

INSPECTION REPORT

EAST HERRINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

East Herrington

LEA area: Sunderland

Unique reference number: 108785

Headteacher: Mr A F Bolton

Lead inspector: Mr A J Dobell

Dates of inspection: 18th to 21st April 2005

Inspection number: 266767

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	461
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Chapman
Date of previous inspection:	February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This very large primary school draws its pupils largely from the local area. Pupils' socio-economic backgrounds and levels of understanding when they join the Nursery cover a wide range, but are average overall. Pupils are largely from white, western European backgrounds and no pupils speak English as an additional language.

The school has the full time equivalent of 461.5 pupils on roll. Fifty-seven children attend the Nursery part time and all other pupils are full time. There are 42 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs and, at 8.6 per cent, this proportion is below average. Four pupils have a statement of special educational needs and, at 0.86 per cent, this, too, is below average. The nature of special educational needs includes severe learning difficulties, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, speech and communication difficulties and autism. Over the last few years, the school has gained Investors in People status, the Activemark Gold award, and an award for Learning Through Landscapes.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10373	Mr A J Dobell	Lead inspector	English, music, physical education.
19374	Mrs W Sheehan	Lay inspector	
22452	Mrs M Farman	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage, mathematics, art and design, design and technology, religious education.
28320	Mr R Willey	Team inspector	Special educational needs, science, information and communication technology, geography, history.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **very good school** giving excellent value for money. Pupils achieve very well because the quality of teaching is very good overall and the headteacher's very effective leadership means that pupils feel secure and valued in the school.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve very well and have very good attitudes to learning because teaching is stimulating and challenging.
- The school's very positive ethos means that pupils' personal development is very good.
- The headteacher's very good leadership has enabled the school to improve very well since its previous inspection.
- The Foundation Stage is a strength of the school.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- In a few areas, for example, personal, social and health education and citizenship, and assessment, there is inconsistency of practice.
- Pupils have very good opportunities for enrichment in activities out of class.
- Parents and pupils have very positive views of the school.

The school has improved very well since its previous inspection. Standards are now generally well above average in the Foundation Stage and Year 2 and above average in Year 6. There have been significant improvements in some areas, for example, in information and communication technology and the Foundation Stage. The school has dealt with the key issues from the previous inspection effectively.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	B	C	B	C
mathematics	A*	A	A	C
science	A	A	C	D

Key: A - in the top five per cent; A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average*

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Achievement is very good. Children enter the Nursery with levels of understanding and learning skills which cover a wide range, but are average overall. By the end of the Reception Year, most have exceeded the standards expected in the six early learning goals designed for this age group. At the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been generally well above average for the last 4 years in the national tests. In the tests at the end of Year 6, overall standards have been well above average in English, mathematics and science for three of the last four years. In 2004, they were above average. These results represent very good achievement overall. Evidence from the inspection shows that standards in mathematics are now well above average in Years 2

and 6; in English, they are well above average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6, and in science, they are above average in Years 2 and 6. In information and communication technology and geography, standards are above expectations in Years 2 and 6. In history, they are above expectations in Year 2 and match expectations in Year 6. In religious education, standards are at the expected level in Year 2 and above in Year 6. In other subjects, there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement.

Pupils' personal qualities are very good. They behave very well in and out of lessons and are very keen to learn. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. There have been no exclusions since the previous inspection, and attendance is above average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is very good. Teaching and learning are very good with almost three lessons out of five being very good or excellent. Teaching is challenging and stimulating so that pupils are keen to work hard and to make progress. Assessment systems are good overall with very good features in English and mathematics.

The quality of the curriculum is good and opportunities for enrichment outside lessons are very good. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for and achieve well. Pupils are well cared for and the school has good links with parents and the local community. Links with other schools are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher's very effective leadership has created a strong ethos throughout the school in which pupils flourish academically and personally because they feel valued for what they can offer. The headteacher receives very good support from his deputy and all his colleagues, all of whom share his vision for the school. Management is very good; the professional development of staff is given a high priority, and finances are managed very effectively. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and potential for development, and ensure that the school meets its legal obligations except for those relating to a daily act of collective worship.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils hold the school in very high regard. This was clear from the very high levels of support in the parents' and pupils' questionnaires completed before the inspection. A minority of parents expressed concern about the information that they receive about their children's progress. Inspectors found this to be satisfactory and support the parents' and pupils' positive views about other aspects of the school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important thing the school should do to improve is:

- ensure that practice is consistent across the school with regard to assessment, and personal, health and social education and citizenship.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- ensure that all pupils have access to a daily collective act of worship.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is very good overall throughout the school. Standards in English and mathematics are well above average in Year 2. In Year 6, standards in English and science are above average, and, in mathematics, they are well above average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is very good throughout the school because pupils are very well taught, overall.
- Children in the Foundation Stage exceed the standards expected nationally in the early learning goals.
- Information and communication technology is being used increasingly effectively to support learning and to raise standards.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

Commentary

1. In the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2004, standards were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. They were also well above the average attained in schools which draw their pupils from similar backgrounds in reading and mathematics, and above the average of these schools in writing. Over the last five years, the trend of improvement in the school's standards at the end of Year 2 has exceeded the national trend. Since pupils enter the Nursery with levels of understanding and learning skills which are barely average, these results represent very good achievement in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2.
2. In the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2004, standards were above average in English, well above average in mathematics and average in science. Overall, standards in these subjects have been well above average in three of the last four years, and above average in the fourth. Mathematics generally has higher standards than English and science because pupils are set by ability. This has a positive effect on achievement. A slight dip in results in 2004 means that the trend in the average points score over the last five years has been below average. The school has identified the reasons for the lower results attained in 2004, which resulted from this year group being marginally less able than other year groups in the school. Strategies have been put in place to reverse this trend.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.8 (18.2)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	16.3 (16.2)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	18.4 (18.0)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.1 (27.4)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	28.9 (29.2)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	29.3 (30.1)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- Evidence from the inspection shows that that pupils are now achieving very well throughout the school because, overall, they are very well taught. As a result, well above average standards are being maintained in Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are above expectations in science, information and communication technology, geography and history and meet expectations in religious education. There was not sufficient evidence to evaluate standards in art and design, design and technology, music, and physical education. In Year 6, standards are now above average in English and science and well above average in mathematics. Standards are above expectations in information and communication technology, geography and religious education, and at the expected level in history. Again, there was insufficient evidence to judge standards in other subjects.
- A major reason for these above average standards is that children get a very good start to their education in the Foundation Stage. They quickly settle into the school, gain in confidence, and make rapid progress. As a result, they are likely to exceed the standards expected nationally in the early learning goals designed for this age group in each of the six areas of learning by the end of the Reception Year. This represents very good achievement.
- Information and communication technology is being used in the school increasingly effectively to raise standards. All classes have access each week to the computer suite and, because their learning is well managed, standards exceed expectations throughout the school. In the classrooms which have computer-driven whiteboards, teachers use them very effectively to support learning in other subjects. These interesting presentations engage pupils' interest very effectively so that they apply themselves and achieve very well.
- Although pupils with special educational needs attain below average standards overall, they generally achieve well in relation to their targets. This is reflected in the results that they gain in national tests, where they achieve well compared with their previous standards. This good achievement results from the very good support that they receive from their teachers and support assistants and the careful arrangements that are made to support their learning. Very good arrangements are made to support the learning of pupils with particular gifts or talents. As a result, they achieve very well.
- The school attains standards which are generally well above average in the national tests because it analyses results in the national and optional tests carefully to identify any areas of relative weakness. It then plans to overcome them in future teaching and learning. This careful management of learning enables pupils to achieve very well so that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good, as is their personal development. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Attendance and punctuality are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are very good, creating an effective learning environment.
- The provision for pupils' personal development helps them to develop very good personal and social skills.
- Attendance and punctuality are good, enabling pupils to make the most of their learning opportunities.

