

INSPECTION REPORT

**BERWICK ST MARY'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND FIRST
SCHOOL**

Berwick-upon-Tweed

LEA area: Northumberland

Unique reference number: 122271

Headteacher: Mr W M Renton

Lead inspector: Mr J J Peacock

Dates of inspection: 26th – 29th April 2004

Inspection number: 263628

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

© Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	3-9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	125
School address:	Newfields Berwick-upon-Tweed
Postcode:	TD15 1SP
Telephone number:	01289 306170
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Guthrie
Date of previous inspection:	October 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This smaller than average Church of England voluntary controlled first school serves two nearby housing estates. It also has a unit attached to it for pupils with moderate learning difficulties but this is scheduled to close in Spring 2005. A 13-place nursery class has been added since the previous inspection and 26 children attend on a part-time basis. Numbers have increased since the previous inspection but fell back a little last year. There are 125 pupils on roll, 69 boys and 43 girls in four classes plus the nursery. All, except those in Year 4, are in mixed-age classes. There are no children from ethnic minority backgrounds nor any who speak English as an additional language but a small number of children from Travelling families regularly attend the school. Almost all of these were absent during the inspection, having temporarily left the area. The attainment of most children on entry to the school is well below that normally expected. Many children have weak language skills.

The number eligible for free school meals, 14.3 per cent, is 10 per cent down from the previous inspection but is broadly in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is also broadly in line with the national average with 24 per cent on the register and the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is well above average. The school provides for just over half of these pupils from its own resources but additional help has been sought from specialists for those who have moderate learning difficulties and those with social, emotional and behavioural problems. The mobility of pupils is significant and is closely linked to fluctuations in the number of pupils from Travelling families. Last year 14 pupils joined and 6 left the school during term time, which amounted to 15 per cent. This is above average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25344	Mr J J Peacock	Lead inspector	English
			Science
			Geography
			History
			Physical education
			English as an additional language
9511	Mrs A Longfield	Lay inspector	
29188	Mrs G Ulyatt	Team inspector	Foundation Stage
			Mathematics
			Art and design
			Design and technology
			Religious education
22466	Mrs D Pearson	Team inspector	Special educational needs
			Information and communication technology
			Music

The inspection contractor was:

Eclipse Education (UK) Limited
 14 Enterprise House
 Kingsway
 Team Valley
 Gateshead
 Tyne & Wear
 NE11 0SR

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	6
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	9
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	14
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	16
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	28

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a satisfactory school, which is providing a sound education for all its pupils. Great emphasis is placed on meeting the needs of individual pupils and as a result, pupils know they are valued and the level of achievement for most is satisfactory. The experienced headteacher is caring and enthusiastic and quickly establishes a very good relationship with all who come into contact with the school. His considerable efforts have been instrumental in creating the good ethos for learning. Pupils enjoy coming to school and benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum with a good range of extra-curricular activities. The quality of teaching varies but is satisfactory, overall. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school is providing satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher leads by example and has a very strong commitment to the needs of individual pupils.
- A strong Christian ethos permeates school life
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs in school and in the special unit attached to the school is good
- Consistently good teaching in Years 3 and 4 enables pupils to achieve well
- The quality of teaching and learning in the nursery is unsatisfactory but it is good in the reception class
- The weak communication skills of many pupils are not tackled well by the school and this is holding back their progress. As a result, overall standards in English, mathematics and science are still below average in Year 4
- Pupils respond well to the generally positive atmosphere for learning. Most have good attitudes towards work and behave well.

The level of improvement from the previous inspection has been satisfactory, overall. The settled staff have worked well as a team with the headteacher to improve the three previous key issues. School development planning is much more detailed and is forward looking. All statutory policies are in place and the role of subject leaders has been successfully developed. However, insufficient progress has been made to improve the weaknesses identified previously in many pupils' speaking skills. This is having an adverse effect on the standards pupils achieve and the quality of their work.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
reading	D	D	E	E*
writing	C	D	E	E
mathematics	B	C	E	E

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E-in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally.*

Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.

Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.

Achievement is satisfactory, overall. It is closely tied to the quality of teaching pupils receive. In Years 3 and 4, for example, pupils achieve well, but in the nursery, achievement is unsatisfactory. The relatively small numbers tested and the effect of the well above average number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs mean that the results in the table above should be treated with some caution. In reading, for example, the very low performance was due in part to the much

higher number of boys than girls, a ratio of two to one. Almost 40 per cent of boys were on the special educational needs register. Inspection evidence shows that, overall, the 13 pupils in Year 2 are attaining well below average standards in English, mathematics and science. If pupils with special educational needs are excluded from Year 2, all other pupils are set to attain the expected standard with a third achieving the higher Level 3. By the end of Year 4, standards in these three subjects improve but overall remain below average because of the number of pupils with special educational needs who are included. The progress of many pupils is adversely affected by weak speaking skills. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below those expected in Year 2 but in line in Year 4. All attain expected standards in religious education and history, and pupils in Year 4 do well in physical education. There was insufficient evidence to judge standards in other subjects. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good in the Unit and all classes owing to the effective support they receive. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve the goals expected of children of this age in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development by the end of their reception year however in communication, language and literacy and their mathematical development standards are well below those expected.

Pupils' personal, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development are good. School assemblies reflect the Christian values and beliefs of the school well. Attendance levels are broadly average. Children are punctual and they behave well. Most have a good attitude to learning. There were no exclusions last year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, overall. The quality of teaching varies from class to class. In the nursery it is unsatisfactory mostly owing to poor control and a weakness in lesson planning. In the reception class, it is consistently good, with the teacher and conscientious teaching assistant working well as a team. Teaching and learning are also consistently good in Years 3 and 4, with all the very good teaching being seen in Year 4. This ensures that pupils make good progress. Learning support staff are used effectively and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. However, the attention all teachers give to improving pupils' speaking skills is not enough to bring about the accelerated rate of improvement needed. The assessment of pupils' learning is satisfactory throughout. The school has a successful partnership with its parents and staff provide pupils with a good level of care, support and guidance. The school is exceptionally well maintained and cleaned by the conscientious caretaker who obviously loves his job.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. Governance is satisfactory. All statutory requirements are met. The headteacher has a strong sense of purpose and high aspirations. Concern for individual pupils is very strong and there is a deep commitment to equality of opportunity for all. Half the governors are recently appointed but all are keenly interested in developing the school and fully support the headteacher and his staff.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils have positive views about the school and regard the headteacher as a friend. They have a great trust in and value his leadership over the past 13 years. The high response to the questionnaire and wholly positive views reflect parental confidence. A very small number would like more information on pupils' progress. Inspectors think the school is doing as well as other schools on this aspect.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to raise standards in English, mathematics and science are to:

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in the nursery.
- Improve pupils' speaking and listening skills throughout the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Overall, pupils' level of achievement is satisfactory. Most children enter the school with levels of attainment which are well below those normally seen and by the end of Year 4, attain standards which are below those expected in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science for this age group. The weak speaking skills of many pupils are a limiting factor on their progress throughout the school. This was also found to be the case in the previous inspection. Overall, the trend in the school's results in the national tests in Year 2 is below the national trend of improvement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The rate of progress for pupils with special educational needs in classes and in the Unit is good.
- Individual pupils' achievement in the core subjects is good in the junior classes, owing to the consistently good teaching.
- Pupils work hard and produce a good amount of work in most subjects. In English, written work is sometimes untidy.
- The school's performance in the national tests for Year 2 is well below average.
- Children's achievement in the Foundation Stage varies. In the nursery it is unsatisfactory and in reception it is good.
- Standards in physical education are above average by Year 4.

Commentary

1 In the previous inspection, children in the Foundation Stage received a good grounding in literacy and numeracy in the reception class. Since then a nursery class has opened. The quality of provision in the two classes directly affects how well children achieve. In the nursery, provision is unsatisfactory and children do not achieve as well as they should. Organisation is poor, groups are too large and activities do not challenge or hold children's interest. As a result, standards of behaviour are poor in this class, making it difficult for those who want to learn.

