

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **NEWTON HALL INFANT SCHOOL**

Durham

LEA area: Durham

Unique reference number: 114134

Headteacher: Mrs Jennifer Jackson

Lead inspector: Mike Onyon

Dates of inspection: 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> June 2005

Inspection number: 266760

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant  
School category: Community  
Age range of pupils: 5 – 7 years  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 159

School address: Langley Road  
Newton Hall  
Durham  
Postcode: DH1 5LP

Telephone number: 0191 386 1203  
Fax number: 0191 386 1203

Appropriate authority: Governing Body  
Name of chair of Mrs J. Barron  
governors:

Date of previous 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> July 1999  
inspection:

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Newton Hall is a smaller than average sized infant school in the suburbs of Durham. At the time of this inspection 159 children were attending. The number on roll has been similar over the last four years. Pupils leave the school at the end of Year 2. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average and there are currently no pupils with a statement of special educational needs. Identified special needs are largely in the areas of language development and communication skills. Pupil mobility is average. There are no pupils learning English as an additional language. The school's socio-economic context is favourable. Attainment on entry to the school is generally above average but varies from year to year. Currently the school is a member of a networked learning community and holds the Investors in People award. It has a significant partnership with the adjoining junior school to which most pupils transfer.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18146	Mike Onyon	Lead inspector	English as an additional language, information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology, religious education.
13706	Gill Marsland	Lay inspector	
23319	Vince Leary	Team inspector	The foundation stage, English, music, physical education.
22805	Jo Greer	Team inspector	Special educational needs, mathematics, science, geography, history, citizenship.

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is an effective and inclusive school** providing good value for money. Pupils are highly valued as individuals and achieve well. Standards in Year 2 are well above average in English, mathematics and science. Changes in teaching staff have been managed well and, overall, the good quality of teaching has been maintained since the previous inspection. The recently appointed headteacher provides very good leadership and management, with a clear focus on continual improvement.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher motivates colleagues very well in the pursuit of all that is best for the pupils; there is a strong sense of teamwork in the school.
- The quality of care and support offered to pupils is very good. Along with very good guidance, it successfully engenders very good behaviour. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning.
- The school's very positive ethos successfully promotes the very good moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
- Very good links with the community, with parents and with other schools support pupils' learning very well.
- The school's systems for assessing pupils' progress are used well to inform future learning.
- Good teaching is leading to good overall achievement, but more could be done to actively involve subject leaders in monitoring and evaluating teaching, to improve consistency.
- Whilst improved in the foundation stage, provision for outdoor play does not yet include a full range of facilities to support the development of all pupils.

Improvement since the last inspection in 1999 has been good. The minor issue identified at that time has been successfully addressed. Standards have remained consistently well above average and the school has retained its many strengths.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
Reading	A	A	A	A
Writing	A	A*	A*	A
Mathematics	A	A	A	A

*Key: A\* - top 5%; A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average  
Similar schools are those with a similar percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals.*

**Achievement is good overall.** When children begin school their attainment is generally above average. Children's achievement in reception is satisfactory and most will exceed the standards expected nationally in the areas of learning in the foundation stage curriculum. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well. The work they do builds well on what they have done

previously. Standards in Year 2 are currently well above average in English, mathematics and science. Results in the 2005 national tests are expected to be at a similar high level. Standards in writing place the school in the top five per cent in the country. Standards in ICT are above average. From 2000 to 2004 the improvement in the school's results in national tests at the end of Year 2 was broadly in line with the national trend. However, the results have been maintained at levels well above those expected nationally. The trend in the average national curriculum points is currently upward in reading, writing and mathematics.

**Pupils' personal qualities are very good.** The pupils' moral, social and cultural development is very good. Their spiritual development is good. Pupils have very good attitudes to school and behave very well during lessons and at other times. A very positive ethos encourages pupils to act in a mature and responsible manner. Pupils from the reception year to Year 2 make a significant contribution to the school, through their school council. All pupils have good opportunities to participate in good quality lessons in personal, social and health education and citizenship. Pupils in Year 2 are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Attendance is well above average and punctuality is very good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good overall,** with some very good teaching and learning throughout the school. Teachers work very effectively together and have retained good teamwork through a period of uncertainty. Expectations are very high and teachers insist on very high standards of behaviour. Teachers and support staff are very successful in promoting a thirst for learning in pupils, encouraging and engaging them very well. Pupils know that they are expected to work hard. The school prepares pupils well for national tests but also provides very good wider learning opportunities for all the pupils. It offers a well-balanced curriculum that links subjects together well, providing good learning opportunities. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good; these pupils are well supported and as a result they make good progress in their learning and personal development. Assessment is used well to plan pupils' future learning, but more can be done to involve subject leaders in monitoring and evaluating the impact of teaching on the progress made by pupils. The care provided for pupils is very good. Partnership with parents and links with other schools and colleges and the community are very good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good overall.** The headteacher is a very effective leader. Following a period of absence by the previous headteacher she has quickly provided a very clear agenda to maintain high standards. She is supported well by other adults in the school, who subscribe enthusiastically to her future vision and provide effective leadership and management. All staff work well together as a team. Subject leaders are yet to have opportunities to monitor and evaluate teaching, to identify good practice and improve consistency. The school governors are supportive of the school and they make an effective contribution to its success and efficiency. All statutory requirements are met.

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

Parents are pleased with the quality of education, the standards achieved by pupils and standards of care provided by the school. They view the teaching and arrangements for their children to settle into the school to be good and they are comfortable in approaching the school with questions or concerns. Pupils also have a positive view of the school; all say

that there is an adult to go to if they are worried at school, they are expected to work hard, teachers are fair and they really like being at the school.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Extend the role of subject leaders in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching in their subjects.
- Upgrade outdoor facilities for children in the foundation stage and pupils throughout the school.



## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects**

*Achievement is a measure of how well pupils are doing, taking their progress and their capability into account.*

Achievement is good overall. Attainment on entry to the school is above average. Children in the foundation stage achieve satisfactorily. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well, and standards are well above average in Year 2.