Commentary

8. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. In discussion, pupils felt that behaviour in particular has improved well with the introduction of playground buddies, more responsibilities and more equipment for them to use at playtimes. Pupils usually settle very quickly in class, listen very well, and are keen to learn. They support each other very effectively in paired and group work. For example, in a Year 6 English lesson, where pupils were required to evaluate a partner's work, pupils shared their ideas sensitively, respected the opinions of others, and gave very positive and constructive feedback. Pupils who have special educational needs are given very good support. As a result, they feel confident and so have similarly very good attitudes in lessons. Pupils' behaviour is very good throughout the school day, and playtimes, both indoors and outdoors, are friendly and supportive social occasions. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the questionnaires distributed before the inspection agreed that behaviour was good.
9. No bullying was observed during the inspection and, in discussion, pupils felt that bullying was very rare and that staff dealt with any instances quickly and appropriately. The school has launched active measures to safeguard against bullying with the introduction of a 'Buddy' system and an active playground programme, where older pupils teach younger pupils playground games. In discussion, pupils felt these have been very effective in helping pupils to sort out minor disagreements and supporting those who feel lonely or upset. There have been no exclusions in recent years and any incidents of a racial nature are sensitively managed and carefully monitored. Very good relationships throughout the school mean that pupils develop very good personal and social skills. Children in the Foundation Stage are likely to exceed the standards expected nationally in personal, social and emotional development by the end of the Reception Year.
10. Pupils' spiritual development is supported well in lessons, helping to raise their self-esteem and self-awareness. For example, in a Reception class lesson where children were exploring Christenings in the Christian religion, their attention was fully engaged when they were shown a Christening dress and shoes. Assemblies meet the act of collective worship requirements. However, not all pupils are present on a daily basis. Spirituality is adequately developed through assemblies, although opportunities are missed to develop these further, for example, music is not routinely played in assemblies. Pupils have a good appreciation of their own and others' cultural traditions and are prepared well for life in a multi-cultural society. Pupils' social development is very well provided for with many opportunities for pupils to work together in class, a wide range of well-attended extra-curricular activities, opportunities to compete against other schools, and residential courses. Pupils have a very clear appreciation of right and wrong. They understand very clearly the impact of their behaviour on others and are developing a very good understanding of the impact of humans on the natural world. For example, there is a 'Fair Trade' tuck shop that is managed by pupils.

11. Attendance levels have remained good and above average for primary schools since the previous inspection. The school recognises that it now needs to introduce a method of calling parents on the first day of absence to ensure that pupils' whereabouts are known at all times. Most pupils arrive on time, resulting in a smooth start to the day.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.8	School data	0.1
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.

12. Behaviour and attitudes to learning have improved since the school was inspected previously. This has had a positive effect on pupils' standards and progress. Pupils feel secure and valued in the school and, as a result, they achieve very well.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides an education of very good quality. Pupils achieve very well throughout the school because they are very well taught. The curriculum is of good quality and pupils have very good opportunities for enrichment outside lessons. They are well cared for and relationships between pupils and adults are very good. Links with parents and the community are good and links with other school are very good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are very good throughout the school and assessment is good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very effective teaching results in very secure learning.
- Very good relationships mean that pupils have very good attitudes to learning.
- Consistently very good teaching means that children make a very good start to their learning in the Foundation Stage.
- Teaching assistants support learning very effectively, particularly for pupils who have special educational needs.
- Assessment systems are good overall, but their effectiveness varies.
- The school has inclusion as a high priority, but pupils do not always have equality of access to all that the school offers.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 60 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3 (5%)	32 (53.3%)	23 (38.3%)	2 (3.3%)	0	0	0

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

13. The quality of teaching is very good overall throughout the school, and this is a significant strength. Teachers put considerable effort into planning lessons which will stimulate and excite pupils so that they put a great deal of effort into their learning. In classrooms where computer-driven whiteboards are available, they are used very effectively to engage pupils' interest and to support their learning. In classes where they are not available, there are examples of teachers putting considerable thought into making lessons interesting and meaningful for their pupils. For example, in an excellent history lesson in Year 2 comparing today's holiday experiences with those of 100 years ago, the teacher had photographs, a video of seaside experiences at the beginning of the last century, and an old recording of 'Oh, I do like to be beside the seaside', to give pupils a realistic understanding of what holidays meant in the past. Their response was excellent and they joined in all aspects of the lesson with great enthusiasm so that achievement was very high.
14. In most lessons, very good relationships between pupils and adults result in very good attitudes to learning. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' attitudes and

behaviour, and, in most classes, these are fully realised. In most classes, pupils work with sustained interest and concentration and so develop their knowledge, skills and understanding very effectively. Staff use humour and praise very skilfully to maintain pupils' motivation. Throughout the school, many pupils are capable of impressive initiative in responding to learning tasks so that they develop very good levels of understanding and build systematically on previous learning. This is the result of very good management of learning.

15. In the Foundation Stage, teaching is consistently very good. All adults work together as part of an excellent team and have a very clear understanding of how young children learn. Because of this, children settle quickly into the routines of the Nursery and Reception classes and achieve very well. They get a very good start to their education. The concerns about aspects of Foundation Stage practice expressed in the report from the previous inspection have been fully addressed.
16. Throughout the school, teaching assistants are very effective in supporting groups of pupils, individual pupils with particular special educational needs, or in managing the learning of small groups withdrawn for a particular purpose. Teaching assistants are well informed, fully involved, and dedicated to helping all children to learn. The learning of pupils with special educational needs is managed with care and attention to detail by the special educational needs co-ordinator and her team of teaching assistants. As a result, these pupils achieve very well in the Foundation Stage, and well in Years 1 to 6.
17. The assessment co-ordinator only took on her role recently and is systematically developing the school's systems. These are most developed in English and mathematics, where they are very effective in tracking pupils' progress and planning their future learning. Assessment contributes to target setting for individual pupils in these subjects in Years 1 to 6. In discussion, pupils emphasise how useful they have found these. However, there are differences in the ways in which assessment is managed in different subjects so that there are inconsistencies in practice. Plans are in place to extend assessment systems systematically to other subjects, starting with science. The school appreciates that, to be fully effective, these systems will need a common format. At this stage, assessment is used well, overall, to manage learning.
18. The school has inclusion as a major priority and wants all pupils to have full access to all that it offers. However, there are instances when this does not happen. For example, some groups of pupils do not attend assembly for different reasons. As a result, they do not have access to the learning that takes place in assembly. Further, swimming lessons take place at 8.00 am so that pupils who cannot get to school for that time, or who choose not to, do not have the opportunity to learn to swim. These examples of inequality adversely affect learning for a small number of pupils. The school acknowledges that these inequalities need to be addressed.
19. The quality of teaching and learning has improved well since the previous inspection. The school is in a good position to improve learning further and so to raise achievement because teachers throughout the school are enthusiastic and dedicated.

