (level 2), few pupils reach the higher standards (level 3).
78. Year 6 results in national tests in recent years have usually been average or below average. Pupils in Year 6 in 2003 achieved standards that were below average and well below those of similar schools. This was a considerable drop in achievement from the previous year, when standards reached well exceeded those of similar schools. The school changed the teaching arrangements for the current pupils in Year 5 and 6. Teachers' assessments, provisional national test results and scrutiny of work indicate that standards in the current Year 6 groups are now around average. This represents current good achievement overall.
79. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as others in their class because of the good support they receive from their class teachers, learning support teacher and assistants. Girls' achievement is better than that of boys at the end of Year 2; however, boys make the most improvement in Years 3 to 6 and by the end of Year 6 boys achieve better than girls.
80. Teachers have successfully developed the use of the National Numeracy Strategy into their teaching. The strong focus on developing pupils' numeracy skills is appropriate. Teachers also provide pupils with good opportunities to develop their knowledge of shape, space, measures, data handling and problem-solving skills. In Year 2 pupils know common two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes and by Year 6 pupils can measure angles accurately and understand reflection and rotation.
81. Overall the quality of teaching is good throughout the school. It is very good in Years 5 and 6. The strengths in the teaching include:
- Basic numeracy skills are well taught and in Years 5 and 6 pupils use these skills very well to solve problems.
 - Lessons are well planned and pupils are made very aware of what they are expected to learn in that lesson.
 - Teachers are sensitive to the pupils' needs and therefore pupils are confident, willing to take part in oral activities and try their best in their written work.
 - Teachers reflect on what pupils achieve in one lesson and use this information well to plan the subsequent lesson.
 - Teachers' marking of pupils work praises them for what they do well and frequently explains how they can improve; this is particularly so in Years 1 and 2.
 - Introductions to lessons usually involve a mental mathematics game that the pupils enjoy, particularly if they can beat their previous best time.
 - Teachers include work on shape, space, measures and data handling in addition to the greatest focus, which is developing pupils' numeracy and problem-solving skills.

The area where teaching can be improved is:

- Teachers need to ensure that they challenge the more able pupils.

82. Leadership and management are very good. The subject co-ordinator monitors teaching and learning very well through regular observation, scrutiny of planning and monitoring of pupils' work. The information has been used well to develop teachers' skills in areas such as the marking of pupils' work and setting appropriate pupil targets. The subject co-ordinator is very aware of the need to improve the challenge teachers provide for the more able pupils, particularly in Years 1 to 4, if standards are to improve further. The co-ordinator has provided information to parents on the methods used to calculate and the ways in which sums are set out so that they can confidently help their children.

Mathematics across the curriculum

83. Pupils have good opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in other subjects, notably in science, ICT and geography. They use graphs and tables to record data in geography and measure materials in science. ICT is used to practise numeracy skills in the classroom.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Unsatisfactory teaching, learning and assessment in Years 5 and 6 are resulting in unsatisfactory achievement.
- Achievement in Years 3 and 4 is good because of good teaching, learning and assessment.
- Pupils who are good at science are not pushed enough to reach better standards.
- Science is well led and managed and the school knows very well what it needs to do to improve.

Commentary

84. Pupils start to learn science in Year 1 with little knowledge of the subject. During the next two years they learn about science through investigations and experiments; for instance, they listen carefully for different sounds around the school and home. Although it was possible to see only a small amount of teaching, evidence from samples of work and planning files shows that teaching for pupils at this age is satisfactory, lessons are well prepared and teachers explain the work clearly and carefully. Marking is satisfactory overall but at times could be used better to help pupils know how to improve their work. As a result of the teaching, pupils learn satisfactorily, and discover more about scientific words and approaches, so that, by the end of Year 2, pupils are achieving satisfactorily. Nevertheless, standards are still well below average; this was confirmed in the 2003 national assessments made by teachers. One difficulty is that few pupils reach the higher National Curriculum level for this age (level 3). Individual year groups vary and the provisional results in 2004 are improved with more pupils at the higher level, but there is still the need for the more able pupils to be stretched more.
85. During Years 3 and 4 pupils make good progress and achieve well; by the end of Year 4 they are reaching standards which have improved to below average. The evidence from lesson observation and scrutiny of work samples shows teaching to be good to very good. Teaching is imaginative, for instance by using soft toys to attract the attention of pupils who have low ability. Pupils are taught how to make best use of language in their work and are encouraged to record their practical investigations in an orderly way. The work is marked well and helps pupils to become more confident. For instance, in a lesson where pupils were separating items such as rice, sugar and paper clips by using sieves, some pupils remembered from previous lessons that they could use magnets to move metals. In lessons like this pupils work closely with each other and are helped by staff from the Behaviour Improvement Programme, so pupils know that learning is a good and enjoyable social experience.

