

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **APPLETREE GARDENS FIRST SCHOOL**

Whitley Bay

LEA area: North Tyneside

Unique reference number: 108584

Headteacher: Mrs J L Brown

Lead inspector: Mrs M Fitzpatrick

Dates of inspection: 15 – 17 November 2004

Inspection number: 266313

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: First school  
School category: Community  
Age range of pupils: 3 - 9  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 298

School address: Appletree Gardens  
Monkseaton  
Whitley Bay  
Tyne and Wear  
Postcode: NE25 8XS

Telephone number: 0191 252 3546  
Fax number: 0191 200 8814

Appropriate authority: Governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Reverend James Robertson

Date of previous inspection: 7 June 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Appletree Gardens is a large First School with 298 pupils aged three to nine years. The school serves a large housing estate on the outskirts of Whitley Bay, though almost 40 per cent of its pupils come from outside the area. The school has a broadly average socio-economic intake and the percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is about the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is slightly above average. This is more marked in some year groups than in others, which causes the school's performance in national tests to vary significantly in some years. Pupils' special educational needs are mainly in speech and language and literacy. The attainment of children when they join the school in the Nursery is below what is usually found in children of this age. The school community has changed in recent

years, with a higher than average percentage of pupils who have English as an additional language joining the school since the last inspection. This has led to a more culturally diverse community in the school, which it welcomes as a way of extending pupils' understanding of the society in which they live. Most pupils remain in the school and the turn over of pupils is small. The school works hard to support the community by running Family Learning courses and offering facilities for Mother and Toddler and Child Minders' groups. It also provides a Breakfast and After School Club, both of which are well attended. In recent years the school has won a number of School Achievement Awards, as well as the Tidy School Award, the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the Healthy Schools Award.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
24326	Mrs M Fitzpatrick	Lead inspector	English Art and design History English as an additional language
13450	Mrs J Madden	Lay inspector	
12394	Mrs C May	Team inspector	Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage Design and technology Music Religious education
32283	Mr D Goodchild	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Special educational needs
30439	Mr M Heyes	Team inspector	Science Geography Physical education

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a happy, welcoming school whose effectiveness is **satisfactory**. Standards are **above average** at the end of Year 2 in English and mathematics; in Year 4 standards are average overall. The quality of educational provision is **satisfactory**, leading to **satisfactory** achievement overall for pupils. Leadership and management are **satisfactory** and the headteacher ensures that the school makes **good** provision for pupils' personal development through the good ethos it creates. The school serves its community well and gives **satisfactory** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are above average in English and mathematics in Year 2 and pupils' achievement is good.
- Very good behaviour, very good relationships and good attitudes create a positive climate for learning.
- The headteacher has a strong commitment to high standards of pastoral care for pupils, which are excellent, and to close partnership with parents.
- There is good provision in the Foundation Stage and children have a good start to their learning; however provision for outdoor learning in the Reception classes is unsatisfactory because there is not a dedicated outdoor learning area.
- The under-developed role of subject co-ordinators does not make best use of their skill and expertise, and is limiting the school's ability to improve at a good rate.
- The quality of teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. The school has devised good procedures for assessment in English and mathematics, but teachers' use of assessment reduces the rate at which some pupils progress, especially in Years 3 and 4.
- The organisation and management of provision for pupils with special educational needs do not make the most effective use of staff expertise to ensure that pupils make consistent progress.
- The school has health and safety issues to resolve.

The school has made satisfactory progress since its last inspection. Most of the issues identified then have been fully addressed. Standards for boys have been raised; provision and standards in information and communication technology have improved; pupils' behaviour is now very good in all areas of the school; lesson timings have been improved and new toilets have been fitted. Information to parents, including that concerning the absence of teachers, has improved and is now good. While there have been some improvements to the role of subject co-ordinators this still needs further development. Currently, their good expertise and commitment are not being fully used to help the school improve at a good rate.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
reading	B	E	C	B
writing	C	E	B	A

mathematics	B	D	B	A
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*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average  
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Pupils' achievement is **satisfactory** overall. The results in the 2004 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 2 mark a significant improvement on the previous year when results were very low, due to the very high percentage of pupils in the year group who had special educational needs. In the 2004 tests, the performance of pupils at the higher level was significantly better than the previous year. In English, this was above the national average and in mathematics it was well above the national average, with almost fifty per cent of the year group reaching level 3. Boys' performance in the tests was better than girls in mathematics and about the same in reading and writing. Since the last inspection the school's overall trend of improvement in the tests has been below the national trend but this is attributable to the very low performance in 2003. Pupils now in Year 2, reach standards that are above the expectation for seven year olds in English, mathematics and art and design and their achievement in these is good. Pupils in Year 4 exceed the expectation for their age in art and design. In mathematics, science and all other subjects inspected, except English, they reach the expected level. In English, standards are well below what is expected of pupils who are nine, but this is because there are so many pupils in this year group with special educational needs in literacy. Children achieve well during their time in the Foundation Stage and they are on course to meet the goals set for them in all six areas of learning by the end of the Reception year.

Pupils have **good** attitudes to learning; their behaviour is **very good**. The school makes **good** provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development which supports **good** personal development.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**.

Teaching is good overall in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 and 4 it is satisfactory. Strengths of teaching in all classes across the school include well paced teaching in mathematics lessons, very good behaviour management and good use of time and resources. Areas for development are in teachers' use of assessment to plan tasks which closely match the needs of all pupils, and more effective use of the teaching assistants' skills in some classes. Pupils' learning is best when they have practical activities to reinforce their learning as in science, art and design and mathematics lessons.

The curriculum is satisfactory and provision for extra-curricular activities is good. Teachers make links between subjects to allow pupils to use their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. The school's links with the community are good and the Family Learning Programme run by the school is well supported by parents and children. The school's care for pupils is good overall, and there is satisfactory support for their learning through the monitoring and guidance they receive. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management in the school are **satisfactory** overall. Subject co-ordinators have not all had the opportunity to monitor the work of the school rigorously enough and



this limits the input they have to improving the school. Governance of the school is satisfactory, but there is an health and safety issue which governors are currently addressing in order to fully meet statutory requirements.

### **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents hold the school in high esteem and are very pleased with the care it provides for their children. They value the close partnership that the school has with them to help them support their children's learning. Pupils are proud of their school and feel safe and happy there. They enjoy the opportunities they have to make suggestions for improvements to the school through the school council.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Extend the role of subject co-ordinators so that they rigorously monitor all aspects of provision in their subjects and ensure that they have time away from the classroom to carry out these duties.\*
- Improve the organisation and management responsibilities for the provision for special educational needs so the expertise of all staff is used in the best way to raise the achievement of pupils with special educational needs.
- Improve teachers use of assessment when planning work for different groups in their classes.\*
- Improve provision for outdoor learning for children in the Reception classes.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that those matters relating to health and safety which have been brought to the attention of governors are dealt with promptly.

\* The school has identified these areas for improvement in its current development plan.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are **above the expected level** for seven year olds in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' achievement is **satisfactory** overall.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good in Years 1 and 2.
- Children in the Foundation Stage make a good start to their learning and their achievement is good overall.
- Standards in art and design are above the expectation for age in Year 2 and Year 4.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well when they are taught by the special needs teacher.
- Pupils in Year 4 achieve well below the expected level in English, but in mathematics where their achievement is good, they reach the expected level for their age.

