

INSPECTION REPORT

VIEWLEY HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hemlington

LEA area: Middlesbrough

Unique reference number: 111666

Headteacher: Miss A Williams

Lead inspector: Mr A J Dobell

Dates of inspection: 8th - 11th March 2004

Inspection number: 258278

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	316
School address:	Andover Way Hemlington Middlesbrough
Postcode:	TS8 9HL
Telephone number:	(01642) 591 053
Fax number:	(01642) 575 129
E-mail:	Andrea_Williams@middlesbrough.gov.uk
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P McGrath
Date of previous inspection:	22 nd June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Viewley Hill Community Primary School draws its pupils mainly from the surrounding area. This large primary school serves a community with significant levels of socio-economic deprivation. Children's attainment and learning skills on entry to the Nursery cover a wide range, but are well below average overall. The very large majority of pupils are from white British backgrounds and very few speak English as an additional language.

At the time of the inspection, there were 316 pupils on roll. Of these, 39 attend the Nursery part time and a further 35 are in the Reception Year. There were 70 pupils with special educational needs, ranging from specific learning difficulties and speaking and communication difficulties to social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. No pupils had a statement of special educational needs. The number of pupils leaving and joining the school other than at the usual times is above average and there is evidence that this adversely affects standards. In the last two years, the school has received a School Achievement Award, Healthy Schools status, Investors in People status and the Activemark. The school benefits from the Sure Start initiative and membership of the Middlesbrough South West Education Action Zone.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10373	Mr A J Dobell	Lead inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education
19374	Mrs W Sheehan	Lay inspector	
22452	Mrs M Farman	Team inspector	Special educational needs English as an additional language English Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology
30691	Mrs K Yates	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Geography History Religious education

The inspection contractor was:

Tribal PPI
Barley House
Oakfield Grove
Clifton
Bristol
BS8 2BN

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school giving good value for money. Children enter the Nursery with standards that cover a wide range but are well below average overall. They achieve well and make good progress in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6. The quality of teaching is good and leadership and management are very good overall. The headteacher and her colleagues continually seek ways of raising standards further and the school has improved very well since its previous inspection. The key issues from that inspection have been addressed well and standards are now rising at a rate faster than the national trend.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher, very ably supported by her deputy and colleagues, is providing excellent leadership.
- Good teaching and very effective support from teaching assistants, enables most pupils to make good progress. For example, standards in information and communication technology are above average.
- Pupils' inability to explain their thinking and their limited understanding of standard English are adversely affecting standards, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
- Most pupils have good attitudes to learning and so achieve well.
- The behaviour of a minority of pupils, especially in Years 3 to 6, adversely affects not only their own learning, but also the learning of other pupils.
- The school's innovative approach to curriculum development and very good provision for those with special educational needs mean that all pupils are given good opportunities to achieve.
- Pupils receive very good levels of care and feel safe and confident in the school.
- Poor attendance adversely affects the achievement of some pupils.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Achievement is satisfactory overall. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage and continue to make good progress and achieve well in Years 1 and 2. Standards in the current Year 2 are average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. Standards have risen well in recent years. Progress and achievement slow down in Years 3 to 6 because pupils' limited competence in English makes it difficult for them to understand more advanced concepts. Standards in the current Year 6 are below average in English and science and average in mathematics. Standards are above average in information and communication technology at the end of Years 2 and 6. Progress is satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6 and standards are rising at a higher rate than the national trend. Pupils do very well in relation to similar schools up to the age of seven, but less well up to the age of 11.

Pupils' personal qualities are good overall. Most pupils are enthusiastic and keen learners and settle down to work quickly and quietly. Behaviour is satisfactory overall but, for a minority, behaviour is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.** They have a secure understanding of the differences between right and wrong, good

relationships with each other and a good appreciation of cultural traditions. Attendance is well below average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good.

Teaching and learning are **good** overall throughout the school. In the best lessons, imaginative teaching and the effective management of pupils, enable all to achieve well. In less successful lessons, time is needed to manage the behaviour of a minority of pupils and this slows the pace of learning for all. Teaching assistants are very effective in supporting learning. Assessment is used very well to promote achievement by making clear to pupils what they need to do to raise their standards.

The quality of the curriculum is good throughout the school and there are good opportunities for enrichment through activities out of class. There are good links between subjects and information and communication technology is used very effectively to support learning. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well and the school has a wide range of strategies to encourage different groups of pupils to learn. The school takes very good care of its pupils, ensures that they work in a safe environment and are well supported in their personal development. There are good links with parents, the community and other schools. The school benefits well from support from the Middlesbrough South West Education Action Zone.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good.

The headteacher is providing excellent leadership. She has a very clear vision and is committed to continual improvement. She receives very effective support from her deputy and colleagues. The school creates effective teams and all adults in the school work together with an impressive unity of purpose. Equality of opportunity and access for all pupils has a very high priority and the school has a very good record in achieving this. Management is also very good. The school is very evaluative and acts effectively on the information it receives from its monitoring of its activities. Planning for improvement is very clear and all staff are provided with training to enable them to carry this out. Financial management is efficient. Governors ensure that the school meets its legal obligations and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The principles of best value are applied very effectively.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are pleased with the way in which the school has improved in recent years. Their main concerns are with behaviour and bullying. Inspectors agree that there are concerns but the school takes effective measures to deal with them. Parents particularly appreciate the way in which the school is led and managed and that their children are well taught and cared for.

Pupils enjoy school, but also have concerns about behaviour and bullying. However, they agree that the school manages these concerns well.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- improve pupils' use of basic English and their ability to explain what they mean so that they have a better understanding of the principles that underpin what they are learning and are able to apply their knowledge to new situations;
- improve the behaviour of the minority of pupils, particularly in Years 3 to 6, who are adversely affecting the learning of others; and

- improve the attendance of those pupils who miss school too often.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is good in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6 regardless of gender and level of attainment. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Standards are average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing by the end of Year 2. They are average in mathematics at the end of Year 6 but below average in English and science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have risen steadily over the last four years at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage but do not reach the standards that children are expected to reach by the end of the Reception Year because they start from a very low base.
- Difficulties in using English, poor behaviour by a minority and poor attendance adversely affect achievement for some pupils in Years 3 to 6.
- Standards in information and communication technology are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils achieve well.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well throughout the school.
- Standards are improving and pupils are achieving well because the headteacher has very clear views on how attainment should be raised.