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

- Pupils are prepared well to move on to the next stage of their education at the end of Year 2.
- Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.
- The pupils' successes arise from good and very good teaching and learning and very good leadership, and are consistently celebrated in lessons, assemblies and displays.
- Higher attaining pupils are effectively catered for and achieve well.
- Good support is provided for pupils with special educational needs and they too achieve well.

#### **Commentary**

1. Children's achievement in the reception classes is satisfactory. Attainment on entry for most of the children is above average. Because of the good teaching and learning and a good balance between direct teaching and child-initiated activities, most children exceed the standards expected nationally in the areas of learning in the foundation stage curriculum. Parents feel that arrangements for their children to settle into school are good. The headteacher and foundation stage co-ordinator have introduced improvements to the foundation stage curriculum and indications are that, as a result, standards are rising.
2. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2. Careful efforts are made to accommodate individual pupils' needs as they move from one age group to the next. Standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science, and above average in ICT. Over the last four years the school has consistently achieved results in the national tests that are well above average. Consistently high standards have been sustained in writing, with results in 2003 and 2004 placing the school in the top five per cent in the country. Whilst the results of the 2005 tests have yet to be validated, they suggest that these high standards have been maintained.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	18.0 (17.5)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	17.7 (17.3)	14.6 (14.6)

Mathematics	18.2 (18.0)	16.2 (16.3)
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*There were 39 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. Pupils achieve well because of the high quality teaching, best characterised by very high expectations of work and behaviour and the effective use of assessment information to match tasks to individual needs. Pupils know that they are expected to work hard and have very positive attitudes to their learning. They are consistently encouraged to do as well as they can and to take responsibility for their own learning. The trend in the school's results in national tests in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 is upward. Teachers have retained a focus on standards during a period of uncertainty which was the result of the long term absence of the previous headteacher. Consequently, high standards have been maintained since the time of the previous inspection. Consistent emphasis is placed upon the celebration of children's achievements, encouraging them to do as well as they can.
4. Higher attaining pupils are catered for effectively and they achieve well. In the national tests in Year 2 in 2004 the number of pupils attaining the higher National Curriculum levels was well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Observations during the inspection indicate that these pupils are being challenged at an appropriate level and that they are on course to do as well as they possibly can. The consistently good quality of teaching contributes strongly to pupils' good achievement. The headteacher has worked very effectively to monitor and evaluate pupils' progress and to ensure that lessons and activities are planned to effectively meet the learning needs of all pupils. Indications are that subject leaders are to become more involved in evaluating the progress made by pupils in order to retain the clear focus on raising standards.
5. Good support is given to pupils with special educational needs, who achieve well because their work is tailored to their individual needs and builds steadily on previous learning. Needs are identified early and teachers and support staff know and plan for them very effectively. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into classroom activities and other pupils are very sensitive to their needs, helping them to achieve well. All pupils are included equally, with staff skilled in ensuring that all are included in lessons and activities and given the opportunity to contribute effectively.

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

Pupils' attendance and punctuality are very good. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have very good attitudes to school and this makes a positive contribution to their learning.
- Behaviour in the school and playground is very good and pupils get on well with each other.
- Pupils' personal development is promoted very well, particularly in aspects of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Attendance is well above the national median and pupils arrive on time.

### **Commentary**

6. Pupils have positive attitudes to school because of the very good relationships they share with staff, which in turn creates a pleasant working environment. They are interested and involved in their lessons and listen carefully to their teachers. When classroom discussions take place they are eager to contribute and work hard. They demonstrate confidence when explaining their work and can be trusted to work independently when necessary. After-school activities such as art and craft and French clubs are very well supported.
7. The pupils behave well in and around school. There have been no exclusions from the school in the last year. Staff have high expectations for good behaviour and the pupils respond accordingly and respect each other. School rules are adhered to and an appropriate scheme of rewards and sanctions is in place. 'Star pupil' certificates and headteacher's awards are given for exceptional work and demonstrating good citizenship. Occasional instances of bullying are dealt with promptly and pupils are comfortable approaching an adult if problems occur. Racial incidents are rare but appropriate procedures are in place if required.
8. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and enhances the pupils' personal development. Assemblies, acts of worship and opportunities to discuss concerns and feelings in personal and social education lessons provide opportunities for pupils to think about their own feelings. Pupils learn about a wide range of faiths such as Buddhism in religious education and develop an understanding of and respect for the feelings of others.
9. Social and moral development is promoted well. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong, develop a good sense of personal responsibility and learn about moral issues and choices. They work together co-operatively in lessons and support each other's learning. Year 2 pupils take on monitor duties, providing good role models for their fellow pupils, and the school council provides a good opportunity for pupils to learn what it means to be an active citizen and develop communication skills.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.2	School data	0.0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

10. Pupils' cultural development is very good and race equality is successfully promoted. Educational visits in the local area encourage pupils to think about community issues. Through assemblies, religious education, visitors and supporting charitable causes pupils learn about life in the wider world and about cultural traditions in Britain and elsewhere. Subjects such as art, geography, history and music also include the study of different cultures. The school has held multicultural and international food days and celebrates festivals such as the Chinese New Year and Eid.
11. The pupils enjoy coming to school and are seldom late. Regular analysis of attendance information is carried out and absences are followed up by telephone each day. The importance of good attendance is frequently promoted in newsletters and holidays in term-time are discouraged. Parents provide very good support by promptly contacting the school if their child is ill.

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

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good overall. The curriculum is good and there are very good opportunities for enrichment. The care provided for pupils is very good. Partnership with parents and links with other schools, colleges and the community are very good.

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching is good overall, with some very good features. Assessment is also good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Lesson planning and preparation are consistently good.
- Teachers have high expectations and challenge pupils well.
- Although teaching is good overall, it is inconsistent because subject leaders do not have enough opportunity to monitor teaching in order to spread good practice.
- Work is carefully matched to pupils' differing abilities.
- The pace and organisation of lessons are not always appropriate.