#### Commentary

1. Children join the Foundation Stage with attainment that is below the expected level for their age. They are well taught and cared for so that they achieve well in all areas of learning, except physical development, and by the time they leave the Reception class almost all children have achieved the goals set for their learning and their attainment is at the expected level for their age.

#### ***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004***

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.6 (14.7)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.3 (13.4)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.0 (15.6)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 46 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. Results in the 2004 National Curriculum tests in 2004 for Year 2 pupils were in line with the national average in reading, and above the national average in writing and mathematics. Compared with the results of schools in the same free school meals bracket, these results were above them in reading, and well above them in writing and mathematics. Since the last inspection, standards for average and higher attaining boys have risen well in English and mathematics. In the national tests in 2004, boys performed better than girls in mathematics and about the same as girls in English. Pupils now in Year 2 exceed the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics because they are very well taught in these subjects and they bring high levels of enthusiasm to their learning. Standards for average and higher attaining boys are being sustained and there was no difference between the attainment of these groups of boys and similar groups of girls in the work done so far this term. Standards for lower attaining boys and those with special educational needs have not

improved significantly since the last inspection. In science, they reach the expected level for their age because they are given very good opportunities to learn through practical investigations which allow pupils of all abilities to learn well.

3. Pupils currently in Year 4 do not reach the expected level in their reading or writing mainly because this year group contains a very high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in literacy. Another reason for their lower standards is that teachers' planning in these classes does not take enough account of the needs of all pupils when setting tasks. In mathematics, pupils achieve well because they are placed in classes according to their ability, the work set provides good levels of challenge and they work at a better rate than in English lessons. Because of this their achievement in the subject is good and they have improved from below average standards when they were seven to reaching the expected level for their age. Standards in science for pupils in Year 4 are in line with the expectation for their age and their achievement in the subject is satisfactory. Pupils benefit from learning through investigation and from using computers to consolidate their understanding of their findings. Pupils in Year 3 reach the expected standard in English and mathematics and many exceed the expected standard in these subjects.
4. Pupils in Year 2 and in Year 4, meet the standards expected by the local education authority's agreed syllabus for religious education. Pupils have a sound understanding of major world faiths and enjoy the opportunities to learn about different cultural practices that are provided by the subject. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with the expectation for pupils aged seven and nine. Because of improvements to teaching in the subject, and much improved resources, pupils achieve well and use computers confidently for a number of subjects which extends their learning. In all other subjects inspected – history, geography, physical education, design and technology and music – pupils reach the expected level for their age and their achievement is satisfactory. In art and design pupils exceed the expectation for their age and achieve well, because the skills are systematically taught and developed throughout the school and pupils have a wide range of opportunities to explore different techniques.
5. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well when they work with the special needs support teacher on programmes to improve their literacy skills and they meet the targets that are set for them. In Years 1 and 2, pupils with special educational needs are well supported by the tasks that teachers set which enable them to make small but secure steps in their learning, which sustains their good achievement. Older pupils in Years 3 and 4 do not consistently make the same good progress in class, because they are not always supported by an adult and the tasks set do not link to those they do at other times with the special needs teacher. Overall, the achievement of these pupils is satisfactory. Pupils who have English as an additional language are well supported by the specialist teacher to learn alongside their peers. Teachers, and pupils of similar ability, also provide support for these pupils so that their achievement is similar to others in the class. Test results show that the performance of pupils who have English as an additional language matches the targets set for them.
6. The school uses regular assessments of pupils' learning to set targets for them for the end of the school year. In most cases these targets are met and in some cases they

are exceeded. However, the targets set for lower attaining pupils and those who have special educational needs could be more ambitious if the school's provision for special educational needs was used more effectively.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

There is **good** development of pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities by the school. Behaviour is **very good**; pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and attitudes are **good**. Attendance and punctuality are **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There have been considerable improvements in pupils' behaviour since the last inspection and it is now very good in all areas of school life.
- Pupils' good attitudes to the school and all it offers support their learning and personal development.
- The school has effective procedures for monitoring attendance and is especially vigilant in tracking those few pupils whose attendance and punctuality is unsatisfactory.
- The school enables pupils to become increasingly socially and culturally aware as they get older and move through the school.

### **Commentary**

7. The very good behaviour of pupils stems from the clear expectations of all staff and their very good classroom management skills. In the playground the atmosphere is happy and relaxed and pupils move around the school calmly and purposefully, including those times when they are not supervised by staff. In classrooms, pupils respond in particular to those lessons that have good pace and challenge so that they have neither the time nor inclination to misbehave. There have been no exclusions from the school in the last twelve months.
8. Pupils enjoy learning and want to succeed, they concentrate well and most take a pride in their work. At the start of lessons pupils focus well and set to work quickly. The extra-curricular activities, trips and visits are very well supported and pupils gain a great deal in self-confidence, enhanced skills and learning. The cruise down the River Tyne, for example, gave pupils an insight into its contribution to the life of the area not possible from other viewpoints.
9. The good social development of pupils through the school results in most leaving the school as confident and socially aware young individuals. The beginnings of this process are clearly seen in the Nursery where they are already learning to co-operate and share toys and activities. Assembly themes and circle times help children understand the need for friendships and the qualities needed to make these flourish. Pupils' moral and spiritual development are well fostered by clear guidance, the high expectations and good example of staff, so their overall quality is good. A major impact is made on pupils' personal and social development by their attendance on the residential visits which they very much enjoy. The cultural development of pupils is good because they benefit from well planned opportunities to experience their own and other cultures through religious education, art and music, performance workshops and visits to theatres, galleries and museums.

### **Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.2	School data	0.1
National data	5.5	National data	0.4

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

10. Pupils arrive happily at the school, most attending regularly and arriving on time. Attendance is carefully monitored on a daily basis and any necessary action taken. There is a good working partnership with the education welfare officer to deal effectively with any serious attendance problems.

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The school provides a **satisfactory** standard of education for its pupils. Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** overall. Procedures for and the use of assessment are **satisfactory**. There is a **satisfactory** curriculum. Provision for the welfare and care of pupils is **good**. The school's links with parents are **very good**.

#### **Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching and learning are **satisfactory** overall. Assessment is **satisfactory**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers' planning in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 is firmly based on good assessment of pupils' needs and makes good use of their natural curiosity.
- There are variations in the quality of teaching and learning because the school does not monitor this aspect of its work rigorously in all subjects.
- The teaching of mathematics is good throughout the school because teachers plan well for groups of different ability.
- Teachers form very good relationships with pupils and insist on high standards of behaviour, which creates a good climate for learning.
- Teaching assistants are well trained and give good support to pupils' learning, but they are not always deployed to the best effect.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well taught by the special needs teacher but their good achievement is not sustained in the classroom.

#### **Commentary**

11. The quality of teaching overall in the school is satisfactory, but there is consistently high quality teaching seen in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is better in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2, than it is in Years 3 and 4. The variations in teaching occur because the school has not developed regular monitoring of teaching and learning by subject co-ordinators.