2 In the reception class, the consistently good quality of teaching ensures that all children quickly settle and make good progress. However, many children enter with poor levels of speech and find it difficult to communicate. Little is done in the nursery to correct this weakness. As a result, a significant number do not attain the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, their mathematical and creative development, before the end of their reception year, despite the calm, caring approach of the class teacher who quickly establishes good relationships and gives all the children confidence. She is supported exceptionally well by the very conscientious teaching assistant. Together, they make a very effective team. By the end of the reception year, children's attainment in communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical development are well below the levels expected. Their knowledge and understanding of the world, personal and social development and physical development are in line with those normally expected.

3 The school's overall performance in the national tests for Year 2 appears to be much worse than in the previous inspection. However, pupils in the Unit for pupils with moderate learning difficulties were not included in the picture then. The school has successfully integrated most pupils from the Unit into the different classrooms with only a few pupils spending some time during each morning in the Unit. All pupils are now tested in the national tests. In 1998, 30 pupils were tested and last year the number was 24. Smaller numbers increase the impact of individual pupils' results. The higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs and significant mobility of pupils further affects the school's overall performance. Consequently, the overall results should be treated with some caution. In the national tests in 2003, overall standards in reading, writing and mathematics were well below average. Compared to pupils in similar schools, standards in writing

and mathematics were well below average and in reading, very low being in the bottom five per cent of similar schools nationally. However, the school's analysis shows that when pupils with special educational needs are excluded, every pupil achieved the expected level with about a third achieving at the higher Level 3.

4 In the teachers' assessments in science, pupils' performance was in the bottom five per cent nationally for pupils attaining the expected level and well below average for those reaching the higher Level 3. Overall, standards in the current Year 2 are well below average in English, mathematics and science. This is mostly due to the inclusion of four pupils with special educational needs in a very small year group of 13 pupils and pupils' continuing problems with communication, both written and spoken. Pupils produce a good amount of written work in English and other subjects, for example, but much of it is untidy with many spelling mistakes. A new handwriting scheme has been introduced in an attempt to improve the presentation of pupils' work but it is too early to see any real impact of this.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.6 (15.6)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.4 (14.0)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	14.5 (16.4)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

5 By Year 4, detailed school records show that individual pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science. The quality of written work is still untidy, particularly in English with few junior pupils joining their handwriting properly. However, in their special handwriting books, most show they can produce joined neat writing. In reading, many pupils struggle to read unfamiliar words, as they do not have a sufficient range of strategies to help them tackle longer harder words. Standards remain below the level expected of Year 4 pupils.

6 Most pupils make good progress in the core subjects through Years 3 and 4, thanks largely to the high incidence of good and very good teaching. Additionally, all pupils have a good attitude to their learning and most behave in a mature and sensible manner. Nearly every parent who responded to the questionnaire sent out prior to the inspection agreed that staff expect pupils to work hard.

7 In history, standards in Year 2 and Year 4 are in line with those expected. An extensive amount of work was available in history as it was the focus for most classes instead of geography. Parents say their children enjoy doing topic work in history. Standards in ICT are below those expected in Year 2 and in line with those expected by Year 4. Pupils have good access to computers in the special computer room and two classes already have the new computer linked whiteboards which they are using well. Standards are undoubtedly rising because of the developing staff expertise and the efforts of the knowledgeable subject co-ordinator. Inspectors saw that computers were used extensively to support learning in most subjects. In religious education, standards are in line with the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

8 There was insufficient evidence for inspectors to make a reliable judgement about standards in art and design, design and technology, geography or music throughout and in physical education at Year 2. However, by Year 4 standards are above those normally seen with pupils achieving well. This is due to the good quality of teaching from the junior teachers, supported by the enthusiastic headteacher who obviously enjoys coaching pupils. The good range of out-of-school sporting activities open to all pupils also helps to raise standards. The school has plenty of resources, a good hall and lots of space outdoors, which are used well.

9 The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good in relation to their learning ability and behaviour. Pupils are placed in appropriate groups with additional support from teaching assistants. The work they are given is carefully planned and ensures that they achieve

well in lessons and over time. For example, recording is made simple in order for a small group of pupils in Year 4 to experience in a practical situation how to feed instructions into and use a programmable robot to understand clockwise, anticlockwise, quarter, half and full turns. Travellers children are fully included in all lessons and supported well when they attend the school. As a result, the same families regularly admit their children. Most were absent during the inspection but those few present were fully integrated in classes and working successfully alongside other pupils with good support from class teachers and teaching assistants.

10 Pupils with statements of special educational need have realistic achievable targets such as spelling, reading and writing tasks. In the Unit, pupils enjoy using a computer and this successfully complements their learning. For example they can recognise counting in fives on a grid and spell out words. They are encouraged to follow a story in order to write sentences beginning with the letter 'w'. One boy was able to write simple poetry, most boys can give appropriate words and make simple sentences, although they find it difficult to find words in the dictionary. Work is marked well with praise and supportive comments. Writing skills show good progress over time and most pupils are improving their reading skills with daily practice. The speech and language therapist devises targets and routinely supports pupils in their learning in the class. A register is maintained for the highly gifted or pupils with special talents. None is currently identified but in the past, special tuition has been arranged for this very small number of pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and together with the good relationships that exist are strengths of the school. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good and their cultural development is satisfactory. Both attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. Bullying or incidents of intimidating behaviour are not a problem at this school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attitudes and enthusiasm for school life contribute effectively to their learning.
- Good relationships exist throughout the school and pupils and staff work well together.
- The good atmosphere for learning is strongly reinforced through assemblies, lessons and the additional provision of the various clubs and extra-curricular activities.
- Provision for cultural development is not as good as that made for spiritual, social and moral aspects, particularly in the infant classes.
- Attendance is adversely affected by the retention of Travellers' children on the school roll when they are out of the area.

Commentary

11 Pupils enjoy their learning. Good examples include a Year 4 English lesson about forming an argument when the chosen subject was 'Should Zoos be closed'. Pupils relate well to each other and to other adults in the school. The staff provide a good example to pupils through their professional approach and dedication to the school and its success. Learning benefits from the strong relationship between staff and pupils. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. In discussion with the pupils, they agree that it is a friendly school and that any incidences of bullying are dealt with quickly. There were no exclusions last year.

12 Pupils with special educational needs, including those in the Unit are supported well to take a full part in the life of the school. Their attitudes, values and personal qualities are good. Teachers and assistants are skilled in involving pupils in practical work, which ensures they are confident and secure.

13 The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils are taught to respect and value each other. They listen carefully in assemblies. The theme for the week of the inspection was about 'Caring for each other' and the example set by The Good Samaritan. The school sets clear guidelines about what is right and wrong; the good behaviour of the pupils is evidence that they recognise the difference. This aspect of school life is

still to be fully understood by the nursery children. There are times that their behaviour is less than satisfactory. Most pupils are kind and caring towards each other and take on the role of monitors in class and around the school very seriously. The opportunity for pupils' cultural development is an area that the school agrees needs further development. On the whole, junior staff plan more opportunities for pupils to appreciate and understand the differences in world religions such as Hinduism than the infant staff.

14 Overall, attendance is satisfactory, being broadly in line with the national average. The annual percentage is adversely affected by the practice of leaving the names of Travellers' children on the registers and continuing to mark them absent when they have left the area. Punctuality is satisfactory.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (96.3%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.7	School data	0.0
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	No of pupils on roll
White – British	90
Mixed – White and Asian	2
No ethnic group recorded	1

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 satisfactory. Great care is taken over the welfare of pupils and all are well supported in lessons. All benefit from an enriched curriculum with a good variety of after school activities provided. There are satisfactory links with other schools.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The quality of teaching and learning varies from good in the reception class and in Years 3 and 4 to unsatisfactory in the nursery. In other classes, it is wholly satisfactory. Assessment procedures are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's behaviour in the nursery is often less than satisfactory and they achieve little, because teaching is unsatisfactory.
- Teachers make good use of the very conscientious teaching assistants to support pupils learning throughout the rest of the school.
- Great care is taken to ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils and the integration of pupils from the Unit is particularly effective.
- Not enough emphasis is given to the teaching of speaking skills and many pupils throughout the school find it difficult to express themselves.
- Physical education is taught well in the junior classes.

