

INSPECTION REPORT

KENTON BAR PRIMARY SCHOOL

Newcastle upon Tyne

LEA area: Newcastle upon Tyne

Unique reference number: 108489

Headteacher: Mr T Leonard

Lead inspector: Mr M Tones

Dates of inspection: 11th – 13th January 2005

Inspection number: 267132

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 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	253
School address:	Ryal Walk Kenton Bar Estate Newcastle upon Tyne
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Miss A Hughes
Date of previous inspection:	1 st – 5 th February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Kenton Bar Primary School is a large community school. There are 253 children on roll between the ages of three and eleven years old. Twenty-six children attend the nursery. The school is an area of socio-economic decline and children start school with attainment that is well below average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is increasing and is well above the national average. There is a high level of movement in and out of the school. Last year 37 per cent of children who started school in the first year had left before reaching Year 6. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including those with a statement, is above the national average. The main area of need is for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. The school gets additional resources for the provision of pupils with communication difficulties. Currently eight pupils have statements of special educational need. The percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is only slightly above average. The school has the Investors in People Award, Schools Achievement Award and Healthy Schools Award.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1575	Mr M Tones	Lead inspector	Information and communication technology; physical education; citizenship
11468	Mrs J Menes	Lay inspector	
16359	Mr J Farrow	Team inspector	Science; geography; history
32130	Mrs L Halliday	Team inspector	English; art and design; music; religious education
21060	Mr G Brown	Team inspector	Mathematics; design and technology; Foundation Stage

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Kenton Bar Primary School provides a satisfactory education and is an inclusive school that gives satisfactory value for money. Although standards in English, mathematics and science are low pupils enjoy learning and their achievement is realistic given their starting points. Sound leadership and management provide for very good personal, social and health education where good relationships flourish. An appropriate emphasis is placed on raising achievement and meeting the many needs of pupils.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school shows itself as a very caring community with very good relationships. As a result, pupils behave well and have good attitudes to work;
- Pupils achieve well in information and communication technology and in physical education where standards are above those expected;
- Leaders and managers do not all play a significant enough part in raising standards;
- Teaching in the Foundation Stage and throughout Key Stage 2 is good. Teaching in Key Stage 1, is unsatisfactory overall, and too many pupils underachieve;
- Teachers do not always check the progress made in pupils' work often enough;
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good;
- There are good links with parents and the school works very well in its partnership with the community;
- A very strong commitment to inclusion provides good support for pupils who have special educational needs;
- The school provides a good curriculum that enriches learning;
- Much is done to encourage pupils to come to school, but attendance remains unsatisfactory.

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection, although standards in English, mathematics and science have remained well below the national average. Considerable improvements have been made to the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) and standards are now above those expected nationally. Good teaching in physical education has improved standards and these too are above those expected. The sound teaching helps pupils to achieve satisfactorily overall. Improvements have been made to the way pupils are assessed and subject leaders now make checks on pupils' work and sometimes on the teaching of the subject. The school improvement plan has been improved and extended. Behaviour is now better than before.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	E	E	E	C
Mathematics	E	E	E	D
Science	C	E	E	D

Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average

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

Although standards of attainment are well below the national average, pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Children start school with standards well below average. They make a good start in nursery and reception, where teaching and learning are good. Except in their personal, creative and physical development, few are able to make up for the shortfall in standards on entry and most do not reach the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1. The most recent national tests show that by the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are still well below the national average. Inspection findings show that achievement is unsatisfactory. By the end of Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science have been well below those expected nationally in recent years. Standards are better when compared to similar schools and in the 2004 tests for English they were in line and in mathematics and science, below average. However, the school faces an increasing challenge due to a rise in the numbers of pupils whose standards are well below average on entry, who have learning difficulties and who are from the high proportion who move in and out of school. The inspection findings show that the overall achievements made by pupils are satisfactory given their low starting points. Standards in ICT and physical education are above those expected. In geography, history, art and design, design and technology and music, standards are in line with those expected nationally. In religious education standards are in line with the requirements of the local agreed syllabus. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with communication difficulties, make at least satisfactory progress in lessons, where they are appropriately challenged and well supported. The school sets challenging targets for itself and strives hard to achieve them. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.** This results in good behaviour and attitudes to work. Pupils arrive at school on time but despite good efforts to improve, attendance is unsatisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers are good at planning lessons and know the subjects they teach well. Their very good relationships with pupils and good management of behaviour enable pupils to show an interest in their work. There is a wide range of ability in many classes and sometimes teachers struggle to provide enough challenge to them all. Teaching in the nursery and reception classes is good overall. Teachers provide interesting activities and use teaching assistants very well to support lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. As a result children learn well against their low starting points. In Key Stage 2, teaching is good. The best lessons are very well organised and pupils become engrossed in their learning through practical tasks and changes of activity. In Key Stage 1, teaching is less effective. Where satisfactory, pupils are managed well and encouraged to learn. Where teaching is weak as in Year 2, the activities provided do not always match the abilities of pupils and either fail to challenge their thinking or make learning too difficult. In some of these lessons, too long is spent making explanations that are not understood and cause pupils to become restless and lose concentration. Where teaching is weak, too many pupils make slow progress and underachieve by the time they reach the age of seven. Significant improvements have been made to the way pupils' progress is checked and forecasts of achievement are made. Teachers' marking is satisfactory. They do not always check the progress made in pupils' work often enough. In the lessons where assessment is good, teachers build on their knowledge of pupils' learning in previous lessons to make sure that the work matches the pupils' needs. The curriculum is good, providing many chances to meet pupils' interests and needs. Very good provision is made for personal and social education and this helps to support learning. The needs of pupils with special educational needs, including those in the resource base and with English as an additional language, are well supported. ICT is used effectively to strengthen learning across the curriculum. There is a good partnership with parents and very good links with the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The day-to-day management of the school ensures the school runs smoothly. At all levels, there is a commitment to provide inclusive and positive approaches to learning. This results in the satisfactory achievements of most pupils and very good relationships and personal development. The leadership provided by the headteacher and other key members of staff has provided an appropriate emphasis on raising achievement. However, not all leaders and managers play a significant enough part in raising standards or in improving the practice of others. Steps to improve weak teaching have not always been successful. This has diluted efforts to improve standards. The governors play an active role in the work of the school and increasingly understand its strengths and weaknesses.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS

Pupils' and parents' views are positive. Parents value the strong links between home and school and feel well informed about how well their children are doing.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things that school needs to do to raise the standards of achievement are:

- Improve the ways leadership and management judge their overall effectiveness and their impact on teaching and learning;
- Develop the roles and responsibilities of key members of staff and their effectiveness as a school improvement team;
- Devise strategies to improve teaching and learning where it is weak;
- Ensure that all teachers check the progress made in pupils' work;
- Improve attendance.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Although standards in the national tests in English, mathematics and science have been well below national averages for several years, pupils' achievement is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good behaviour and attitudes of pupils towards work create a good climate for learning.
- Pupils achieve well in ICT and physical education and standards are above those expected nationally.
- Pupils with autistic spectrum difficulties placed in the school's communication centre achieve well.
- Pupils underachieve in Key Stage 1.

Commentary

1. The attainment of pupils is well below average in English, mathematics and science throughout the school. This follows a similar pattern of standards over recent years, which are well below those expected nationally. Standards are not as high as they were at the last inspection. When taking into account the very low attainment of pupils when they start school, their achievements are satisfactory. This is because good teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2, makes up for weaknesses in Key Stage 1.
2. Since the last inspection, improvements have been made to the standards achieved in ICT, which are now above those expected nationally by the time pupils leave school. This is due to the improved resources and the confidence of teachers as a result of their training. In physical education, standards are good because teachers used a variety of energetic activities and help pupils improve the quality of their movements through a better understanding of how to judge performance.
3. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. This is because they are challenged at the right level and are well supported. Pupils allocated to the school's communication centre achieve well in relation to their learning difficulties and prior attainment. These pupils almost always make significant gains in relation to the learning and personal development targets set out in a series of individual education plans. This helps them to gain in confidence and self-esteem and enables them to be fully included in some lessons alongside mainstream pupils of a similar age.
4. Standards in geography, history, design and technology, art and design and music remain in line with those expected nationally. In religious education, standards are in line with the requirements of the local agreed syllabus.