## Commentary

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 28 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	9	12	7	0	0	0

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.*

12. Teachers of classes in the same year groups plan their lessons together so work covered is consistent in each class. Planning and preparation are thorough so no time is wasted in lessons and pupils build systematically on what they already know and can do. Teachers use whole-class introductions very well to encourage pupils to develop thinking skills; they promote speaking skills by giving pupils sufficient time to express their ideas fully. Teachers use their observations, both during this time and whilst pupils are engaged on tasks, to assess how well pupils understand the work. They use this knowledge well to assist individual pupils and to plan or adapt future lessons.
13. Teachers' very good knowledge of individual pupils is used effectively to plan tasks which are well matched to individual pupils' learning needs, thus those with special educational needs and those of high ability are equally challenged. Teachers set high expectations for all pupils and frequently challenge them to develop their ideas or find more detailed information. In most lessons, the plenary session is used well to consolidate what has been learnt and extend the ideas or challenge pupils further.
14. Teachers adopt a range of strategies and activities so that pupils are interested and motivated by the work planned. The pace of lessons is generally brisk so pupils do not become bored or fidgety when gathered together on the carpet. Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good, so most pupils are confident and contribute well to discussions. Teachers in Year 2 use the electronic whiteboards very effectively. All teachers plan good use of computers and other technology as tools for learning. The calm and positive atmosphere created by teachers provides pupils with a very good learning environment. Very occasionally the pace of a lesson is slow or the lesson is not organised as well as it might be. Subject leaders have not yet had opportunities to observe teaching and learning. As a result they have not been able to monitor and evaluate the impact of teaching in their subjects, or to identify and share good practice.
15. Homework is set weekly in reading, spelling and mathematics, and teachers ensure that it is individual to the pupils. The diary includes very helpful guidance for parents on how they may support their children's learning. There is space for parents to comment on the homework completed.
16. Assessment procedures are good. Marking is of a high standard, work is judged against the learning objective and targets for improvement are included at the end of individual pieces of work. Assessment and monitoring for pupils with special educational needs are good. Their individual learning plans have clear achievable targets which are reviewed regularly.

## The curriculum

The school's curriculum is good with very good features, particularly in the opportunities provided for enrichment. Accommodation is satisfactory overall, but the range and quality of resources are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides a broad and varied curriculum.
- Planning has improved since the previous inspection, resulting in more independent learning.
- The ICT curriculum has improved significantly and is developing well as a tool for supporting learning in other subjects.
- The curriculum is effectively enriched by the use of visiting specialists and by strong community and parental links.
- Despite improvements to the building, there remain inadequacies in the accommodation.

### **Commentary**

17. The school has improved features of the curriculum that were identified as satisfactory at the time of the previous inspection, whilst also maintaining or improving standards in most subjects. The curriculum is broad and well structured and gives ample time to all subjects. The school provides good learning opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage and for pupils in the rest of the school. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have contributed to the consistently high standards in English and mathematics. Teaching is challenging overall and a clear focus has been given to meeting the needs of all pupils. It is well planned and complemented by the innovative use of a supportive learning environment where pupils develop their skills through good quality questioning by the teachers. Pupils are motivated and effective learners because the provision is stimulating and varied.
18. Teachers provide good opportunities overall to promote literacy, numeracy and ICT through other subjects. For example, in science and history they encourage pupils to write conclusions and develop data handling skills after completing investigatory activities. Diary writing is a feature of their work in history. Writing through other subjects is strongly promoted and is an important element in the improving literacy standards.
19. The curriculum for ICT is now good. It is enabling pupils to achieve well and makes a strong contribution to the pupils' learning in other subjects. Provision has been strengthened by the installation and subsequent updating of computers, as well as the use of the ICT suite at the local junior school. This has improved the pupils' access to good quality, well-focused teaching of ICT skills.
20. Parents value and support the variety of activities offered, because they believe they result in interested children who want to learn. A number of parents provide support in the classrooms on a regular basis. The range of extra-curricular clubs has been extended to include simply soccer, arts and crafts, choir, ICT, athletics and dance and French. In addition, specialist providers such as sports coaches, theatre groups and other outside speakers are used effectively to enhance the curriculum with their expertise. The school is an active participator in local sporting events and festivals.

21. The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs. Social and educational inclusion is fostered well. The school ensures that pupils with special educational needs are identified as soon as possible so that lessons and activities can be suitably modified for them. Some withdrawal sessions provide extra support for pupils where assessment indicates they need it. Teaching assistants working in close liaison with the teachers use their experience and skills well to meet the varying needs of individuals. Rightly, parents and pupils feel strongly that children are treated fairly. The school's ethos places children at the heart of all considerations. Their views are sought regularly.
22. There is a good match of teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. The sense of joint purpose that binds all staff is a strong feature and a key factor in the school's success. The school has invested appropriately in its resources for learning. In every part of the school, teachers have access to a wide range of stimulating and relevant materials. For example, interactive whiteboards are improving the quality of teaching and learning, but the external accommodation is only just adequate. There is a dedicated outside area for the reception-age children but it requires significant improvements for it to complement the children's development through outdoor play. The playground area also has limitations that adversely affect its use as a curriculum resource, and it remains relatively under-developed. While the current library has a suitable range of books to support pupils' learning, its location in the school hall limits pupils' opportunities to use it for independent learning and research.

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

The arrangements to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are very good. Pupils receive very good support, advice and guidance. Involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff know the pupils very well and successfully promote their academic and personal development.
- Good induction procedures in the reception class enable the children to settle swiftly into school.
- The recently established school council provides the pupils with the opportunity to air their views on all aspects of life in school.

### **Commentary**

23. The school provides a safe and caring environment in which the pupils can enjoy learning. Pupils are very well supervised around the school at breaks and lunchtimes and routines are firmly established. Potential hazards are swiftly identified and resolved. Arrangements for child protection and 'looked after' children are very good and meet the requirements of the local area child protection committee. All staff, lunchtime supervisors, regular parent helpers and members of the governing body receive regular training. Training in first aid has also been completed by all staff and the school is working towards the Healthy Schools Award.
24. Staff know their pupils very well and value them as individuals. Detailed records keep all staff aware of contact and medical details to help them to support the pupils'

personal development. The teaching of personal and social education is now firmly established and includes a discussion period called 'circle time'. These sessions provide an opportunity for the pupils to discuss their views without fear or embarrassment on issues such as bullying or friendship. This teaching also takes place in lessons such as religious education or science. Health professionals, some of whom are also parents, support some of these sessions.