Commentary

15 The previous inspection reported that teaching was good and there were no unsatisfactory lessons. Consistently good teaching was seen in some classes during this inspection. However,

the overall quality is now satisfactory, rather than good as some significant weaknesses exist which are having an adverse effect on the standards that pupils achieve. It was reported in the previous inspection that many pupils have problems with speaking and communicating and this was having a serious effect on their progress and the standards attained. There is still insufficient emphasis given in lessons throughout the school to accelerate pupils' skills in this key area. In the nursery, there are few planned opportunities for children to practise and develop their speech and in a lesson seen in Year 2, the teacher readily accepted one word answers from pupils, missing opportunities to encourage pupils to talk more and explain further.

16 The quality of teaching in the nursery is unsatisfactory and on occasions poor. As a result, children do not achieve as well as they should. Organisation is poor, groups are too large and activities do not challenge or hold children's interest. Many activities last too long, so children lose interest. Behaviour management is also unsatisfactory and this impacts strongly on children's learning in all six areas. Children in the reception class benefit from the teaching of an experienced and skilful teacher and dedicated teaching assistant. Children settle in quickly and make good progress in all areas of learning. All of the teaching seen in the reception class was good. The accommodation is imaginatively used to provide interesting areas which stimulate children's interest. The good range of resources is an added benefit. The outdoor area is sufficient in size for the number of children and is used most effectively for promoting learning in all six areas, which make up the Foundation Stage curriculum.

17 The latest curriculum guidance has been adopted by the school and detailed schemes of work set out clearly the learning for each year group. This helps teachers' lesson planning and they work closely together to ensure that pupils' learning is a continuous process. The exceptionally close and trusting relationships pupils have with their teachers in the smaller than average school are a key factor in promoting a good climate for learning in the school. Pupils in some lessons, however, do not make sufficient progress as they find expressing themselves verbally and in writing difficult.

18 Three very good lessons were seen, all of which were in Year 4. Exceptionally detailed planning, well thought out tasks which successfully motivated and interested pupils and high expectations, coupled with excellent use of support staff, ensured that pupils' full attention was guaranteed. As a result, learning was very effective. Equality of opportunity is a key consideration for all staff and support or guidance is always on hand for any pupil who needs it.

19 Lessons generally are well organised and teachers make their expectations about behaviour clear. As a result, most pupils are keen to learn and behave impeccably in lessons. Pupils work hard and inspectors were able to make judgements about standards in subjects such as science and history from the amount of neatly produced work. All pupils make good use of computers in the computer room to gain more skills. They research facts about other countries in geography and use their writing skills to record information for history topics.

20 Physical education is taught well in the junior classes. The headteacher enjoys coaching pupils and his enthusiasm coupled with the junior teachers' subject expertise and good teaching ensures all pupils achieve standards above those normally seen. The good range of sporting activities after normal school time and opportunities for pupils to take part in competitive games against pupils from other schools add successfully to the curriculum.

21 Teachers and teaching assistants know the pupils with special educational needs well and their work in lessons is well planned. They ensure that these pupils have equal access to subjects and all activities. The variety of approaches to pupils grouped according to their prior attainment contributes well to meeting individual needs. Individual work is appropriate to ensure pupils know what they have to do and most is marked with supportive comments. The good support system ensures pupils have every opportunity to learn as effectively and independently as possible. For example, in a physical education lesson, pupils with physical difficulties were encouraged to follow a routine devised by the physiotherapist while taking part with their group. Continual assessment and regular reviews contributes well to individual education plans and targets. There is a good relationship with parents and other professionals. In the Unit during the week of the inspection, a

supply teacher worked sensitively with a teaching assistant who knows the pupils well to give support to pupils so that they completed their literacy and numeracy work successfully.

22 The assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is undertaken regularly and in depth for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Results of assessments made of progress in pupils' termly work and their performance in the national tests are carefully analysed. Assessment information is used satisfactorily to modify the planning for future work and to track progress from year to year. Specific learning targets are planned for pupils from the results of the detailed assessments, ensuring all pupils build progressively on their previous learning. These targets are communicated very well to individual pupils and their parents in order to involve them more and give a better understanding of what needs to be achieved. In the foundation subjects, assessment procedures are satisfactory. A detailed assessment is undertaken for some subjects such as music at the end of the year or at the end of each term for others such as history.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 32 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	3 (9)	16 (50)	10 (31)	1 (3)	2 (6)	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.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory. It provides adequately for all pupils. There is a good level of enrichment through additional activities available outside the school day. The resources and accommodation in school are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is designed to be fully inclusive and pupils with special educational needs are well supported in class.
- The grounds are good, providing pupils with opportunities for practical activities.
- Planning for self-directed play in the Foundation Stage is not developed enough.

Commentary

23 Considering the size of the school, the extra-curricular provision is good. Infant and junior pupils have opportunities to partake in activities at lunchtime and after school. The choir performs in the Berwick annual schools choir festival. The games club attracts infant pupils and junior pupils on separate evenings after school. Pupils enjoy a good range throughout the year including football, cricket, rounders and netball. Pupils from Year 2 to Year 4 have swimming lessons each week. Pupils also participate in sporting activities with other schools and in area competitions. Artists support pupils' work and through activity days, pupils have produced their own musical compact disc.

24 All pupils have full access to the curriculum. Children from Travelling families regularly attend and are welcomed by all staff. Integration for all pupils is made possible because of the determination of senior management, teachers and support staff to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunity. Pupils who have special educational needs from the Unit take full part in foundation subjects, belong to mainstream classes and are taught alongside their classmates. Some are taught separately in the Unit for literacy and numeracy only. Additional support is carefully planned and targeted where it is most needed when they are in the classrooms. Lesson plans are carefully written and show a good range of activities to support learning and these are planned to match the differing abilities and age ranges in classes. This means that pupils are working at a level appropriate to their stage of development.

25 The accommodation is good. Classrooms are spacious and well resourced to support the work planned. The indoor accommodation has a good sized hall, dining hall and a combined computer suite and library. The area outdoors is particularly well resourced. Pupils benefit from large playing fields, spacious playgrounds, a wild life area and a pond. The school buildings and grounds are exceptionally well maintained by the on-site caretaker who obviously loves his job. These areas are used well to support pupils' work. All are safely enclosed following recommendations in the previous inspection report. Children in the Foundation Stage benefit from a well designed outdoor area, including a wooded area, grassed area and hard surface which is marked to support learning across the curriculum. There is a good sized shed to store heavy equipment so it is readily accessible for staff and children.

26 Whilst those activities in the Foundation Stage that are taught by staff are planned, those that children choose for themselves do not always have a clear learning outcome. Plans show resources to be used but are not clear enough about what children should learn from the activities. This means that there are lost opportunities for staff to help children as they play. Children, particularly in the nursery, often lose interest and concentration because they are unsure about what they are supposed to be learning.

27 The provision to meet the special educational needs for pupils in the mainstream classes is good. The register identifies the needs of pupils well and is an improvement since the last inspection. The liaison between the co-ordinator and staff ensure planning and monitoring is comprehensive. Each class has a detailed file of information for each pupil, which ensures a sharing of information.

28 The teaching assistants support and contribute well to pupils' learning. Assessment and planned work carried out by assistants continue the work of the County team and the speech and language therapist. Best use has been made of the building with full access for pupils with a physical disability. Pupils have equal access to ICT to support learning.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides good care for its pupils. They are given good support, advice and guidance. The staff in this smaller than average school know pupils well and often listens to their views. The response to pupils' views is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good procedures are in place for child protection, racial awareness and for promoting the pupils' well-being, health and safety.
- Staff know the pupils and their families well and this ensures that there is a close supportive relationship between home and school.
- Pupils with special educational needs in the Unit and throughout school are well cared for and supported effectively.
- No School Council exists and consequently there is no standard procedure in place to obtain pupils' views on a regular basis.