86. During Years 5 and 6, pupils fail to build enough on previous progress and as a result their achievement by the end of Year 6 is unsatisfactory. The 2003 results were around the national average and pupils in that year achieved as well as pupils in similar schools. Since that time the arrangements for teaching the subject have changed. The 2004 teachers' assessments, provisional results from national tests, and scrutiny of work indicate that standards have fallen and are now below average. Pupils in 2004 are not achieving as much as they could because the teaching, learning and assessment in Years 5 and 6 are unsatisfactory. The objectives of lessons are not clear enough for pupils or the teacher to know how successful they are. Some of the activities are mundane; for instance, pupils fill in a lot of worksheets during the year. Little account is taken of the different ability of pupils, and as a result the more able are not given hard enough work and they do not reach the higher standards that they could. This is evident in lessons and in samples of work provided by the school. However, pupils with special educational needs are often given specific different tasks and this helps them to achieve satisfactorily. Too much of the learning during the year is based upon covering the facts. Because of this, pupils do not understand well enough what makes an experiment as opposed to an investigation. The practical work they do is often recorded in an untidy manner and does not build upon previous standards. The work of pupils in Years 5 and 6 is marked throughout but the teachers' comments are either too general to help pupils improve or too negative in their style.
87. The leadership and management of science are good. The curriculum is well planned for the school's two-year organisation of pupils and subjects. The teaching, learning and assessments are monitored and detailed feedback is provided for teachers. This monitoring has clearly identified the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and provided information for the school leadership to be able to take action to improve.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well by Year 2 but unsatisfactorily in Years 5 and 6.
- There has been recent improvement in resources and staff expertise.
- Subject leadership is good and is having an impact on raising standards.
- ICT is not used consistently to support learning in other subjects.

Commentary

88. By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve standards that are above those expected nationally. This is a good achievement, taking into account the skills that they bring from Reception class age and the recent improvements brought to the subject. Pupils currently in Years 3 and 4 are reaching expected standards and for these pupils it represents satisfactory achievement. The achievement of pupils in Years 5 and 6 is unsatisfactory, however, and they reach only below average standards; this is because the use and teaching of ICT in subjects across the curriculum are too variable.
89. Although it was possible to see only one lesson focusing on the teaching of ICT skills, information from this observation and scrutiny of samples of work across the curriculum show that many pupils are learning ICT skills well because of good teaching. However, these skills are not built upon sufficiently for older pupils; expectations are not high enough. Teachers use the national guidance in their planning to ensure that pupils experience the full range of skills in their curriculum. Examples of pupils' work show they are learning to use ICT for word processing, graphics, the Internet, data handling and control, monitoring and modelling. Recent work on assessment in Years 1 and 2 is a useful and positive development.