Commentary

1. In the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003, standards were average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. Teacher assessments in science show standards to be average. These standards compare very favourably with schools drawing their pupils from similar backgrounds. Since children enter the Nursery with levels of knowledge and learning skills that are well below average, these results represent good achievement in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2.
2. In the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003, standards were average in mathematics but well below average in English and science. The standards were above those reached in schools with similar levels of free school meals, but well below those attained in schools that achieved similar results at the end of Year 2 in 1999. These results represent satisfactory achievement in Years 3 to 6. There is evidence that pupils joining the school during Years 3 to 6 have an adverse effect on standards. However, in the five years 1999 to 2003, the trend of improvement in the school's average points score in the national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 exceeded the national trend.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.0 (16.5)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.4 (15.5)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.8 (16.6)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 39 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.3 (25.7)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	26.7 (25.8)	26.8 (26.7)
science	26.7 (25.8)	28.6 (28.3)

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

3. Children enter the Nursery with levels of knowledge and learning skills that are well below average. Effective teaching and very good support enable children to achieve well and they make good progress in all areas of learning. Staff have a secure understanding of how young children learn and plan exciting and stimulating learning activities which engage their interest so that they work with levels of sustained concentration. However, because of their very low starting point, most are unlikely to attain the expected levels in the goals set for children at the end of the Reception Year. This good achievement continues in Years 1 and 2 and children make impressive progress during their first four years in the school.
4. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. There are a number of reasons why the rate of progress slows. Many pupils have a limited vocabulary and do not use English easily. This has an adverse effect on their writing because they find it difficult to express themselves clearly, using a wide range of interesting words. In science, pupils learn facts in lessons reasonably well, but their lack of skill in using English prevents them from developing a depth of understanding of the underlying principles. This means that they find it difficult to apply aspects of science that they know to new and different situations because they do not recognise that it is the science that they know which answers the question. This is particularly true under test conditions.
5. Further factors which adversely affect achievement in Years 3 to 6 are the poor behaviour of a minority of pupils in some lessons and above average absence. For various reasons, some pupils have short concentration spans and quickly become distracted. The time taken to manage their behaviour then slows the pace of learning for all pupils and so depresses achievement. Overall, attendance in the school is well below average and, where pupils have frequent odd days of absence, continuity of learning is disrupted and time taken to help these pupils to catch up is time that could be used to increase the achievement of other pupils.
6. Throughout the school, pupils' standards in information and communication technology are above average. The school is well resourced for information and communication technology with a good number of interactive whiteboards. These are used routinely in teaching and learning so that pupils appreciate that information and communication technology is a valuable resource for learning in all subjects. Pupils' skills are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6 and they achieve well.
7. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Their learning is managed very efficiently and very good support from teaching assistants enables them to play a full part in learning. Their standards are below average overall at the end of Years 2 and 6, but this represents good achievement because they start at a very low base. Gifted and talented pupils attain above average standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 because of the good arrangements made for them. There is little difference in the performance of boys and girls and the very few pupils speaking English as an additional language achieve at the same rate as other pupils.
8. The headteacher has focused on raising attainment and improving pupils' achievement since she took up her post. Her systematic and clear-sighted approach and the very good support that she is receiving from her colleagues mean that the school is in a good position to raise attainment further.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Most pupils have good attitudes to school and to learning and behaviour is satisfactory overall. Relationships are good between teachers, support staff and pupils. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and helps pupils to mature. Attendance is well below the national average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attendance is well below the national average and this adversely affects standards.
- The school works very hard to promote a desire to learn and, as a result, most pupils are enthusiastic and keen learners.
- Friendly relationships mean that pupils feel valued.
- In Years 3 to 6, some pupils with behaviour problems disrupt their own learning and the learning of others.
- Children in the Foundation Stage are given a good start in personal and social skills and achieve well, but most will not reach the level expected nationally by the end of the Reception Year.
- Good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development helps them to mature and benefit from learning.

Commentary

9. Attendance is well below the national average. This is due largely to a considerable amount of absence condoned by some parents, for example, days off for birthdays and to holidays taken during term time. This has an adverse effect on learning for these pupils. The school is working hard to improve attendance and achieving some success. The headteacher and class teachers monitor attendance very closely and procedures to follow up any concerns are rigorous. On occasion, the headteacher will make personal home visits to follow up any long term absences. Initiatives include class attendance targets, individual certificates and weeks concentrating on attendance. Notices constantly remind parents and pupils of the need for regular attendance. A number of pupils are a few minutes late each morning. This adversely affects their learning, as lessons start very promptly and they miss the introduction to the lesson. Settling them to their work when they arrive then disrupts the learning of other pupils.
10. The school successfully develops in pupils a desire to learn and to try hard by making lessons stimulating and challenging and through a carefully developed programme of activities outside class. As a result, in most lessons and around the school, the attitudes of pupils are good. Pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes to learning overall, although some with challenging behaviour are sometimes reluctant to participate fully. All pupils respond well to the 'fun' learning activities which match their needs. They generally try hard in lessons and settle down to work quickly and quietly. In a Year 1/2 English lesson, for example, pupils loved writing the shopping list with 'ee' and 'ea' words. This had a positive effect on their achievement. Around the school, older pupils are keen to take on responsibilities and carry them out proudly, for example, when organising the equipment for assembly or sorting out break-time fruit.
11. Relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils are generally good. When given the opportunity, most pupils co-operate well and respect each other's ideas and contributions. For example, in a Year 1/2 personal, social and health education lesson, pupils listened carefully to the contributions of others about what objects have a significance for them. This had a positive effect on learning and on these pupils' confidence.
12. In many lessons, the behaviour of pupils is good. In the best lessons, this is due to the brisk pace of the lesson, the challenging tasks set and the teacher's high expectations for behaviour. However, in some lessons, particularly in Years 3 and 4 and to a lesser extent, in Years 5 and

6, the poor behaviour of some boys disrupts not only their learning, but also the learning of others. Although these boys have been identified as having specific behavioural problems, their calling out and immature behaviour slows lessons and results in other pupils learning less effectively. During 2002/3, there was a high rate of exclusions. This year there have been fewer and none since January. This reflects the school's behaviour strategies which are beginning to succeed in improving behaviour.

13. In discussion, the school council feels that the behaviour of some pupils is the only drawback to this school being excellent. They are also quick to comment, 'Behaviour is much better now due to the new rules and rewards started by the headteacher'. Bullying was a concern raised in meetings with both parents and pupils. However, in discussion, pupils on the school council felt that staff dealt effectively with any instances of bullying and that there has been much less in the last year. Outside lessons, the majority of pupils are well behaved and play well together. However, a small number of older boys are determined to cause mischief. The school has recently put into place many positive initiatives to improve lunchtime behaviour, including teaching pupils playground games, ensuring that there is a range of equipment for pupils to play with and providing lunchtime activities. These have been appreciated by most pupils and have helped to improve behaviour.
14. Children in the Foundation Stage quickly settle into the school and learn the classroom routines. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children have achieved well in all aspects of personal, social and emotional development, but they are still below the nationally expected levels in this area of learning by the end of the Reception Year.
15. There is good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils generally have a secure understanding of the difference between right and wrong and a suitable appreciation of the possible impact that their behaviour might have on others. Social skills are developed effectively so that relationships between different age groups are good overall. Pupils develop a good appreciation of their own and others' cultural traditions through visits to museums and visits by theatre companies, for example. Opportunities in assemblies and lessons promote spiritual development well. Children are given the opportunity to wonder at the world around them. For example, in the Nursery, a boy was drawing a picture in different colours using the interactive whiteboard. His amazement was confirmed by his comment 'it's magic isn't it?'