Commentary

29 The school has a suitable policy for child protection and race equality and all the staff are aware of their responsibilities. There are good health and safety procedures in place. Fire drills are carried out regularly. Teachers and other members of staff are conscientious in their care of the pupils. There are good arrangements for administering first aid and dealing with accidents or sickness. There is an ethos of care, order and structure, which is emphasised in the school's expectations and the response in the daily assemblies. As a result, pupils feel safe and cared for and are able to concentrate well on their learning.

30 Personal development is monitored through the class teachers' knowledge of the pupils in their class. Academic achievement, good attitudes and behaviour are acknowledged throughout the

school with house points and mention in assembly. The families of the Traveller children appreciate the effort the school makes to integrate their children quickly when they return to the area. Pupils' books are safeguarded and readily at hand when they are re-admitted.

31 The identification and support for pupils with additional needs are good. The Unit for pupils with moderate learning difficulties provides a pleasant, quiet, learning environment. The unit teacher is responsible for co-ordinating special educational needs throughout the school. This ensures an overview of how well pupils are included and access to a full curriculum while pupils have appropriate support for emotional, behavioural and academic needs. Although standards are well below average, assessment and planning by the unit teacher, speech and language therapist and educational psychologist ensure pupils achieve well in relation to their ability and make satisfactory to good progress in lessons and over time. Reading is encouraged at home and this is achieved with very good relationships and communication with parents. Pupils receive maximum support each morning and are supported in lessons during the afternoon where they have full access to the curriculum. The co-ordinator and staff are very informed about all other pupils with special educational needs throughout the school and support them well. Each pupil is treated as an individual and targets for learning and behaviour are realistic and achievable. This ensures that pupils feel secure and confident. The environment is as safe as possible with appropriate resources to ensure full access to learning.

32 The school has no systematic system in place to seek pupils' views on a regular basis. Their views were sought prior to the inspection and most view all aspects of the school very favourably. There are advanced plans to introduce a school pupil council, giving pupils more chance to share their views with staff on a formal rather than informal basis.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has established good links with parents and the wider community and has satisfactory links with other schools in the area.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school actively involves the parents in the life of the school.
- The school is at the heart of the community.

Commentary

33 Parents are kept well informed of all school affairs through newsletters and subsequent correspondence. The pupils' annual academic report informs parents what their child has learned during the school year but does not provide them with sufficient information about areas for improvement. Parents support their children at home by listening to them read and supervising their homework. The Parent Teacher Association provides excellent support for the school through their social and fund raising events.

34 The partnership with parents of pupils with special educational needs is good. Parents value the school and think highly of the support given to their children. Parents speak highly of the Unit and the commitment of staff. They are happy with the very good support for their children and the way all pupils in the Unit make good progress in their level of confidence, independence and learning. The good links with other professionals and a sensitive introduction to the Unit ensures pupils settle well. The ethos of inclusion and the supportive atmosphere encourages pupils to take a full part in the life of the school. Parents are concerned about the future of the Unit and the next stage of education for their children. However there are good links and relationship with the middle schools. Parents are very involved in the process of statements and reviews where targets are realistic and achievable, these are shared with staff in order to maximise support in lessons. Records of achievement illustrate good examples of successful work and endeavour that are celebrated with certificates. The co-ordinator and staff work effectively with all parents of pupils with special educational needs to support each pupils' learning. There is comprehensive sharing of information about pupils' achievement and behaviour.

35 The school works closely with the local community. The school is the only non-residential building on the estate and is used for a variety of community functions. The pupils designed the special road signs for the estate. The school maintains satisfactory links with the other schools in the area through the various sporting events. There are links with the other Church of England Primary school through the joint worship.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are satisfactory. The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is satisfactory. The governance of the school and management are satisfactory. All statutory requirements are met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a strong sense of purpose and is keenly interested in pupils' academic, and personal development.
- Leadership of the curriculum and teaching by the headteacher are good and his enthusiasm is an example for all.
- A very strong commitment to equality of opportunity for all pupils, including all those with special needs exists. The management of special educational needs provision is good.
- The governors play an active role in developing the school.
- Management of the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory.
- The school has carried forward an unacceptably high proportion of its funding but it is being reduced year on year.

Commentary

36 In the previous inspection, the headteacher was described as an effective leader. He still has a positive effect on the way the school operates and is a very good role model. Parents are very appreciative of his leadership with virtually all saying that the school is well led in the questionnaire for parents. His relationship with parents is a major aid to pupils' learning. There is a genuine commitment to inclusion, equality of opportunity and concern for the needs of individual pupils.

37 Analysis of most aspects of the school's work is satisfactory and focuses well on appropriate priorities. The previous key issue about the role of subject co-ordinators, for example, has been fully addressed. Staff who are responsible for English and mathematics are effective in the work they do to monitor and evaluate standards and the quality of teaching in their subjects. However, insufficient time and effort has been allocated to improving pupils speaking skills, a problem identified in the previous inspection. The procedures that are carefully developed in consultation with all staff to monitor strengths and weaknesses in these subjects are being used as a model for all other subjects leaders when their subject is identified as a priority for improvement in the detailed school improvement plan. However, the gathering of information for some subjects such as history is in its infancy.

38 All teachers have analysed test results and prepared action plans to address gaps in teaching and learning. As a result, most pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. The inspection team believe that if the weak speaking and communication skills of many pupils were tackled better by teachers, it would help to raise standards generally as pupils improved their reading and writing and gained more confidence in expressing themselves. Another significant barrier to learning is the lack of a co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage. This has meant that weaknesses in the provision in the nursery have not been identified and this in turn has adversely affected children's progress in all areas of learning. Urgent steps need to be taken to improve the quality of teaching and learning in this class.

39 In the previous report, governors were taking an active role in managing the school. About half of the governors have been replaced during the past year. New and longer serving governors are equally determined to continue to play an active part in the life of the school and are fully

supportive of the headteacher and the staff. They have a great diversity of skills and challenge the school in what it plans to do to ensure that decisions benefit all users. They offer strong support to the headteacher and are becoming more involved in monitoring different aspects of the school. This is giving most a clear understanding of all aspects of the school's work. They expect teachers to encourage pupils to reach the highest standards possible but realise that their expectations must be reasonable. Individual governors take responsibility for different subject areas and some are responsible for overseeing the development of priorities in the School Improvement plan. Most visit the school on a regular basis in order to keep themselves up to date with developments. However, there is little documentary evidence to show the purpose of visits or to record identified strengths or areas for improvement.

40 School spending decisions relate closely to identified priorities for improvement. In the last full financial year for which accounts are available (2002/03) the school under spent by 16.6 per cent, which is well outside acceptable limits. The balance was reduced to a more acceptable eight per cent for last year and will reduce further in the current financial year. Funds were held over to support a programme of planned refurbishment for classrooms, the hall and headteacher's office as well as providing new furniture and upgrading security.

41 The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs by the co-ordinator (SENCO) is good. Together with the Headteacher, she successfully promotes a supportive, caring ethos in which individual pupils feel safe and valued. Pupils with special educational needs in classes and the Unit and are well supported. The management of the unit is effective and the quality of teaching is satisfactory. The small numbers of pupils helps to ensure that they feel confident and secure as they have individual attention. They respond well to the adults and try hard to complete their work. Some of the children from Travelling families attend the Unit when in the area. The co-ordinator is well organised and carefully maintains all records about individual pupils on the special educational needs register. The management of inclusion is good, ensuring equality of opportunity for all. There is satisfactory monitoring of special educational needs throughout in order to ensure progress.