90. The school has a satisfactory range of resources and has plans to improve these further. Resources include a room with a suite of computers to develop pupils' ICT skill. This room is also timetabled for teachers to enhance pupils' subject experiences. For example, some Year 6 pupils practised their number skills attempting to beat their previous best time. Each classroom also has a computer. Sensing materials and digital resources, such as an interactive white board, are available. An interactive whiteboard is available in the computer suite and is appropriately used by staff.
91. Leadership and management are good and have been important in improving the hardware and software resources and staff expertise within the school. There is a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development and a correct focus on developing teachers' confidence in the teaching of ICT skills. Teachers describe how they feel more confident to teach the various ICT skills and applications because of the recent good training. This is beginning to have an impact on standards. The ICT room has problems of ventilation and overheating and this affects the concentration of pupils.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

92. Teachers' use of ICT to enhance pupils' learning across the curriculum is variable and sometimes adds little to their learning in other subjects. During the inspection little use was made of ICT outside the direct teaching sessions time-tabled for the ICT room. Pupils used computers to support their learning in history, mathematics, English, religious education, design and technology and geography. The teachers have planned and established some good curriculum links between pupils' developing ICT skills and appropriate subjects; for example in Year 1 and 2 pupils draw and label flowers using ICT as part of their science work. However, there is little evidence in retained samples of work that ICT is used regularly to support learning across the full range of subjects. The school has appropriately highlighted the need to enhance the use of ICT across the curriculum as a development area.

HUMANITIES

Geography

93. This subject was only sampled because of the limited amount of time available for observations.
94. Scrutiny of limited work samples and observation of pupils in lessons indicate that by Year 2 standards are well below expectations, with overall satisfactory achievement. However, achievement in lessons observed is currently good because of good teaching and learning. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn about geography through work on topics such as 'islands'. This is linked well into the personal and social development of pupils. In a well-taught lesson based on circle time pupils were encouraged to invite a friend to an imaginary island they had designed and play and talk about what they could see. This was effective in giving pupils some sense of the place and encouraged co-operation and friendship. As a result of lessons like these pupils develop an understanding of what it is like to be in other places and the more able pupils recognise physical and human features. Work is matched to pupils of different ability and experience.
95. By the end of Year 6 standards of work seen are still well below expectations. Samples of work indicate that pupils appear to make good progress during Years 3 and 4 but unsatisfactory progress in Years 5 and 6. During Years 3 and 4 pupils use an investigative approach in well-ordered and structured work, focusing on real places, using maps and map skills. Pupils have clearly made good progress in studying a village in India; their work demonstrates some understanding of life there, although standards are still below average.
96. In Years 5 and 6 there is too much work that is copied and little attention is paid to the different abilities or experiences of pupils. Work is marked throughout but does little to encourage pupils

to improve. Little of the work is based on real enquiry. In one lesson seen with older pupils they did not make enough progress in being able to use co-ordinates because of unsatisfactory teaching.

97. The detailed file of the subject co-ordinator indicates how the subject should be taught, it has good curriculum plans and provides good information about how monitoring should operate. Much of the monitoring has been done but it has not been effective enough at identifying and influencing the current quality of provision. Not enough is done to identify the contribution of fieldwork to the subject.

History

98. This subject has been sampled only. There were limited opportunities to observe teaching in history and as a result no overall judgement is made about provision.
99. Scrutiny of work indicates that standards of work by the end of Year 2 are well below expectations but that pupils are achieving satisfactorily. Pupils can sort and comment about family trees and they write satisfactorily about the differences between the past and the present. They recognise that there are important dates during the year such as Guy Fawkes' night, and birthdays, and mark on a time line when these occur.
100. Only one lesson was seen; that was in Years 3 and 4 and was very good. An innovative approach that encouraged pupils to act as spies in finding out about the Romans in Britain enabled pupils to make very good progress and develop a real sense of the period.
101. By the end of Year 6, however, scrutiny of work shows that standards of work are well below expectations despite the earlier good teaching. Sampled work shows satisfactory progress being made by pupils in Years 3 and 4 but some unsatisfactory achievement in Years 5 and 6. Too much of the work of older pupils is based on simple questions and some copying of information, the purpose of some activities is not clear and marking is ineffective in raising standards because it is often too general in nature. Pupils in different year groups often do the same level of work.
102. There is a detailed subject file of documents, policies and work plans available. Some useful monitoring has taken place but is not effective enough in improving provision overall because the judgements on provision are not sharp enough.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Younger pupils in particular show enthusiasm for the subject.
- Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 and 2.
- Some of the subject matter taught in the junior years is not easily understood by the pupils.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