25. Good induction procedures in the reception class enable the children to settle swiftly into school. Visits and meeting are arranged for parents and children. Staff make visits to early years providers to meet the children and assess their individual needs. The children are then eased gently into school on a part-time basis. Additional induction procedures are in place for the children of families where English is not the first language.
26. The recently established school council meets regularly to discuss issues and ideas of interest to pupils. All year groups are represented and all members are elected. This has brought about the re-introduction of the 'friendship bench' and the allocation of funds for each class to purchase 'rainy day' equipment for lunchtimes. They know that their views are taken seriously and where possible acted upon.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school maintains very good links with parents. Links with the community and other schools are very good.



## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents receive very good quality information about their children's progress and the work and life of the school.
- Links with parents are very good and there is a good degree of mutual support.
- Very good links with the local community enrich the pupils' learning.
- There are very good links with local schools, particularly the adjoining junior school.

## **Commentary**

27. The quality of information for parents is very good. The prospectus and governing body's annual report are attractive and informative. Regular newsletters provide all the key information and news that is required. The newly appointed Press Officer ensures news of forthcoming events is forwarded to the local newspapers. Curriculum information is given in the prospectus and workshops have been held to explain the National Literacy Strategy and national tests. The pupils' progress reports are good and are supported by three parents' consultation evenings each year. They contain all the required information and targets to inform parents how their children can improve their work.
28. Parents provide very good support for their children's learning. Attendance at parents' meetings and social events is very good. The active Parents and Teachers Association raises considerable funds to benefit the pupils. Resources such as digital cameras have been purchased and additional funds have been donated towards developing the outdoor environment. The school has a regular group of parent helpers who support in lessons and two parents have progressed to working as teaching assistants. Homework is well supported and the homework diaries provide a valuable means of communication between home and school. The local college runs family workshops from the school in subjects such as literacy and numeracy, and these also have the potential to assist parents in helping their children to learn.
29. The school has very good links with the community and makes good use of community resources. This contributes to the pupils' understanding of the wider context of their learning. For example, the pupils entertain the community with carol singing at Christmas and visit the local day centre. Educational visits to the local cathedral and visitors such as the clergy support the pupils' academic and personal development. Business links have been established with a local bank and many local businesses make donations towards fund-raising events.
30. Very good links with local schools are maintained. Liaison takes place with local infant schools and teaching assistants attend cluster meetings. High school students take part in physical education sessions and students on work experience or teacher training complete placements at the school. Strong links with the adjoining junior school ensure a smooth transition into Year 3. Primary pupils are welcome to use their ICT suite and attend assemblies. Induction days are held and transition units of activities such as circus skills and music promote continuity of learning. Years 2 and 3 also exchange teachers for 'story swaps'.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership by the headteacher is very good. She has quickly gained the support of staff and focused on key areas for improvement. The school is well managed and leadership by other key staff is good. The governance of the school is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has very high aspirations for the pupils, very effectively sharing the vision with pupils, parents and teachers.
- The deputy headteacher makes a significant contribution to developing areas of the curriculum.
- Governors are well informed and effectively influence the school's work and development.
- There is a strong sense of teamwork within the school, but subject leaders need to be more involved in monitoring teaching to reduce inconsistency.

### **Commentary**

31. The headteacher has very quickly established a very good working relationship with all staff. She has been very successful in creating a stimulating environment where high standards are reached and where pupils enjoy their learning. There is a strong sense of teamwork and all adults enthusiastically subscribe to the school's vision and ethos. This places great value on the contributions of all pupils and they have opportunities to be involved in all activities. The headteacher is constantly seeking to maintain and improve the high standards. Subject leaders feel empowered and are beginning to make a strong contribution, carefully considering how the school is to move forward. The headteacher has involved staff in analyzing strengths and weaknesses and made a determined start to improvements in areas such as the quality of the foundation stage curriculum, resources in ICT, supporting teaching and learning through focused development opportunities and actively encouraging the involvement of parents in the education of their children.
32. The headteacher works closely with the deputy headteacher, who very successfully leads curriculum developments, working closely with the foundation stage co-ordinator. Because of this good quality leadership the school has been able to focus on improvements to the foundation stage curriculum and to keep pace with improvements in ICT. The deputy headteacher motivates staff well and they are encouraged to develop their skills and competencies through well-focused continuous professional development. Like the headteacher she is committed to the school and its community. Her teaching and effective subject co-ordination provide good role models. The high aspirations of the headteacher, who is the special educational needs co-ordinator, have ensured very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. She manages this area well. As a result, the needs of all pupils are met well.
33. The governing body supports the school well and is also prepared to challenge it. Governors tackle difficult issues such as staffing and resources objectively. They are actively involved in the school's self-evaluation and play a full part in determining its future direction. They have responded well to the minor issues of the previous inspection and carefully monitored the school's improvement. They ask pertinent questions about the attainment of pupils in particular subjects, and, through information provided by the headteacher, have a good knowledge of the trends in pupils' attainment and the performance of different groups of pupils. They ensure that their duties are carried out effectively. They have a good understanding of the

accommodation issues faced by the school and are active in seeking improvements to the outdoor areas. The headteacher and chair are determined to provide pupils with the necessary skills that will enable them to develop fully. This teamwork contributes positively to the maintenance of very high standards.

34. All staff have responsibilities for subject development and are given time to monitor and evaluate progress. They work together very well, assisting each other across a wide range of areas. Information they gather informs the school's development plan well. They have retained a strong commitment to the school through a period of uncertainty about the leadership of the school. Plans are in place to extend their role to enable a greater involvement in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects, so that good practice can be disseminated and the overall quality of teaching raised. The school has some very capable volunteers who are organized well, contributing effectively in lessons, supporting pupils' learning well.
  
35. The headteacher and governors are aware of limited outdoor facilities and have begun to offer better provision. Applications have been made for grant funding for improvements, and effective partnerships have been established, for example with a local environmental agency, in order to improve facilities for outdoor play and environmental education.

***Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005***

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	416,576
Total expenditure	388,491
Expenditure per pupil	2,634

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to the next year	28,085

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

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

36. Provision for children in foundation stage is good and there has been good improvement since the last inspection. Almost all children come to the school with some pre-school playgroup experience. Children enter the reception classes with higher than average attainment overall, although there is a wide spread of ability. By the time they enter Year 1 the majority are working above the expected levels in all areas of learning, and some well above. Limited provision for outdoor play means that children achieve soundly overall during their time in the reception class, in spite of good teaching. A positive partnership between the two reception teachers means that they make the most of the limited accommodation. Notably, there are now well-organised opportunities for children to engage in activities planned by themselves and assessment of the learning outcomes is good. The headteacher is aware of the limitations in accommodation and has plans to improve provision.
37. The induction procedures for children joining the school are good and greatly appreciated by parents. There is plenty of useful contact with pre-school groups which helps staff to be aware of specific children's needs. A number of visits are made by children and their parents before the children start school. Parents are made to feel very welcome and are given the chance to look round the whole school, as well as join their children in the reception classes. Teaching in both the reception classes is consistently good. The class teachers works closely with the nursery nurses and both understand the needs of young children and make learning fun. Children's progress is frequently assessed and the information gathered is used effectively to plan the next step in their learning. Leadership and management are good. There is a clear understanding of how the foundation stage should provide for the learning of young children and this is put into practice effectively.

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

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

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

- There are very positive relationships throughout the reception classes, and adults provide very good role models for the children.
- There are very good opportunities for children to develop independence and to take responsibility for their actions from a very early age.

#### **Commentary**

38. The classrooms have a warm, welcoming atmosphere in which young children feel safe and secure. There are very high expectations of children's attitudes and behaviour, but these are very well related to the children's social development. The staff themselves give a very good example of how other people should be treated, and this helps the children to appreciate the importance of good social behaviour. Children know the class rules and many are developing an understanding of how their actions affect others. Children's independence is developed effectively, as is their ability to

work and play alongside others. For instance, in the role play area children worked together in the 'Beach café' serving breakfast to their customers.

39. Children play happily during the many stimulating activities in the classrooms, and are expected to choose activities themselves sensibly. They learn to tidy away the resources that they have used. Lack of space and resources limits provision for outdoor play and restricts activities to support children's personal and social development. Because of good teaching, however, children's confidence develops rapidly and they achieve well, so that by the time they start in Year 1, all will have reached the early learning goals for their age and most will have exceeded them.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children make good progress and reach standards above those expected by the end of reception.
- Good opportunities for speaking help children to communicate confidently.
- Children are encouraged to write from an early stage.
- There is good provision for developing children's reading.

### **Commentary**

40. Children enter the reception classes with generally better than average language and communication skills and they are provided with good opportunities to develop them further. Throughout reception teaching is good, with the teachers and support assistants giving a high priority to extending children's language skills. This ensures children continue to make good progress and the majority will exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the reception year.
41. Good routines for speaking and listening are in place right from the start so that children learn how to listen to each other and take turns in speaking. All staff provide good opportunities for children to speak, encouraging them to discuss experiences both in groups and in their role play activities. This helps to give children confidence and encourages those few who are more reluctant speakers. Staff use questions and discussions effectively to extend children's vocabulary. For instance, children used their photographs of recent holidays as a stimulus for conversations. This results in children being confident speakers, who take turns in speaking and listening and communicate easily with adults and each other.
42. A good range of varied activities promotes the development of children's writing well. For example, there are opportunities to write and address postcards, and to make lists and labels. This approach was effective with the reception children in their role-play as tourists at the seaside, and later in opportunities to write their own postcards. The teacher challenged higher attaining children to write their cards with an address unaided. They were successful; their writing was well formed and neatly presented with near-accurate spellings of demanding words. More formal teaching of handwriting begins at an appropriate stage, so by the time the children enter Year 1 most will have achieved well in this aspect of their learning.

43. The development of reading skills has a high priority and is effectively supported by parents. Children handle books confidently and have a different sound to learn each week. All children have embarked on a systematic reading scheme and are making good progress with their reading. They listen to stories with interest and concentration and most can retell them accurately. Reading is promoted well. At times, books are provided and effectively displayed to support children's work in other areas, such as model-making. Children enjoy the opportunities they have to share books with other children and adults.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teaching uses a variety of approaches and children achieve well.
- Good practical activities and an emphasis on appropriate mathematical vocabulary support children's learning effectively.

### **Commentary**

44. Teaching is good, with staff making good use of a variety of activities to promote children's mathematical development. There is a good focus on appropriate mathematical language and on understanding through practical experience. Every opportunity is taken to reinforce children's understanding in counting and ordering numbers, and as a result many children can count in twos and understand the concept of doubling. The frequent singing of number songs also encourages confidence and makes children familiar with number patterns. All this ensures children's learning is good and contributes to the progress they make, so that the majority achieve the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception and many exceed them.
45. Good displays and use of mathematical phrases such as *more than*, *less than*, *empty* or *half full* effectively promote children's learning. In practical lessons staff use an interesting range of teaching methods and resources, including ICT, so that children develop a good understanding of all aspects of mathematics. During the inspection children were seen working on subtraction. The majority of children demonstrated a clear understanding of this concept. The variety of practical experiences provided ensured that their number language was developed effectively. Their mathematical vocabulary improved as they used language such as 'more', 'less', 'one less than' and 'take away'. The outdoor area was used to reinforce children's learning in this area. Most children are able to name shapes such as squares, triangles, and circles. Mathematical language is woven into everyday activities well.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The staff create a lively learning environment to simulate children's curiosity.
- Weaknesses in the outdoor area limit the range of children's investigations.

## Commentary

46. The staff create a rich environment and plan topics that stimulate children's interest. The good teaching results in children achieving well in lessons. For instance, in science sessions on food, children were challenged to predict which foods would melt when left in the sun. This well-organised session provided the children with opportunities to guess, observe, smell and handle the various produce. The language flowed, children noticing that the bread had gone crispy but the melted chocolate hardened when the sun went in. The children's knowledge and awareness of change were enhanced. The children are knowledgeable about various types of vehicles from experiences of making simple wheeled vehicles and visits to places like Tanfield Railway Centre. Through thoughtful and well-planned activities they gain an awareness of other cultures and beliefs. Religious education forms an appropriate element of the curriculum, with an initial focus on children's awareness of themselves developing into an appreciation of the diversity of different faiths and celebrations. Children become familiar with the computer and learn to use the mouse and keyboard, but exploration is limited to a narrow range of ICT resources. The outdoor area is limited and restricts children's regular exploration of the immediate environment, such as learning from close observation of the changes in the growth of plants or mini-beasts. Achievement is satisfactory overall. Most children are likely to reach the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception, and many will exceed them.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children learn how to control their movements.
- Learning outside is limited with few opportunities for child-initiated activities.

