

INSPECTION REPORT

St Godric's RC Primary School, Thornley

Wheatley Hill

LEA area: Durham

Unique reference number: 112477

Headteacher: Mrs M J Lewin

Lead inspector: Steve Bywater

Dates of inspection: 26th to 29th April 2004

Inspection number: 257668

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:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	96
School address:	Thornley Road Wheatley Hill Durham
Postcode:	DH6 3NR
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev. Pat Laydon
Date of previous inspection:	22 nd June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Godric's Roman Catholic Primary School Thornley is a smaller than average school with 96 pupils aged 4 to 11 years. It serves two ex-mining villages in rural East Durham. Almost a third of pupils are known to be entitled to free school meals and this is above average. All pupils are of white British heritage and all pupils speak English as their first language. Thirty three pupils are on the special educational needs register, which is well above the national average. Their needs vary; most have moderate learning difficulties but others have more specific needs. Two pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. Almost all children have attended nurseries before starting school. Standards on entry to the reception class are poor, especially in communication, language and literacy and number, although the full range of attainment is represented. The school is organised into four classes. Reception and Year 1 pupils are in one class, Year 2 pupils are in the second class, a mixed Year 3 and Year 4 class is the third and a mixed Year 5 and 6 comprises the fourth class. The school holds numerous awards including Activemark, Basic Skills Quality Mark, Investors in People and also received a School Achievement Award in 2001 in recognition for raising standards in two consecutive years.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18463	Steve Bywater	Lead inspector	English, the Foundation Stage, design and technology, art and design, music, physical education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an **effective school**. As a result of the good teaching pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. By the age of eleven, pupils' standards meet national expectations in all subjects except English where writing and speaking are the weaker elements, and music. The children have very good attitudes; relationships throughout the school are very good and pupils behave very well. The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides very clear educational direction. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Children in the reception class get off to a good start.
- Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well in most subjects because most of the teaching is good and there is a rich and well balanced curriculum.
- Pupils' standards in speaking and writing are lower than they should be.
- Good quality leadership and management are supporting school improvement.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and the additional activities to enhance the curriculum are very good.
- Pupils' personal development is good and their very good attitudes and very good behaviour support their learning. Relationships are very good.
- The links with parents and the community are good.
- The quality of care is very good.
- Assessment is good and used well to plan future work.
- Standards of music in junior classes are too low.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection and, in 2001, received a school achievement award in recognition of the raising standards. It now has a management structure which clearly defines the role of the second-in-charge and identifies the monitoring role of co-ordinators. There is a systematic approach to whole-school development and the school identifies the correct priorities and suitable plans to deal with them effectively. There is a consistent approach to planning and assessment across the school and the results of these are analysed to identify areas for improvement. Although there have been a number of improvements in the provision of writing, they have not been successful in raising standards and more needs to be done.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Overall, pupils achieve well. Children in the reception and Year 1 class achieve well and pupils in Year 2 achieve satisfactorily. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well although there is a weakness in the development of writing skills. However, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well in reading, mathematics and science. The work seen during the inspection indicates that children in the reception class make good progress but do not meet the national standards (early learning goals) in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. In knowledge and understanding of the world, physical, creative and personal, social and emotional development they are likely to meet the early learning goals. In Year 2, pupils reach standards which

are average in mathematics and science but below average in English. In Year 6, pupils reach standards in listening and reading which are above average by the end of Year 6 but standards in speaking and writing are below average. In mathematics standards are above average and in science they are average. Standards in ICT meet national expectations at ages seven and eleven.

Pupils' personal development is good and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Pupils have a very good attitude towards school and their behaviour and relationships are also very good. A number of initiatives, such as the class councils, positively promote pupils' sense of responsibility. Attendance is satisfactory but a small number of pupils are not punctual despite the efforts made by the school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. The curriculum is good with a very good range of activities to enrich it. **The quality of teaching is good.** Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and manage them very well. Pupils are keen to learn and are clear about what is expected of them. The teaching of numeracy skills is mainly good but there are weaknesses in the teaching of literacy where opportunities for pupils to speak and write are not being exploited sufficiently. Teachers are not confident in the teaching of music. There is a good range of assessment strategies which help teachers to set suitably demanding work. Pupils with special educational needs are taught and supported effectively.

The school provides a good range of opportunities to develop learning within a well-balanced curriculum. Teachers prepare an interesting environment and make good use of educational visits and visitors to inspire children. There is a very good range of activities within school time, after school and at lunchtime. The school provides a high level of care for the emotional and physical needs of its pupils. Information to parents is good and parents are directly involved in supporting pupils at school. There are very positive links with the community and the relationships with other schools are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The leadership of the headteacher is good. The leadership of other key staff is good. The headteacher has a very clear vision and is clearly committed to school improvement. The overall management of the school is good. Monitoring and evaluation of the performance of staff by the headteacher and others have many very good features. Current weaknesses have been identified and action planned. The work of the governing body is good. The governors show a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are fully committed to supporting the school and act as critical friends in challenging the school in its desire to improve standards.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents strongly agree that the school provides well for their children. They understand that staff know their children very well and particularly appreciate the high quality of teaching and the personal approach by staff. Pupils also think highly of the school and speak enthusiastically about their teachers.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise standards in speaking and writing;
- improve the standards in music.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement in reception is good and in Years 1 and 2 it is satisfactory. Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Standards in Year 2 are average in reading and listening, mathematics and science but below average in speaking and writing. In Year 6, standards are above average in mathematics, average in science but below average in English because of the shortcomings in writing.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Throughout the school pupils show good achievement in listening, reading, mathematics and science.
- Standards in speaking and writing are not high enough.
- Standards in music are too low.
- Standards in mathematics are above average in Year 6 and have improved since the last inspection.