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.3	School data	0.5
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.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed - White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background

Exclusions in the last school year

No. of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
265	28	0
5	0	0
1	0	0
4	0	0
2	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. Good teaching throughout the school enables pupils to achieve well in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 and satisfactorily in Years 3 to 6. There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and this is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The school's curriculum is innovative and the headteacher and her colleagues continually seek new ways to make learning interesting. Pupils are very well cared for and there are very good systems to track their progress and to manage further learning.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall throughout the school. Information and communication technology is taught very effectively. The assessment of pupils' work is very effective.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In the best lessons, imaginative teaching and stimulating learning activities totally engage pupils' interest so that they work with sustained concentration and achieve very well.
- In Years 3 to 6 especially, effective teaching does not always have its full impact on learning because pupils' insecure understanding of English prevents them from fully understanding the concepts being taught.
- In some lessons, especially in Years 3 to 6, the poor behaviour of a minority of pupils adversely affects learning and progress for all.
- Teachers use information and communication technology very effectively to promote successful learning.
- Assessment is used very effectively to support learning and to improve achievement.
- Teaching assistants are very effective overall in helping pupils, particularly those with special educational needs, to achieve well.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 63 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	11 (18%)	33 (52%)	19 (30%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

16. The quality of teaching is good overall with almost one fifth of lessons being very good. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection. In all lessons, learning was at least satisfactory. In the best lessons, teaching is imaginative and engages pupils' interest and attention thoroughly so that they work with sustained concentration and so achieve well. For example, in two very good English lessons in Years 1/2, the purpose of the lesson was made very clear so that all pupils knew what they were learning. High expectations for pupils' effort and behaviour were rooted in good relationships so that all pupils had very good opportunities to learn and to make progress. Teachers were skilled in adapting teaching strategies to suit the needs of different individuals and groups. Very carefully phrased and targeted questions ensured that all pupils were continually challenged. At the end of the lesson, a whole-class session reinforced learning very effectively. Pupils were confident and, knowing that their answers would be valued, were keen to respond to questions. They were encouraged to express their thoughts and ideas carefully so that their vocabulary and use of English were developed.

17. Similarly, in a very good information and communication technology lesson in Year 5, a very clear introduction ensured that all pupils understood their tasks and were able to begin work promptly. A brisk pace and high expectations meant that pupils put a good amount of effort into their work. Very effective support from the information and communication technology technician as part of the Education Action Zone's contribution to the school, helped to ensure that learning was very effective and all pupils made very good progress, achieving above average standards.
18. However, in Years 3 to 6 particularly, effective teaching does not consistently result in effective learning because many pupils do not have the skills in using English to gain a sufficient depth of understanding of more advanced concepts. As a result, while they might make sound progress in the lesson, they find it difficult to retain what they have learned because they have not thoroughly understood it. This lack of thorough understanding makes it difficult for them to apply their knowledge to new or unfamiliar situations. For example, in mathematics, when problems are expressed in words, pupils find it difficult to decide which mathematical methods are required to answer the question. It is these skills which are needed to gain the higher level in the national tests at the end of Year 6.
19. Another reason why well planned lessons do not always enable pupils to learn effectively is that a minority of pupils have short concentration spans and quickly become distracted. Managing their behaviour slows the pace of learning for all pupils. This is particularly so in Years 3 and 4 and, to a lesser extent, in Years 5 and 6. While the school has effective strategies in place to manage this, continuity of learning is disrupted and pupils do not achieve as well as they would without these interruptions to learning.
20. The quality of teaching and learning is enhanced by effective use of information and communication technology. The school is very well equipped with 'smart boards' and other information and communication technology equipment. These are used routinely in classes throughout the school. Their use motivates pupils well so that they work with enthusiasm. Skilful use of this equipment reinforces learning successfully as well as enabling pupils throughout the school to develop above average skills in information and communication technology. This enhances pupils' achievement well.
21. The school has developed very effective assessment systems to monitor the progress of individual pupils. Long-term targets are sub divided into shorter term targets which are regularly adjusted to reflect progress. Pupils' progress towards these targets is carefully and systematically tracked so that support mechanisms can be introduced if needed. These developing systems are beginning to have a positive effect on attainment and progress. As a result, standards as measured in the national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6, are rising more rapidly in this school than they are nationally.
22. Effective and enthusiastic teaching is supported throughout the school by very good teaching assistants. Nursery nurses and other classroom assistants confirm in discussion that they are fully involved in the school's work and feel their work is valued. They have opportunities for training and professional development and appreciate their termly meeting with the headteacher to discuss their work and any concerns. They feel that this is an exciting place to work because the school 'strives for success for each child' and that they are involved in improving and expanding pupils' learning. Parents are very appreciative of the good teaching that their children receive as a result of the effective partnership between teachers and other adults in the school.
23. The quality of teaching has improved significantly over the last two years because the headteacher's clear-sighted leadership has given teachers throughout the school opportunities to plan interesting learning. She has empowered her colleagues to be creative and innovative in managing their teaching. For example, the provision for special educational needs, which was criticised when the school was inspected previously, is now very good. Adults throughout

the school now feel valued and able to contribute to the school's progress. As a result, the school is in a good position to improve further.

The curriculum

The school provides its pupils with a curriculum of good quality. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage of learning is good. There are good opportunities for enrichment outside class and the curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school's accommodation and resources meet the needs of the curriculum well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very strong leadership and management of the curriculum ensure that all pupils have broad, rich and stimulating work that meets their individual needs well.
- The very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and those identified as gifted and talented ensures they learn and achieve well.
- Pupils use information and communication technology well to support learning in all areas of the curriculum.
- The provision for out of school activities and learning supports all groups of pupils very effectively.
- The innovative approach to the use of teaching assistants increases pupils' self-confidence and learning skills very well.
- The accommodation is good overall, but has some limitations because distraction is occasionally caused when people have to use classrooms as a thoroughfare.

Commentary

24. There has been a considerable improvement in the quality of the curriculum since the school's previous inspection. The recently appointed headteacher is providing very strong curricular leadership and management. This is ensuring that each subject is covered very thoroughly and is giving pupils stimulating learning opportunities. The use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects is very effective overall. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.
25. The planning of learning for children in the Foundation Stage is good. It gives children a suitably well-balanced range of experiences to meet their developing needs. All adults provide children with interesting and stimulating activities.
26. The school makes very good provision for pupils who have special educational needs. It ensures that they have full access to the National Curriculum, out of school activities and provides clubs to meet their needs. The school takes full account of pupils' identified needs and the requirements of the code of practice when planning this work. This is a very good level of improvement from the unsatisfactory provision at the previous inspection. Pupils who are identified as gifted and talented have equally good provision. They attend special classes in subjects such as mathematics and have specific clubs after school. For example, there is a well-attended animation club run in conjunction with the Education Action Zone. Activities such as these increase pupils' skills and maintain their interest in learning.
27. The curriculum is rich and stimulating overall. It includes a wide range of out of school clubs for sporting and creative activities. These are tailored to the needs of a wide ability range from pupils who have learning difficulties to those who are particularly gifted. School performances help pupils to develop their creative, performing and social skills and parents are supportive of all the activities provided by the school. Visits to places of interest, such as the Life Centre in Newcastle and visitors to the school, make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.

Teachers make effective use of the area around Middlesbrough to support work in subjects such as history, geography and science. This increases pupils' understanding and awareness of the speed with which places change over time. The school takes part in a wide range of creative activities. These help pupils to increase their understanding of the importance of the arts and make a positive contribution to their creative development. For example, some pupils in Year 6 spoke enthusiastically and with feeling about their achievements in a range of art competitions.