## Commentary

47. Within the confines of space available, teachers organise lessons well and so increase children's skills in control and co-ordination. Children have a good range of opportunities to extend their skills with various tools and equipment in the classroom and these are effective in helping them make progress in developing their hand and eye co-ordination. They have many opportunities to manipulate small construction toys, for example through imaginary play, and show a good level of dexterity. They are developing a sense of space and an awareness of how to share the hall floor area sensibly and safely with other children in the class. The teaching is clearly focused on developing not only physical skills, but also on making children aware of the importance of movement as a means of keeping healthy. However, the outdoor area is under-developed as a facility for developing the children's physical skills. As a result, achievement is satisfactory. The majority of children achieve the goals expected of them by the end of reception and some will exceed them.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children enjoy the range of activities provided for them.
- Good opportunities are provided to encourage children to work co-operatively together.

## **Commentary**

48. Teaching in this area of learning is good overall. The teacher plans an appropriate range of activities to stimulate children's imagination. As a result their learning is good and they make good progress towards the goals they are expected to achieve. Some children will exceed the standards expected for their age by the end of their time in the foundation stage.
49. Children experiment with colour mixing as they paint or print. They enjoy the role-play opportunities they have, using the props provided to support their play effectively. These stimulate good interaction as children work together in pairs or small groups. Staff provide good opportunities for children to sing simple songs and rhymes and to dance. Children clearly enjoy these activities and enter into them enthusiastically. They also contribute to their creative development and cultural awareness, for example the role-play linked to the 'Seaside' theme. Children show good concentration and dexterity as they work on their 'thumbpots' and are proud of their achievement. They relate well to each other as they work both within and outside the classroom.



## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average and all pupils achieve well.
- There are very good opportunities for speaking and listening, and good arrangements for reading.
- Teachers have substantial expertise in the teaching of English.
- Good teaching of literacy through other subjects has improved standards of writing.
- The subject co-ordinator does not have sufficient opportunity to monitor the work in classrooms.

#### Commentary

50. The 2004 results of national tests in English at the end of Year 2 were well above the national average, and were well above average for similar schools. Evidence collected during the inspection indicates that standards are currently well above the national average in Year 2 in all aspects of the subject. A substantial number of pupils come into school with good communication skills. Very good relationships between teachers and pupils result in generally confident and expressive pupils. They respond well to the teachers' questions, and learn to express their ideas with assurance. Pupils' oral skills benefit from frequent and regular opportunities for pupils to talk through and extend their work and explain it to others in engaging ways. Role-play is a developing feature of lessons. For instance, pupils in a Year 1 lesson enjoyed acting out a beach holiday. This experience provided opportunities to engage in conversations and improve writing skills through the writing of postcards. The school places a high priority on developing literacy skills by involving the pupils in role-play, drama or debate. Pupils' oral skills also benefit from the regular opportunities to speak with adults in the wider community and when visitors come to the school.
51. Pupils build upon the good start they make in the reception year in learning to read. The more capable readers make good progress and are well launched into reading when they leave Year 1. By the start of Year 2, pupils are already able to extract deeper levels of meaning from a text and speculate as to the motives and feelings of characters in their group reading of a story. Most pupils enjoy reading and try very hard to decode unknown words when reading aloud. There are a number of reasons for the high standard of reading:
- pupils enjoy phonic lessons, because the teaching is very good, learning is fun, and so they learn how to link letters and sounds at a good rate;
  - books and stories are celebrated and promoted in all corners of the school;
  - a very well-organised home-school partnership means that pupils are encouraged to read at home, and come to value reading all the more;
  - pupils with special educational needs are quickly identified and given extra support with learning letters and sounds to help them to catch up;
  - teachers use small group reading sessions effectively to challenge higher attaining pupils to interpret what they read and to dig for meaning 'between the lines'.

52. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to write in a wide variety of contexts. A good range of classroom materials, such as word banks and displays of points of grammar, supports pupils' writing well. The display of a wide range of class and individuals' work encourages pupils to improve their writing skills. Good attention is paid to developing grammatical skills, spelling and handwriting. This supports pupils' written work, particularly in English lessons. Year 2 pupils have written interesting accounts of educational visits which are well set out and presented. Higher attaining pupils produce imaginative writing of high quality using vivid description. Less able pupils are able to write several simple sentences. There are many opportunities provided for pupils to use their writing skills in other subjects.
53. Teaching is good overall, because of the teachers' good knowledge of how to teach all strands of English, their good management skills and their firm but fair, caring and enjoyable relationships with the pupils. In the best lessons teachers expertly manage pupils' learning. They choose topics and materials which engage pupils, set a very good pace for the lesson and provide the right amount of challenge and support. Teaching support staff are effective in meeting the learning needs of individuals and small groups of pupils. As a result, pupils of all levels of attainment achieve well, including pupils with special educational needs, who are making good progress towards meeting their personal targets. However, in some lessons the task set is not demanding enough of the more capable groups in the class. On the whole, pupils have very good attitudes to learning and this helps support their progress. Marking helps the lower attaining pupils to see their faults, and overall, shows the higher attaining pupils how to do better.
54. Resources for learning are good, although the library is located in the school hall as there is no other space available. This is not a satisfactory arrangement since it limits pupils' opportunities for independent learning and research.
55. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator is a very good role model for other teachers, and is keen, interested and a valued support to other staff. Her work is hampered by the limited time available for her to monitor and evaluate teaching in her subject, alongside her other key responsibilities. She has not yet been able to formally monitor the quality of teaching and learning in every classroom. Assessment procedures are thorough and data is analysed well to monitor strengths, areas for improvement and pupils' progress. However, the results are not yet used to set a consistent system of individual target setting to help pupils focus on what they need to do to improve. The good provision has been maintained since the previous inspection.