Foundation Stage

5. On starting nursery, standards are very low. They have dropped since the last inspection and are now well below average. Teaching and learning are good in nursery and reception, meeting the needs of children well. As a result they make significant progress. However, few are able to make up for their low starting point and reach the goals expected of them by the end of the reception year.

Years 1 and 2

6. By the age of seven, standards have remained well below average in reading, writing and mathematics over the last few years. Teacher assessments of science also indicate that over the same period, standards have been well below average. Most pupils start Year 1 with below average standards, but even taking this into account, by the end of Year 2, their achievements are below those expected of pupils of similar background and attainment. This is because in Year 2 teaching does not provide enough challenge that matches pupils' ability or the pace and focus of lessons do little to capture pupils' interest and concentration. Few pupils reach the higher levels of attainment.
7. Standards of speaking and listening are low. Most pupils listen attentively, but do not speak in sentences well. Since the last inspection, the school has gone some way towards developing writing. The introduction of a whole school approach through the Intensifying Support Programme has not been in place for sufficient time to improve achievement. Pupils like reading, which is a key area for development.
8. In mathematics, recent national tests, supported by the inspection findings, show a downward trend in standards. Few pupils reach the higher standards. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 in particular are struggling to match the standards recorded in previous years. Some of this is due to weak teaching, which is not strong enough to compensate those pupils with weak mathematical backgrounds.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	12.8 (11.1)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	9.9 (9.6)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	12.8 (11.8)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 45 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Years 3 to 6

9. By the age of eleven, standards remain well below average in English, mathematics and science. However, due to good teaching, pupils learn well and their achievements are in line with those expected given their low starting points.
10. Pupils' language skills are below those expected. They often speak with confidence but have a limited range of words with which to explain themselves. This also applies in reading where too many pupils have a limited vocabulary. There are plenty of books and the library supports learning, an improvement since the last inspection. The teaching of reading is generally good and the new focus on reading is improving achievement. In writing, appropriate skills of handwriting and spelling are developed and pupils' achievements are satisfactory.
11. In mathematics, most pupils' achievements are satisfactory. However, pupils find number facts difficult and do not have the skills to develop their mathematical understanding or to work at speed. Their progress is hampered by a poor use of mathematical language. Achievement is better where pupils are taught in groups of broadly the same aptitude.
12. In science, achievement is satisfactory but too few pupils achieve the higher levels in written tests. Standards in science as measured by national tests have fluctuated since the last inspection, rising briefly towards national averages before falling back to their present level. Teachers provide a good focus on practical work and pupils can plan investigations taking into consideration what is a fair test. However, too few pupils have the literacy skills necessary to

accurately reflect the quality of their understanding or learning in science through their written work.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.3 (24.3)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	23.8 (24.2)	27.0 (26.8)
science	26.0 (25.7)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 49 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are **good**. The school provides very well for pupils' personal development. The school tries hard to improve attendance but it remains unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships throughout the school are very good and contribute well to pupils' positive attitudes.
- Pupils respond very well to the many opportunities to think of others and understand their feelings.
- Pupils like coming to school and enjoy the activities provided.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons are generally good and contribute to effective learning.
- Levels of attendance are below the national average.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.5	School data	0.2
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.