The curriculum

The school provides a good, balanced curriculum for its pupils which fully meets requirements. It is enriched and enhanced by a wide range of out of school activities, visits and visitors to the school. It is very inclusive, including good support for pupils with special educational needs. Gifted and talented pupils are challenged both in lessons and by

additional activities. The school's accommodation is very good and resources for learning are of good quality overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils at different stages of learning benefit from a good breadth of curricular opportunities.
- A very wide range of clubs for all ages and frequent visits and visitors to the school support pupils' learning very well.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and for those who are gifted and talented it is often very good.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are skilful, innovative and caring.

- Information and communication technology is used extensively to support learning in other subjects.
- Very good accommodation and resources for learning contribute to an effective learning environment.

Commentary

20. The range of learning opportunities is good and includes subjects and activities beyond the normal primary curriculum. French for pupils in Years 3 and 4, and two residential visits are good examples of this. Collaborative planning within year groups follows national guidance for most subjects and provides good equality of opportunity for pupils. The school's positive commitment to inclusion ensures that pupils' various needs are mostly well met by all members of staff. However, there are instances, for example, in science, where work is not graded to match the needs of pupils at different stages of learning. Well-planned work for targeted groups affords pupils with special educational needs effective support in literacy and numeracy in addition to the support that they receive within their own classrooms. Challenging opportunities for pupils who have particular gifts or talents are provided within school and beyond. The local high school makes a particularly good contribution to this by providing supportive activities using its facilities and expertise. The close working relationship between the two schools ensures that pupils do not repeat prior learning when they transfer. The developing dialogue about the curriculum is benefiting both schools and improving their management of learning. Similarly, teachers are fashioning a smoother transition between the Reception classes and Year 1 to avoid abrupt changes when the National Curriculum is introduced.
21. The curriculum is greatly enriched by a wide range of clubs, by numerous visits and also by visitors who come to the school. Apart from an extensive range of sports clubs, there are clubs for computing, gardening, chess, art, choir, and Spanish. Most year groups are involved in these without restrictions for gender or ability. All year groups visit places of interest to different subject areas, and pupils in Years 5 and 6 each have a residential visit. The school has many visitors who make good contributions to pupils' knowledge and understanding. These add interest to many subjects. Representatives of local churches contribute to religious education by leading assemblies and working with pupils, for example, in Years 1 and 6 on Bible studies. In addition there are contributions to history by people acting as Ancient Greeks and to drama through visiting theatre groups. A drugs 'road show' helps to deliver part of the science curriculum. Parents appreciate the wide range of opportunities and activities that the school provides.
22. Teachers and classroom assistants ensure that the curriculum is accessible to all pupils in the main, although a few pupils are withdrawn from assemblies on different days for different purposes. They use it to promote pupils' thinking skills and are aware of pupils' differing learning styles. In Years 5 and 6, for example, history and geography lessons do this through a series of challenging detective-style activities. Teachers are prepared to be adventurous and take risks to promote better learning and maintain pupil interest. Classroom assistants, whose wide range of acquired skills enables them to help pupils very effectively, especially those with special educational needs, support these very well. Classrooms are well equipped with computers and computer-driven whiteboards that teachers use very well to make lessons interesting and to stimulate pupils' learning. This is a particularly strong area of the school's curriculum.

23. Accommodation is very good and helps pupils to achieve very well. Classrooms are of a good size and the addition of several conservatories has resulted in spacious, airy rooms. The school is fortunate to have two large halls enabling many activities to happen simultaneously. The outdoor areas are large and well maintained. Resources are good and the newly completed computer suite is a very useful asset. The recently furnished library is well stocked and the school is exploring ways to ensure it is used to maximum effect. The outdoor play areas for the Foundation Stage have improved considerably since the previous inspection and are now a strength of the provision.

Care, guidance and support

Good levels of care, support and guidance help pupils to develop into confident young people. The school involves all pupils well by seeking and acting on their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's procedures for health and safety are good and ensure that pupils work in a safe and secure environment.
- Whole staff child protection training has yet to be completed.
- Good procedures for induction help pupils to settle in well.
- Pupils' views and opinions are listened to sensitively and guidance on how they should improve their work is good overall.

Commentary

24. All staff in the school show considerable concern for pupils' welfare and know their pupils very well. Adults are very good role models for pupils to emulate and, by Year 6, pupils are impressively mature and independent, and care very effectively for younger pupils. The school ensures that regular health and safety checks are carried out and the governing body is effectively involved in supporting these arrangements. Thorough procedures, including risk assessments, are firmly in place to promote a safe learning environment. The site supervisor and his team ensure that pupils enjoy a clean, safe and secure environment on a day-to-day basis. Through initiatives such as the 'Fit for Learning' programme, where pupils undertake 10 minutes of exercise each day, there are good opportunities to ensure that pupils learn how to keep safe and healthy.
25. Although several staff have received training in child protection, the school has yet to introduce regular whole school training in this area. However, procedures to monitor pupils where staff may have concerns are fully in place.
26. Very good induction procedures, including home visits, enable children to benefit from a smooth transition into the Nursery. Following a recent questionnaire, the school is changing induction arrangements into the Reception classes to meet the parents' needs more effectively.
27. Pupils' views are carefully listened to, for example, through the school council, which has been effectively involved in discussions to improve the school environment and playtimes. School council members from Years 3 to 6 are particularly proud of the introduction of the 'Buddy' system and their role in buying and organising the use of playground equipment. The school recognises the need to explore ways of ensuring that the views of younger pupils are taken into account. In lessons, pupils' ideas are valued and teachers often encourage feedback from pupils about lessons. The school has developed very effective systems of assessment in English and mathematics to help pupils to understand how to improve their work. For example, in English, group and individual targets in the front of all pupils' writing books explain clearly how they

can develop and improve their work. In discussion, pupils say that these have been useful and have helped them to know what they need to do to get to the next level. Daily marking varies between classes and is inconsistent. In the Foundation Stage, assessment is used very effectively to meet children's needs, and has improved very well since the previous inspection. For example, following a discussion with some boys, a jungle area was created for role-play, and this led to an improvement in boys' writing skills. Pupils' personal development is largely monitored informally by staff, who know their pupils very well.

28. The school's good provision for pupils' care, guidance and support has been maintained since its previous inspection.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnerships with parents and the community are good. Links with other schools are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents' views of the school are positive and they are provided with a suitable range of information.
- Links with the local community are good.
- Links with the main feeder secondary school and local primary schools are very good.