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

56. Provision is good. Pupils benefit from a good range of opportunities for developing their literacy skills. The focus on cross-curricular literacy is having a positive impact on standards. Teachers display and explain key words. In geography and science, pupils enjoy writing descriptions of places visited on holiday and use language well to explain activities they enjoyed the most. Their use of scientific vocabulary is impressive, producing detailed accounts of their observations of minibeasts. ICT is also well used to support literacy skills, for instance for drafting and redrafting work and for spell checks. Work is well written and presented in the different subjects and this is contributing well to developing literacy skills.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are well above average in Year 2 and pupils achieve well.
- Good teaching throughout the school makes mathematics relevant to pupils' experiences.
- Assessments are thorough and help match tasks closely to the needs of all pupils. Teachers know their pupils well.
- The grouping of pupils according to ability in Year 2 contributes to the high standards.

## **Commentary**

57. National test results at the end of Year 2 were well above average in 2004. The test results have been at a consistently high level over the last four years. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are still well above average in Year 2. This represents good achievement because pupils generally enter the school with above average attainment. There is no significant difference in performance between boys and girls. All pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs and those who are more able.
58. Teaching is good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They plan lessons very well, building on what pupils already know and can do based on formal and informal assessment. Teachers ask questions well and encourage pupils to explain their reasoning. Time is spent in Years 1 and 2 carefully consolidating basic concepts and reinforcing pupils' understanding. Mental agility is fostered by number games so that pupils learn to think quickly and use what they have learned before in practical situations. Teachers effectively develop pupils' skills through practical activities. These are usually taken from realistic situations so that pupils see that what they are learning is important in the world in which they live. Pupils in Year 2, for example, learnt that each digit in a number represents a particular group of objects. If pupils experience difficulty with a concept teachers are quick to recognise this and modify their plans and adapt the work accordingly. Lessons are generally brisk with a range of strategies so that pupils maintain good concentration. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is always good.
59. There is a good concentration on numeracy skills. Teachers set challenging problems for pupils to solve using a range of mental strategies which they share orally. In many lessons, during the initial oral session, pupils used individual whiteboards to display their answers so that all were actively engaged in the tasks. Occasionally games do not involve all pupils so that concentration is not so good and the pace of the lesson falters. Individual tasks are carefully matched to effectively challenge pupils of different abilities. Because teachers use the outcomes of the assessment of pupils' progress well, the pace of lessons is brisk. Pupils often work well without direct adult supervision, enabling teachers to focus their attention on a particular group, either to support the less able or to challenge the higher attaining pupils.
60. Leadership and management are good. The arrangements in Year 2, whereby pupils are taught in groups of similar levels of attainment, are successful in achieving high standards. Results of national tests are carefully analysed to check if there are any common areas of weakness so that these can be incorporated into future lesson planning. More time for the subject leader to monitor teaching would offer opportunities to identify and share good practice.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

61. Numeracy is used well in other subjects, and this reinforces the relevance of mathematics to virtually all areas of life, particularly in solving number problems. Pupils in Year 2 readily related their calculations when recording science investigations. Tasks, therefore, made more sense. ICT is used by small groups of pupils to support and extend their mathematical learning in classrooms. Mathematics is used well in most areas, especially in science for measurements, calculations and the presentation of data.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a good balance between all strands of the subject.
- Pupils are encouraged to use an investigational approach to the subject and are encouraged to question the results of their investigations.
- Teachers have a good understanding of the levels at which pupils are working and plan lessons accordingly. Work is well matched to pupils' needs.

### **Commentary**

62. Standards in science are well above average in Year 2. Teacher assessments show that almost all pupils reach the standard expected and many exceed it. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. The trend in results has been upward over the last four years.
63. Teaching is good. Teachers are confident in the subject because they have good knowledge and understanding of the subject. They have recently adopted a more investigative approach so pupils learn through first-hand experience and direct observation. All aspects of the subject are provided for well. In whole-class discussions at the beginning and end of lessons, teachers use probing questions to encourage pupils to think beyond simple answers. Pupils are taught correct scientific vocabulary. They are encouraged to give reasons for their answers and to explain their ideas fully. These sessions contribute well to developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. A variety of teaching strategies are used to ensure that all pupils build on what they already know and can do. Sometimes mixed ability groups work together; at other times groups or pairings are of similar ability so that the teacher can support pupils who find tasks more difficult. Some worksheets are simplified for less able pupils.
64. Pupils' good achievement is supported by a good level of challenge. Lessons successfully contain all strands of the National Curriculum programme of study. Pupils with special educational needs have the support of well-briefed support staff who make sure that questions are within their capabilities but always require plenty of thinking. All pupils are effectively included in activities and investigations. The books of higher attaining pupils show that the level of detail required of them is high and they must regularly contend with extended work that makes for more complex answers.
65. Teachers make good use of the local environment and visits further afield to support learning, for instance when studying the habitats of small animals and minibeasts. As well as English, there are good links with other subjects, such as geography, mathematics, art and design and technology. ICT is used well as a tool for learning. Year 1 pupils used a computer program to paint and label parts of flowering plants and a digital camera to photograph different leaves. Year 2 teachers have the benefit of electronic whiteboards, which they use very well.
66. Leadership of the subject is good. The subject leader is very keen to develop the subject further and her enthusiasm for the subject is infectious. She is in the process of developing an effective assessment procedure for whole-school use. Management is satisfactory since the subject leader does not have opportunities to monitor teaching. This inhibits the ability to identify good practice and improve consistency. Teachers

currently assess individual pieces of work against the learning objective and set pupils individual targets for improvement.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Leadership and management of the subject by the co-ordinator are good.
- Good resources for teaching the subject are used well, contributing effectively to above average standards.
- Teachers effectively use equipment in the computer suite in the adjoining junior school.
- In lessons, teachers use questioning and intervention effectively to take pupils' learning forward.
- There are good links with other curriculum areas.