42 All three key issues raised in the previous inspection have received much attention and are no longer issues for improvement. All relevant policies are in place and the role of coordinators is being carefully developed. The school improvement plan is well written and has a clear strategic view looking forward three years. Under the guidance of the experienced and enthusiastic headteacher, the school has maintained a satisfactory rate of improvement and is a fairly effective school. Taking account of the standards achieved, the satisfactory quality of teaching and learning, leadership and management of the school and with the above average costs per pupil, it is providing satisfactory value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	383,833
Total expenditure	373,035
Expenditure per pupil	3,108

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	52,921
Balance carried forward to the next	63,719

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory** overall.

43 In the reception class provision is good. In the nursery provision is unsatisfactory. By the end of reception standards are well below those normally seen for communication, language and literacy and mathematics; they are in line with those expected for personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development.

44 The nursery is open each morning and children start in the term of their third birthday so some spend up to five terms here. They transfer to the reception class in September in the academic year of their fifth birthday. Children in the reception class achieve well in all six areas because teaching is consistently good, and the curriculum is appropriately planned to provide a wide range of interesting and relevant activities, which are well matched to their needs. Planning takes good account of learning opportunities both indoors and outside. All adults set excellent role models for the children and manage them well. They work very well as a cohesive team, carefully monitoring all children's progress.

45 In the nursery the majority of children do not achieve as well as they should. This is due to unsatisfactory teaching overall. Organisation is poor, groups are too large and activities do not challenge or hold children's interest. Many activities last too long, so children lose interest. Planning for focused activities is beginning to develop, but self-initiated learning is not planned. This means that there are missed opportunities for children to develop responsibility for their own learning. Behaviour management is unsatisfactory and this impacts strongly on children's learning in all six areas. There are missed opportunities for children to engage in focused discussions with adults and other children because staff do not plan well enough for this very important aspect of the curriculum.

46 The accommodation for the Foundation Stage is good and outside facilities are inspiring for young children. This is because the school has invested well in improving outdoor provision, based on the imaginative planning by the nursery teacher. However, nursery staff do not consistently plan for learning outdoors, so children are not clear about what they should do and they soon become bored and misbehave.

47 There is no leader in the school for the Foundation Stage. Although staff look carefully at profile results, the analysis is not rigorous enough, nor is there a clear subsequent action plan to address weaknesses and drive up standards. For example, speaking and listening skills score very low for most children, yet the emphasis on developing the necessary skills is not strong enough. The reasons for the weak provision in the nursery have not been identified.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

48 It was not possible to make an overall judgement of provision or standards for children's **creative development**, but the work on display indicates that standards are below the expected level. Role-play was observed in both reception and nursery classes and children enjoy being a *mechanic* or being *at the vet's*. Art work is planned and children in the reception class mix paint and work from direct observation. Too little emphasis is given to creativity in the nursery. Children enjoy singing but there is limited use of instruments.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision in the nursery is unsatisfactory.

- Children achieve well in the reception class because of good teaching and high expectations set by staff.

Commentary

49 In the nursery staff do not have clear and consistent strategies in place to manage children's behaviour. This weakness impacts throughout their learning. Children are unclear about right and wrong. Staff give too much attention to children who behave inappropriately, so others copy. Although children enjoy coming to the nursery to meet with friends and have opportunities to make choices, activities do not inspire them enough because there is no clear learning outcome. Children therefore do not develop good concentration and generally lack motivation.

50 In the reception class, children have developed good concentration skills. The atmosphere is relaxed and purposeful. Children show great pride in their work and eagerly show their paintings to adults. They are well behaved because staff explain clearly and have a consistent approach. Teachers know children well and challenge them, for example, they make sure they learn to care for their environment by helping to tidy away at the end of sessions. They are supported well by parents who bring in clothing from different cultures to help children to develop awareness.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and support staff take every opportunity to develop the children's speaking and listening skills in the reception class.
- Strategies for teaching early literacy and communication skills in the nursery are not practical enough and do not match the way young children learn.

Commentary

51 Children make steady progress in their speaking and listening skills in the reception class. Nevertheless too little emphasis is given to speaking skills in the Foundation Stage. Staff plan well and offer children activities that captivate them. In one session the teacher brought a real go-cart for children to play with because the class were reading a story about this type of vehicle. Every child had the opportunity to talk about it, but the class was clearly reminded that their comments had to be in a clear sentence. Staff show genuine interest in what children have to say. This strategy also supports their early writing well. Children are beginning to record their ideas through drawings and paintings. Some are beginning to sound out letters, form them correctly and write words. Children are learning to read and recognise common words on sight. Some sound out unknown words and manage to read them accurately.

52 In the nursery some emphasis is given to early letter sounds, but activities focus on worksheets and do not inspire children enough. Few opportunities are planned for children to develop their language skills by engaging in conversations with adults. As a result, their speaking skills remain weak. Most children enjoy stories. They like to sit in the book area and browse. Parents are keen to take story sacks home to read with their children. Children enjoy stories such as 'Rosie's Walk'. They are beginning to predict what might happen next and talk about the pictures. However, when stories are read to them, group sizes are too big so children are distracted and misbehave.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The emphasis on mathematics in the nursery is weak.

- Reception staff make good use of the area outdoors to stimulate children.

Commentary

53 In the nursery children are beginning to identify shape from a description. However, groups are too large, so when a child mentions that a circle is like a wheel, staff do not challenge children's thinking any further because other children are losing interest. Children sing songs and rhymes and use fingers for counting backwards and forwards. The nursery environment pays very little attention to mathematics. There are no large numbers or shapes displayed so children have no opportunities to consolidate their learning.

54 Teaching and learning are good for reception class children because teachers plan a range of interesting activities to promote mathematical understanding. Children learn to count and recognise numbers beyond ten. More able children are well challenged to count forward from higher numbers. Children know what *more* means in terms of number and eagerly explain that *less* means '...when you eat one, there are not as many.' Good use is made of the area outside so that learning is fun. Children happily run to stand on different numbers painted on the schoolyard. Activities match children's stage of development so all make good progress. They learn to count objects and record the correct number. Activity sheets are well devised so they are clear and supportive. Children have well-planned baking sessions where they develop an understanding of measurement.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the nursery have regular access to computers.
- Children have regular opportunities to explore and investigate.
- Visitors enhance children's knowledge and understanding.

Commentary

55 In the nursery children use the computer each day. Many of them learn to use the mouse competently. Games are well chosen to enhance learning in other areas. Children explore and investigate as they play. In the nursery, staff encourage children to examine seeds through magnifying glasses. However, the activity is carried out with the entire group so there are missed opportunities for scientific discussion about children's observations. In the reception class, children play with tubes and bubbles in water and find out how to make water move slowly and quickly. Children design and make sock puppets and hats, for example. They talk about improvements they might make to their work. The area outdoors is well developed with a wooded area where children can enjoy a natural environment. Nursery children examine what happens to grass when it is covered with black polythene bags. Reception children benefit from visitors. Parents come to the school to share their working experiences with the children. They find out what it is like to be a police officer or a digger driver.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers make the most of the accommodation outside.
- Behaviour management is unsatisfactory for nursery children, resulting in lost opportunities for learning.

Commentary

56 The area outdoors is easily accessible to nursery children, but less so for reception children. The resources and equipment are of good quality. Reception staff use afternoon sessions to ensure children have good access to what is available. All children learn to control and co-ordinate their body when using tricycles and wheeled apparatus. Reception children are taught skills in a systematic way and achieve steadily. In the hall, nursery children were responding to music, but because staff did not manage behaviour well enough, children did not listen to instructions so they did not achieve as well as they could. The time observed when nursery children were engaged in outdoor play lacked focus, and was really a session for children to let off steam, and this limited further learning. Children develop their manipulative skills by handling dough, scissors and brushes, and learn to handle small construction equipment with dexterity. They handle large construction equipment outdoors to enhance their physical development.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils achieve well in the junior classes because of the consistently good quality of teaching. However, standards remain below average.
- Standards are well below average by the end of Year 2.
- Pupils with learning difficulties achieve well.
- Pupils' weak speaking and listening skills are holding back many.
- Written work is often untidy and many find difficulty with spellings.
- The assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is good.