Commentary

29. Parental views collected through the parents' meeting held before the inspection and parents' questionnaires show that they are pleased with most aspects of the school. Some parents felt they were insufficiently informed about progress. However, the school provides termly opportunities for parents to meet teachers as well as parental surgeries and an annual report. This is similar to most primary schools and inspectors judge this to be satisfactory. The well-written prospectus and governors' annual report provide clear and helpful information. Newsletters are sent out frequently and provide useful information on events and activities. Information about the curriculum is sent out termly and provides parents with a useful overview of what is being taught. However, it has yet to suggest how parents could support their children's learning. The school has carried out its own questionnaire in the Foundation Stage to ascertain parents' views on induction, but has yet to introduce a whole-school systematic method of seeking parents' views. The school's website provides a particularly useful source of information for parents and pupils. Pupils' annual reports fully meet reporting requirements but are in a range of formats. The school is currently in the process of reviewing its methods of reporting to parents. The reporting of targets for improvements is often insufficiently precise to enable parents to support their children's learning. The 'Friends of the School Association' actively supports the school's work by raising funds, for example, by funding improvements to outdoor play provision.
30. The school has developed good links with the community. For example, good links exist with local church visitors and residential homes for the elderly. Through the young enterprise scheme, community members have been involved in helping pupils' understanding of business activities.
31. Very good links exist with the main feeder secondary school, a sports college, to which most pupils transfer, and various school cluster meetings promote the sharing of ideas and good practice between primary schools. A year-long induction programme ensures that pupils are fully prepared for their transition to secondary school.

32. Links with parents have improved well since the school was inspected previously. Parents appreciate the school's efforts to involve them as partners in their children's education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher provides very effective leadership and is well supported by his deputy and other key staff. Governance is good; statutory requirements are met except where a few pupils miss the opportunity for a daily act of collective worship.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's very effective leadership ensures that all feel valued in the school for what they can offer.
- The Foundation Stage is very well led and managed so that children have a very good start to their education.
- All adults set very good examples for pupils so that all wish to succeed.
- The professional development of staff is given a high priority so that all have a secure understanding of the subjects that they are teaching.
- Governors have a good appreciation of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Finances are managed very well and the principles of best value are applied very effectively.

Commentary

33. The headteacher provides very strong leadership so that the school is given a clear educational direction. He has established a very strong ethos in the school so that all, adults and pupils, are valued for what they can offer. Because all feel valued, they give of their best and there is an impressive unity of purpose throughout the school. The headteacher knows all his pupils and is known by them. This is the basis of the high level of expectation which is evident throughout the school. Pupils respond very well to this and are keen to succeed and to contribute to all aspects of school life. Parents very much appreciate the high standards set by the headteacher and his clear concern for the well being of all his pupils. These 'old-fashioned' values are a significant strength of the school.
34. The headteacher acknowledges the effective support he receives from his deputy and all his colleagues. The school is very open and any issues are discussed within the senior management team of four and at whole staff meetings. Because all feel consulted and informed, all are keen to contribute to the school's development. Subjects are managed effectively. For example, the special educational needs co-ordinator has a secure overview of the provision for pupils with special educational needs. She has established good systems to track the achievement of these pupils and shares this information with colleagues so that they can use it to plan future learning. Because of this, formal reviews are rooted in the progress that pupils are making. There are regular meetings with teaching assistants and very good relationships with parents and outside agencies. As a result of this effective and mutually supportive approach, the management of support for pupils with special educational needs is good. Some subjects, for example, English, mathematics,

information and communication technology, and personal, health and social education and citizenship, are led and managed very well. Leadership and management in science is satisfactory because the subject leader is part time and so does not have the opportunity to develop an overview of teaching and learning across the school.

35. The Foundation Stage is very well led and managed. The Foundation Stage leader has established very effective teams to support the learning of children in the Nursery and Reception classes. Teachers, nursery nurses and teaching assistants work very effectively to ensure that all children have a wide range of stimulating activities to promote their learning. As a result, children are offered very good support and are always challenged to develop their ideas and thinking. Because of this, they achieve very well. This is a very good improvement since the previous inspection.
36. Throughout the school, adults set very good examples for pupils in terms of attitudes and commitment. Pupils appreciate these attitudes so that relationships are very good between pupils and adults, and, as a result, between pupils. Mutually supportive relationships mean that pupils are very keen to learn and make progress. This is another aspect of the unity of purpose throughout the school which results from very effective leadership and management.
37. The headteacher rightly recognises that his staff are his major resource. Because of this, the continuing professional development of staff is given a high priority. For example, teachers have had effective training in the use of information and communication technology. The creation of effective teams of adults throughout the school means that there is an ethos of mutual support and collegiality. Fresh approaches to learning, for example, in the use of computer-driven whiteboards, resulting from professional development, are helping pupils to achieve very well. However, there has been no recent whole staff training in child protection procedures. The school makes very significant contributions to training, for example, to initial teacher training and to the training of nursery nurses, as well as to training staff at different levels in the school. This area of its work is a strength of the school.
38. Governors are effective. They ensure that the school meets virtually all its legal requirements and have a good appreciation of its strengths and potential for development. However, a few pupils are withdrawn from the daily collective act of worship for different reasons on different days, and this does not conform with legal requirements. Pupils who do not attend the act of worship on some days are not able to fully appreciate the concepts being dealt with. All governors have a link with a subject so that so that they have a secure understanding of teaching and learning in that subject. Governors are committed to maintaining the school's strengths and developing them further. They are appropriately involved with strategic planning, which is effective. They are also appropriately involved in managing the school's finances, which are managed effectively on a day-to-day basis by the school's financial administrator. They were last audited in November 2004. There were a number of recommendations for adjustments to the school's procedures to conform with best practice, even though procedures were basically sound. These recommendations have been adopted. The school applies the principles of best value very effectively. For example, a number of classrooms have been extended by having 'conservatories' added to them. This is relatively inexpensive, but enhances pupils' learning environment significantly by making the rooms lighter, more spacious and more attractive.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	923,223
Total expenditure	927,078
Expenditure per pupil	2,006

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	62,256
Balance carried forward to the next	58,401

39. The amount carried forward in March 2004 was slightly above average. It has been used, sensibly, to maintain staffing and to support two building projects.
40. Given pupils' very good achievement, their very good personal development, very good teaching and learning, very good leadership and management and low costs per pupil, the school is giving excellent value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

41. Provision in the Foundation Stage is very good. Teaching is consistently very good in the Nursery and Reception classes. This is a very significant improvement since the previous inspection and has a very positive effect on children's achievement. All adults take the requirements of the early learning goals into account when planning children's work. This ensures that the curriculum is very good and meets individual needs very well. Another very good improvement since the previous inspection is the outdoor learning area. This is very stimulating and exciting and gives all children a wide range of interesting opportunities to learn and explore in natural surroundings. Nursery and Reception class children work together in this area and all have immediate access to it. The very systematic and effective use of assessment is also a very significant improvement since the previous inspection. All members of staff assess children's progress and achievement in all areas of learning throughout the Nursery and Reception classes. Their findings enable them to plan suitably challenging work and to inform parents about their children's progress and achievement.
42. Very effective leadership of the Foundation Stage ensures that all adults work extremely well together for the children's benefit. This exceptionally cohesive teamwork is a very strong feature throughout the Foundation Stage. It provides children with a very good example to follow and contributes very significantly to the very good relationships between children and amongst children and adults.
43. Most children enter the Foundation Stage with standards that meet those expected for the majority of three-year-olds. Their speaking and physical skills are less well developed. They make very good progress and most are on target to exceed the standards expected in the early learning goals designed for this age group by the time they leave the Reception classes.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well because teaching is consistently very good.
- All adults have very high expectations and relate very well to children and each other.
- Very effective levels of support ensure that all children feel confident and secure.