In practice, this means that good teaching is not identified and shared and weak teaching is not remedied. The monitoring of teaching by senior staff for performance management targets has not picked up weaknesses in the planning of teachers in Years 3 and 4, which is having a significant impact on the rate at which groups of pupils are learning in some subjects.

12. In the Foundation Stage teaching is good overall, and ranges from excellent to good. Teachers plan a wide range of activities for children based on daily assessment of their learning. All adults who work with the children are well briefed about targets children should meet and they engage very well with the children throughout the day. Clear expectations from all adults about behaviour and relationships help the children to settle quickly into routines that enable them to share and learn together well. Because of this children achieve well in their time in the Foundation Stage and they meet the goals set for them in all areas of learning by the end of the Reception year.
13. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is nearly always good or better. A strength of the teaching in these classes is the use that teachers make of their knowledge of pupils' learning, especially in English and mathematics. The result is that they plan interesting activities which match pupils learning needs very well and ensure they achieve well when working on independent tasks. Because teachers' expectations of what individuals can achieve is finely matched to their abilities, pupils are presented with tasks that they can complete in the time given which increases their confidence in their ability to learn. Teachers also plan practical activities in most subjects so that pupils learn through first hand experiences and this makes their learning stimulating as well as memorable. Children in Year 2 science lessons had very good recall of their previous learning about electricity because they had learned well from investigations carried out with a partner.
14. Teaching in Years 3 and 4 ranges from good to satisfactory and is satisfactory overall. A strength in the teaching in these classes is in mathematics, where, because pupils are placed in groups according to their ability in the subject, teachers' planning is much more closely matched to their needs. Because of this pupils learn at a good rate in mathematics lessons and their achievement is better in this subject than in others. In English, where pupils are taught in age groups so there is a range of abilities in the class, teachers do not use their knowledge of pupils' learning to plan different activities for different groups. The result is that, for some pupils the work is not challenging enough and for others it is too difficult to complete in the time given. Work in pupils' books demonstrates that a number of pupils with special educational needs and some lower attaining pupils do not complete the tasks set in many English lessons.
15. All teachers have very good expectations of pupils' behaviour and co-operation in lessons. They form very good relationships with their pupils, who feel safe and secure in the classroom. The result is that in all classes pupils are eager to learn, they listen well and follow instructions promptly. The very good relationships that exist make a very good contribution to pupils' learning because they work so well together when they are set paired or group tasks. This has a significant impact on the learning of all groups of pupils, but particularly those with special educational needs and pupils who have English as an additional language, whose learning benefits

from working with others who can support them at certain points where they need help.

16. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning both when they work on specific programmes for literacy development and when they are assigned to groups within the classroom. They are expert and experienced in how children learn and strike a good balance between giving support and encouraging pupils to be independent. Because of their experience, teaching assistants have a good range of strategies which help pupils learn and they are adept at encouraging them to sustain effort and complete tasks. Despite this, the skills and expertise of teaching assistants are not as fully used as is usually seen. For example, they do not link with the special needs teacher and follow her very good planning for pupils with special educational needs. They have no part in planning work for pupils, nor do they make use of their expertise to assess and record how pupils are learning. These missed opportunities reduce the learning of lower attaining and special needs pupils from good to satisfactory over time.
17. Learning for pupils with special educational needs is good in the literacy lessons they take with the special needs teacher. Very good planning, based on regular and rigorous assessment, ensures that learning is pitched at the correct level for each pupil in the group. The teacher prepares good resources which help pupils learn through practical activities and discussion. She makes very good use of talk in her teaching and this helps pupils develop their ideas and consolidate learning through listening to others. Time is very well used in these sessions and pupils work extremely hard throughout. Because of this they achieve well and make good progress within each lesson.
18. The school has devised good assessment procedures for English and mathematics, but these, and other assessments of pupils' learning, are not sufficiently used to plan the next steps in learning for all pupils. While in some classes these assessments are well used for planning, inconsistencies across the school reduce the impact of these recently developed systems. As with teaching, the lack of monitoring by co-ordinators has slowed the sharing of good practice in the use of assessment, leading to variations in rates of learning between classes. Assessment in other subjects is developing, but is mainly restricted to recording whether or not pupils have reached the expected level for their age.

### ***Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 41 lessons***

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	9 (22%)	17 (41%)	13 (32%)	1 (2%)	0	0

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

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum is **satisfactory**, meets all statutory requirements and the meets the needs of pupils. In the Foundation Stage the curriculum is **good**. The provision to extend pupils' learning outside of school is **good**. The accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**



- Provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage is good, except that for outdoor learning, which is unsatisfactory.
- A good range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors extends and enriches pupils' learning opportunities.
- The accommodation and resources for information and communication technology (ICT) are good.
- The storage of physical education equipment makes access difficult and constitutes a health and safety risk in physical education lessons.

## Commentary

19. The curriculum is broad, relevant and well planned. All subjects have suitable schemes of work which covers the requirements of the National Curriculum. Religious education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Most teachers are beginning to use ICT in other subjects which makes effective use of time. Teachers' planning ensures that pupils in all classes receive their full curriculum entitlement. The addition of French to the curriculum from Year 3, and Latin as an after school club makes a positive contribution to pupils' cultural and language development.
20. There is a good range of planned and structured activities for all areas of the Foundation Stage, except for outdoor learning in the Reception class. Children in the Reception class have too few opportunities to learn outdoors because there is no designated area which teachers can easily access throughout the day. In the rest of the curriculum there is a balance of teacher-directed activities and opportunities for children to make their own choices. Adults have regular meetings where they plan and work well together to decide how best to meet the needs of the children. This gives the children a good start to their education.
21. Pupils with special educational needs have well written individual education plans which are based on good assessment of their needs by the special needs teacher and their class teachers. However, the impact of these plans is diminished because the activities they do in class are not as well resourced or as closely linked to their needs as when they are taught by the special needs teacher. The curriculum for pupils with English as an additional language is well supported by the visiting specialist teacher who also gives advice to teachers on how to support the learning of these pupils. A policy for gifted and talented pupils has yet to be adopted by the governors and there is no register for these pupils. However, a pupil with specific talents in ICT has attended the local education authority's weekend club for gifted and talented pupils.
22. A good range of activities enriches the curriculum provision and helps pupils develop a positive attitude to learning. Visits, carefully planned into the curriculum, contribute to the development of skills and knowledge in geography and history. Residential visits further extends pupils' physical education skills in canoeing and rock climbing as well as contributing to the development of good personal and social skills. Pupils participate in a good range of sporting competitions and netball, football, cricket and rugby clubs further develops individual skills. Pupils' musical skills are developed well through visiting music teachers and participation in concerts.

23. The school's accommodation is spacious, well maintained and is enhanced by attractive displays. The school maximises the use of space to support pupils' learning. There is a designated 'support centre' for pupils with special educational needs, a pupil kitchen and a music room which supports pupils learning in food technology and music. The new ICT suite has considerably improved provision so that full classes can now be taught together and all pupils have access to a computer. The school library is spacious and has a number of computers which the school uses for pupils' research. The large hall used for physical education is crowded with physical education apparatus which is difficult to access for lessons, restricts the use of the hall and is a health and safety risk during lessons. The school grounds are spacious and well used by pupils for play and learning.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The school provides **satisfactory** care, guidance and support for pupils. There is good care, welfare, health and safety. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is satisfactory, as is the involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The pastoral care and child protection provided by the school are excellent.
- There are very good relationships at all levels within the school.
- The school makes good provision for the induction of pupils who start at the school at times other than the beginning of the school year.
- The overall provision for health and safety in the school is good and the school is in the process of addressing an outstanding issue.