Commentary

1. Most children enter the reception class with low levels of attainment, particularly in their use of language and number. Good teaching helps children make good progress in all areas, but about a third of the children are unlikely to reach the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. However, because the teacher provides such a wide range of interesting activities, children are likely to meet the Early Learning Goals in their personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development by the time they go to Year 1.
2. In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve satisfactorily and currently reach average standards in reading and mathematics. The table below indicates that standards were below average in reading, average in writing and above average in mathematics. Standards are now much better in reading because the school has initiated a number of positive strategies. Writing, however, is not as good and the reasons for this are explained in later paragraphs. Last year, pupils did much better in writing and mathematics tests than those in similar schools. When there are so few pupils in each year group, care needs to be taken when analysing results because one pupil counts for a significant proportion of marks. Cohorts which have included a significant number of pupils with special educational needs over the past two years partly explain the overall improvements being below the national trend.
3. Standards in science are average but this represents good improvement from a low level. There has been a good improvement in the opportunities for investigative science since the last inspection.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	14.2 (14.1)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.5 (14.1)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.8 (18.4)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 13 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. The 2003 national tests for pupils in Year 6 (see below) showed that overall standards in English were well below the national average and the standards of similar schools nationally. In

mathematics and science, standards were in line with the national average and standards of similar schools. Currently, standards are somewhat different. In mathematics, pupils are achieving well and standards are on track to be above expectations. Pupils also achieve well in science, although standards are more in line with national expectations because pupils have a less than expected understanding of materials and how they change. In English, reading is a strong aspect of pupils' work and the majority of pupils in Year 6 read very expressively and with understanding. However, pupils' speaking and writing are not as good as they should be because they have insufficient time and opportunity to write and speak at length.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.3 (24.9)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	26.7 (26.3)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	28.7 (27.4)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 21 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- In information and communication technology (ICT) standards are average in Years 2 and 6. Staff expertise has been improved by training and this has had a positive effect on raising standards and improving pupils' achievement. The use of ICT in other subjects has improved and pupils now have access to much better resources. Standards in all other subjects are average except for music where standards are below average due to the lack of teacher confidence and a suitable programme of work to develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the support they receive from teachers and work set at the correct level.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have **very good** attitudes to school. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is consistently **very good**. They respond **well** to the strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural values promoted by the school. Levels of attendance are **satisfactory** and in line with levels normally found in primary schools. Pupils' personal development is **good** and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour result from the teachers' high expectations and valuing of their ideas.
- The very good relationships that pupils share with adults and each other help to create a very good ethos.
- Pupils' personal development is good as a result of a good curriculum.
- Pupils with special educational needs show very good attitudes to their work.

Commentary

- Since the last inspection, the school has strengthened this aspect of its work. The pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour and understanding of others contribute highly to the ethos of the school. Almost all the parents who returned the questionnaire and attended the meeting agreed that their children like school and thrive on the high expectations of hard work set by staff. This is also reflected in the pupils' opinions.
- From starting in the reception class, children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in their acquisition of personal and social skills. They are enthusiastic learners who approach each task with interest and a sense of purpose; they waste little time in starting work and listen

carefully to teachers' instructions. Children are very biddable and eager to please and have good relationships with the teacher, with each other and with other adults who work with them. Most understand the routines in the classroom and tidy up sensibly when asked.

9. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 participate in all aspects of school life with great enthusiasm and interest. This makes a significant contribution to the individual success achieved by the pupils during their time in school. Most pupils are well motivated learners who listen carefully to their teachers and, because teachers value all their ideas, they contribute confidently, though briefly, to discussions in lessons. As a result, the relationships they have with each other, with their teachers and with other members of staff are very good and the majority develop into sensible, caring and mature individuals. This is the foundation of the happy, harmonious and supportive community atmosphere that pervades the school. Older pupils take very good care of their younger friends and this adds to the 'family' feeling at the heart of the school community. It is a very significant strength which has a major impact on the good progress that most pupils make.
10. Standards of behaviour are very good in lessons and around the school. Pupils bring a mature self-disciplined approach to every situation and this helps to create a calm and very purposeful learning environment. Pupils have a very clear understanding of adults' high expectations and they respond to this by being trustworthy and sensible. Pupils were responsible for creating school rules and as a result they understand and follow them very well. They model themselves effectively on the very positive examples offered by the headteacher and staff. No instances of unacceptable behaviour or bullying were seen during the inspection. Last year, one pupil was excluded from school in line with the school discipline policy after all other avenues had been exhausted. Prior to this, there had been no exclusions from school for many years.

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	96	1	0

11. Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils are encouraged to explore values and beliefs in their religious education and personal, social and health education lessons. The climate in which the pupils learn is based on respect for others and the right of individuals to express their opinions. The respect all teachers show for their pupils sets a very good example. Pupils' comments and questions are valued and pupils of all abilities are treated with equal respect. Pupils' moral and social education is very good. Pupils make the most of any opportunity offered in school to extend their independence and, as a result, they become increasingly mature individuals. They enjoy the experience of being a member of their class councils and they feel their views are taken into account. Many pupils take advantage of the very good extra-curricular provision to participate in recreational activities, such as dance, rugby and quilting. Some experience the more competitive nature of local team sports and last year were awarded the 'Fair Play' award in a regional sports competition. Pupils are encouraged to take care of the environment. The curriculum encourages pupils to explore their own cultural values and the local culture. Pupils learn about other cultures and religions and are encouraged to compare, contrast and empathise with them. The school is committed to extending and developing the range of visitors, such as the recent visits of a blind Indian musician, African drummers and mask makers, and cultural experiences of the pupils.
12. Pupils with special educational needs concentrate very well on their work and they try very hard even when they find work challenging. They are treated with similar sensitivity by everyone and all make a full contribution to the life of the school.

Attendance

The attendance rate is satisfactory and similar to the average for other local schools. The rate of unauthorised absence is very slightly above the national average. The vast majority of pupils arrive at school on time but there is a very small minority who are consistently late.

Attendance statistics

Authorised absence	
School data:	5.3
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	0.5
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 school provides a **good** quality of education.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good**. The use of assessment is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers know the pupils very well and have very good relationships with them.
- There is good teaching of children in the Foundation Stage.
- The teaching of writing has weaknesses.
- Teachers manage behaviour very well: they are kind but firm.
- Teachers use good assessment methods to set the next stage of work.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills.
- Teachers lack confidence in the teaching of music.
- Learning support assistants help pupils very well.
- Pupils with special educational needs learn well because of effective planning by teachers.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 23 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	6	12	5	0	0	0

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

13. The quality of teaching is good overall. Over a quarter of the lessons seen were taught very well and the large majority were taught well. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. Because teaching is so consistent, pupils' learning mirrors this quality of teaching and, as a consequence, pupils' progress builds systematically.
14. The quality of teaching is good for children in the Foundation Stage. The reception teacher has a good awareness of how young children learn through experience and talk. She prompts the children to talk about what they are doing and gives them time to explain themselves fully. Occasionally, the teaching assistants tend to over-direct children without picking up on learning

opportunities to develop children's communication skills. The staff's insistence on the children having good manners and waiting their turn ensures the children learn what it is to be part of a group.