Commentary

- The school works hard to develop pupils' attitudes to learning, good behaviour and personal qualities so that they have the confidence to respond to challenge. This is evident in the levels of competence achieved in ICT. Pupils like school. They talk with enthusiasm about the variety of activities provided for them and show positive attitudes in their vigorous singing in assembly, their friendly courtesy around the school, and their willingness to volunteer for jobs and responsibilities.
- The school consistently promotes and develops very good relationships between staff and pupils, which are characterised by mutual respect and trust. This effectively underpins the management of behaviour and procedures to overcome bullying and harassment. As a result behaviour in class and around the school is usually good and has improved since the last inspection. Behaviour is very good in the best lessons when pupils enjoy learning. Staff actively involve all pupils in the life and work of the school and treat them with respect. Consequently pupils with communication difficulties, English as an additional language or

special educational needs enjoy coming to school where they feel secure and valued and show their appreciation of the school's additional educational provision by behaving well and working hard.

15. Pupils are usually attentive and concentrate well. This has a positive effect on their learning. However, pupils' attention wanders when lessons lack pace and interest. When pupils find it difficult to comply with the school's expectations for good behaviour, they are well supported. Staff work closely with behaviour support services and parents to help the pupils to improve, and to avoid the need for exclusions. When exclusions are used, they are used appropriately as the last resort.
16. Good provision for pupils' personal development supports the development of constructive relationships throughout the school. Pupils respond well to opportunities to put themselves in the position of other people, and to understand their feelings. Teachers discuss aspects of current news reports, such as the Tsunami disaster, with pupils to help them relate to the wider world and the need to help others. They learn to value each person as an individual and recognise positive qualities in themselves and others. Teachers encourage pupils to distinguish between right and wrong, and to think about the need for rules and the responsibilities of living in a community. Pupils effectively operate a buddy system at playtimes, which was introduced by the elected school council. Older pupils take turns to be on duty as buddies, and ensure that children are not left out and lonely. Awareness and understanding of different customs and beliefs are promoted well through the curriculum and by visitors to school.
17. Levels of pupils' attendance are consistently below the national average and there is some unauthorised absence. The school works closely with the Education Welfare Service to monitor pupils' attendance and punctuality. Parents are contacted on the first day of absence if they have not contacted the school to give a reason. The school promotes good attendance through the reward system. There was a significant number of exclusions last year, despite the school's very constructive attempts to manage the very challenging behaviour of some boys.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	242	6	0
Mixed – White and Black African	3	0	0
Black or Black British - African	6	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Information not obtained	0	0	0
Total	253	6	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching is **satisfactory** overall, the curriculum is **good** and there are **good** links with parents and the community, which benefit pupils' learning.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and pupils' learning is satisfactory overall. Teaching in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 2 is good. The checks made on pupils' progress and achievements are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in both the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2.
- Teaching in Year 2 is unsatisfactory; children make limited progress.
- The school has a good system for tracking pupils' progress.
- Teachers' use of assessment during lessons to respond to children's individual needs is good.
- Teachers do not check the progress made in pupils' work often enough.
- The quality of teaching and learning assistance in the communication centre is good.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 46 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	8 (17%)	21 (46%)	14 (30%)	2 (4%)	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.

Commentary

18. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall across the school. This is the same as at the time of the last inspection. Teachers throughout the school have very good relationships with pupils. Staff have clear, high expectations of pupils' behaviour and most use good systems of behaviour management very effectively. Teachers speak to pupils quietly and calmly and ensure that lessons and large group activities are carried out in an orderly way. As a result, pupils show considerable respect and behave well in lessons. This means that in most classes, teaching and learning go on with very few disruptions.
19. The achievement of most pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. This is because teaching approaches are appropriately matched to their individual needs. In the best practice, teachers place a strong emphasis upon developing the language skills pupils need to learn successfully. Teachers work effectively with well-deployed and capable teaching assistants who also make a significant contribution these pupils' successful learning. This support leads to a high level of interest from pupils and helps maintain their self-esteem as learners. The quality of teaching in the communication centre is good. The teacher uses her understanding of the pupils' learning difficulties effectively, for example when supporting and challenging their use and insights into language well. As a result, when these pupils are sensitively included into mainstream lessons they cope well and play a full part in the life and work of these classes.
20. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall. As a result, children achieve what could be expected for their age and time in school. This is because teachers provide interesting activities and the children enjoy every minute of the lesson. Teachers take a firm but friendly approach and give support that is well matched to the children's ability. Children are very aware of their teachers' high expectations and respond well, working with concentration and effort. Consequently the pace of lessons is good and most children learn well. A good example of this was seen in the reception class during a lesson aimed to improve their physical development. The lesson contained many elements of the children's everyday learning. They responded to the teacher's piano music by moving like wild animals with concentration and enjoyment. They made good progress because the teacher gave sensitive support and encouragement whilst making clear her high expectations for all.
21. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory overall. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, as in Year 2, pupils make too little progress. In these lessons, planning does not clearly identify the focus of the support staff during lessons and tasks are not adjusted in accordance with pupils' achievement in previous lessons and therefore do not match pupils' different abilities. This means that children do not achieve the best that they can. Too often, important concepts are