Commentary

44. Children's personal, social and emotional skills meet the expectations for their age overall when they enter the Foundation Stage. Consistently very skilful, patient, and knowledgeable teaching enables all children, including those with special educational needs, to conform to the very high expectations set by staff. This very good quality teaching ensures that most children in the Reception Year already exceed the requirements of the early learning goals. All children achieve very well in learning to settle quickly to tasks with the minimum of fuss and concentrate very well as they work. The excellent teamwork of adults in all three classes gives the children superb

examples of how to work together harmoniously. This ensures that children share and take turns very well and work calmly with a very clear sense of purpose. They show much interest in what they are doing and work very well whether they are supervised or working independently.

45. All adults continually encourage children to feel confident about their achievements and to volunteer information in secure and non-threatening learning situations. This increases children's trust in adults and their awareness of their own and each other's achievements. Adults expect children to clear up after lessons, which they do carefully and without prompting. These very supportive relationships give children the confidence and security to ask for help when they need it. Children's above average standards and very good achievement are a direct result of the respect with which adults treat them.
46. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection because of consistently very good teaching, the very good promotion of children's social development, and their very good achievement.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well and are on target to exceed the expectations of the early learning goals in reading and writing by the end of the Reception Year.
- Adults take every opportunity to develop children's speaking skills but these standards are below their reading and writing skills.
- Consistently very good relationships help children to become confident and eager learners.

Commentary

47. Children's very good achievement in reading and writing indicates they are likely to exceed the expectations for their age when they enter Year 1. This is a direct result of the consistently very good teaching by all adults. Most children enter the Nursery with average skills in reading and writing. Their speaking skills are less well developed and, overall, are below those expected. All staff ensure that children have ample opportunities to increase their skills in using spoken language. They constantly reinforce acceptable speech patterns and take every opportunity to speak with and listen to children. For example, adults set up role-play areas such as castles and a jungle, and work alongside the children to engage them in conversation. This helps them to realise the importance of speaking clearly and of choosing words carefully. They listen very attentively and have above average skills in this area of their learning. Very good relationships give children the confidence to talk, share books and read out their own writing. All adults are genuinely interested in what the children have to say and ask them to give reasons for their opinions. This increases children's thinking skills very effectively.
48. Work in children's books and examples of what they are reading show that there is a very good emphasis on the use of sounds to help children to read and write. By the time they are in the Reception classes, most children already write sentences

independently with well-formed handwriting. Overall, the majority of children are on target to exceed the expectations of the early learning goals in listening, reading and writing by the time that they leave the Reception classes. A significant minority, however, will just meet the requirements for speaking.

49. Improvement since the previous inspection has been very good because of children's improved listening skills, improved teaching and very good achievement.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Consistently very good teaching enables children to learn and achieve very well.
- All adults take every opportunity to increase children's mathematical knowledge and understanding.
- Very high expectations ensure that children achieve above average standards by the end of their Reception year.

Commentary

50. Teaching and learning in this area are consistently very good. This has a very positive effect on children's achievement throughout the Foundation Stage. All adults plan a suitably wide range of interesting, exciting, and stimulating activities to promote and develop the children's mathematical knowledge and understanding. They make very effective use of the outdoor learning area for children to apply their knowledge of numbers and counting. For example, wheeled vehicles are numbered and parked in matching numbered bays. This contributes very well to children's personal development as well as increasing their understanding of the use of numbers. Children have many varied opportunities to count and experiment with numbers. This increases their confidence and makes them eager to try out their own ideas. Higher attaining children already have a good understanding of using numbers to twenty and understand the concept of more and less than. All children sequence and order numbers to ten and enjoy practising their counting as they chant number rhymes. Adults have very high expectations of what children can achieve and give them many chances for practical investigations. For example, children recognise pattern in everyday objects and quickly learn to produce accurate repeating patterns. These practical experiences prepare them very well for their future learning and make a positive contribution to the above average standards and very good achievement.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well because of the stimulating and interesting work planned both indoors and outside.
- Consistently very good teaching ensures that all children enjoy their work and reach standards above those expected.
- All adults use questions very effectively to help children to become eager and inquisitive learners.

Commentary

51. Teaching and learning are very good and children achieve very well. Work is equally interesting and stimulating both indoors and outside. The very effective use of the outdoor learning area by children from the Nursery and Reception classes increases their understanding of the natural world very well. For example, children have experience of working amongst plants that smell and rustle. This increases their awareness of how to use their senses. Adults ensure that work flows naturally from inside to outside. An example of this was when children talked about directions and moved outside to plot the route from the classroom to the climbing area. Very skilful teaching enabled them to plot accurate directions and to label points of interest along the routes. All adults ensure that children use computers as an integral part of their learning. This increases their realisation of how information and communication technology supports learning across the curriculum. Children achieve very well in this area of learning and their skills are above those expected in the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year. The religious education element of children's learning is covered very well in the Foundation Stage. Children celebrate a range of festivals and learn to respect others' beliefs and practices very well. The very clear focus on the early learning goals' requirements is a clear improvement since the previous inspection and makes a very positive contribution to children's very good achievement.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching and constant use of the outdoor learning area ensure very good achievement.
- Very clear planning for sessions in the school hall gives children work that extends their skills very effectively.

Commentary

52. Teaching and learning are very good in this area of children's work. All adults ensure that children use the outdoor learning area regularly. This enables them to gain confidence in moving with control and co-ordination as they manoeuvre wheeled vehicles, climb and balance and run safely around this large area. Their achievement is very good in developing their physical skills and awareness of space as they navigate amongst each other. The planning for all physical sessions, outside and indoors, is very good. It gives very clear steps of expected progress, which are based on adults' very careful observations of previous achievement. This is an improvement from the unsatisfactory planning identified at the previous inspection. Throughout the Foundation Stage children thoroughly enjoy listening and moving to music. They develop very good listening skills and very good control of their limbs and bodies. Overall, children have below average skills in using tools and equipment when they enter the Foundation Stage. Adults take every opportunity to increase their ability to use tools and manipulate materials such as play dough and clay. This means that most children achieve very well in developing their skills of manipulating tools and materials, and are likely to achieve above average standards in the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year.

53. There has been very good improvement since the previous inspection because of the very significantly improved achievement, standards, provision and use of assessment to guide the planning of future learning.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Consistently very good teaching ensures very good achievement.
- All adults make sure that children increase their imagination and artistic and musical skills very well.

Commentary

54. Teaching is consistently very good in this area of the curriculum. This ensures that children achieve very well in all aspects of their creative development. The teaching team plans a suitably wide range of different opportunities for children to develop their skills and techniques. A wide range of role-play areas help children to develop and increase their imagination and act out different scenarios. These interest both boys and girls. For example, after discussion, a jungle area was created to help boys to develop their speaking and writing skills and has been very effective. Adults give children a wide range of different materials and expect them to discuss and select their own resources confidently and sensibly. This increases children's independence and prepares them very well for transfer to Year 1. Their finished work shows an above average level of attention to detail and finish, and they are justifiably proud of their achievements. Very effective teaching of musical skills enables pupils to sing tunefully and to learn many songs from memory. They play accurate rhythmic accompaniments to songs and dances and clearly enjoy these activities.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment in the national tests at the end of Year 2 has consistently been well above average, and, in these tests at the end of Year 6, attainment has generally been above average.
- Pupils achieve very well because the quality of teaching is very good overall.
- Achievement is improving because very effective subject leaders are putting strategies into place to address identified weaknesses.
- Very effective assessment procedures have been put into place to track pupils' progress and to plan their future learning.