28. The school has good strategies for inclusion. It checks test results for achievement by gender and ability and treats boys and girls equally. Staff identify strengths and areas for improvement and address any perceived weaknesses very carefully. This helps to ensure that work in lessons matches the needs of all pupils. For example, there is a good level of consistent challenge for higher attaining pupils.
29. There is a good match of teachers to meet the needs of the curriculum. This ensures that there is an effective spread of knowledge across all subjects and is having a positive effect on pupils' achievement. Very well trained teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. The school uses them very effectively to support pupils who have emotional and learning difficulties so that they have good access to the curriculum. The provision of calm and quiet working areas makes a considerable difference to the quality of behaviour and learning for most pupils.
30. The school makes effective use of its accommodation to ensure that pupils learn and achieve well. There are occasional problems when lessons are unavoidably disrupted because classrooms are used as a thoroughfare. All subjects have a good range of high quality learning resources. Pupils enjoy using them and want to learn from them. All members of staff use them very effectively to stimulate and promote learning. For example, the interactive whiteboards stimulate immediate interest and motivation to learn. The library is an inviting area and the books, fiction and non-fiction, are good in range, number and quality. Pupils enjoy using them.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes very good care of its pupils and procedures to ensure that pupils work in a safe environment are very good and have improved well since the previous inspection. Pupils have access to very good guidance systems to support their academic and personal development. There are very good systems for seeking pupils' views and acting on them.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's procedures for health, safety and child protection are very good and ensure that pupils work in a safe and secure environment.
- Assessment procedures are used very effectively to guide pupils' learning and personal development.
- Good procedures for induction, including those for pupils joining during the school year, help pupils to settle in well.
- Very good relationships ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are individually cared for and supported.

Commentary

31. Health and safety procedures are very good because the school ensures that regular health and safety checks are carried out. The governing body oversees health and safety provision by receiving regular health and safety reports from the headteacher and by an annual external report. Thorough procedures, including risk assessments, are firmly in place to promote a safe learning environment. Child protection procedures are very well embedded and the school

is diligent in consistently monitoring the welfare of its pupils. All teaching and non-teaching staff have received training in this area and are fully aware of what to do if they have any concerns about a child. This very good care ensures that pupils are given appropriate opportunities to achieve in a secure and positive learning environment.

32. The school's assessment procedures are used very effectively to guide pupils in their learning. All staff have a very good knowledge of pupils' standards and, along with good relationships with pupils, this ensures a positive environment where pupils want to achieve well. All pupils have individual targets to reach in numeracy and literacy and these are regularly reviewed with the class teacher. Pupils' behaviour is also carefully monitored through a very well defined procedure. This has a positive effect on pupils' achievement and their desire to learn for most pupils.
33. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well to ensure that they make good progress in their learning. The school has a wide range of strategies to encourage pupils with special educational needs. The learning mentor, part of the Education Action Zone provision, plays a key role in helping pupils to become responsible for their own actions. Her sensitive and carefully planned interventions make pupils feel secure and able to express their feelings about themselves and their lives. All staff work hard to ensure that pupils with special educational needs relate well to each other and to adults and develop useful social skills. The school keeps detailed records of all pupils' progress in developing emotional, learning and personal skills. These give a clear overview of all pupils' needs, including those who have particular gifts or talents and those who speak English as an additional language. This provision has improved very well since the school was inspected previously.
34. The school ensures that children enjoy a smooth induction into the Nursery through home visits and helps them to feel secure in their new environment. Pupils joining other year groups are carefully monitored during their first weeks and provided with carefully targeted support from teaching assistants. This has helped new pupils to settle in quickly and to make good progress in their learning and achieve well. Parents are pleased with this good provision.
35. Teachers provide very good role models for pupils and this leads to a purposeful learning environment. Relationships between adults and pupils are generally very good. Throughout the school, pupils are friendly and keen to be involved in school life. Pupils' views are taken into account, for example, through the school council. This council has been effectively involved in discussions to improve resources in the playground. They are responsible for running a disco every week for pupils who have behaved well in class. This initiative reflects pupils' own support to improve behaviour throughout the school and concern for relationships to be positive.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's commitment to involving parents has improved since the previous inspection and is good. There are good links with the community and other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of parents have positive views about the school.
- The school is continually creating new opportunities to involve parents and provide them with information of good quality.
- Some parents do not ensure that their children attend regularly.
- Good links have developed with the community and a very good partnership exists with the Education Action Zone.
- Partnerships with the newly built main feeder secondary school are good and are still developing.

Commentary

36. An analysis of the return of parents' questionnaires shows that most parents who expressed an opinion agree that their children make good progress, are expected to work hard, that teaching is good and that the school is well led and managed. Inspection findings fully support these views. Some parents feel that pupils' behaviour is not good and that there are instances of bullying. The inspection found that pupils' behaviour was good on the whole although, in some lessons, particularly in Years 3 to 6, a minority of pupils disrupt the learning of others. In discussion, pupils felt that staff dealt with instances of bullying very well and that these have reduced significantly in the last year and are carefully monitored. Some parents also felt that they did not receive sufficient information about their children's progress. The school holds termly parent consultation evenings as well as providing written annual reports to parents. This is in line with most primary schools. However nearly a fifth of parents do not attend these termly meetings.
37. Parental involvement in the school has continued to improve. A group of parents recently launched PAT, the 'Parent Action Team', to raise funds and support the school further. This has been very successful in improving parental involvement. Parents are given opportunities to attend courses such as 'Better reading partnership' and to learn more about the school through information evenings. For example, a recent event was held to demonstrate the interactive whiteboard technology. Useful booklets have been produced to help parents to support their children's learning at home. However, some parents are still not sufficiently supportive in ensuring that their children attend regularly and on time and this has an adverse effect on their learning and on the learning of others.
38. There has been a significant increase in partnership links with parents of pupils who have special educational needs since the previous inspection. The school involves these parents very closely in discussing their children's achievement and needs. These consultations give parents a clear idea about how well their children are doing. Very good links with outside agencies support these pupils' learning well. For example, the educational psychologist discusses strategies for managing their learning and behaviour. Similarly, links with a local special school have helped teachers and teaching assistants to plan suitable work and find resources to meet these pupils' needs. The school is very effective in involving the parents of pupils who speak English as an additional language to support good learning and achievement.
39. The quality of information for parents is good. Newsletters are sent out regularly and are informative about events in school. In addition, well-explained curriculum information is sent out termly. Pupils' annual reports are satisfactory. They all include information about pupils' attainment and progress. However targets for improvement are not reported consistently. The school prospectus, Nursery prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents are helpful and clearly written documents to inform parents about the school. They meet statutory requirements. The school has developed a 'Children's prospectus' written by children for other children and this provides friendly and helpful guidance, which is particularly useful for pupils joining the school during the course of the year.
40. The school has developed good links with the community and these have contributed well to pupils' learning. For example, a local bank provided a room makeover that has given one of the classrooms a fascinating aquatic theme. A grant by a local bakery is helping the school to set up a breakfast club to ensure that pupils have somewhere safe to meet before the start of the school day. The partnership with the Education Action Zone has resulted in considerable investment in resources of both staff and equipment to improve pupils' learning. For example, extra teaching assistants are funded through this partnership.
41. Links with the newly opened secondary school, which is the main school to which pupils go when they leave the school, are good but are still at a very early stage of development and have yet to become fully effective. However links with other secondary schools, primary schools and a special school are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good overall. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and the leadership of senior staff is very good. The governance of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher is fully committed to continual improvement; her leadership is enabling subject managers to fulfil their roles very well and all adults to contribute effectively to learning.
- The school is very effective in creating staff teams so that all feel valued. Very effective induction procedures support new staff so that they settle quickly and contribute well.
- The school is very evaluative, identifies areas for development and plans very effectively so that it is progressing systematically.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and are appropriately involved in strategic planning.
- Finances are managed efficiently and the school succeeds in harnessing a range of support structures to support its development.