### **Commentary**

67. By Year 2 pupils' standards are above average. The co-ordinator has scrutinised samples of pupils' work and offered teachers good advice and assistance. There are clear plans in place to enable the co-ordinator to observe the teaching of colleagues in order to offer further advice and support. The resources for the subject are good. Currently both Year 2 classrooms have interactive whiteboards, which are used well to support teaching and learning. The school uses a well-equipped computer suite in the adjoining junior school. All the computers are linked to the internet. The school has appropriate procedures to ensure pupils' safety when pupils access different internet web sites. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Since that time the school has invested in resources and planned an effective programme to ensure that skills are taught well to pupils. Over the last two years the resources have been used well and this has impacted positively on standards. Pupils achieve well.
68. The quality of teaching and learning is good. In all lessons seen in the computer suite or when computers were used in classrooms, all teaching staff displayed secure subject knowledge and used the equipment well. All teachers use questioning and intervention effectively in lessons to help pupils grasp ideas to take their learning forward. This was demonstrated in lessons in Year 2 when teachers used the interactive whiteboard to illustrate how to consider strategies to solve number problems and also to build compound words. Assessment is used well. Pupils' progress is assessed each half term and the outcomes used well to plan future lessons.
69. When pupils are working with computers they treat them with respect, the quality of dialogue is good and pupils work together well to complete tasks. Computers in classrooms are used well to reinforce what has been learned in the computer suite.

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

70. ICT is used effectively to support pupils' learning across different curriculum areas. For instance, in literacy lessons, pupils in Years 1 and 2 were able to present good quality written work by using their word processing skills. In a mathematics lesson in Year 1 pupils accessed a program to help them recognize time in both analogue and digital form. Pupils' work on display around the school illustrates the use of ICT to present the

outcomes of science investigations in pictures and text, and the presentation of high quality art work, based on that of artists such as Mondrian.

## HUMANITIES

*Work was sampled in geography, history and religious education. It was not possible to see any lessons in religious education.*

71. One **history** lesson was seen. From a scrutiny of pupils' books and displays in classrooms and around school it is evident that requirements of the National Curriculum are met in ways which interest and involve the pupils. They share their experiences of visits to other countries. Organised school visits are used well to support learning, such as a recent visit to Beamish. Teachers make good use of both history and **geography** to develop pupils' literacy skills through different forms of writing and using books as reference sources.
72. Discussions with pupils and with the headteacher reveal that subject planning in **religious education** is closely based on the nationally agreed units of work and the locally agreed syllabus. Scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that they present work well and that lessons have been planned to meet the differing needs of all pupils. The work illustrates a number of aspects of the curriculum and pupils have studied many of the Christian stories and also examined other faiths, for example Buddhism and Hinduism, at an appropriate level. Consequently, the school has successfully increased the contribution the subject makes to pupils learning about cultures other than their own and now has a good range of artefacts that help pupils to understand major world religions. Pupils' moral development benefits from the subject's strong links with the personal, social and health education development programme. For example, they look at the nature of relationships by considering how we look after our pets, and how we behave towards each other. Effective links with other subjects were illustrated in an assembly about the differences and similarities between individuals.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

*Work was sampled in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education.*

73. In **art and design**, pupils are able to experiment with the styles of famous artists such as Mondrian and William Morris. Pupils are keen and enjoy their work. Talented pupils in art and design have been identified and are being nurtured well through additional activities outside normal lesson times. There are appropriate cross-curricular links with ICT and geography. Work on display illustrates the good use of computer software to enable pupils to experiment with colour and tone. The co-ordinator has recently taken on responsibility for the subject and has a clear vision for the future, clearly set out in an action plan.
74. **Design and technology** is covered appropriately and according to national guidance. Secure systems are in place to ensure that pupils understand that they design for a purpose, and pupils in Year 2 record outcomes that reinforce the design, make, review and improve process. The work on display illustrates an appropriate range of topics and opportunities for pupils. Written and drawn work indicates that pupils are aware of the need to design and confidently discuss any necessary changes to improve the design. They are enthusiastic and keen to complete tasks to a good standard. Resources were used well in the items on display.

75. In **music**, good use is made of teachers' expertise to ensure that pupils enjoy a varied musical curriculum. In a good lesson observed, pupils developed well their performing skills using a range of percussion instruments and playing well together. They are improving their skills in recording their own compositions with graphic notation and they have benefited from working with visiting musicians in developing their understanding of instruments from other parts of the world. Computer programs are beginning to be used to develop pupils' compositions. Opportunities are provided for pupils to listen to music, but more could be made of these to help them appraise it.
76. There is a satisfactory curriculum for **physical education**. Pupils participate on a regular basis in lessons in dance, games and gymnastics. Pupils in Year 1 were positive when they worked at improving their throwing and striking skills and this helped to ensure satisfactory learning. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils developed their movement skills using space safely. In these lessons, pupils' attainment was average for their age. Extra coaching in football skills for both boys and girls and a dance club enrich the physical education curriculum. However, the school grounds, although of satisfactory quality, do limit opportunities for pupils to participate in a variety of high quality physical education activities.

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

*This area of the curriculum was sampled.*

77. The promotion of personal, social and health education and citizenship is very good, and is a strength of the school. Overall, the curriculum successfully promotes the school's caring ethos and the intellectual, physical and personal development of the pupils. A sensitively planned programme helps pupils, for example, to discuss personal responses to a variety of issues that affect their health in an atmosphere of caring and trust. It is very evident that the school's provision for personal, social and health education is successfully raising pupils' self-esteem and developing their personal and social skills. The recently formed school council gives children and pupils good opportunities to be actively involved in decision-making.
78. Reception children and pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop a good knowledge and understanding of how to care for themselves through, for example, science and physical education lessons. A central purpose underpinning all lessons is to promote respect for others and improve speaking and listening skills. The school is very successful in promoting care and respect for all its pupils and supporting literacy skills. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, pupils were discussing the uses of water in the home. They listened thoughtfully to other pupils' ideas and in groups sensibly discussed the importance of water, demonstrating confidence and good speaking and listening skills. In assemblies and religious education lessons, pupils are encouraged to reflect upon issues such as caring and valuing the beliefs of others. The school's very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development makes a significant contribution in promoting personal, social and health education.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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