15. All the teachers and support staff have very good relationships with the pupils. They know every pupil in the school and often share news and ideas. The pupils have respect and affection for the teachers and try their best for them. Teachers usually manage the pupils skilfully, often through humour and praise. They make their expectations clear and let the pupils know when they do not meet them. Lessons and therefore learning are not interrupted by unacceptable behaviour. Pupils work hard and are productive. They know what to do and in lessons they strive to complete their tasks. Only when the pace slows, or when the task is too easy or too hard, do the pupils show natural restlessness and behave a little inappropriately.
16. In both literacy and numeracy, the teachers follow the recommended structure for lessons. They plan their lessons in detail and often make good use of practical aids, such as number sticks to focus the pupils' attention and small whiteboards for them to draft and show their responses. There are times when teachers do not give enough opportunities for pupils to speak at length and accept brief answers. Pupils learn facts and ideas well and, although they have difficulty in talking about what they know, their understanding is assured. Whilst the teaching of reading is particularly good, and teachers devote much time to this, the teaching of writing is not as effective and pupils do not achieve as well as they should. The main reasons for this include teachers sticking very rigidly to an hour for the literacy lesson and not using time well enough. Sometimes, the pace slows during the lessons and this prevents pupils from having enough time to complete their work. In addition, pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length in other subjects. Despite these difficulties, in Years 3 to 6, the teachers' marking is extremely effective in helping the pupils to learn how to improve their writing. They give critical but constructive advice, such as *'Good use of punctuation and accurate use of speech, however use apostrophes to mark missing letters'*.
17. Teachers are skilled at planning links between subjects which help pupils learn about the real world. A weaker subject is music. Teachers lack confidence to develop music in a systematic way and do not have the support of suitable planning to support them. As a result, standards in music are low.
18. Teachers plan effectively for pupils with special educational needs. Work is set at levels that meet their needs and as a result pupils make good progress both in lessons and over the longer term. Pupils with statements of special educational needs receive effective support from classroom assistants and the quality of pupils' learning and their progress is much enhanced. Support staff offer unobtrusive but effective support which often benefits others sitting close by.
19. The school has good procedures for measuring pupils' achievements and monitoring their progress. Regular tests in English, mathematics and science that include both statutory and optional assessments and other standardised tests are entered into the school's tracking system. Pupils' achievements from the age of five are satisfactory. They are recorded, based on data from the local education authority and used to track pupils' progress. Pupils are set individual targets so that they are more aware of their own progress. The analysis of pupils' performance in the tests is used to identify any weaknesses in the provision. For example, pupils did not achieve well in reading so this prompted the school to focus on this. Reading is now good. Pupils with special educational needs have good individual education plans that are specifically geared to meet the needs of each individual by providing appropriate and achievable targets that are reviewed regularly and have a very positive effect on developing standards.

The curriculum

The school provides a **good** curriculum which is enhanced by a **very good** quality range of learning opportunities which enrich pupils' educational experiences. Accommodation is **good** and there is a **good** range of resources.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Learning opportunities are planned effectively to meet the needs of all the pupils.
- Mathematics and reading are developed well across the curriculum but there are missed opportunities to develop writing skills.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- There is a very strong commitment to equality of opportunity.
- There is very good provision for sports.
- Visits out of and visitors to school along with a very good range of additional learning opportunities outside the school day have a very positive impact on learning.
- Accommodation is good overall but there is no direct access to outdoor play in the reception classroom.

Commentary

20. There has been good improvement in curriculum provision since the previous inspection. The school offers pupils a good range of learning activities which meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and the syllabus for religious education. The curriculum is very effectively adapted to meet the needs of pupils with particular educational or social needs. Regular reviews ensure that new developments take place and the curriculum enables all pupils to achieve well. The curriculum prepares pupils well for the next stage of education. Numeracy skills are well developed in other areas of the curriculum. Reading skills are very well developed across the curriculum but there are missed opportunities to develop writing skills. In the reception class, children follow a good curriculum based on the areas of learning for the Foundation Stage. It covers all the areas of learning and it is very well enhanced by well organised out of school visits.
21. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all aspects of the curriculum. Where necessary the curriculum is modified to meet particular needs. This has a very positive effect on the good progress made by the pupils. The school very successfully provides equal opportunities for all pupils regardless of their age, ability, background or ethnicity to help them make good progress as they move through school. Children with particular educational or social needs access the curriculum at a level that matches their need.
22. The curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to learn about citizenship as part of the personal, health, social and citizenship education programme. This is very well linked to other areas of the curriculum and very effectively reinforced by visitors and the work of the 'class councils'. The provision for sports is very good and this has a very positive effect on the standards achieved in the subject. A very wide range of sporting activities is taught. Special funds are used very well to give pupils opportunities to take part in sports like basketball at other venues. Good provision is made for the arts. Art, drama and dance are very well enhanced but provision for music is not as strong.
23. Visits out from school and visitors into school linked with activities outside the school day have a positive effect on developing pupils' social and academic skills. Pupils visit a range of museums and galleries and the local area is used to develop pupils' understanding of local history and geography and their cultural heritage. Older pupils are given good opportunities to develop physical, social and geographical skills in the annual residential session. There is a very good range of after school and lunch-time clubs. These include a very wide range of sporting activities, dance, drama and quilting. Special projects involving visiting artists have developed the skills of both pupils with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented. The curriculum is very effectively enhanced by a wide range of multi-cultural activities.

24. Accommodation is good overall. The main school includes spacious classrooms, a library and resource room which is effectively used for small group work. The outdoor facilities are good and used effectively to develop learning. There is no direct outdoor access for children in reception and this limits opportunities for spontaneous play. The accommodation is very well maintained by the site manager. There is a good range of resources and these are used effectively to support pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

The school continues to provide a **very good** level of care for the needs of its pupils. It provides **very good** support, advice and guidance to its pupils. The school provides **good** opportunities for pupils to be involved in school life by seeking, valuing and acting on their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a very high level of care for its pupils.
- Very good procedures are in place for health, safety and child protection.
- Very good procedures are in place to support, advise and guide pupils.
- There are good opportunities within school for the views of pupils to be heard and valued.