Commentary

42. The headteacher is providing excellent leadership. She is fully committed to continual improvement and is clear-sighted and caring in leading the school forward. Since her appointment, as a result of her leadership, standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 have risen more quickly than they have nationally. She has given subject managers the power to manage their subjects so that the curriculum is now managed very effectively. She herself maintains an overview of provision. In this, she is given very effective support by her deputy and her senior management team. This empowering of colleagues has meant, for example, that the management of special educational needs, which was criticised when the school was inspected previously, is now a strength.
43. The headteacher recognises that her staff are her most valuable resource. She has created an impressive unity of purpose among all adults in the school so that all are fully committed to its excellent ethos. Essentially, this is to enable all pupils to achieve the best they can academically while developing into confident and caring young people able to lead fulfilled lives. The school's excellent commitment to equality for all its pupils is increasingly enabling all pupils to achieve well. This is largely because all adults in the school are members of teams serving the different age groups. All adults feel valued and able to contribute to planning and delivering the curriculum. Professional development at all levels is putting teachers and other adults in a strong position to contribute effectively. In addition, the school introduces new staff to its systems and expectations sensitively so that they quickly gain confidence as members of their teams. The school is also a valuable supporter of initial teacher training and, in different ways, student teachers gain valuable experience at the start of their careers. All these strands contribute effectively to pupils' learning and achievement.
44. The school is very evaluative. Systems are in place to monitor and evaluate its progress and plan for further developments. The headteacher has an excellent capacity to identify the school's needs and to plan to meet them systematically over time. For example, she quickly realised that the management of behaviour was a key priority to be addressed if the school was to move forward. Considerable progress has been made, but there remains scope for further progress. The headteacher's excellent grasp of long-term strategy means that she is able to plan for the school's development over time so that a range of initiatives contribute coherently to a common goal. The school improvement plan is carefully thought through after wide consultation. It contains a relatively small number of objectives so that it is manageable. Progress is monitored and evaluated so that future plans can be created. The school improvement plan is supplemented by a 'maintenance plan' to facilitate the further development of subjects.

45. Governors are also part of the team. Under their shrewd and experienced chair, governors are appropriately involved in strategic development and the management of the school's finances. They have a good appreciation of the school's strengths and potential for development. Governors ensure that the school complies with legal requirements and that the principles of best value are applied very effectively.
46. Spending decisions focus on raising standards. For example, the number of teaching assistants has been increased significantly and the financing of the school's inclusion workshop is helping to raise standards for the pupils who are benefiting from it. The budget is managed carefully to maximise support for learning.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	841,287	Balance from previous year	125,533
Total expenditure	774,657	Balance carried forward to the next	66,633
Expenditure per pupil	2,482		

47. The proportion of the budget carried forward has been appropriately allocated to maintain staffing and to provide for future developments.
48. The headteacher's excellent leadership has enabled the school to improve very well since it was inspected previously. All the issues from that inspection have been addressed successfully. The school is in a strong position to improve further.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

49. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Children enter the Nursery with attainment and learning skills that are well below average. Careful and sensitive arrangements to introduce them to the school enable them to settle quickly. They achieve very well in the Nursery because of lively and very well organised teaching and highly effective support from the nursery nurses. They go on to achieve well in the Reception class. Good teamwork throughout the Foundation Stage enables all children, including those with special educational needs, to make good progress in all areas of learning. Their good achievement is underpinned by good leadership and management of learning, careful monitoring of progress and good accommodation and resources. These are a significant improvement since the previous inspection. As a result of these improvements, children's achievement is now good whereas it was satisfactory when the school was inspected previously. A particular strength is the experienced nursery nurses who have an excellent understanding of how young children learn and help to provide a wide range of experiences so that learning is fun. However, in spite of good achievement and progress, most children are unlikely to reach the standards expected nationally in the six areas of learning by the end of the Reception Year. This is because their level of understanding and their learning skills are so far below those of most children when they enter the school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff enjoy very good relationships with children.
- There is a strong emphasis on daily routines.

Commentary

50. Teaching and learning are very good in the Nursery and good in Reception classes and achievement is good for all children. Most children start in the Nursery with very low personal, social and emotional skills. Some are only just toilet trained. Very good relationships, teamwork and the quiet manner of staff ensure that a peaceful atmosphere exists which has a very calming effect on all children who settle very quickly to the wide range of activities set out for them for each session. In all classes, staff know and understand their responsibilities. Good relationships between adults and children ensure that pupils develop confidence, interact well with each other and adults and develop social competence and emotional security.
51. Daily routines are well established. These enable children to move round the classrooms with increasing confidence. Children in the Reception Year are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions and have plenty of opportunities to choose activities and to decide which utensils to use in their play. As children get older, they often work in focused groups, led by their teacher and their attitudes and behaviour, though boisterous on occasions, are improving.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning in the Nursery are very good
- The pace of learning slows in the Reception Year.

Commentary

52. Teaching and learning are very good in the Nursery and good in the Reception classes. Overall, achievement is good. Many children enter the Nursery with very poor speaking and listening skills. Through a variety of stimulating techniques, nursery staff quickly gain the attention of children who are beginning to listen well to short stories. The more confident children join in with rhymes and remember, for example, that the shell around a caterpillar is called a 'cocoon'. Lower attaining children, who lack the vocabulary to describe the brightly coloured pictures, indicate their understanding by pointing, while others remain silent.
53. Although the overall judgement on teaching is good in the Reception classes, learning in one lesson observed lacked pace and failed to engage the interest of children sufficiently so that they did not listen carefully. During a shared reading session insufficient attention was drawn to how reading is made more interesting. Higher attaining children are beginning to record some sounds heard in words, while lower attaining children have little sound recognition. Reading books are regularly sent home, but a number of parents do not contribute to their children's learning by sharing books with them and this slows their rate of progress.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Resources are used well to make learning meaningful and fun.

Commentary

54. Teaching and learning are good in the Nursery and children achieve well. In the Reception classes, teaching, learning and achievement are satisfactory. Resources were used well to make learning meaningful and fun as children in the Nursery explored number through water play. Adults questioned them skilfully, drawing attention to 'how many' ducks or fish are 'in' or 'out' of the water and whether containers were 'full' or 'empty'. In this way, speaking and listening skills were constantly promoted and, in all activities, adults spoke clearly, emphasising good mathematical language. In the Reception classes higher attaining children demonstrated their understanding of 'first, second and third' as they explored pattern, shape and space, while lower attaining children arranged objects by colour.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Opportunities for children to develop skills in information and communication technology have improved.