103. The subject meets fully the requirements of Gateshead's Agreed Syllabus in Religious Education. Standards are broadly at the level expected for the age of the pupils by the end of Years 2 and 6. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily and there is no significant difference between the achievements of girls and boys. Infant age pupils make considerable gains in knowledge and understanding because of the good teaching, the practical nature of the curriculum and their own enthusiastic approach. Pupils with special educational needs make mainly good progress due to additional support and the specially prepared work they are sometimes set.
104. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have mainly poor recording skills but this does not undermine the many good gains they make in knowledge and understanding during their various topics. During the inspection, some classes visited the nearby St Paul's Church and responded very well to such a new and practical experience. They were particularly thrilled on visiting the belfry, hearing the bells and seeing their guide carried off the floor when pulling the bell rope! Pupils were able to practise their literacy skills by writing 'thank you' letters to their host. Most pupils show satisfactory understanding of topics such as Moses in the Bulrushes, the Good Samaritan and

the special places where they like to be alone and reflect. This contributes to their spiritual development.

105. A sound range of topics is covered in the junior years and most pupils achieve satisfactory standards. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have a sound knowledge of the signs and symbols used in different religions and why the Bible is important to Christians and the Feast of Diwali to Hindus. Several pupils do well in their understanding of the differences between the world's great faiths. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 also achieve well when studying various sacred texts and understand that the beliefs of Christians can affect how they behave. They achieve mainly satisfactory standards when studying how Muslims express their faith and the importance of Shabbat to Judaism.
106. Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory overall elsewhere, although some weaknesses occur in Years 5 and 6. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 are imaginative in their approach, combining well-known stories with good opportunities for pupils to express their emerging beliefs. Before visiting the local church, pupils were given help with their language skills by preparing questions for their host and the visit was recorded on videotape to enable teachers to assess pupils' memories and observation skills. Whilst satisfactory overall, some of the teaching in the junior years is less successful as it is prepared using inadequate or unsuitable resources. Most lessons are planned well although more effort is needed to prepare work for differently attaining pupils, particularly those with a strong subject interest or those of higher ability. There is little evidence, for example, of pupils researching their own knowledge.
107. Religious education is led and managed well. The subject co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and her policy and help with suggested approaches are appreciated by staff. There are positive and helpful links made with school worship, with the moral development of the pupils and with the school's programme in personal education.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC AND PRACTICAL SUBJECTS

Design and technology

108. This subject has been sampled only. There was limited evidence available in this subject and no lessons for observation, making it impossible to make an overall judgement on provision.
109. The pupils' work on display suggests standards broadly in line with the expectations of the curriculum and sound achievement across the school. Pupils have an adequate range of topics in order to build up their skills and experiences and there is appropriate emphasis on evaluating work as well as design techniques, although the former is very basic and sometimes immature. There is good emphasis on moving models and various control mechanisms and on pupils choosing from a wide range of different materials depending on the purpose. Some good links are made with other areas of the curriculum such as designing Diwali cups as part of a religious education project in Years 3 and 4 and, in Years 5 and 6, pupils designed and made successful Anderson shelters as part of their history topic on World War II. Documentation indicates that the subject is led, managed and resourced satisfactorily.

Music

110. This subject has been sampled only. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about provision for music because of the small number of lessons seen. However, it was possible to make a number of judgements about aspects of standards and provision.
111. Observation of lessons, assemblies, practice sessions and extra-curricular activities indicate that pupils achieve very well in music and by the end of Year 6 they are attaining standards in the work seen above those expected for pupils of this age. For example, Year 6 pupils are able to create their own lyrics for a melody showing an understanding of rhythm. They are able to record the melody using standard notation and play it on an electronic keyboard. They can talk

confidently about the types of music they like and evaluate pieces by considering tempo, pitch and structure. For example, after listening to a piece of country music one pupil wrote, "The mood is happy, the tempo is quite fast, the pitch is high and then low, and the sounds of drums and singing are combined."