Commentary

25. The school looks after its pupils very well. The high level of care is underpinned by the high quality of relationships that exist within the school community and the knowledge that all staff have of the pupils. Parents consider that the school is caring towards their children and that it looks after their emotional and physical needs very well. The school takes its responsibility for health, safety and child protection very seriously. Very thorough records are maintained for risk assessments, both in and out of school, and very good procedures are in place for first aid, fire drills and accident recording. The governing body, through its premises committee, is also fully involved in health and safety matters and is committed to providing a safe and secure environment. The procedures for child protection are very effective and understood by all teaching and non-teaching staff.
26. There is a very good level of provision for the support, advice and guidance of all pupils. This is based on the very high quality of trusting relationships that exist between children and adults within the school community. Class councils also provide good opportunities for pupils to make their views known about aspects of school life.
27. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support in school. There is early identification of need. Appropriate programmes are put in place to address needs and as a result pupils achieve well. Where appropriate, pupils are involved in discussion about the targets on their individual educational plans. This helps them to understand how they can improve their learning. Very good quality advice and support from visiting professionals is used effectively by the school to develop learning.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has maintained the **very good** relationships with its parents and the community. The quality of information provided to parents is **good** and links with other schools are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very good partnership with parents and the community.
- The school provides good quality information for parents.
- There is very good support for parents of pupils with special educational needs.

Commentary

28. The school benefits from the very good partnership that exists with its parents. A good number of parents help in class on a regular basis and some parents and grandparents have trained under the 'Better Reading Partnership' scheme and are able to provide very good support to pupils. Additionally, parents are very keen to help on class visits into the community. Parents are also very supportive of school productions, open evenings and sports fixtures. There is a hard working and committed 'Friends Association' which organises a variety of events that raise approximately £2,000 a year for additional school resources and activities. The school values the contribution that all its parents make to school life. Parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire or who attended the meeting expressed very positive views about the school.
29. The strong relationship starts from the first moment pupils begin at the school. Parents and children make a number of visits and parents are given good information about how they can help their children at home.
30. The school provides good information for its parents with regular informative newsletters, homework guidelines and annual reports that give parents the appropriate targets for their children to improve. Additionally, the school seeks the views of its parents on a regular basis through surveys and questionnaires.
31. Very good links exist with the local community. Pupils benefit from visits to interesting places such as Beamish, Newcastle and Durham. The school does all it can to celebrate the mining history of the area and visits are also made to the local Heritage Centre. Additionally, the school benefits from the support of a number of visitors, such as a storyteller, African drummers and dancers, and local community police officers. All these community links have a major impact on the understanding that pupils have of their own and other cultures.
32. The school has received many benefits through its association with the local Education Action Zone and these have had a positive impact on many aspects of school life. For example, the provision of interactive white boards coupled with staff training to use them effectively has made lessons more interesting for pupils. Additionally, the school is able to share good practice with other schools through the cluster arrangement. The good quality of links that have been established with local secondary schools allow pupils to move to the next stage of their education without any concerns.
33. Parents are informed at an early stage if their child has special educational needs. They are invited to discuss target setting on individual education plans. Parents are encouraged to help their children to work towards their targets at home. This has a positive effect on the good progress made by pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is **good**. The governance of the school is **good**. The quality of the leadership of the headteacher is **good** with some very good features. Overall effectiveness of management is **good**. There has been good progress since the previous report, particularly in improving the school development plan and developing the role of the assistant headteacher and subject co-ordinators.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors have a clear understanding of strengths and weaknesses of the school and contribute effectively to the running of the school.
- The headteacher has a very clear vision and very good sense of purpose.
- Leadership and management in subject areas are good.
- There is good leadership and management of special educational needs.
- There is good management of the school.

- There is a good commitment to the development of staff.

Commentary

34. The governing body plays an active part in the life of the school. It is involved in the formation of the school improvement plan and monitors and evaluates decisions. There is a clear view of where the schools strengths and weaknesses lie. All statutory requirements are met, with all relevant policy documents in place, covering special educational needs, disability, race equality and sex. The governors carry out their role as 'critical friend' effectively.
35. The headteacher has a very clear vision of the school's strengths and areas for development and has successfully addressed issues including improving standards in information and communication technology. She is a very good role model for staff and pupils.
36. All staff share a common purpose to raise standards in the school. They are all involved in producing a good quality school improvement plan. They work hard to address issues. The role of the assistant headteacher has been clarified and there is now a specific job description outlining areas of responsibility. The leadership and management of curriculum subjects are good. The subject leaders have monitored lessons and analysed pupils' books and teachers' planning to identify areas of strength and weakness. Leadership and management of special educational needs are good. There is early identification and procedures ensure that these pupils are regularly monitored and make good progress. There is good management in the Foundation Stage. Care is taken in ensuring that there is appropriate provision in the mixed age classes.
37. There are good management systems in place in the school. The school secretary gives very good support to the headteacher and staff, allowing them to carry out educational tasks. All staff are clear about their roles. The school improvement plan focuses on the correct areas for development and there is regular evaluation of progress towards targets. Data is analysed and the school compares itself with other establishments to measure achievement and progress. There are good opportunities for staff development. The school meets performance management requirements. All training is closely linked to personal, school and curriculum targets. This ensures that there is benefit both for pupils and members of staff. There is good management of finances and the school applies the principles of best value well.

Particular aids or barriers to raising achievement, and their impact

38. The very positive attitudes and commitment of all staff are a significant aid to raising standards. Allowing pupils to access the curriculum at a point suited to their needs has a positive effect on improving achievement for pupils with special educational needs and children with particular social needs. Funding and support from the local Educational Action Zone and New Opportunities Funds have been used very effectively to enhance and extend the number of educational experiences available to the pupils. This has had a very positive effect on learning and improving achievement across the curriculum.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	301,836	Balance from previous year	21,634
Total expenditure	306,020	Balance carried forward to the next	17,537
Expenditure per pupil	2,807		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

39. Eleven children attend school on a full-time basis in the reception class and are in a class with eleven Year 1 pupils. When the children start school, their knowledge, skills and understanding vary in reading, number and personal skills but the majority are somewhat lower than the national and local authority averages. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Induction procedures are satisfactory; children settle quickly and happily into the reception class and, eventually, into Year 1. The children achieve well because teaching is consistently good. In addition, the curriculum provides a good range of activities that are accurately matched to pupils' needs. This good provision is well managed and represents an improvement since the last inspection. There are sound systems to monitor children's progress. By the end of the reception year, around a third of the children do not achieve the standard expected for their age in speaking, reading, writing and mathematics but most are on track to do so in their knowledge and understanding of the world and their creative and physical development. Most children have already attained the early learning goals for personal, social and emotional development and for listening. Very few children were under the age of five during the last inspection and too little evidence from the previous report is available to make a comparison between provision in 1998 and now.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children achieve well because teaching is consistently good and the area is well promoted in all activities.
- All adults support learning well as they interact sensitively when children work in small groups or alone.
- Behaviour is very good and children develop positive attitudes to learning.