Commentary

57 Standards are well below average when compared to national levels of attainment in Year 2 and below those expected in Year 4 in reading, writing and speaking and listening. Individual teachers try to address the very poor communication skills of many pupils when they enter the school but there is no sustained whole-school planning or provision to ensure pupils' accelerated progress in this key area. It is difficult to make meaningful comparisons with the standards achieved in the previous inspection as smaller numbers are tested and a high proportion of these have special educational needs. This has caused the trend for improvement in all core subjects to be below the national trend.

58 The school's results in the tests for seven-year-olds are well below average in reading and writing. When compared to similar schools, their performance is very low, being in the bottom five per cent nationally in reading and well below average in writing. Boys in particular do a lot worse than girls and markedly less well than boys nationally. However, it is mainly boys who are in the Unit and on the register for those with special educational needs. In the current Year 2, for example, out of 13 pupils, four are on the special educational needs register which is about a third. This drastically reduces the overall performance figures for the school.

59 Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons and school records show all make good progress. Excluding those pupils with special educational needs, most pupils achieve well in reading by Year 2. They take pride in being able to read increasingly difficult books and practise often at home with their parents. In writing, they make good progress in using correct punctuation and spelling. Most were able to identify direct speech and other punctuation marks in the story of The Enormous Turnip. However, their handwriting is often untidy, and letters poorly formed. The school has recently adopted a handwriting scheme in order to address this area. It is too early to assess any improvement. Assessment of pupils' language skills show that they are not doing as well as most children of their age in speaking and communicating. This weakness persists

from the nursery and it hampers their writing because the quality of their language and range of vocabulary are more limited than usual. In the infant classes it is usually the teacher who does most of the talking. Pupils are often allowed to simply give one word answers.

60 In the junior classes, the weakness in pupils' communication skills shows through during class discussions or when adults question them. At these times, many are confident but not articulate. Average and higher attainers have a broader range of vocabulary but sometimes even they find it hard to phrase a precise enough answer or to give a clear explanation of what they mean. In both the infant and juniors, teachers have concentrated on helping pupils to explain themselves through developing better factual writing. For example, they record the results of science experiments or write historical accounts. More needs to be done to help pupils of all ages to experiment with a wider and more adventurous range of vocabulary in their speech and imaginative writing.

61 Teachers in the junior classes use their good knowledge of national strategies to ensure that skills are taught to pupils in a systematic way. They share objectives with pupils so all are clear about what they are going to learn and what is expected of them. As a result, pupils make good gains in their knowledge and most develop their literacy skills well. In Year 4, a very good lesson was observed with the teacher actively promoting discussion and encouraging pupils to use interesting descriptions when writing poetry. The teacher in this class challenges all pupils, consequently, they have a good work ethic and see a clear sense of purpose in all they do.

62 The school gives good emphasis to reading and most classes allocate time each day for pupils to read for pleasure. Parental support for reading at home is significant and this is undoubtedly helping pupils of all ages to make progress. The library is well stocked and often used by pupils.

63 In Years 3 and 4 where teaching is consistently good, there is a good balance between teacher input and pupil discussion. This means that everyone gets the chance to talk through their ideas with a partner and share them with the whole class. This has a very positive effect on the quality of pupils' writing because through speaking their ideas audibly, they learn to use expressive vocabulary and alter their sentences and phrases before writing them down. For example, in the Year 4 lesson, after reading the story of 'The Fallen Elephant' boys gave graphic descriptions of maggots and dripping blood...*'like a river of red tears'* and *'I saw maggots sucking greedily on the ribs and oozing guts, rotting on the ground and covered in a cloud of flies'*. With boys outnumbering girls two to one in this class, the teacher successfully found a theme which captured boys' imagination and interest. As a result, all concentrated exceptionally well and were ready for their milk and biscuits at the end of the lesson.

64 In the previous inspection, the co-ordinator's role was under-developed. Much has changed and the experienced and knowledgeable coordinator is quite clear about the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. Good assessment procedures have been developed, giving a clear indication of pupils' progress as they move through the school. Opportunities to monitor teaching and learning have been introduced and a new handwriting scheme developed for the school. All staff regularly analyse the quality of pupils' work, looking for areas which can be further improved. However, a whole-school approach is needed to ensure that all pupils quickly gain confidence and improve their communication skills when writing or speaking.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

65 Teachers are good at using other areas of the curriculum for pupils to practise and consolidate the skills they learn in their literacy lessons. Pupils' reading skills support their work in other subjects such as history when researching information in books or on the computer. Pupils have ample opportunities to write from scratch, using technical language in lessons such as history, geography and science. Other areas of English are not developed as profitably. There is, for example, too little use of drama or role-play to develop communication skills or to stimulate lively writing.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement in mathematics is good for most pupils.
- Teaching is particularly good in junior classes.
- Good use is made of classroom assistants.
- Subject leadership is satisfactory but the monitoring of teaching and learning is in its infancy.

Commentary

66 The school does well for most pupils in mathematics. Pupils in Year 2 achieve well in relation to their prior attainment but their overall performance is adversely affected by the proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Test results show that pupil performance is well below average compared to all schools and also well below compared to similar schools. Pupils of above average ability do not achieve as well as they could. This is because infant teachers do not always use what they know about pupils to challenge those who are more able. By the end of Year 2, most pupils understand place value to 100. They identify halves in number, understand odd and even and begin to multiply and divide. Pupils in junior classes make good progress and achieve well. In Year 4 pupils increase the number of strategies they use to add and subtract numbers up to 1000 and most are in line with national expectations. However, when pupils with special educational needs are taken into account, overall standards are below those expected for this age of pupil.

67 Since the last inspection the school has adopted national strategies for teaching mathematics and these support teaching and learning well. The commercial scheme used by the school supports teaching and ensures that all strands are fully covered. It also provides a useful basis for assessment. Marking is consistent. Some teachers indicate to pupils how they can improve and this accelerates their learning. Work in books shows that pupils have many chances to practise and improve their number skills. In junior classes, in particular, teachers work hard to ensure that all pupils are well challenged. Lessons are carefully planned with very clear learning objectives, therefore pupils remain well focused on what they are supposed to be learning. Teaching strengths include:

- Activities, such as 'birthday present money', which capture pupils' interest and enthusiasm and make them enjoy the challenge of counting large amounts of money.
- An active and physical approach when learning whole, half and quarter turns to secure pupils' understanding.
- Very good subject knowledge, for example, the same concept being illustrated in several ways so all pupils improve their understanding.
- A very good selection of activities to ensure all pupils' specific learning needs are addressed.
- Many opportunities for pupils to discuss different methods of calculation.
- Clear explanations to ensure all pupils understand how to complete the task successfully.
- Questions to pupils of all abilities to make sure they fully understand the new concepts being taught.

68 In all lessons seen, support staff make a good contribution to pupils' learning. They work alongside pupils who have special educational needs as well as individuals and small groups, explaining again what the teacher is saying in simpler terms. They repeat difficult concepts to help individuals understand; they praise and encourage each pupil, helping to raise self-esteem and confidence. They are part of the effective teaching team and are briefed well to support teaching and learning.

69 The subject leader analyses test results and considers strengths and areas for development. The school is beginning to look at different ways of monitoring teaching and learning, and a timetable and action plan have been devised.

Mathematics across the curriculum

70 The school makes satisfactory links between different areas of the curriculum and pupils sometimes use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects. For example, they use graphs and tables to record data in science. They link points of the compass with mapping skills in geography. Pupils in Year 2 sew patterns following a logical process. These activities ensure pupils develop an appreciation of mathematics and the way it can be used to improve their understanding.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a good attitude towards the subject and enjoy doing experiments and investigations.
- All pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
- Good use is made of teaching assistants and other support staff.
- The accommodation is good and there are plenty of resources.
- More use could be made of computers to support learning.