Commentary

55. Teaching, learning and achievement are good for all classes. There is a much better level of access to information and communication technology than at the time of the previous inspection and staff make good use of this as a teaching aid. In small groups, nursery nurses engage children very effectively as they learn to 'drag and tap' on the smart board. Higher attaining children in the Reception classes use the keyboard to write their name and understand the use of the backspace key, while lower attaining children were well supported by a teaching assistant to locate the letters in their names. In all classes, children learn about the fruits grown in other parts of the world and compare them to fruits grown in our country. They are developing an early understanding of the passage of time and that other communities in different parts of the world live in different conditions.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching enables children to develop confidence in running, climbing and balance.

Commentary

56. Teaching, learning and achievement are good for all classes. Nursery children enjoy daily opportunities to develop physical skills by using climbing equipment and playing with large, wheeled toys in the enclosed and brightly painted playground. All children in the Reception classes join together for a weekly hall session where they respond confidently to the instructions of both teachers to develop direction and shape through a sequence of movements. Other skills, that require finer control, for example, using scissors and pencils, are less well developed. Although good opportunities are provided for children to use small equipment to cut, paint, thread, spread and build, their physical skills, overall, are still below expectations when they move into Year 1.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide a good range of imaginative and creative activities.

Commentary

57. Teaching, learning and achievement are good for all classes. Teachers use role-play well to promote speaking and listening skills and mathematical understanding. Children in the Nursery begin to join in the singing of rhymes about counting and ordering the 'Three Bears' bowls, beds and chairs. They enact the story alongside adults who work very hard at developing children's language. Many good opportunities are provided for them to experiment with paint as when they produce symmetrical patterns in butterfly wings. Children in the Reception classes rehearsed and performed a song which they later shared with the nursery children. Staff interaction during art activities encourages children to experiment and to be creative.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in writing exceed expectations by the age of seven.
- The rich curriculum stimulates and motivates pupils to learn.
- Good quality teaching and learning ensure that pupils achieve well throughout the school.
- Standards in speaking are not high enough because of pupils' limited vocabulary and lack of understanding of standard English.
- Well-qualified support staff have a positive effect on pupils' learning.
- Marking gives pupils a clear picture of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- Very good assessment procedures are used very effectively to identify and address areas of weakness.
- Classroom and library books are stimulating and provide interest for boys and girls.
- High quality leadership gives very good support and guidance for teaching and learning across the school.

Commentary

58. In the national tests for Year 2 in 2003, pupils were above the national average in writing. By Year 6, however, standards in English were well below average. This does not reflect the achievement of pupils, many of whom entered the school with very low levels of communication skills and had too big a backlog to make up to attain average standards.
59. In the current Year 6, pupils achieve satisfactory standards in their reading skills because of stimulating teaching. Pupils enjoy talking about their favourite books and authors and give clear reasons for their likes and dislikes. Their reading is reasonably fluent and they are confident when reading to an audience. Speaking is generally below average because of pupils' limited literacy skills and for many pupils, particularly in Years 3 and 4, listening skills are also below average. Older pupils' written work is imaginative and well structured. This is an improvement from last year and pupils in Year 6 are likely to achieve better standards in the national tests, but these are still likely to be below the national average. This is a result of the carefully structured teaching in classes of similar ability.
60. Pupils analyse poetry and plays and write interesting and lively stories. One pupil wrote with feeling about the forthcoming inspection ...*"Morning sun, warm me. Pale green tray, keep things safe for me. Paper, write to me. Teacher, be patient for me. As the warming sun lights the sky, the inspectors begin to drive. As the inspector stalks the school, who will be the first to impress him? Computers, help me. Teachers, teach me. Line guides, guide me. Lead me to the inspection."* All adults provide stimulating work which motivates pupils to persevere and achieve well. Many pupils have difficulty in speaking clearly and their limited vocabulary hampers their progress. Teachers work hard to increase pupils' knowledge and understanding of standard English and take every opportunity to persuade them to speak clearly. All teachers ensure that pupils have carefully structured handwriting sessions. This results in good quality handwriting which is used well across all subjects. The consistently high quality of teaching ensures pupils develop positive attitudes to learning and enjoy their work in English.
61. Pupils in Year 2 achieve satisfactory standards in reading and above average standards in writing. This represents a good rate of achievement from a below average base. It is a direct result of careful and systematic teaching which is based on a very thorough analysis of pupils'

earlier attainment. Skilful teaching enables pupils to reflect on stories and to increase their ability to speak clearly in sentences. For example, in one lesson, pupils explored how to use speech marks ...*"We open speech marks when someone opens their mouth ... Yes, and close them when they've done talking."* Pupils enjoy their work in English because teachers make it interesting and stimulating. Most pupils read accurately, but some are hesitant when they meet unfamiliar words. They develop a good and clear handwriting style in Years 1 and 2. This is because of the consistent teaching of joined and well-formed handwriting. By the time they leave Year 2, most pupils use joined script. The analysis of work shows clear improvement in writing across Years 1 and 2.

62. The quality of teaching is good overall across the school and is supported by well-qualified teaching assistants who play an important part in helping pupils to learn. This sensitive teaching has a positive effect on the standards and achievements of pupils with special educational needs. All teachers ensure that pupils have a good understanding of what they are expected to learn during lessons. This gives a clear sense of purpose to their work. There is some very good teaching in Years 1 and 2. The hallmarks of this teaching are the high expectations that teachers share with their pupils, the care taken to meet the needs of pupils at different stages of learning and the insistence on pupils speaking clearly and audibly. All teachers use marking of pupils' work to celebrate achievement and to show them where they can improve. This is consistent across the school and is a good improvement since the previous inspection. Good relationships permeate most lessons and make a positive contribution to pupils' enthusiasm, interest and behaviour in lessons. On occasions some pupils do not listen and disrupt lessons. This hinders learning for themselves and others. Teachers use displays of pupils' work very effectively throughout the school to celebrate achievement. These displays reflect the value that adults place on pupils' contributions. The level of challenge for higher attaining pupils is very effective in enabling them to achieve acceptably high standards. This is a good improvement since the school's previous inspection.
63. The use of drama and links with other subjects enrich the curriculum well. All adults make effective use of information and communication technology to develop writing skills. The effective match of work to pupils at different stages of learning ensures there is no noticeable difference in achievement between boys and girls. It makes a positive contribution to the good level of equality of opportunity for all pupils.
64. The improving standards achieved by pupils in Year 6 are also a result of the very good quality of leadership and management in the subject. The subject leader has a very clear view of priorities and knows her subject well. For example, she has addressed the previously identified weakness in assessment and marking very effectively and has already raised handwriting standards. She provides very good guidance for colleagues and uses data very effectively to identify future priorities. This very good management is enabling the school to use a suitably wide range of monitoring procedures to track pupils' progress and standards. The subject manager uses this information to maintain careful and thorough individual records of achievement and provide new resources. For example, the library is comfortable and inviting and there is a good range of fiction and non-fiction books for pupils to use.
65. Improvement since the previous inspection is good because assessment is now very good, marking is consistent across the school and pupils' handwriting is consistently clear and legible.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

66. All teachers ensure that pupils make effective use of literacy skills across the curriculum. This is particularly noticeable in the use of extended writing in history and technical writing in subjects such as design and technology. Teachers use drama effectively to extend pupils' skills in reading, speaking and listening. Most pupils enjoy reading and know how to use books for research purposes.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and, as a result, achievement is good so that standards are average at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- The subject is led and managed very well and pupils' progress is tracked carefully so that future learning can be planned.
- Difficulties with English prevent some older pupils from developing a depth of understanding so that they find it difficult to use their knowledge in unfamiliar situations.
- For some pupils, particularly in Years 3 to 6, poor concentration and above average absence adversely affect achievement.
- Information and communication technology is used very well to support and to develop numeracy skills.