Commentary

40. The children adjust quickly to school and are happy and confident. All make good progress as the quality of teaching is good. Good provision enables most children to reach at least the expected levels by the end of their time in reception. Achievement is good because the children show positive attitudes to learning and thoroughly enjoy coming to school. The children are offered many good experiences as they work in pairs and small groups and begin to develop the skills necessary to work independently. Most children take turns and concentrate well as they select activities with confidence. Most children know that they are expected to help to tidy away at the end of each session. All adults have very high expectations regarding behaviour and, as a result, behaviour is very good and the children get on very well with all adults with whom they come into contact. Personal independence is developed well.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of early reading skills is good.
- Support staff do not always encourage children to speak at length.

Commentary

41. Teaching is good and children achieve well. Most children are on course to attain the expected levels by the end of their time in reception but a few will not because the lower attainers struggle to sustain attentive listening and do not understand and retell stories. Achievement, however, is good.
42. Good teaching is characterised by well-organised sessions where children work at interesting activities that motivate them and move them on to the next stage of learning. All adults have a good understanding of the skills needed to begin to communicate, read and write. However, although adults have high expectations regarding listening carefully at all times, and the teacher successfully develops the children's use of language through her frequent use of 'why?' and 'tell me', support staff sometimes tend to talk 'to' the children rather than encouraging them to speak at length.
43. The children make good progress in reading and writing. Most children are reading the first books in the school's reading scheme. The teacher shows the children how to follow the story and use clues to predict what is coming. As a result, the children recognise and read many familiar words. Most show an understanding of the main elements of stories. The higher attaining children use their knowledge of letter sounds to build up two- and three-letter words. Many children are developing technical skills in reading and enjoy reading. This is partly due to the good choice of books, both fiction and non-fiction, and also the 'story sack' lending library run by a member of the non-teaching staff. This has proved very popular, develops their enthusiasm for books and encourages parents to read and talk about books with their children.
44. In writing, the teacher provides a good balance between teaching handwriting, sentence structure and encouraging the children to write independently. The majority of children write one or two words on their own and letters to represent what they want to say. Higher attaining children write short sentences and phrases.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good. Activities are interesting and well resourced.
- Support staff occasionally miss opportunities to develop vocabulary.

Commentary

45. By the end of the reception year, children do not meet the early learning goals in number. Although they achieve well, especially for counting and calculating, children struggle to solve word problems and they also have difficulty with shape and time. Despite this, teaching is good and there is an appropriate emphasis placed on interesting number activities.
46. Children enthusiastically and confidently sang number songs as they reinforced the idea of counting. The large majority of children count reliably to ten, some count beyond this without help. Most recognise numbers to ten and higher attaining children are recording simple number problems formally using addition and equivalence signs. Over the year, the children have made sound progress in learning to recognise and name basic shapes and patterns. Resources are good and, although adults interact well within the ability groups that the children work in, there are missed opportunities to encourage children to articulate their thinking and developing their mathematical vocabulary and understanding.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good quality teaching provides children with many opportunities to learn about the world around them.
- Resources are used effectively to develop learning.

Commentary

47. Teaching is good and children achieve well. They are on course to reach the early learning goals by the end of the reception year although their technical vocabulary is below average. The children are interested in the world around them and want to find out more. They enjoy finding out how things work and talking about what they see. A good example of this was when the children collected shells on a visit to the seaside. They recorded their findings in writing, drawing and models and the teacher linked this to stories about the sea.
48. When considering how musical instruments make sounds, the children correctly named banging, shaking, scraping and plucking of the strings as suitable methods and talked about how they could make the sounds 'louder' and 'quieter'. Children learn about the past and develop geographical skills because the teacher uses very effective visits, visitors and resources to bring the learning to life and make it more relevant.
49. The children make good, independent use of the computer because they are taught the basic skills in using the keyboard and mouse effectively. Children have well established skills in using the computer, for example in creating tunes by using a music program, controlling events on the screen and in using the floor robot.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teacher has secure subject knowledge and provides good opportunities indoors for the children to develop skills of coordination, control and movement.
- There is no established play area in which children can regularly play and use large apparatus

Commentary

50. By the end of the reception year the large majority of children are likely to have met, and a few exceeded, the early learning goals for this area of learning. The quality of the curriculum and teaching are good overall.
51. Children use tools, such as brushes and scissors, with suitable manipulative skills and this reflects the good range of daily opportunities to practise skills. In a well organised physical education lesson in the hall, the teacher demonstrated flair and very good subject knowledge as children made good progress in moving with imagination, coordination and confidence. They show a good awareness of space and consideration for the safety of others. Their improvement in physical skills is clear and due to the teacher's praise and her encouragement to focus on what they are doing.
52. The children do not have regular access to planned and resourced outdoor activities as part of the day. This weakens the development of a range of skills, such as balancing, climbing and controlling a range of different materials and tools. The school recognises this as an area for improvement.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children experience a wide range of activities and enjoy creative work.

Commentary

53. Teaching is good and the teacher provides a good range of opportunities for the children to develop their creative skills. The majority are on course to attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year.
54. Over time, the children explore colour, line and form in their paintings, drawings and weaving. Good teaching introduces the children to skills and techniques and also encourages children to develop their individuality. The staff correctly focus more on children making their own decisions about what to use and do than the adults directing what the children do. The layout and organisation of the room enable the children to take part when they wish in activities such as imaginative play with large blocks or construction toys, role play, sand, water, art and craft activities.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are too few opportunities to develop pupils' speaking and writing skills.
- Pupils achieve well in reading and listening.
- Standards in writing are not high enough.
- There is good leadership which has identified the areas to develop and already improved achievement in reading.