### **Commentary**

24. Pupils' pastoral care is given the highest priority by the school and pupils' needs are given great consideration so that they are supported and enabled to take a full part in everything the school has to offer. Several parents brought this to the attention of the team during the inspection, as they felt that provision had made an enormous contribution to the life of their child and the inspection team agrees that the high level of care makes pupils happy and secure in school. Child protection is also of the highest quality, provided by staff who are very well trained, procedures and routines are well observed and pupils in lessons receive appropriate guidance to observe safe practices. The school is in the process of resolving an outstanding health and safety issue as speedily as possible.
25. There are very good relationships between adults and pupils and pupils themselves in all areas of school life, which makes a significant contribution to both pupils' learning and their personal development. Those pupils spoken to during the inspection felt it was a very friendly school and this was clearly in evidence through the absence of conflict between pupils and the happy way they co-operated in the classrooms. The majority of pupils felt they had an adult to whom they could turn if necessary and that they were listened to by teacher. The school ensures that all pupils are included in all activities and adequate access is made for disabled pupils. The school follows it

policies for equal opportunities and race equality and both pupils and parents agreed that everyone was treated fairly.

26. Parents of children who joined the school at times other than the beginning of term, are delighted by the way the school made their children welcome. The inspection team agrees that these arrangements are very thorough and give the child a strong sense of belonging at an early stage. The school makes satisfactory arrangements for pupils to learn about the responsibilities of citizenship by involving them in helping to improve the school via the school council. This year pupils have been involved in promoting healthy eating and deciding on how the newly built toilets should be decorated.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnerships that the school has with parents, other schools, and the community are **good** overall. Partnerships with parents are very good, those with the community good and with other schools satisfactory.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school works very hard to ensure that very good relationships with parents support the learning and personal development of pupils.
- Links with the local and wider community broaden the curriculum and enrich pupils' learning.

### Commentary

27. The good partnership between the school and parents found at the last inspection has improved and is now very good. Parents are very supportive of the school and take advantage of the courses offered to improve their understanding of what their children are learning. They are given good support by the range and quality of information that the school shares with them about the curriculum and how they can support their children with homework. Parents consider that the headteacher and teachers know their children well and are readily available to discuss any concerns they have about their children. They are particularly pleased that teachers approach them about any concerns they have with their children's learning. Some parents of Nursery children do not think it appropriate that they are made to wait outside their child's classroom when all other pupils entered their rooms earlier. The inspection team agrees that this mars the otherwise very good relationships that the school has with parents.
28. Information to parents about the progress their children make is good. They have regular opportunities to meet teachers to discuss their children's learning. Their annual reports provide a clear picture of their children's strengths and what they should do to improve. Parents feel that these reflect the individuality of their child. The Parents, Teachers and Friends Association successfully raises funds for the school and these are very well used to improve resources for the children as for example in fitting new toilets and developing the new computer suite.
29. The school has worked hard to develop links with the community since the last inspection. These are now good, mainly as a result of the school's good response to parents' views. A well established Breakfast Club and an After School club runs throughout the year giving good quality provision from before the start of the school day. The appointment of a Community Liaison Officer since the last inspection has allowed the school to take more account of the needs of the community and improve its ability to meet these. The provision of Family Learning programmes allows parents and children to learn together; Fun French and a course in British Sign language have been particularly successful in the last year and the school intends to repeat these. Other courses are designed for adult learners in direct response to surveys carried out by the liaison officer. All of these activities allow the community to see the school as a local resource and develop positive relationships between the broader community and the school.

30. The school has close links with local schools to develop and share good practice. There are good links with community through activities that are planned to support the curriculum. Local services and shops such as the optician, dentist and library are visited by pupils. Parents and grandparents come into school to talk to pupils on a variety of topics including the world of work and childhood experiences and broaden pupils' understanding as a result. The wider environment is used in particular for cultural visits and to enrich the history and geography curriculum. The school has good links with a local college to support training in child care.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**. Leadership is **satisfactory** and management is **satisfactory**. The governance of the school is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Governors have a clear understanding of their roles and work well to support the school, but do not play a significant part in the strategic development of the school.
- Leadership of English, mathematics, information and communication technology and the Foundation Stage is good.
- The headteacher provides strong direction for the pastoral work of the school, including forming very good partnership with parents.
- The role of subject co-ordinators is underdeveloped; they do not play a full part in identifying priorities for improvement in the school.
- The management role of the special needs co-ordinator is too narrowly defined to be effective in managing the good resources available.
- The school is not making the best use of the good initiatives started by key staff.

### **Commentary**

31. The headteacher provides satisfactory leadership and management for the development of the school. She places great emphasis in her work on developing very good relationships with parents and ensuring that pastoral provision in the school is of a very high quality. This has led to good improvement in these aspects of the school's work since the last inspection which has produced a good ethos in which pupils feel secure and happy. However, the development of the role of subject managers has not been so well promoted. The absence of clear systems for collecting, managing and sharing information about the work of the school means that good practice is not shared for the benefit of all children's learning. This has resulted in variations in the quality of teaching and learning which has not been recognised because of the absence of regular monitoring by subject leaders. While the school has begun to address this aspect of its work this term, current management of subjects is only satisfactory overall and the school is not making the most effective use of the considerable expertise and commitment of its staff. The good initiatives begun by staff, for example in assessment and target setting, are not fully implemented across the school and this is an area for development.

32. Governors have a satisfactory knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses which is gained mainly through the headteacher's termly reports. However, because they have no direct involvement in evaluating the work of the school, they are not able to play a full part in shaping the direction of developments. While they are involved in agreeing the school's priorities for development, they rely heavily on the headteacher's recommendations when they do this. Governors use their expertise to support the school through the committees they serve on and many governors give their time to supporting work in the classroom. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met and that the school follows its policies in relation to equality, race and disability. At the time of inspection, a health and safety issue was brought to the attention of the headteacher and governors and this is being addressed.
33. There is good leadership and management of English, mathematics, information and communication technology and the Foundation Stage. Each of these subject leaders has a clear vision of how their subject should improve and is ambitious to improve standards and provision. While they have been hampered in the past by a lack of time to carry out effective monitoring activities, particularly within the classroom, this is set to change with the provision of non-contact time from this term. Hitherto, other subject leaders have not had enough opportunity to gather information about standards and provision in their subjects so that they do not have an accurate basis for deciding on improvements. Overall, their role is not significantly different from what it was at the time of the last inspection. Developing the management skills of staff is a challenge that the school has recognised must be addressed if it is to improve at a good rate. There is undoubtedly the capability and the commitment amongst staff to meet this challenge effectively.
34. The management of special educational needs provision is not currently delegated fully to the special needs co-ordinator, whose main responsibility is for liaison with parents and external agencies. Her management of this aspect of provision is good. Other aspects of provision, such as the assessment of pupils' needs, the writing of individual education plans and the tracking of pupils' progress, are shared between the part time special needs teacher and class teachers, with no-one responsible for monitoring these aspects of provision, which is a weakness. A further weakness in the management of provision is that the work of teaching assistants is not monitored or closely matched to the most significant learning needs of pupils. The absence of a co-ordinator with overall responsibility for all of these aspects of provision is producing an inefficient and less effective quality of provision than there should be, given the quality of expertise involved at each level. For example, the considerable skills and expertise of teaching assistants are not being used to the best advantage for pupils' learning, nor is the learning of special needs pupils in the classroom sufficiently linked with the work they do with the special needs teacher. The result is that the good progress that pupils make with the special needs teacher is not always sustained in the classroom, thus reducing their progress over time from good to satisfactory.
35. The school's development plan reflects some of the weaknesses in management noted above, in that the school has correctly identified areas for improvement such as aspects of provision in English, mathematics and ICT, while it has not recognised others, such as those in the provision for special educational needs. Good information, gathered from rigorous monitoring, evaluation and consultation, has