Commentary

71 Although only one science lesson was seen, there was a wealth of evidence from national test results, pupils' completed work, science displays in classrooms and teachers' detailed planning files to make secure judgements about standards and the quality of teaching and learning. Standards in Year 2 and Year 4 were above average in the previous inspection. However, pupils in the Unit were not included and they are in the latest test figures. When all the pupils with special educational needs are taken into account, overall standards for this year are well below average in Year 2 and below average in Year 4. School tracking of individual pupils' progress shows that all, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. In Year 2, when pupils on the special educational needs register are excluded, every pupil is set to achieve the standards expected with about a third achieving at the higher Level 3. In the teacher assessments for Year 2 in 2003, no pupils achieved the higher Level 3 and only half achieved the expected level. There is no significant difference in the performance of girls and boys in science.

72 The emphasis on a practical approach in all classes offers pupils a wide range of well-planned learning opportunities as they conduct experiments or investigations themselves. In the good Year 3 lesson seen, pupils enjoyed examining the various materials which items on the three bicycles were made from and listing them under the correct heading on their worksheet. All worked sensibly in small groups. The teacher constantly challenged them to explain why certain materials had been used for different purposes. This was a good example of a teacher actively promoting pupils' speaking skills, which generally are still weak for this age group. Often pupils have to draw on skills from other subjects. In Year 2, pupils had to measure the amount of growth for their plants and Year 3 used design skills when creating sandwiches. Mathematical skills and a knowledge of computer programmes were needed as pupils in Year 4 entered data and produced graphs to show the length of a shadow at different times of the day and compared the length of adults' and children's forearms.

73 The scrutiny of work showed that all aspects of the curriculum are covered in some depth and that pupils in all classes have lots of opportunity to conduct experiments or investigations for themselves. There were records of pupils' attempts to separate materials, for example, and investigations involving exercise and heart rate, electrical circuits and friction. All pupils cover topics on health and growth and on growing plants. Most have a good understanding of fair testing. However, the neatness of many pupils' work needs improving and there was little evidence of computers being used to support pupils learning.

74 Teachers make good use of the extra adults in the classroom to ensure that groups are helped well. The support available for pupils with special educational needs is good and as a result, these pupils are able to work alongside other pupils and complete the work expected of them. Teachers' planning is good. It ensures that lessons are interesting, enjoyable and usually challenging for pupils of all levels of ability. As a result, by Year 4, pupils have achieved well in relation to their prior attainment at Year 2. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. The class teachers maintain detailed records of each pupil's attainment and progress as they move through the school and these show clearly the gains that each pupil makes.

75 Subject management is satisfactory. The headteacher and co-ordinator take joint responsibility for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning each term and this is undertaken in depth whenever science is identified as a priority for improvement. However, records of monitoring visits are not sufficiently detailed and do not clearly highlight areas for further improvement. The accommodation is good with the pond area being used well for scientific investigations. Resources for science are also good, enabling all pupils to have access to sufficient magnets, electrical and other scientific equipment.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a satisfactory range of computers and they are used well to support pupils' learning in most subjects.
- The co-ordinator teaches discrete lessons to every pupil each week and this helps to develop pupils' computer skills.

76 No lessons were observed during the week of the inspection. Display work illustrates pupils' use of a variety of fonts, style and colour to illustrate their topic work. They are achieving a satisfactory to good range of skills to put together print and pictures. Pupils work in pairs for discrete lessons, which are supported well by teaching assistants. The subject advisor gives good support to the co-ordinator to plan appropriate work for each class each half term. This supports class topic work appropriately. For example, pupils in Year 1 use simple grid work to illustrate house numbers and pupils in Year 2 complete graphs of their favourite fruits. Pupils in Year 3 study the local area using a digital camera with a Power Point presentation and pupils in Year 4 illustrate repeat patterns for art and design work.

77 Resources are improving with access to a computer in each class and use of interactive boards for older pupils. Appropriate software is beginning to help in topic work. A small group of pupils discuss, plan and design aspects of school life for the web site. The co-ordinator supports teachers and there is training for teaching assistants.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

78 The school makes satisfactory use of ICT across all areas of the curriculum. Pupils in Year 4 are encouraged to work independently to estimate the sizes of angles; they enjoy recording and printing their scores in games sessions. Pupils who require more support develop the concept of clockwise and anticlockwise by programming a robot to change position.

HUMANITIES

79 Only one **Geography** lesson was seen and so an overall judgement about the quality of provision is not possible. Evidence was gathered by looking at displays and pupils' books and by talking with them about their work. The amount of work available for analysis was limited as most classes were focusing on history topics. In the one lesson seen in Year 3, standards were at the expected level. All the pupils enjoyed examining aerial photographs of Berwick-upon-Tweed and the surrounding area, recognising human and physical features. Studies in geography are well

supported by skills from other subject areas, such as history, mathematics and literacy. Work includes a range of diagrams and illustrations to help improve pupils' knowledge and understanding. Pupils' design skills were tested in Year 3 as they drew a map or plan to show their route to school in detail. In Year 2, there are good links between geography and history as pupils learn about the Roman invasion of Britain and map routes and settlements. A discussion comparing farms in Kenya and England successfully helps pupils in Year 4 to use correct terminology when talking about the effect of climate, different modes of transport and lifestyles with those of Britain.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- History has a high profile in the school with a well-planned range of interesting topics for pupils to study.
- The subject benefits from links with other subjects.
- The quality of most pupils' written work needs to be improved.

Commentary

80 Standards in history are at the expected level in Year 2 and in Year 4 with pupils of all ages and abilities achieving satisfactorily in the subject. These judgements were made possible by the amount of work produced by pupils and the detail in teachers' planning. In the only lesson seen in Year 2, the curator of the Grace Darling Museum fascinated pupils with the story of the famous rescue from the Big Harcar rock in 1838. All managed to join in the chorus as the Curator ended a very interesting session with a song about Grace. Pupils demonstrated a good local knowledge and an appreciation of life in Victorian times when questioned by their teacher. However, opportunities to further develop pupils' weak speaking skills were missed when most simply gave one word answers and were not asked to explain further or add more information.

81 The subject has a high profile in the school and it is clear from discussions with pupils that they enjoy their work. However, the quality of pupils' written work is often below the standard expected. A recently introduced handwriting scheme has not yet had time to help improve matters. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about the Romans and the Ancient Greeks and clearly remember the work they did for their topics on these historical periods. Teaching is satisfactory. Pupils are given plenty of chances to engage in their own research on aspects of the topic they choose. Teachers plan a good range of visits and visitors come to the school to enhance historical knowledge. Pupils have visited local historical sites and travelled to see the Viking settlement, Jorvik Museum in York and a museum in Newcastle.

82 A good feature of the subject is that the topics planned by teachers develop pupils' skills and knowledge in subjects such as geography, mathematics, English and art and design. For example, pupils in Year 2 drew plans of a lighthouse and labelled the various rooms. The topic about the Greeks involved locating the country and appreciating its landscape and climate. Maps of Roman roads in England and accounts of the Roman invasion mean that pupils have opportunities to practise many skills at the same time as they widen their historical knowledge and understanding.

83 Management of the subject is satisfactory overall. The very experienced co-ordinator has been responsible for the subject for the past 10 years and regularly evaluates the quality of provision by looking at other teachers' planning and sampling completed topic work. Schemes of work covering all year groups have been successfully developed with the latest national guidance for history having been adopted by the school. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Pupils' progress and attainment is assessed at the end of each topic. Work is being undertaken to make assessment procedures more consistent from class to class with a view to clearly showing the progress individual pupils make as they move through the school.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good emphasis is given to Christianity.
- Pupils are encouraged to apply religious ideals to their every-day lives.
- The teaching of other faiths is limited in the infant classes.

Commentary

84 Standards of attainment seen during the inspection remain in line with expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus, as they were at the time of the previous inspection. Only two lessons were observed and as a lot of work covered in religious education lessons centres around discussions, there was limited written work to examine. However, an analysis of the available work and discussions with pupils indicate that pupils' achievement is sound throughout the school. Pupils illustrate their work well and learn about major events in the life of Jesus, such as the time when he fed five thousand people, when he was born and when he died.