Commentary

55. The national comparative data for the 2003 tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 showed that standards in reading were well below average and standards in writing were average. For pupils at the end of Year 6, the data showed standards in English were well below average and comparison with results when this year group was in Year 2 suggest progress in Years 3 to 6 was not as good as it should have been. The school has recently analysed the reasons for this and correctly identified that progress of Year 3 pupils in the mixed Year 2 and 3 class was slow for a number of years. This affected overall improvement during their time in Years 3 to 6. Since the beginning of September, the class organisation has changed as a result of these findings. It is too early to judge the impact of this. The school also correctly identified the need to extend writing outside the Literacy Hour and has introduced a number of strategies to improve the use of vocabulary and imaginative writing throughout Years 3 to 6.
56. Overall, standards in speaking and listening are below average but pupils achieve satisfactorily. Listening is the strongest aspect of the two and most pupils listen attentively to their teachers and classmates. Teachers provide satisfactory opportunities for pupils to talk to each other and to adults but, although even the youngest pupils speak confidently, they do not do so at length, and neither do most use a wide range of words and expressions. Teachers and support staff, particularly in Years 1 and 2, but also at times in other classes, do not encourage pupils enough to clarify, rephrase and add detail in their speaking.
57. Having analysed the results of national tests and school assessments and identifying an issue

with reading, the headteacher, who is also the literacy coordinator, sought advice in order to deal with this. A consultant funded by the Education Action Zone worked with the school to train staff in the use of class stories to develop literacy skills. Now pupils achieve well in reading and standards are above average by the ages of seven and eleven. By the end of Year 2, most pupils attain the level expected for their age and a few do better. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make steady, satisfactory progress in learning to recognise words. They learn to use their knowledge of letter sounds to work out unfamiliar words. Their developing fluency and accuracy in reading is much helped by parents hearing their child read regularly at home and adult volunteers from the 'Better Reading Partnership' who hear pupils at school. The more able readers use good expression and use the sense of the story to predict and infer. Their skills in reading non-fiction are also well developed. By Year 6, pupils read fluently and with good understanding. They get the gist from the text and use a range of strategies to read words they do not know. Many read with a lively expression. In talking about favourite authors, including Roald Dahl and Dick King-Smith, pupils showed an awareness of style and preference. They know how to find information and are adept at selecting specific details and collating information. This is because they have been taught relevant skills and strategies.

58. Standards in writing are below average in Year 2 and Year 6. Many pupils get off to a reasonable start in writing and, by the end of Year 2, higher attainers are writing independently with well-structured sentences. Although most pupils are using full stops and capital letters accurately, the analysis of pupils' work shows that few pupils use question marks or speech marks in their work. While many Year 2 pupils use imaginative words and sequence their sentences logically, the lower attainers produce very little work because work is too difficult for them in the time allocated.
59. During Years 3 to 6, pupils make satisfactory progress in learning about different types of writing and their features. They also develop uniform, neat, joined handwriting and learn spelling patterns and strategies. Year 6 pupils usually set out their work well using paragraphs. Many use language for effect, such as dialogue to take the story on and asides to the reader. Not all spell words correctly and punctuate their work accurately. This sometimes lowers the consistency of quality. There is little evidence of the development of their skills in drafting, revising and editing their work. Pupils' flair in using language is evident in some of their stories, poems and book reviews but a common problem across the school is unfinished work. The reason for this is that teachers rigidly stick to the normal one hour for literacy and on occasions a slow pace reduces the time for pupils to apply their learning and complete their writing. In addition, there are too few opportunities for pupils to write at length in subjects other than English.
60. The quality of teaching and learning seen during the lessons of the inspection week was good, but in view of pupils' achievement over time it is best described as satisfactory. The teachers follow the recommended structure of the literacy hour and plan their lessons carefully but they do not use it flexibly enough to make sure that pupils make enough progress. Teachers assess pupils' understanding of their work in relation to each lesson and use the information effectively to modify planning of the next lesson. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well when they have carefully planned support. However, teachers do not ensure that pupils practise effectively what they have learned in groups and move on to write independently. Individual work is produced at a leisurely pace and there is often little to compare at the end of a lesson. Teachers' explanations and questions are clearly expressed but often leave pupils with too little time or scope for extended answers. Marking however, is extremely effective in helping the pupils to improve. The teachers act as a critical audience and give pertinent advice.
61. The leadership and management of English are good. The English co-ordinator is knowledgeable about the subject and her observations of individual lessons are evaluative, focusing on whether pupils make sufficient progress and identifying exactly what needs to be done to improve standards. She monitors teachers' planning to ensure that all National Curriculum requirements are met. Termly and annual targets are set for writing and the headteacher carried out a thorough analysis of assessments at the end of the year, following

attendance at a 'Headfirst' course. Work done as a team to assess the quality of pupils' writing has increased the teachers' awareness of the National Curriculum levels of attainment and provided a good basis for teachers' marking. The positive impact of staff training, for teachers and support staff, shows in the teaching of reading, phonics and the intervention programmes. Despite the fall in standards in writing, there have been some good changes in provision since the previous inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

62. The development of pupils' language and literacy is not consistent in all subjects. There are too few opportunities for pupils to practise speaking at sufficient length or for a variety of purposes. Opportunities for pupils to use their reading skills are used better. Writing skills are the least well developed. Pupils learn useful techniques in English lessons but they do not have enough opportunities to put them into practice in English lessons or across the curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good because of the good quality of teaching and very good assessment.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 are above average.
- There are good links with other areas of the curriculum.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to mathematics.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

63. Pupils achieve well throughout the school because there is good quality teaching and work is set at the correct levels to meet their needs. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the support they receive and additional aids which allow them to work at a more practical level. When necessary pupils with particularly complex special educational or social needs work with other groups to allow them to access a more appropriate curriculum. This has a very positive effect on improving achievement. Attainment levels are difficult to compare with other schools because of low numbers in each year group. In smaller year groups, one pupil represents a relatively large proportion of the group and any pupil with special educational needs may create a significant fall in standards if they do not achieve the expected level. Inspection evidence shows that standards in Year 2 are in line with national expectations and this is lower than the previous National Test results because a greater proportion of pupils had special educational needs. The Year 6 pupils are attaining at above expected levels. The most recent National Tests showed attainment below this level. No significant difference was observed between the achievement of boys and girls.