been lacking in drawing up the current plan, but changes to the role of co-ordinators begun this term, should produce a clearer basis for identifying priorities in the coming year.

36. Financial management is sound. The school secretary monitors spending well and attends governors meetings to explain spending patterns and keep governors up to date with the budget out turn. The school makes satisfactory use of best value principles, though the lack of rigorous monitoring of its work means that it does not always identify the most urgent areas for improvement for itself.
37. The school has few barriers to raising achievement. There is a stable and effective teaching staff, support from parents is very good and pupil mobility is low. The school does have a higher than average percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language, but they are well supported by the visiting specialist teacher so that they make good progress in their language development and are soon able to learn alongside their peers. However, the steady increase in numbers of this group does pose a potential threat to the school's ability to raise achievement. This is because the amount of support time allocated to pupils is being reduced, as the criteria for support changes. The school's arrangements for the provision of pupils with special educational needs and for lower attaining pupils currently inhibit the rate at which these groups of pupils achieve and improvements to the management of provision are needed in order for these pupils to receive the full benefit of the expertise available.

***Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004***

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	800,574
Total expenditure	787,182
Expenditure per pupil	2,255

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	27,169
Balance carried forward to the next	40,561

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

Children start in Nursery soon after their third birthday with attainments that are below those expected for children of this age. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good** overall. Children get a good start to their education in most areas of learning, the high standards seen at the time of the last inspection have been maintained and children achieve well in both the Nursery and Reception classes. At present, while outdoor learning is planned for, it is not as effective as other areas of the curriculum in the Nursery and is unsatisfactory in the Reception classes, because there is no area designated for this purpose. The systems in place to assess children's progress are fairly new and, whilst the day to day assessments are good, recorded assessment is not yet used systematically to set longer term targets. Children with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language are catered for well and are provided with specific support. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children settle into Nursery quickly and happily.
- They achieve very well because of the very good teaching they receive, and the positive relationships established make them feel confident enough to learn.

#### **Commentary**

38. The development of children's personal and social development is given high priority and underpins all the work in the Nursery class. The well-structured induction arrangements do much to ensure that children's first experiences of school are happy ones. The positive relationships with parents are marred slightly by the practice of keeping them out of the Nursery until after the rest of the school has entered. This limits the opportunities for staff to greet parents individually and deal with any concerns.
39. The very good working relationships between members of staff and volunteer helpers in both the Nursery and Reception classes show children how to relate to each other positively. Very good teaching, which emphasises kindness to each other, and planned activities that require co-operation, result in good social development. Members of staff place strong emphasis on the development of children's self-esteem, confidence and independence. As a result, most children respond well to new challenges. They achieve very well and at the end of the year standards are average for their age.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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



## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good overall.
- Standards in speaking and listening are not as good as those in reading and writing by the end of Reception.

## Commentary

40. Teaching in this area of learning is good in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Every day, staff and volunteers work with small groups of children encouraging them to speak and develop their vocabulary and understanding. The Nursery teacher assesses children's language development as soon as they start school and ensures additional help and support is provided for speech therapy and help for those new to learning to speak English. In the Reception classes, good opportunities are provided for children to further improve their speaking and listening skills when working together, through role-play, stories, poems and rhymes. Effective questioning encourages them to give considered answers and builds on prior learning. Very good examples of this were seen when two children new to English and two with speech and language difficulties were working with a specialist English teacher. Very skilled teaching and assessment ensured all four children achieved well and made good progress. More opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills are needed to help pupils improve these aspects of their communication skills. By the end of the Reception year, standards in reading and writing are broadly in line with national expectations, but are below the expectation for speaking and listening.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Mathematics teaching makes good use of practical activities which help children's learning.
- Children's ability to use calculations is not as good as their knowledge of other aspects of mathematics.

## Commentary

41. Consistently good teaching in the Nursery and both Reception classes ensures that children achieve well and, by the end of the Reception year, most children meet the early learning goals for mathematics. Mathematics is taught in the practical way that helps young children to learn. In the Nursery, children have plenty of opportunity to sing number songs and rhymes, to count and to use positional language when playing on the large apparatus in the nursery yard. When cooking, they use mathematical language to solve problems such as 'how many do we need? These activities ensure that they have a good knowledge of number.
42. This practical approach is continued in the Reception classes. By the end of the year most children can count reliably to ten and are beginning to use mathematics for practical calculations. However, this aspect of mathematics is slightly weaker than their use of number and space, shape and measures.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A good range of interesting activities promotes good learning.

## **Commentary**

43. Teaching and learning are good in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Children are provided with a very good range of experiences which help extend their understanding of the world about them. They are strongly encouraged to play and to benefit from resources which promote good achievement. Children achieve well and attain average standards by the end of the Reception year.
44. In both the Nursery and Reception classes teachers provide a range of well planned activities. In the Nursery, children have good opportunities to care for plants and animals and learn well from visitors of different ages to school as well as firemen and policemen who visit as part of topics about people who help us. These activities all help children to develop a good understanding of the world about them. These experiences are built upon in the Reception classes where the children take walks around the local environment, make simple maps and reproduce the local environment using small world toys. This extends their knowledge of the world well as they become more aware of the variety in their local environment. In ICT, they are taught well to use the mouse to control the screen cursor when moving images across the screen and to control programmable toys. In their religious education lessons children are taught about times that are important to their community, such as Christmas, Eid and Divali, and how to share important events in their lives such as naming ceremonies when the vicar comes in to baptise a doll. These experiences make a good contribution to their understanding of the different cultural practices of the world they live in.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Opportunities for children to develop their fine muscle control are good.
- Outside play is limited in the Nursery and unsatisfactory in the Reception classes.