112. Some excellent teaching was seen. For example, in a Year 5/6 lesson pupils were asked to create a piece of music for a reality television show. Pupils had real purpose for their work therefore levels of interest and motivation were very high. They listened and responded to others, combined ideas together and used an electronic keyboard to layer sounds in order to add texture and structure. Relationships in the classroom were excellent. Pupils knew that they would be supported therefore they were confident to try hard, and to perform their compositions for others. As a result of this teaching pupils achieved excellently.
113. Pupils have good opportunities to practise skills and to perform through class assemblies, and regular events for parents. The Performing Arts Club enables pupils from Years 2 to 6 to work together with teachers who have specialist knowledge. The high quality of their performances reflects the very good teaching that they receive. The enthusiasm of the staff involved contributes to the very positive attitudes of pupils, exemplified by one pupil who wrote, "I like singing because it is like reaching for the soul."

Physical education

114. This subject has been sampled only. Only a very limited range of activities and lessons was available for observation, so no judgement can be made as to the quality of overall subject provision. However, the subject is well led and the curriculum is well mapped out using a nationally approved scheme of work that ensures all elements of the statutory curriculum are covered, including swimming. The curriculum is also enhanced by sporting visits and visitors, competitions with other schools and extra-curricular activities of a sporting nature. There are strong links with promoting good health including 'skipping towards a healthy heart.' During the one lesson seen, pupils from Years 3 and 4 reached the expected standards for their age when using hockey sticks and controlling pucks or small balls. Resources are satisfactory overall. Although some of the gymnastics equipment for older pupils is in need of replenishment, the accommodation and general facilities for the subject are good.

Art and design

Overall provision in art and design is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective use is made of art to extend learning in other subjects
- Techniques are not taught systematically therefore standards are not as high as they could be by the end of Year 6.

Commentary

115. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils attain standards below those expected nationally. This represents satisfactory achievement overall given their initial progress in the Foundation Stage. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to work in two- and three-dimensional forms and to use a range of media. For example, in Years 1 and 2 pupils use collage, paint and pencil to record their ideas. These skills are built upon in Years 3 to 6 as pupils learn to merge pastels to create pictures in the style of Botticelli, and to use shading and perspective in order to create three-dimensional effects.
116. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Pupils try hard in lessons and teachers support and encourage pupils to do their best. However, techniques are not always clearly explained and modelled and this slows the rate of children's learning. For example, in a Year 3/4 lesson

pupils were asked to create a design for a mosaic. Questioning was used effectively to consolidate and extend children's understanding of the uses made of mosaics in the past, drawing particularly on pupils' knowledge of the Romans. However, insufficient time was spent modelling the mosaic technique therefore pupils did not understand that their designs had to be based upon complete squares of a single colour. As a result too much time was spent drawing pictures rather than creating designs which could be re-created using the mosaic technique. Similarly in a Year 5/6 lesson which was focusing upon the work of Picasso, insufficient time was spent teaching children how to create blocks of colour using felt-tip pens. Consequently pupils made limited progress in their basic colouring skills. However, pupils' understanding of ideas such as cubism was satisfactory and they knew something of the life of Picasso and his reasons for painting *Guernica*.

117. Schemes of work provide appropriate guidance for staff by identifying what pupils should learn. Art activities are well matched to the topics that children are focusing upon therefore pupils' work in art supports and extends learning in other subjects. For example, Year 3/4 pupils make diva lamps using clay, and design and make christening cards as part of their religious education studies, and Year 5/6 pupils use papier-mâché techniques to create helmets as part of their study of World War II.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

118. The school gives pupils' personal development a high priority and as a result pupils are confident on most occasions to share ideas and thoughts with staff and other adults. There is a good provision for personal, social and health education, which includes work on health, drugs, sex and personal safety. The school council provides pupils with opportunities to discuss issues and come to decisions, which they share with staff, who listen to their views and explain why some of their ideas are accepted and others are rejected.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgements</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	N/A
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
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	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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