64. In Year 2, the majority of pupils show good understanding of the basic skill of number. They add and subtract two-digit numbers. The average and higher attaining pupils recognise multiples of 2 and 5. Most pupils divide with remainders but a minority find this difficult. Almost all pupils recognise and name a range of two-dimensional shapes and higher attaining pupils recognise and name three-dimensional shapes. Pupils draw block graphs and the highest attainers are starting to produce straight line graphs. By the end of Year 6, pupils show a good understanding of the four rules of number. They use this knowledge to answer 'real-life' questions. They usually draw accurate diagrams and measure angles correctly. The average attaining pupils name different types of triangle and understand that the angles of a triangle measure 180 degrees. Pupils show better than expected understanding of rotating figures and use the correct vocabulary when talking about 'vertex', 'vertices' and 'axis'. They have good understanding of the language of probability but not all understand the probability scale fully. Pupils collect information and record it in a number of different ways including straight line graphs.

65. The quality of teaching and learning is good and as a result pupils achieve well. The majority of lessons seen in the inspection period were very good but analysis of work shows that there are missed opportunities to develop learning by the use of marking. Teachers prepare their lessons well using the National Numeracy Strategy three-part lesson. Mental or oral starters are brisk and keep pupils interested. Good use is made of the interactive white-boards in these sessions. Teachers use questioning very effectively to assess what pupils have understood and to involve all pupils in the lesson. There is good individual support when teachers move around the class in group sessions. Teachers expect high standards of behaviour and all pupils respond very well. Pupils show very good attitudes to learning and this allows teachers to concentrate on imparting knowledge and giving additional support. Teachers and support staff ensure that pupils with special educational needs and those with particular needs are fully included in lessons with work that matches their needs. There is very good regular assessment and this is used very effectively to improve achievement. Pupils have individual targets which enable them to measure their own progress. Most of these are very specific but occasionally they are more concerned with coverage of a topic rather than mastering a skill.
66. There is good leadership and management of the subject and this has a positive effect on raising standards. The co-ordinator has monitored teaching and learning in the classrooms to identify areas of development. Assessments are analysed to identify weaker areas and these are effectively addressed. There are good links with parents. Workshops have been held to help parents work with their children at home and booklets and leaflets on mathematics are sent to all parents.
67. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. The National Numeracy Strategy is now fully implemented, opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills have improved and there has been very good improvement in the use of assessment procedures to raise standards.

Mathematics across the curriculum

68. There is good provision for mathematics across the curriculum. Pupils are given many good planned opportunities to develop their mathematical skills in other subjects. They measure and record using straight line graphs in science. They use spreadsheets and collect and record data in ICT. They weigh and measure in design and technology. They compare and record climatic conditions in geography and develop a sense of time in history.

SCIENCE

The provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well throughout the school.
- There is a good emphasis put on investigative science.
- Knowledge and understanding of materials and their properties is not as strong as other areas.
- Pupils have good attitudes to the subject.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

69. Pupils achieve well throughout the school because of the good quality teaching and the emphasis placed on investigative science. Inspection evidence shows that in Year 2 and Year 6 attainment is at the expected levels. Small numbers in each year group make national comparisons difficult because one pupil represents a relatively large proportion of the group and any pupil with special educational needs may create a significant fall in standards. The most recent test results show average standards at the end of Year 6. No significant difference in attainment levels of boys and girls was observed. Pupils with special educational needs make progress in line with classmates because of additional support from adults. The use of

'social mix' groups benefits special educational needs pupils because of the peer support they receive.

70. Year 2 pupils show good knowledge and understanding of living things. They carry out simple investigations and record using their own words. Knowledge and understanding of materials is not well developed. This has been recognised by the school and is to be addressed. Pupils have satisfactory knowledge of simple circuits and produce good quality diagrams. By the end of Year 6, pupils have built well on their knowledge and consolidate their good understanding of living things; for example, they have very good knowledge and understanding of the heart and its functions. Almost all pupils show a very good understanding of the need to be healthy. They use their scientific knowledge and understanding well to solve problems such as how to measure the effect of surface area on air resistance in work on forces. All pupils show better than expected understanding of forces, including gravity. Pupils have a less than expected understanding of materials and how they change. Most pupils present their work very well. They record using charts and straight line graphs.
71. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are well planned with a good mix of teacher input and pupil investigation and recording. Teachers make lessons interesting. Year 2 pupils learned a great deal about living things when they were taken out to the 'nature area' and the school field. Teachers give pupils opportunities to discuss their ideas in groups, for example when studying air resistance in Years 5 and 6. There are some missed opportunities to develop learning through marking. All work is positively marked but there are few comments, such as 'What happens if.....?'. Class control and relationships are very good and allow the teacher to concentrate on imparting knowledge and giving additional support. Pupils respond very well to the very high expectations of behaviour. They show good attitudes. There are very good levels of co-operation in the group sessions and pupils enjoy science lessons. Teachers link science very well to other areas of the curriculum. Mathematical skills are very effectively developed when collecting and recording data. There is particularly good emphasis on developing English skills in report writing and ICT is used very effectively in the subject to provide information and to monitor.
72. There is good leadership and management of the subject. There has been good monitoring of teaching and learning to identify areas for development. Assessments and test results have been analysed and areas for development have been identified, for example materials and their properties, and these are being addressed.
73. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. There has been a good improvement in the opportunities for investigative science. The development of scientific vocabulary has improved and there has been good improvement in the leadership and management of the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The provision in information and communications technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good achievement by pupils because of good quality teaching and effective use of good resources.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to the subject.
- There is good collective leadership in the subject.

Commentary

74. Pupils achieve well because there is good quality teaching and learning. All pupils make good progress in their learning. Particularly good use is made of peer support and this has a positive effect on the improvement in skill development of pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils. No differences were observed in the achievement levels of boys and

girls. Attainment is at the expected levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Year 2 pupils handle computers and laptops with confidence. They input data, use controls and word process at the expected levels. They understand terms including 'icon' and 'first field'. As they progress through school, pupils effectively build on their previous knowledge and understanding. By the end of Year 6, pupils use ICT effectively to collect and record data. They carry out mathematical tasks using spreadsheets and use control programs. All pupils use word processing skills to draft and improve their work. They understand how to use ICT to measure physical data, for example by using sensors. They consider purpose when using programs to design playground games.