## **Commentary**

45. By the end of the Reception class standards are broadly average. This is because children are given plenty of opportunity to use scissors, pencils, crayons, paint brushes and small construction toys. As a result, both boys and girls develop their manipulative skills well when playing with small and large construction equipment. By the end of the Reception class children confidently use staplers, hole punches, string, paste and glue by themselves to make pictures models.
46. In the Nursery opportunities for outside play are satisfactory although they are limited to one period each session. However, most apparatus in the Nursery yard is not suitable for Reception children who use it and they have insufficient opportunity to use outdoor toys in a structured way. Therefore, outdoor play provision for the

Reception classes is unsatisfactory and does not meet the requirements of the curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage. However, during timetabled lessons in the school hall children are taught physical education skills well and as a result most reach the early learning goals in this area of their learning.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching and learning is very good, enabling children to achieve well.
- Standards in music are above average.

### **Commentary**

47. Most children are set to reach the standards expected by the end of the Reception class in most aspects of creative development. In music, standards are above average. Teaching is very good in this area of the curriculum and most children reach, and many exceed, the standard expected for their age by the end of their time in the Foundation Stage. In both the Nursery and Reception classes creative development is successfully fostered through a wide range of experiences. Work on display around the classroom and in photograph albums shows that children are given a wide range of experiences including studying the work of famous artists, use of collage, clay and designing with natural materials.
48. In the Nursery, children explore how sounds can be made and sing simple songs. Teachers give time for role play to allow children to play co-operatively and develop their imagination. Such experiences enrich children's learning and enhance their spiritual, social and cultural development. By the time the children are in the Reception classes they are given more formal music lessons. During the inspection an excellent lesson was seen in one Reception class. In this lesson the children behaved extremely well and had clearly been taught to work together as an 'orchestra'. They handled instruments responsibly, obeyed the conductor's instructions, took turns at conducting and named the instruments. In this aspect of creativity children are already above average.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory** overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are above the national average by the end of Year 2.
- Provision in Years 1 and 2 is good and pupils achieve well.
- The co-ordinator has not been able to monitor standards and provision.
- Variation in planning between year groups results in different rates of achievement for pupils.
- There is not enough time allocated to reading in the junior classes.

## Commentary

49. By the end of Year 2 standards in reading and writing are above the national average. Pupils of all abilities and those with English as an additional language in Year 2 achieve well. Standards in the current Year 4 are well below the national expectation, which reflects the very high proportion of pupils in this year group with special educational needs. Overall, the achievement of these pupils is satisfactory. Only in Year 4 was there a difference in the attainment of boys and girls and this is due to there being more boys with special educational needs in this year group than in others.
50. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn at a good rate, quickly master letter sounds and learn to recognise an increasing number of words, because they are very well taught. Their teachers build well on the skills the pupils have when they leave the Reception class and plan work which closely matches the needs of different groups in each class. Because of this, all pupils are confident learners who tackle independent work with enthusiasm and a conviction that they will succeed. Pupils in Year 2 were very well supported by thorough preparation for writing instructions on How to Play Pass the Parcel. By the end of the lesson all the class had achieved very well because the range of tasks provided good levels of challenge for every pupil.
51. In Year 3 and 4 teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Pupils' learning does not progress at such a good rate as it does in Years 1 and 2, mainly because teachers' assessment of pupils' needs is not as sharp as in the younger classes. The result is that planning does not take enough account of the different needs of pupils in each class, so that tasks set tend to be the same for most pupils. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well when they are taught by the special needs teacher but this is not sustained in those lessons when they are unsupported by an adult in class. The learning of pupils who have English as an additional language matches that of their peers of similar ability, because they have been well supported by the specialist teacher to learn through English by the time they reach the juniors. Pupils' enthusiasm for learning in Years 3 and 4 is not so marked as in younger classes and this too plays a part in how well they achieve. When teaching is good, as in one Year 4 lesson seen, then pupils concentrate hard and follow instructions promptly to please their teacher and keep up with the tasks. However, in most of the lessons seen, pupils were passive for too long because teachers tend to use talk as the main vehicle for teaching. Teachers make satisfactory use of ICT in the subject to set tasks in spelling and grammar for pupils to improve their skills, as well as to use word processing to present and redraft their work. Overall, the promotion of reading in Years 3 and 4 is not rigorous enough and in none of the classes do pupils have daily opportunities to read either alone or in a group and this is a weakness.
52. Leadership and management of the subject are good overall. However, management is only satisfactory because the co-ordinator has limited opportunities for rigorous monitoring. The subject co-ordinator is expert and has high ambitions for the subject. She has recently taken on sole responsibility for the subject after a very long period when it was shared with two other colleagues. She has devised a very effective system of monitoring pupils' progress in the subject. The new system allows teachers to set targets easily for individual pupils to make the next step in their

learning. However, variations in practice demonstrate the need for the co-ordinator to monitor rigorously so that the scheme can be successfully implemented and fully effective. Lack of time for the subject co-ordinators to monitor teaching and learning in the past means that the co-ordinator has no picture of the variations in the quality of teaching and learning in the subject, nor where there are colleagues who need support with their planning. This is set to change with the allocation of time away from the classroom in the school day which will allow the co-ordinator to plan a timetable of lesson observations and to look at teachers' weekly planning for the subject. There has been satisfactory improvement overall since the last inspection, with good improvement in standards by the end of Year 2 in that time, especially for average and higher attaining boys.

## **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

53. Teachers follow the school's policy for promoting language across the curriculum. In all classes pupils have some opportunities for learning through talk. In mathematics lessons pupils are encouraged to explain their answers and share ideas with others in the class. Writing is promoted in subjects other than English and good opportunities for writing have been provided for older pupils when writing about their history topic on the Victorians. A weakness is the lack of reading that pupils do both for other subjects and as part of their planned literacy development. Too few opportunities are provided for regular reading, especially in Years 3 and 4. Where shared and guided reading does occur, this works well in raising standards and gives pupils confidence to read aloud.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Clear planning and organisation builds on pupils' prior learning support good teaching.
- Pupils' basic numeracy skills are secure but they are not always sufficiently challenged to explain their calculations.
- Pupils have a good attitude in mathematics lessons because teachers have high expectations of behaviour.
- Assessment is used to set individual and cohort targets but is not used as effectively as it could be to review and track pupils' progress.
- Good subject leadership monitors and evaluates the school's performance.

### **Commentary**

54. Pupils reach standards above the expected levels by the end of Year 2 and they achieve well. Standards by the end of Year 4 are in line with expected levels. This represents an improvement on standards seen at the last inspection. Standards for average and higher attaining boys have risen well since the last inspection, though there was no significant difference between boys' and girls' attainment in the work seen during inspection. Overall pupils' achievement is good compared to their below average attainment on entry to the school. The current Year 4 group made good progress during Year 3, because the setting of Year 3 and 4 into groups of pupils with the same ability allows teachers to plan more closely to meet pupils' needs. Pupils

with special educational needs achieve as well as their peers because they receive additional help from the support teacher. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve as well as their peers of similar ability with whom they work in lessons.