Commentary

55. For the last four years, at the end of Year 2, standards in reading and writing in the national tests have consistently been well above average. This is the result of very good achievement in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. At the end of Year 6 in the national tests, standards over the last four years have generally been above average, but have lagged behind standards in mathematics and science. The school has recognised this and has introduced strategies to improve pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6. Evidence from the inspection is that these strategies are generally

becoming effective and that achievement is now very good throughout the school. Standards have improved since the previous inspection at the end of Year 2, and have been maintained at the end of Year 6.

56. Pupils achieve very well because the quality of teaching is very good overall, ranging from excellent to satisfactory. In very good and excellent lessons, pupils' attention is fully engaged because learning activities are stimulating and challenging, and teaching is enthusiastic and carefully planned to enable pupils to build systematically on their existing levels of understanding. Care is taken to provide learning activities which will challenge pupils at different stages of learning, including those with special educational needs. Excellent relationships and effective use of praise and humour mean that pupils retain their interest and concentration over the whole lesson, and move smoothly from one activity to the next. In contrast, in satisfactory lessons, while teaching is accurate, noise levels are high and pupils take time to move from one activity to the next. This slows the pace of the lesson so that achievement is satisfactory.
57. Throughout the school, pupils' speaking and listening skills are above average and most are happy to discuss and explain their work. In Year 2, higher attaining pupils read fluently and with good expression. Average pupils read with enthusiasm and have the phonic skills to read unfamiliar words. Lower attaining pupils are average readers, able to read fairly simple new words. Standards are well above average overall. In writing, higher attaining pupils in Year 2 are accurate in their spelling and use of grammar and use some challenging vocabulary such as 'gigantic' and 'towering'. They understand alliteration, writing, for example, 'Four fluffy ferrets flying over France'. There are some good examples of extended writing, for example, about Goldilocks. There are occasional spelling errors and these increase for average and lower attaining pupils, whose handwriting is less mature.
58. By Year 6, higher attaining pupils read fluently and with mature levels of understanding. They discuss their reading with impressive levels of insight, comparing characters and authors, and discussing the historical context of what they are reading. Average pupils read with clear understanding and discuss favourite authors with enthusiasm. Lower attaining pupils read less and are less inclined to persevere with challenging books. While standards are above average overall, some pupils have little understanding of how libraries work. Higher attaining and average pupils have experienced a wide range of creative writing including some rooted in Shakespeare. They present balanced arguments and evaluate different viewpoints. Handwriting is neat and clear and spelling and grammar largely accurate. Lower attaining pupils are more prone to error and have some insecurity of understanding, for example, with regard to tenses. Overall, standards are above average.
59. The subject is led and managed very effectively by two enthusiastic members of staff who are keen to improve standards, particularly in Years 3 to 6. A range of strategies has been put into place, and these are beginning to improve achievement. Resources have been improved and the library has been developed. A comprehensive system of assessment has been developed so that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, understand their targets for improvement. Their progress towards these targets is tracked regularly so that new targets can be set. In discussion, pupils say that these have been very useful. Marking is generally very effective in helping pupils to improve their standards with examples of very effective marking, for example, in Year 4. In contrast, there are occasional examples of less detailed marking which gives pupils little indication of how to improve.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

60. Pupils have very good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills in other subjects such as personal, health and social education and citizenship, and religious education. There are very good examples of specialist vocabulary being developed in subjects such as mathematics and science. Reading skills are developed well in subjects such as geography and history. Information and communication technology is used very effectively to promote learning in classes which have computer-driven whiteboards. Pupils develop their writing skills in subjects such as geography, history and religious education, but writing is usually narrative so that opportunities to develop skills in other areas, for example, in letter writing, are missed.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has maintained the high standards identified in the previous inspection.
- Very good teaching, teamwork and learning activities enable pupils to achieve very well.
- Pupils enjoy experimenting with numbers and use these skills very effectively in other subjects.
- Information and communication technology is used very well to support learning in mathematics.
- Very strong leadership ensures that assessment is used very effectively to identify pupils' needs and to plan the next steps of learning.

Commentary

61. Standards in mathematics in Year 2 and Year 6 are well above average. This confirms the findings of the previous inspection for pupils in Year 6. The school maintained these high standards in the 2004 national tests. Achievement is very good throughout the school and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. The school gives its pupils a very good quality education because all groups achieve very well. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support from classroom assistants and their teachers. This enables them to achieve as well as the rest of their classmates. There is no significant difference between the performance of girls and boys in lessons and in test results. The use of setting in Years 2 to 6 makes very good provision for pupils at different stages of learning and extends the skills of higher attaining pupils very well.
62. Pupils' achievement is rising steadily because the school is continuing to seek ways of improving standards in mathematics. This is having a positive effect on the number of pupils achieving well above average standards in the national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6. Most pupils enter the school with average skills in mathematical knowledge and understanding. They leave the school with well above average standards and a very high level of confidence. Throughout the school, teachers build on pupils' knowledge and understanding and give them interesting and challenging work. This motivates pupils to learn very effectively and they thoroughly enjoy trying to solve problems. For example, some lower attaining Year 6 pupils grew in self-esteem as they worked out how to translate three-dimensional shapes into two-dimensional drawings.

These very positive attitudes to learning make a very strong contribution to the standards that pupils achieve.

63. Pupils make very effective use of computers to collate and present information in pie graphs and charts. This helps them to realise how technology can be used in everyday life. Teachers use computer-driven whiteboards very well to support and extend pupils' learning. This heightens their interest and enthusiasm and encourages them to try out ideas in a non-threatening environment.
64. Overall, the quality of teaching in lessons is very good. This is confirmed by the work in pupils' books and displays around the school. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection because no teaching observed was less than good. The quality of teaching was excellent in one Year 6 lesson. In this lesson, inspirational and enthusiastic teaching enabled pupils to grasp the difficult concept of how to move and rotate shapes to show a reflection. All teachers have very good subject knowledge and use this very effectively to plan interesting and stimulating work. They make sure that all pupils understand how work builds on previous learning so that they work confidently and are not afraid that they might fail. Classroom assistants are very well briefed and make a very significant contribution to pupils' success. This very high quality teamwork is a significant feature of teaching in all lessons.
65. The leadership and management of mathematics are very good. The subject leader is very successful in motivating staff and pupils to give their very best. For example, pupils came first in the Sunderland Schools Mathematics Challenge. He carries out very thorough analyses of achievement and shares strengths and weaknesses with the staff. This enables teachers to plan work that meets all pupils' needs and abilities. Pupils are beginning to assess their own achievement through target setting and this is having a positive effect on standards. This, along with regular marking giving pointers for improvement, is helping to raise standards and achievement.
66. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection because of pupils' improved attitudes, the provision for pupils in Years 1 and 2 to experiment with numbers, and the significantly improved teaching.