75. The quality of teaching and learning is good and this enables pupils to develop their ICT skills well. Teachers plan their lessons very effectively. They make good use of the interactive boards in introductory sessions to illustrate and demonstrate the main points. Usually, pace is brisk and keeps pupils interested. There are occasional times when introductions are rushed and additional time is then spent going over aspects of the introduction. Class control and relationships are very good and, as a result, teachers can concentrate on imparting knowledge and giving support to individual pupils. Teachers use questioning well and record pupils' achievements and this ensures that there is satisfactory assessment in the subject. Resources are used effectively and pupils are given supporting activities if computers are not available. Teachers make very good use of pupil support by allowing more able pupils to work alongside classmates to demonstrate techniques. In discussions, Year 6 pupils said this was very helpful and thought it was a good way to learn. Pupils enjoy ICT lessons. They concentrate very well, help each other and have very good attitudes. This has a very positive effect on the good achievement of pupils.
76. All staff are responsible for the management of the subject. This system works well and the staff have identified and successfully addressed areas for development. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. Staff expertise has been improved by training and this has had a positive effect on raising standards and improving pupils' achievement. The use of ICT in other subjects has improved and pupils now have access to much better resources.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

77. There is satisfactory use of ICT across the curriculum. There are particularly good links in mathematics and science. Computers are used effectively for research in a number of subjects and word processing develops skills in English. Paint programs are used in art but they are not fully developed. In music, there is good use of CDs but opportunities to use computers are not fully developed.

HUMANITIES

78. In humanities, work was sampled in **history** and **geography**, with no lessons being observed in either subject. It is therefore not possible to make overall judgements about provision in these subjects. From work seen and planning analysed, all required areas are covered by the school. Standards of work seen in geography are at a higher level than those usually seen at the end of Year 6. Pupils show a better than expected understanding of the local area and the area of Grasmere in Cumbria. In history, standards of work seen are at the expected levels. Pupils have good knowledge and understanding of the history of their own area.
79. The history curriculum is effectively enhanced by visits out from school including to the Beamish Museum. Visiting 'period actors' help bring the subject to life. Good use is made of the local area to develop both geographical and historical skills. A residential session develops the geographical skills of older pupils.
80. There is good management of the subjects. Subject co-ordinators have monitored teaching and learning in the classrooms and have analysed pupils' work to identify areas for development. There are satisfactory assessment procedures in place. There has been good

improvement since the previous inspection in developing the role of the co-ordinator and identifying areas for development.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

81. No lesson was seen in art and design and only one lesson was seen in design and technology and music. Two physical education lessons were observed in Years 3 to 6 but these were both games lessons which concentrated on the skills of sending and receiving balls. It is not, therefore, possible to make a firm judgement about provision or changes since the last inspection. In addition to observing lessons, inspectors spoke to co-ordinators about their work, spoke to pupils about what they had learned and looked at pupils' development of skills.
82. In **art and design**, there are a number of impressive displays of varied, interesting and high quality artwork around the school. It is clear that standards now are similar to those observed at the time of the last inspection and the full range of work is covered. There is good evidence of textile work and modelling as well as drawings and paintings. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 used water as a stimulus for artwork linked to the work of Claude Monet. They painted their own interpretations and considered the effect of colour on mood and feelings. An impressive part of pupils' art work is their multi-cultural awareness. This was certainly evident in the displays of African masks, an Indian Banner and a very good aboriginal 'dreaming' collage produced by pupils with special educational needs in a project with the talented art coordinator. Pupils often link subjects together well and close observational drawings, paintings and collages are seen which match well to work in history, geography and science.
83. In **design and technology**, analysis of pupils' work and teachers' planning and discussion with pupils shows that pupils are gaining experience of a range of materials and techniques, and developing the expected subject skills through designing and making a variety of products. The scheme of work plans the systematic development and progression of pupils' design and making skills. Resources are sufficient and adequate for current use, although there is little evidence of ICT being used to support learning. In the one lesson seen, pupils in Year 2 used 'fixed' and 'loose' axles on the chassis of paper vehicles. This was a satisfactory lesson because pupils were over directed by some staff and their independent skills were not being extended. Pupils made good progress in developing their technical vocabulary but did not have sufficient encouragement to talk about what they were doing and why.
84. In **music**, pupils were observed only in one Year 5 and 6 lesson, although the whole school was heard singing at various times. The school has correctly identified a weakness in the provision of music and recognised that standards in Year 6 are well behind the levels normally expected. This was clearly evident in the lesson observed where pupils were able to clap out a simple steady beat. Lessons are enhanced by occasional choir and recorder groups and there is brass instrumental teaching. Concerts and performance also contribute to pupils' overall musical experience. The school is aware of the need to develop the curriculum for pupils in Years 3 to 6 in particular and is looking to find a scheme of work which will build progressively on pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. Music is not as strong as it was during the last inspection.
85. In **physical education**, teachers provide pupils with good opportunities to practise and refine their skills. Pupils listen intently and respond with enthusiasm. Teachers encourage pupils to work cooperatively with partners and in groups. The staff have built up a good after-school programme of dance, gymnastic and games practice. The skills developed here feed back well into the school lessons. All pupils take part in lessons and pupils who have special educational needs are supported well so that they achieve as well as their peers.
86. In each of these subjects, with the exception of music, subject leaders are enthusiastic about their area of responsibility and some are very knowledgeable. They have attended training, been given time to monitor their subjects closely, are aware of standards in their subject and are able to support colleagues. This has been further acknowledged by subject leaders of art

and design and physical education being seconded last year to the Education Action Zone to develop new schemes or lead staff training programmes. They have a clear overview of whole-school strengths and areas for development, and there is systematic monitoring and evaluation.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

87. There is insufficient evidence to report in depth and make judgements on the teaching of **personal, social and health education and citizenship**. No full sessions were observed during the inspection period. Discussion with staff and pupils and analysis of documentation show that there is good coverage in the subjects. All aspects of the curriculum are covered in the programme. There are very good links between personal and social development and religious education, science and geography. Pupils learn about their own and other cultures. The curriculum covers drugs, alcohol and sex and relationships education. Pupils express their views via the class councils. Links with the police, other emergency services and local church and visitors to school give the pupils a good understanding of the world around them.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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