55. Teaching overall is good. Teachers' planning is clear, based on the National Numeracy Strategy and builds on prior learning. For example in a Year 2 lesson, carefully chosen activities, developed over the week, helped pupils to understand the attributes of 2- and 3- dimensional shapes. In the best teaching, clear explanations and demonstrations help pupils to practise and apply skills during their independent work. Discussions and questioning help sustain pupil interest, but teachers do not sufficiently challenge pupils to use what they know to check, explain and clarify their answers and calculations. Pupils are keen to learn in their mathematics lessons. This is because teachers make their expectations of behaviour clear so that pupils work hard and effective use is made of time during lessons.
56. Teachers identify individual targets achieved by pupils and communicate them clearly to the pupils in their exercise books. Pupils are assessed each year against National Curriculum criteria and are then set targets for the next year. However, the individual targets are not reviewed during the year and this limits their effectiveness in tracking individual and group progress to identify where intervention may be needed.
57. Leadership is good and management is satisfactory. The co-ordinators have had too little opportunity to monitor standards and provision in the subject in the past to have a very strong picture of strengths and weaknesses in the subject. Results in the subject are carefully analysed and the joint co-ordinators have identified weaknesses in teaching and learning. An action plan is in place but has yet to be modified to include these areas for development in teachers' planning. A few lessons have been observed this term but co-ordinators do not yet have a clear picture of strengths and weaknesses across the school. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

58. Satisfactory use is made of mathematics in other subjects. Its main use is in the creation of databases and construction of graphs in science and topic work. Opportunities to use mathematical vocabulary occur when pupils use graphic programmes in their information and communication technology work. In science lessons, pupils are taught to count, measure and record accurately.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers use questions and intervene well to support pupils' learning in lessons.
- There is a good emphasis in lessons on pupils using an investigative approach to help them develop their scientific knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers make effective use of resources to support learning.

- The role of the co-ordinator is under-developed, as are assessment procedures.

## Commentary

59. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils are attaining standards expected nationally at the end of Year 2 and when they leave the school at the end of Year 4. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language learn as well as their peers, mainly because of the practical nature of their learning. In the work seen, there was no difference in the standards of boys and girls, except for those pupils who have special educational needs, where there are more boys than girls. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.
60. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and engage the pupils well in discussion of the ideas being taught, so that they are fully aware of what they are learning. Teachers make good use of demonstration. For instance, in a Year 3/4 lesson, pupils were shown how to measure accurately using a Newton force-meter before they commenced their investigation. Teachers use questions and intervene well in lessons to gauge the extent of pupils' knowledge and understanding of a topic being studied and to prompt further learning. In the lessons seen there was a clear focus on pupils using practical investigations to help develop and further their understanding of scientific principles. In Year 2, teachers create good opportunities for pupils to learn from each other. This works to the advantage of lower attaining pupils and those who have English as an additional language because teachers are careful to plan groups with a mix of abilities.
61. Not all teachers make use of computers to support pupils' learning in science. Marking is variable, with the best examples challenging pupils to think about their work, whilst other examples just consist of a tick or one-word comment with the result that pupils do not know what to do to improve their work. Lack of rigorous assessment means that teachers do not have a clear picture of how far to challenge pupils so that they make the best progress in each lesson. The use of scientific vocabulary such as 'circuit', 'battery' and 'force' in lessons makes a positive contribution to the promotion of literacy in the school. There are links with numeracy when pupils in Year 3 and 4 class counted how many paper clips a magnet could hold.
62. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Currently, the role of the subject co-ordinator is underdeveloped. She monitors planning on a termly basis and undertakes an annual audit of pupils' work but the co-ordinator has not yet undertaken any lesson observations so has no overview of where good practice exists and where teachers need support to help them improve. There are assessment procedures in place to record the learning of pupils against expected levels of attainment. In their current state, these assessment procedures are too general to allow the co-ordinator to identify any strengths and weaknesses in the teaching of the subject or to detect where pupils may not be achieving as well as they could.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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



## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Consistent good teaching helps all pupils make good progress in the acquisition of basic ICT skills.
- Pupils have a good attitude and enjoy ICT because of teachers' high expectations.
- Assessment procedures which clearly track individual pupils' progress have been recently introduced but have yet to impact on standards.
- Good leadership and management have improved provision and raised standards. However, the subject leader's role is not yet fully developed.

## **Commentary**

63. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 4 are in line with the expected levels for these age groups and pupils of all abilities achieve well. The standards achieved by both age groups are an improvement on those seen at the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their peers because of good support from teachers and teaching assistants.
64. Teaching overall is good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge. They are confident and effective in using the electronic whiteboard in the ICT suite to demonstrate basic ICT skills and programmes. Pupils therefore make good progress in acquiring and using basic skills. For example, Year 2 pupils made good progress in creating a storyboard by using a range of tools to insert characters, props, speech and thought bubbles and narrative text. Teachers' consistent use of ICT terminology during explanations has developed pupils' understanding of ICT vocabulary. Pupils are therefore quick to respond to both verbal and written instructions. In all Year 3 and 4 lessons pupils knew what to do because of precise instructions and explanations which carefully built on knowledge and skills. All pupils therefore made good progress in using a range of tools in a paint programme. Pupils are skilled in using a range of graphic tools. Teachers are adept at planning lessons which combine these skills with pupil's good word processing skills. Pupils' abilities to produce and organise and amend ideas and presentations are being developed well.
65. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and prepare well-organised lessons. Therefore pupils have a very good attitude and work hard in their ICT lessons. Time is used well, pupils are productive and in their success they find enjoyment.
66. Leadership and management are good. Since the last inspection the action taken has improved the quality of teaching and raised standards. Teacher skills have been developed through training and the caretaker's skills have been harnessed as a technician. Sufficient resources are now in place to support pupils' learning and the ratio of computers to pupils is good. The subject leader is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and leads by good example in his teaching. There have been limited opportunities for him to observe teaching and learning. This, combined with a lack of assessment of pupils' learning in the past has limited the subject leader's ability to further improve standards. A more rigorous assessment method has recently been introduced which will clearly track pupils' progress. The school therefore is now well placed to build on recent improvements and further improve standards.

## **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

67. Overall, the use of ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory. Teachers' planning shows how computers can support teaching and learning, though this is not yet consistent. ICT is used well to support literacy, particularly in the development of pupils' writing skills. It is used in numeracy and science to create databases and construct graphs. Pupils use it as a research tool in geography, history and science and use of graphics programmes contributes to pupils' development of art and design skills.

## HUMANITIES

**History** was sampled during the inspection. Only one lesson was seen so no overall judgement is made about the quality of provision. Evidence from pupils' work and displays indicates that standards are in line with expectation for pupils' ages at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. In the lesson seen, pupils compared toys in the past with toys now. Good teaching focused on allowing the pupils to see that the materials used for toys now were different to those used in the past. The teacher also placed a good emphasis on developing the pupils' understanding and use of vocabulary associated with the subject such as *in the present, now, long ago and in the past*. In Year 4, pupils have made good use of their visit to a local Victorian estate to write in variety of styles about what they learned. Higher attaining pupils wrote with good detail about the inventions and innovations they saw which had been created by a famous Victorian engineer. Other work on the Victorian era has allowed pupils to use census data to develop their skills of finding out about the past from official documents of the time. In discussion, some pupils talked of their enjoyment of learning about Victorian schools when the teacher staged a lesson in the style of a Victorian classroom. First hand experiences such as these add much to the quality of pupils' learning as well as to their enjoyment of the subject. Pupils use computers to find information about the eras they study. Leadership and management in the subject are satisfactory but under-developed at present in that the co-ordinator has little first hand knowledge of standards or provision in the subject.