Commentary

67. In the national tests in 2003, standards were average at the end of Years 2 and 6. This represents good achievement because pupils enter the school with levels of understanding and learning skills that are well below average. This good achievement is the result of effective teaching. Teachers have a good level of subject knowledge and clear explanations help pupils to understand the work that they are doing in lessons. Very effective teaching assistants help to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are given full access to learning. The quality of teaching is consistently good throughout the school and some imaginative approaches to learning help pupils to concentrate well in most lessons.
68. The subject is led and managed very well and very effective systems to assess and track pupils' learning and progress have been introduced. Careful analysis of the results obtained in national tests supplements day-to-day marking of pupils' work so that there is a secure range of evidence on which to plan future learning. Any areas of weakness are quickly identified so that understanding can be reinforced in future learning. Training has been provided to help learning to be more effective and the school's membership of the Education Action Zone has been useful in developing the skills of teaching assistants. The subject leader is alert to the need to develop learning and teaching styles to match the needs of different pupils and is very aware of the potential for information and communication technology to support learning. Pupils who are particularly gifted in mathematics have benefited from 'master classes'.
69. In Years 3 to 6, a below average command of English is adversely affecting some pupils' depth of understanding. Because they find it difficult to find the words to explain their thinking, they have problems in retaining a clear understanding of more difficult concepts over time. This makes it difficult for them to identify which mathematics is needed to solve unfamiliar problems, particularly those expressed in words. As a result, they do not always do themselves justice, particularly under test conditions, because they know more mathematics than their answers would suggest.
70. For some pupils, particularly in Years 3 to 6, short concentration spans mean that they quickly become distracted and interrupt the lesson. The time taken to manage this behaviour slows the pace of learning, not only for these pupils, but also for the rest of the class. For some pupils, learning and achievement are also adversely affected by unsatisfactory attendance. Frequent absences in the form of odd days off disrupt continuity of learning so that pupils do not make the progress that they should.
71. Information and communication technology is used particularly well to support learning in mathematics. The school has a good supply of interactive whiteboards and they are used

regularly in lessons. Teachers take opportunities well throughout the school to use the facilities of these boards to illustrate what is being learned and to support explanations. Pupils are becoming increasingly confident in using these boards to solve problems and this is reinforcing their learning well.

Mathematics across the curriculum

72. Numeracy has been developed in other subjects. There are good examples of graphs being used to represent findings in science and of measuring and calculating in design and technology. Data handling skills are used well in information and communication technology, for example, when creating pie charts and different types of graphs.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving throughout the school.
- Teachers emphasise the value of investigative science in lessons.
- The overall quality of teaching is good.
- Pupils' poor vocabulary sometimes limits their explanations.
- Leadership and management of science are very good.

Commentary

73. Standards are improving throughout the school, but they are lower than those found at the time of the previous inspection for pupils in Year 6. Attainment for pupils in Year 2, who achieve well throughout Years 1 and 2, is at the expected level. By the end of Year 6, where overall achievement is satisfactory, standards are below average. This is because fewer pupils reach the higher Level 5 in the national tests while a greater than expected number attain the lower Level 3.
74. Teachers emphasise the value of investigative science in lessons. The current focus on practical investigation, discussion, collaborative activities and enquiry skills throughout the school is helping pupils to be more involved in their learning, so that their ability to recall scientific findings is increasing. This is having a positive effect on standards.
75. The quality of teaching is good overall. In a mixed age class of Year 1 and Year 2 pupils, for example, all achieved well because the lesson had been effectively planned to build up pupils' knowledge and understanding systematically. Pupils worked with good initiative as they planned, investigated, predicted and accurately drew conclusions that plants need light and water to grow successfully. Teachers encourage pupils to record their results clearly. In a lesson observed in a Year 3-4 class, where teaching was only satisfactory, this was because progress was slowed by the inappropriate behaviour of a small minority of pupils. In contrast, in a lesson observed in Year 6, teaching and learning were very good. The pace was brisk and there was a high degree of practical participation as pupils dissected tulips, learned the scientific names of individual parts and discovered their functions. Pupils concentrated well and very thorough questioning probed pupils' understanding so that any misunderstandings were quickly corrected. The support of teaching assistants is very effective in ensuring that lower attaining pupils contribute to discussions. Higher attaining pupils are given work that challenges them appropriately and so achieve well.
76. Pupils' limited vocabulary sometimes adversely affects their learning. Many pupils have a very limited range of words and this impedes their ability to explain their understanding using scientific terms, especially in their recording of findings. Teachers are aware of this and make

good use of smart boards to present information, for example, a glossary of scientific terminology, so that pupils gain confidence when recording their findings using appropriate vocabulary both in their speech and in their writing.

77. The leadership and management of science are very good. Results from regular assessments are carefully analysed and any weaknesses are systematically targeted in follow up lessons, so that standards may be raised further.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards exceed expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6 because of the recent and very significant improvements to resources and staff expertise which have resulted from very effective subject leadership.
- The teaching of skills and techniques is consistently good and ensures high levels of achievement.
- Information and communication technology is used effectively to support learning in other subjects.
- The very good procedures for monitoring and evaluating provision and progress and taking action are having a positive effect on standards.

Commentary

78. The school has been very successful in raising standards throughout the school since it was inspected previously. It has made a significant improvement to the knowledge and expertise of staff and to the range and quality of resources. The weaknesses identified at the previous inspection no longer exist. Another significant improvement is pupils' use of information and communication technology to support their work in other subjects. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils explored how to use a computer database to represent mean, mode and median on a spreadsheet. Staff have achieved these improvements through developing their own skills and techniques and using expert support from colleagues from the Education Action Zone. These improvements are the result of purposeful leadership by the subject managers who have ensured that the subject has a high profile throughout the school.
79. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their work and are eager to show their expertise. For example, some pupils in Year 2 carefully explained how to use a binary tree and what sort of questions to pose. By Year 6, pupils produce high quality animations, using digital cameras and understand how to use computers in control situations. They produce sequences of movements for jointed toys and investigate how traffic lights work. This is the result of careful teaching of skills and techniques which builds effectively on earlier learning. Pupils word process their work regularly and create carefully designed decorations. They are enthusiastic about the artwork that they produce and work productively in the classrooms and in the computer room. The school ensures that pupils are aware of the need for Internet safety when they send e-mails and use the school's website.
80. The quality of teaching is good overall with some examples of very good teaching. Teachers and classroom assistants have good subject knowledge. They are supported very well by members of the Education Action Zone. The school ensures that time is organised very carefully to make the most of this expertise. This ensures that pupils and staff have opportunities to increase their skills and techniques. Carefully timetabled sessions in the computer room enable pupils to use their skills and develop their understanding of what they can achieve by using computers. The subject managers monitor work carefully and keep detailed records of each pupil's achievements. This and the thorough evaluation of the

effectiveness of the provision, gives a clear picture of progress across the school. It allows teachers to identify the learning that has taken place in the previous class so that they can build on it.