Mathematics across the curriculum

67. Pupils regularly use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects. This increases their understanding of the use of mathematics as an everyday tool. For example, they use their skills practically to record data in science and geography and make accurate measurements in design and technology. Teachers plan systematically to include these opportunities in their lessons, and this enhances learning in mathematics.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attainment is above average because of the good teaching that they receive.
- The systematic development of learning helps pupils to achieve well.
- Teachers' good knowledge of the subject enables them to deliver lessons that enthuse pupils.
- Tasks set for pupils are not sufficiently graded to reflect pupils' ability.
- Marking frequently does not tell pupils how their work might be improved.

- Information and communication technology is used well to support learning.

Commentary

68. The good quality of teaching throughout the school results in effective learning and, as a result, standards are above average throughout the school. These above average standards have been maintained since the school was inspected previously. Learning is usually developed systematically and this helps all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to achieve well. The latter make particularly good progress in lessons where they are given direct support.
69. Pupils enjoy science lessons because teachers use innovative approaches which engage their interest. In a very good Year 6 revision lesson, for example, the teacher used the computer-driven whiteboard to conduct a session of 'University Challenge' to help pupils to remember what they had learned about pitch and volume in their topic about sound. Lessons are well planned and generally conducted at a good pace, though teachers, sensibly, respond to their pupils' needs by slowing down when they experience difficulties. They know their pupils well and their class management is good. They use questions skilfully to build on pupils' prior knowledge and to ensure that all members of the class are included in lessons. However, although subject vocabulary is wide-ranging within lessons it is often not focused on key words so that pupils understand and acquire the correct scientific terms. They make good use of discussion groups for pupils to generate their ideas. Pupils are enthusiastic learners and generally behave very well.
70. The tasks set for pupils, however, are usually common to all. They do not, therefore, reflect pupils' ability in a way that would help both high and low attaining pupils fully to record what they have learned. Similarly, although work is marked regularly, few comments are made to help pupils to understand how it could be improved.
71. Both classroom computers and those in the suite are used well to support teaching and learning. Those teachers with computer-driven whiteboards use them well to support pupils' learning. The graphics used in a program about sources of light and the way light travels, for example, enabled a teacher to ask pupils to predict what would happen next. They also make good connections across the curriculum when teaching science, particularly with literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology.
72. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject leader has only been in post since January 2005, and so has not yet had time to carry out an audit of the subject's strengths and weaknesses. She is a part-time teacher and this makes it difficult for her to gain a full picture of all that is happening in school. This problem is compounded as she is not released from her own classroom commitments to observe others teaching. She believes resources to be adequate, but has not yet considered how the subject could be improved and standards raised further.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The wide use of computers to support work across the curriculum ensures that standards in both Year 2 and Year 6 are above average and improving.
- Teacher expertise and good resources help pupils to achieve well.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- The subject is led very well by a manager who has a clear vision of how it can be developed.
- The recent acquisition of a full-time technical assistant in the computer suite ensures that technical problems are immediately resolved and that additional support is available to pupils.

Commentary

73. Pupils become confident users of computers because they use them in most subjects. Resources have been improved well since the previous inspection, as has teacher expertise. As a result, standards are above average throughout the school and are rising. Pupils achieve very well and the subject is a strength of the school.
74. The computer suite has been in place for eighteen months so the full impact on pupils' learning has still to work its way through the school. This was well reflected in the Year 1 lessons seen, for example, where standards were well above average. Six classrooms have now been fitted with computer-driven whiteboards and teachers' confidence in using them to support learning in all subjects is developing well. The computers based in classrooms are linked to the school's network and have access to the Internet, and pupils use them frequently for research as well as for word-processing their work.
75. The lessons seen during the inspection show that the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is very good. Lessons are planned in great detail, the learning objective is shared with pupils, and teaching proceeds at a good pace. Expectations are high, appropriate challenges are set, and focused questions are asked. All these features were present when pupils in Year 6 produced a PowerPoint presentation in geography. Because teaching is effective, pupils are enthusiastic learners.
76. After comparing the positions of ICT in the school in 2003 and 2005, the subject leader has produced a short term action plan for the rest of this year and a longer term one until the end of 2006. He has a clear vision of how the subject should be developed so that standards can be raised even higher. His leadership has made a significant contribution to the high profile that ICT enjoys in the school.
77. Since January 2005, the school has employed a technical assistant to work in the computer suite. He maintains computer hardware and can act as a support teacher for classes using the suite. He also helps the subject leader to monitor the subject, as he is present through all lessons. He has already established himself as a subject asset.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

78. The impact of ICT is positive in most subjects. As well as word-processing some work, pupils use computers for data handling and spreadsheets in mathematics, for producing reports and presentations in the humanities, and to create patterns and pictures in art. They use control technology well in classes. Younger pupils use a programmable toy to reinforce teaching about directions and older pupils use simulations well to support their learning.

HUMANITIES

Geography and History

Provision in geography and history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment in geography is above national expectations in both Year 2 and Year 6 because imaginative teaching is engaging pupils' interest effectively.
- Good teaching in both subjects enables all pupils to achieve at least satisfactorily and often well.
- Innovative approaches to subject teaching in Years 5 and 6 are raising standards.
- Information and communication technology is used well to support teaching and learning.
- The new, capable subject leader has the skills, drive and enthusiasm to move both subjects forward, but is not given the time needed to gain a proper overview of the subject.

Commentary

79. Geography and history are taught in rotation. As most classes were working on geography topics at the time of the inspection, little history teaching was seen. Attainment in both subjects is above the national average in Year 2, whereas in Year 6 above average standards are attained in geography only. Standards in history in Year 6 are similar to those found in other schools. Overall, standards have improved since the previous inspection. Imaginative teaching methods effectively reinforce pupils' understanding of the concepts being taught and encourage enthusiasm for the subject so that achievement is good for most pupils, including those with special educational needs.
80. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good. Lessons are well planned and conducted at a crisp pace. Teachers' knowledge of both subjects is good and the imaginative teaching methods which they use engage pupils' interest successfully. In an excellent Year 2 history lesson, pupils were provided with a range of very good resources to discover the differences between the seaside of a hundred years ago and that of today. The emphasis on evidence for the statements pupils were making ensured that the subject's skills were being taught from the start. The good relationships which teachers enjoy with their classes, help them to create an effective learning environment. They understand their pupils well and this helps them to question effectively, ensuring that all are involved in lessons. The tasks set offer realistic challenges for each level of ability in the class. Teaching assistants are deployed well to support pupils with special educational needs.
81. Innovative approaches to the subjects, particularly in Years 5 and 6, are helping to raise standards. In a very good Year 5 lesson in geography, for example, the teacher had prepared envelopes which contained clues to help each group of pupils to answer a series of questions. When they had completed the task, they could explain how human behaviour is affecting the environment. A similar approach had been used in history when pupils were asked whether Tutankhamun had been murdered. The group posters made for a presentation on 'mountains' were well produced and contained clear information supported by imaginative pictorial evidence.
82. Information and communication technology is used well to support teaching and learning in geography. Pupils enjoyed creating presentations of seven to ten slides,

which were an effective way of recording learning about the village in which they had stayed for a residential visit. Residential and other visits, such as that to the Farne Islands, help to bring geography alive for pupils. Visits to Washington Old Hall, Beamish Museum, Bede's World and Hartlepool's Historic Quay do the same for history.