85 In lessons seen, teaching was satisfactory and pupils are gaining a sound understanding of Christianity. They are encouraged to discuss Christian principles and to apply these ideas to their own life. They know many parables that Jesus told, including *The Good Samaritan* and clearly understand how to show care for others. Infant pupils discuss the importance of belonging to a community and the impact this has in terms of friendship and care. Older pupils develop their ideas and talk about the specific qualities needed for true friendship.

86 From work seen, it is evident that pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn much about world faiths. Pupils in Year 3 study some events in the Jewish faith such as Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year and through this they learn to *forgive and forget*. They also learn about Hinduism and some Hindu gods when studying a topic on India. In Year 4 pupils find out about Islam and the importance of the prayer mat and Mecca. The subject leader is aware that in infant classes, there is not enough emphasis given to faiths other than Christianity so pupils are less well prepared for the multi-cultural and multi-faith society in which we live.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

87 In art and design, design and technology and music, insufficient lessons were seen to enable overall judgements to be made about the quality of provision or standards.

88 **Art and design** was sampled by looking at displays and talking to pupils in the two lessons observed. Pupils say they enjoy art and design. The subject is used well to improve pupils' geographical and historical understanding. For example, pupils in Year 3 were taken on a visit in the locality to draw parts of Victorian houses. A local artist also accompanied pupils and showed them examples of her sketches of local buildings. Pupils benefit greatly from the excellent role model and tried hard to use their pencils to create depth in their sketches. Pupils in Year 4 are influenced by African art and design different patterns for batik and tie-dye work.

89 **Design and technology** was sampled by looking at displays, pupils' work and talking with pupils. In Years 1 and 2 pupils learn several different ways of making hinges. Displays show they use folded cards, tape, wool and string. There are good links between design and technology and mathematics. Pupils sew logical patterns with thread onto *binca*. They learn how to use needles and fasten thread correctly. The subject is linked with science during the 'pushes and pulls' topic. Pupils make pop-up Easter cards and cards where Santa's hat can be pushed up. In Year 4 there are good links with history. Pupils design and make Greek warrior helmets and masks depicting the way Greeks looked. Pupils in Year 3 make sauce for pasta. They learn how to follow recipes step by step so that the end product is good to eat.

90 No **music** lessons were observed during the week of the inspection. Evidence shows that pupils experience a variety of music during each year such as the Travelling Theatre Company, a steel drum workshop and productions with the local theatre and arts centre. They perform in church and enjoy family festivals, assemblies and visiting musicians. This contributes well to personal and social education.

91 A visiting teacher of keyboard skills has very recently commenced teaching fifteen pupils a week in small groups. Pupils enjoy the sessions and are learning the notes of the keyboard. A supply teacher takes six Year 4 pupils for recorder practice once a week. Pupils enjoy and are very confident when accompanying the daily assembly hymns. Both adults and pupils sing in the school choir and practise during lunchtime. They take part in regular church services with a neighbouring school. Visiting musicians involve pupils in singing, playing and performing together, while regular workshops encourage pupils to listen to a variety of music such as popular and more classical tunes played by the Northumberland teachers' orchestra. Pupils in Year 4 took part in African drumming by the Black Friday Band which supported their topic work on Kenya. Pupils link with other schools to perform for families and friends at the local theatre and arts centre. Recently, every class took part in contributing to and producing a compact disc that was recorded in school.

Physical Education

The provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above those normally seen in Year 4.
- Pupils benefit from a good range of sporting activities during and after school.
- The accommodation, both indoors and outdoors, is good.
- Resources for the subject are good.
- The quality of teaching for Year 4 is very good.
- Teachers' planning does not always set out clearly the skills to be learnt in each lesson.

Commentary

92 The headteacher's involvement and enthusiasm for coaching sports and games successfully motivate pupils. The subject has a high profile in school and is a popular subject for pupils. There was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on standards or the quality of teaching in Year 2 as only one lesson was seen but by Year 4, standards in the three lessons seen are above average with most pupils achieving well. This is due to a steady improvement over time and the teaching expertise of the Year 4 teacher. In a very good games lesson, the teacher constantly challenged pupils and demonstrated very good subject knowledge in the way she successfully warmed up all pupils and taught fielding skills in preparation for the game of rounders. All pupils were very competitive and showed above average levels of skill when throwing and catching.

93 The provision for swimming is good, as all pupils in Years 2 to 4 have swimming sessions in each of the three terms. This ensures that all have time to gain the required standards. The school reports that all pupils attain the expected level of competence before they leave in Year 4.

94 The overall quality of teaching in the junior classes is good. An analysis of teachers' planning shows that the school provides a good range of activities. There is a detailed scheme of work, which closely follows the latest national guidance. It ensures that pupils have sufficient opportunities for all aspects of the subject, including dance, which was found to be a weakness previously. The range and quality of extra-curricular sporting activities are good for such a small school. All junior pupils have the chance to represent the school in competitive events such as netball and cricket matches or take part in games sessions after school. Only one games lesson was seen, involving pupils in an infant class doing a 'mini-Olympics' team games. Although it was an enjoyable session, it was not clear from the teacher's planning what skills the pupils were expected to learn. Boys and girls were equally enthusiastic and worked well together.

95 The subject co-ordinator has brought about a satisfactory level of improvement to aspects such as teachers' planning and assessment since the previous inspection. Pupils' attainment and progress are assessed carefully at the end of each year with satisfactory procedures. However, procedures to monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning are currently still at the development stage. The sound monitoring model introduced for English is to be used when the subject features as a focus for improvement in the school improvement plan. Space indoors is good and pupils regularly make good use of the well-equipped hall. The playground space is also good with plenty of room for two or more classes.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHCE)

96 The previous inspection reported that the ethos of the school reflected a community with a purpose where the pupils knew that they were valued. Although only one lesson of **PSHCE** was seen, there was much documentary evidence and evidence from pupils' conduct and their relationships with staff and other pupils to show that this is still the case today.

97 Pupils listen attentively in school assemblies and these make a significant contribution to the provision for pupils' PSHCE. In one, the individual letters spelling 'citizenship' were turned over to spell 'considerate', just one of the definitions suggested by pupils trying to define what being a good citizen means. Teachers and all staff are good role models for pupils and the very close and caring relationship pupils of all ages have with their teachers gives them the confidence to contribute. There was a particularly good attendance at the family assembly, showing parents' willing involvement in the life of the school. All pupils knew the story of *The Good Samaritan* and listened well to a modern equivalent, understanding that when someone is in trouble, it is best to try and help them. Another assembly helped pupils to appreciate the importance of water to us and the difficulties some villagers in parts of Africa have to get enough for their needs.

98 In a mixed Years 2 and 3 class, pupils were engrossed in an exercise to match descriptions of different children with corresponding pictures. This effectively encouraged pupils' thinking about other people, helping them to be more aware of people's characteristics and their personalities. The teacher, in this lesson, successfully promoted pupils' speaking and listening skills, which are still a weakness for many.

99 During the year, pupils have satisfactory opportunities to develop an understanding of different world faiths and to appreciate the customs associated with other religions. The overall quality of provision is enhanced by the good attitudes of pupils and the close and trusting relationships they enjoy with all staff. In the pupil questionnaire, for example, all pupils under six and 98 per cent of those over seven agreed that they had an adult to go to in school if they were worried.

100 The provision for PSHCE is becoming an increasingly more important aspect in school. The policy document is detailed and a careful record of visits reflects the school's commitment to broaden pupils' educational experiences. Policies for pupils' sex education and relationships and for drugs education are detailed and helpful for teachers when they plan their lessons. Plans are well advanced to form a school council and every opportunity is taken to give pupils a sense of responsibility by allocating jobs and giving them plenty of opportunities to work independently of their teachers in small groups. As a result, there is a good atmosphere for learning in most lessons.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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