81. The school is using adult expertise well to provide a computer club specifically for gifted and talented pupils. It is well attended and pupils enjoy extending their skills to carry out more complicated tasks. Pupils with special educational needs have programs that are specifically developed to meet their needs. This ensures that they increase their skills and enjoy using computers to support their learning.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

82. This is very effective because the subject managers have ensured that teachers provide opportunities across subjects to develop pupils' skills. Teachers make effective use of the interactive whiteboards in all subjects. This increases pupils' awareness of the use of information and communication technology in a wide range of situations. All pupils use computers for research in subjects such as art, history and music. They are very competent in using computers for recording findings in graph form and for data handling. Their carefully illustrated, word-processed poems considerably enhance work in English.

HUMANITIES

It was not possible to observe any lessons at all in history and only lessons in Years 3 to 6 in geography. However discussions with pupils and evidence from an analysis of pupils' work indicate that standards are at least satisfactory and that information and communication technology is used well to support learning in these subjects. The enthusiasm of the subject leader contributes well to pupils' learning.

Geography

Provision in geography is **good** in Years 3 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff have good subject knowledge.
- On occasions there is a significant amount of poor behaviour from some pupils.
- Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop literacy skills.

Commentary

83. Staff have good subject knowledge and make lessons interesting for pupils so that they achieve well. The quality of teaching is good overall. Attractive displays together with detailed planning of lessons ensure that pupils who have little prior knowledge of the world around them have a wide range of opportunities to gain information and deepen their understanding. However, in some lessons, achievement is adversely affected by the poor behaviour of a few pupils with short concentration spans. For example, in a Year 3 lesson, where pupils were beginning to understand the relationship between location and economic activity, the pace of learning was slowed because of the amount of time the teacher spent dealing with a significant amount of poor behaviour by a few pupils.
84. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop literacy skills in geography as they study the environmental impact of the building of reservoirs such as the Kielder. Pupils readily took part in a 'brainstorming exercise' and identified the importance of water for sporting activities, hygiene, industry and for drinking. The teacher's clear explanation as to the function of dams and reservoirs inspired pupils to take on the roles of the village publican and a factory manager as they engaged in lively debate as to the advantages and disadvantages of the building of a

reservoir. This very engaging lesson culminated in pupils composing a letter of protest describing the feelings of local people. Many visitors to the school and visits to the local area, for example, to study a scale model of the River Tees, have made the subject come alive for pupils and enhanced their learning effectively.

History

No judgement is made on provision or standards in history.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils gain a good understanding of the role of celebrations.
- In some lessons, learning is adversely affected by the poor behaviour of some pupils.
- Religious education makes a useful contribution to pupils' literacy.

Commentary

85. Standards in religious education are in line with expectations for pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 and meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Achievement is satisfactory. Religious education makes a sound contribution to pupils' spiritual development and their awareness of the need to be sensitive to others' values and beliefs.
86. Pupils in all classes gain a good understanding of the significance of the traditions observed by Christians and by members of other major faiths. This is the result of sound and, occasionally, good teaching. Pupils from Years 1 and 2 visited the local church, for example, to learn more about baptism. There, the local vicar made them aware that both adults and children may be christened. Pupils learned that Jesus himself was baptised in a river.
87. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learned about the significance of 'The Last Supper' in a lesson that was well prepared, but which did not have its full impact on learning because of the poor behaviour of a significant minority of pupils. The amount of time taken to manage this behaviour slowed the pace of the lesson. Literacy skills were developed as the teacher questioned pupils well as to their understanding of the word 'betrayal' in connection with the actions of Judas Iscariot. The sharing of bread and drinking of juice was effectively carried out so that all pupils gained an understanding of this special communion celebration.
88. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils were considering the natural world and its impact on spirituality. With the teacher's support, lower attaining pupils created a prayer/poem with some sensitive use of vocabulary which improved their literacy skills. There was satisfactory use of information and communication technology to support learning and higher attaining pupils' spiritual awareness was developed satisfactorily by a consideration of the impact of flowers on our perception of the world. Evidence from displays and discussions with older pupils show that they have a satisfactory understanding of the five pillars of Islam and that they understand how faith may be expressed through art.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

89. Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education were sampled and no judgement is made on provision or standards.
90. In **art and design**, work on display and discussions with pupils show that they have varied and stimulating opportunities to use a range of media and materials. The school has recently

developed an exciting and well-equipped art studio which pupils enjoy using. They speak enthusiastically about the work they have done with visiting artists, for example, on the mosaic murals. They are also enthusiastic about the competitions they have entered and are particularly pleased with the music wall hanging and the posters for Middlesbrough Football Club. Paintings on display show well-developed skills in using paint and pencil. For example, a very carefully executed pencil sketch of Shakespeare supported learning in English well. Information and communication technology is used effectively to support learning in art and design, for example, to create pictures in the styles of Klee and Mondrian.

91. In **design and technology**, discussions with pupils and an analysis of work show that they experience a suitably wide range of materials. Pupils explain clearly how they have designed, made and evaluated products such as biscuit boxes and chairs. Pupils now also disassemble objects to see how they are made and this is a good improvement since the previous inspection. For example, pupils take cardboard boxes apart and explain how to re-make them. Resources for learning are good and pupils use information and communication technology well to support their learning.
92. In **music**, the subject manager has worked hard to improve the subject. The inadequacies identified when the school was inspected previously have been successfully addressed. Whole-school singing is now satisfactory and pupils successfully sing a two part round unaccompanied. Pupils have some opportunities to hear live musicians, for example, a string quartet. There are opportunities to learn brass instruments, guitar and recorder. A school choir gives pupils opportunities to experience performance and school productions and a performing arts club for Years 5 and 6 provides good opportunities for music to be linked with drama. The introduction of CD players into all classrooms has raised the profile of music throughout the school.
93. In **physical education**, only one lesson was observed and, in that lesson, the quality of teaching and learning was very good. Pupils in Year 5 have swimming lessons, but standards in swimming are below average. There are good opportunities for pupils to experience competitive sport and some opportunities for external coaching, for example, in soccer. The school offers a range of clubs for keep fit including a dance club for Years 1 and 2 and a club for those who underachieve in physical activities.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

It was only possible to observe two lessons in this area of the school's work so no judgements can be made about the overall provision.

Commentary

94. The school regards pupils' personal and social development as a very important part of its work and develops their personal and social skills effectively. A good programme of work is consistently used throughout the school in classes and in one-to-one situations. This enables pupils to increase their confidence, self-esteem and awareness of the needs of others. Sometimes, the effectiveness of this sensitive provision is diminished when people walk through the open plan classrooms during discussions. The school has a clear focus on healthy living, including personal safety, sex education, drug and alcohol misuse, diet and exercise. For example, the school kitchen gives pupils a choice with its healthy food options. Visits from members of the community, for example the police 'Good Citizenship Training' initiative, develop pupils' understanding of the meaning of citizenship. Work on the school council gives pupils good experiences in community responsibility and how democracies work. Learning sensitively takes account of pupils' different levels of maturity and work in this area contributes well to pupils' moral and social development.

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	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	4
Attendance	6
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
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	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
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	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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