83. The subjects are led well and management is satisfactory. A new subject leader was appointed to lead both subjects in January. She inherited a policy document as well as guidance for teachers, both of which she has reviewed. She has yet to carry out a full audit of the subjects but resources appear to be adequate. She sees teachers' planning for lessons but has no release time to observe them teaching, nor is she given the opportunity to see pupils' work except that which is on display around the school. This limits her ability to develop an overview of provision although she has good ideas for the development of the subjects.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Consistently good teaching ensures that pupils achieve well, particularly in learning about and respecting different religions.
- Teachers do not have a firm base for planning the next steps of learning because there is no consistent assessment system.

Commentary

84. Standards of attainment in Year 2 meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and exceed them in Year 6. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. Pupils of all abilities achieve well, particularly in learning about different world religions. This results from confident and knowledgeable teaching. Very effective support for pupils with special educational needs ensures they take a full part in all lessons. This increases their self-esteem as they work alongside their classmates and join in discussions so that they, too, achieve well.
85. Pupils enjoy their work in religious education because the teachers make it interesting and relevant. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, behave very well in lessons, listen carefully and support each other. This is because of the very good relationships between pupils and with adults.
86. The quality of teaching in the lessons seen was consistently good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this effectively to increase pupils' knowledge of different religions. They use questions well to establish what pupils already know and to move them on to new learning. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils explained clearly why the cross is important to Christians. The teacher successfully promoted a lively discussion as to whether a cross should be worn as an item of jewellery by non-Christians. This increased pupils' understanding of the need for respect. Throughout the school, teachers promote respect for others' faiths and beliefs. This was apparent, for example, in the work on Buddhism in Year 1 and Islam in Year 5. These pupils learned about the sanctity of all forms of life and why people feel the need to go on pilgrimages. There is no consistent method of assessing pupils' attainment in religious education. This does not help teachers to plan future work that meets the needs of pupils at different stages of learning effectively. The subject leaders are aware of this and are working to provide a simple and systematic form of assessment.

87. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The subject leaders are relatively new to their responsibilities and have already successfully implemented the new locally agreed syllabus. This is having a positive effect on pupils' achievement and teachers' confidence. Both are determined to raise the profile of religious education and to improve assessment. They make good use of visits and visitors to enrich pupils' experiences and understanding. Their annual audit shows a need for resources such as videos to supplement the already good collection of books, posters and artefacts.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design, design and technology, music, and physical education were sampled.

Art and design

88. It is evident from the work seen that current standards exceed expectations for most pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils build well on their skills and techniques as they move through the school. By Year 6, most pupils have well-developed skills in using a wide range of media and materials. Their clay tiles, used to represent the outline of Africa and features of the continent, are particularly effective. This work provides good links with geography. The range and quality of work indicate a curriculum of good quality. The enthusiastic subject leader provides support, engenders confidence and promotes good achievement. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the well-attended art club and use computers effectively to support their learning.

Design and technology

89. It is clear that pupils attain above average standards in all elements of design and technology by Year 2 and Year 6. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The work available for analysis was of a consistently high quality. Pupils take great care over finishing their products carefully and accurately, for example, the slippers in Year 6, and make well reasoned evaluations of their work. All pupils, from Year 1 to Year 6, offer suggestions for improvements to their work. Although it is not possible to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching, pupils' work suggests that they have a good grounding in the subject. Enthusiastic and effective leadership is giving teachers confidence so that pupils benefit from a curriculum of good quality. This is enriched by links with business and the increased profile of design and technology across other areas of the curriculum.

Music

90. Only one lesson was observed and, in this lesson, standards met expectations although lively teaching resulted in good achievement. The school uses a commercial scheme to underpin teaching and learning in music and this ensures that the National Curriculum is covered. Pupils have opportunities to learn instruments and a good number take advantage of this. Pupils have good opportunities to experience musical performance and there are good links with dance. A choir sings at Christmas both in the school and to groups outside, and a nativity play for younger pupils and a summer concert for Year 6 also include music, some of which the pupils write themselves. However, music is not routinely played as pupils enter and leave the hall for assemblies, and singing is not a normal part of assemblies for Years 3 to 6. As a result, music does not have a high profile in the daily life of the school, and only

contributes satisfactorily to pupils' cultural development. A visiting specialist takes the Reception classes and Years 1 and 2, and Years 3 to 6 separately for singing each week. However, during the inspection, he was only paying his second visit to the school, and was only beginning to establish a relationship with the pupils.

Physical education

91. In the one lesson observed, standards were above average because teaching and learning were very good and pupils' achievement was very high. Pupils have good opportunities in physical education both in and out of class with dance a particular strength. External coaching is available in a number of games and other physical activities, and a range of school teams has a good level of success in tournaments and games against other schools. Pupils have opportunities to swim before school, so some are unable to take advantage of this. Even so, in the current Year 6, standards in swimming are above average. The subject is very well led and managed by an enthusiastic member of staff. He ensures that the National Curriculum is covered. He has identified pupils with particular gifts or talents in physical education and is arranging for their skills to be developed. He is also developing a system to assess pupils' progress in the subject to help to guide their further learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject is led very well and the subject leader has a very clear overview for the development of the subject.
- Pupils develop very good independence and maturity due to the many opportunities to develop their personal and social skills.
- The timetabled programme is inconsistent throughout the school, which means that there is no systematic planning or assessment of the development of pupils' skills.

Commentary

92. Pupils' understanding of personal, social and health education and citizenship is above average because of the strongly supportive school ethos and the wide range of activities that the school provides. However, the provision is only satisfactory overall as there is currently no whole-school strategy to ensure a consistent and coherent approach throughout the school. The subject is very well led and managed and the recently appointed and enthusiastic subject leader is developing an overview of the school's work in this area. For example, she has carried out an audit to establish what is currently being taught in the school, either discretely or as part of other lessons. This has led to the introduction of more focused drug and sex education lessons and requirements for this aspect of the curriculum are fully met.
93. Many activities take place in school to develop pupils' personal skills. For example, pupils are given responsibilities through the 'Buddy' system and the school council. Health education is given a high profile through the 'Fit for Learning' and 'Brain Gym' initiatives. Citizenship skills are developed through the 'Fair Trade' tuck shop and the Young Enterprise programme. The subject leader recognises that the next step is to co-ordinate all these strands to ensure that all pupils receive a planned PSHCE programme that develops their knowledge and understanding systematically.
94. Overall, good teaching in lessons supports the school's emphasis in developing pupils' personal and social skills. The lessons observed during the inspection were frequently linked to issues in the classroom which the teacher wanted to consider, for example, friends falling out, rather than to any planned scheme of work. At present there are inconsistencies in the provision between different years and classes, as not all classes have specifically planned lessons. These inconsistencies make any assessment or monitoring of provision difficult.
95. Pupils' personal, health and social education and citizenship skills have continued to improve since the school's previous inspection due to the many initiatives introduced unofficially by the subject leader before she took over this responsibility. They help to develop pupils' confidence and positive self-image, and contribute effectively to their very good progress and achievement.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	1
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
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	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

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