Only one lesson was seen in **geography** and there was insufficient evidence to make judgements about provision in the subject, or the quality of teaching and learning. Planning documents indicate full coverage of the National Curriculum requirements. Displays around school, for example in a Year 3 and 4 classroom on the physical and human features of the River Tyne, help maintain pupils' interest in the subject. In a Year 3 and 4 geography lesson, which was judged to be of good quality, pupils were learning about noise pollution around the school. High attaining pupils know and understand how to use a colour key to indicate different areas that are 'noisy' or 'quiet' during different part of the school day, whilst less able pupils needed adult guidance in producing a colour key for different times of the day. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory, and though monitoring in the subject has been restricted since the last inspection, this is set to change from this term. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Sometimes the content of lessons is not matched well enough to the needs and abilities of all pupils.
- There are good links with personal, social and health education.
- The daily act of worship supports and reinforces well the ideas introduced in lessons.
- The co-ordinator has no first-hand knowledge of teaching and learning in the subject.

### Commentary

68. Standards by Year 2 and in Year 4 are as expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Analysis of pupils' work and observation of lessons shows that the school has maintained standards since the last inspection. Examination of teachers' planning shows that the school follows the locally agreed syllabus supplemented by advice provided nationally. Progress since the last inspection is satisfactory.
69. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. In Year 1, pupils study festivals including Eid, Divali and Christmas. This knowledge is built on satisfactorily and by Year 2 pupils show the expected factual knowledge about a number of world religions. By Year 3 and 4 they are beginning to consider values and morality. However, there was little evidence of pupils considering the deeper questions relating to what it means to be a believer, to have a faith, or to consider the similarities and differences between religions.
70. Teaching is satisfactory, though sometimes the way a topic is taught is not correctly matched to the age and stage of the pupils. An example of this was seen in a Year 1 and 2 class in which pupils were studying the symbolism involved in the Jewish Seder Plate. There was only one plate shown and pupils could not all see this properly from their position on the carpet. The work set was the same for most of the pupils in Year 1 and Year 2. In lessons pupils listen carefully to their teachers and make thoughtful and sensitive responses to the ideas taught. Although there are close links with the local parish church, there are not sufficient opportunities for pupils to visit a range of centres of worship or to listen to a variety of visitors talk about their religions.
71. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator maintains an overview of the work covered, monitors teachers' planning and she collected examples of pupils' work from each year group. She has had no opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in the subject through direct observation and this is a weakness.

### CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

**Art and design** was sampled during the inspection so there was not enough first hand evidence to make a judgement about provision in the subject. Evidence from displays of pupils' work and the co-ordinator's portfolio of pupils' work, shows that standards exceed the expected level for pupils in Year 2 and Year 4. Planning for the subject shows that a wide range of skills are taught progressively as pupils move through the school. There is a good emphasis on the pupils planning for work in the subject and this was well illustrated in a Year 2 lesson where pupils have been studying the designs of Antonio Gaudi. Here, they were given a very good opportunity to look at and discuss a wide range of door designs that their teacher projected onto a screen. After being exposed to many good ideas, pupils of all abilities had no difficulty in coming up with their own ideas for door design. From the many examples of artwork seen, it is clear that the subject is well used

to support and enhance learning in other subjects such as history and design and technology and that pupils have regular opportunities to use computers for their work. Leadership of the subject is good and management is set to improve with the new arrangements made for co-ordinators to have time away from the classroom to carry out more monitoring activities.

Only one lesson was seen in **design and technology**, so there is insufficient evidence of teaching and learning to make a judgement about provision. Analysis of pupils' work, discussions with the subject co-ordinator and analysis of teachers' planning shows that standards are similar to at the time of the last report. The school's scheme of work provides a good range of experience for the pupils and ensures a structured development of skills. Standards in Year 2 are in line with national expectations and some samples of pupils work on display show above average standards in Year 4 with good quality products made from an attractive range of materials. For example a variety of model chairs using a range of materials and techniques showed neat and precise work. In the Year 3/4 lesson seen pupils were given opportunities to design, make and evaluate the processes involved in making shoes. The imaginative designs illustrated clear expression of pupils' own ideas and the lesson was linked very well to pupils' art and design lessons.

As only one lesson was observed insufficient evidence was obtained to make a secure judgement about the overall provision of **music**. In the lesson seen in Year 1/2 teaching was of a good standard, pupils were enthusiastic and performed at the level expected for their age. The only singing heard was during the acts of worship and the quality was satisfactory. The provision of instrumental tuition from visiting teachers is of a high standard. Extra curricular clubs such as recorders and choir enhance the music provision and pupils talk with enthusiasm about the concerts they have taken part in. The music room is bright and attractive with a good range of easily accessible instruments. Resources for the teaching and learning of music are very good. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic, but has had no opportunity to observe or support colleagues directly in the classroom.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

The provision for physical education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The large apparatus stored in the school halls presents a health and safety risk in lessons.
- Too much direction in lessons by teachers stops pupils from working independently and extending their skills at their own pace.
- The co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge but has had too little opportunity to monitor the subject effectively.

### **Commentary**

72. Pupils attain standards seen nationally in most schools in Year 2 and in Year 4, when they leave the school. The achievement of pupils of all abilities is satisfactory. There are no pupils who have special educational needs which hamper their learning in this subject. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection and the standards found then have been maintained.

73. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They make effective use of questioning and intervention in lessons; this was seen in a Year 3/4 gymnastics lesson, when the teacher demonstrated what shapes he wanted pupils to create when moving around the apparatus. Although teachers support pupils in lessons, there is an over-directive style of teaching, which inhibits pupils' working independently or collaboratively during lessons. In one lesson seen, the teacher was dressed correctly, and showed enthusiasm for the subject, which set a good example for the pupils. In another lesson the teacher was not dressed correctly, which had the opposite effect on pupils' enthusiasm for the subject.
74. The school does not yet have in place whole school assessment procedures to help teachers in their planning for the subject, so that the level of challenge set for pupils is not always the correct one. The physical education apparatus which is stored in the school hall presents a hazard during lessons besides restricting the space available for lessons.
75. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has had no opportunity to visit lessons to assess the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning, so has no way of identifying priorities for improving provision. The lack of whole school assessment procedures prevents him from comparing standards between classes. The co-ordinator is expert, enthusiastic and well able to lead staff to make improvements to the subject given a more clearly defined role and time in which to carry it out.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

Only one lesson in personal, social and health education was seen during inspection so it is not possible to make an overall judgement on provision.

The caring ethos in the school supports pupils' personal and social development well. The school's planned curriculum covers the aspects of personal development, lifestyles and relationships in a way which is relevant to the pupils' understanding. There are also opportunities to discuss citizenship and the responsibilities of living in a community during circle time. Visits from the police, the school nurse and from the fire brigade bring a wider perspective to pupils' understanding about safety and community responsibility.

Pupils who are members of the school council have opportunities to negotiate and represent the views of others. Some positive outcomes of these activities have been improvements to games for playtimes and deciding how the new toilets should be decorated. Pupils are taught about the possible harmful effects of some drugs and medicines in science lessons. Issues of growth and personal relationships are dealt with in science lessons and in circle time as they arise.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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