not explained or take too long. For example, in the introduction to a literacy lesson, which was to focus upon identifying the beginning, middle and end of a story, the teacher spent ten minutes describing the props that she was going to use. As a result the pace of the lesson was very slow and the children became bored and restless. Poor management of their behaviour means that children are not fully engaged and as a result they make limited progress. In Year 1, teaching is satisfactory because planning is better. It includes work that is better matched to ability and the role of adults is clearly identified. Instructions are clear and deliberate and behaviour management is good. As a result pupils make sound progress.

22. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is generally good. These lessons are well planned to provide a variety of tasks that match the wide range of abilities. In the less successful lessons teachers are still learning ways of challenging the many needs of all the pupils in the class. Explanations are very clear so that children are absolutely certain of their tasks and what is expected of them. Teachers concentrate on direct class teaching and model the work for pupils. A good example of this was seen in a literacy lesson for Year 6 when the teacher, using the interactive whiteboard, clearly modelled the writing of playscripts for the pupils and focused upon very clear explanations, which continuously reinforced the characteristics of the playscript. As a result the children made good progress.
23. Teachers have a very good knowledge of the subjects they teach and this is used to stimulate and develop the pupils' own enthusiasm for learning. Support staff are used well and work with focused groups of pupils to support their progress. In effective lessons teachers often check on how well pupils have understood their work to move children's learning on. As a result pupils make good progress.
24. Significant improvements have been made to the way pupils' progress is checked and forecasts of achievement are made. In English and mathematics, this involves tracking children from their baseline assessment in nursery and reviewing their progress each term. This ensures that those pupils not making the expected progress can be quickly identified and appropriate action taken. Teachers' marking is generally up to date and positive and, where it is linked to pupils' individual targets, helps pupils to understand how they can improve their work. Teachers do not always check the progress made in pupils' work often enough and as a result are less able to evaluate the effectiveness of their plans and methods and make the necessary changes. In the lessons where assessment is good, teachers build on their knowledge of pupils' learning in previous lessons to make sure that the work matches the pupils' needs.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is **good**. It provides a wide range of opportunities that helps to meet the needs, aptitudes and interests of individual pupils. It is also strengthened and enriched by experiences and activities in which pupils can participate outside normal school hours. Resources and accommodation are both **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is appropriately broad, well structured and organised to ensure all pupils benefit in their learning.
- A major strand is the programme for personal, social and health education that supports pupils' personal development well.
- The curriculum is enriched well by a wide range of visitors, visits and school clubs.

Commentary

25. The very good provision made for personal and social education is the firm basis around which much of the curriculum is built. This works well due to the very good working relationships fostered in the school. The school follows a comprehensive and formal programme of work and supports this in many aspects of school life including strong links with spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The self-esteem of the pupils is raised, their behaviour becomes more mature and many become more aware and tolerant of each other's views and needs. Winning the Healthy Schools Award has also helped to strengthen pupils' achievements. The great majority of pupils are prepared satisfactorily for the next stage of their education. The school continues to make good improvements to its overall provision since the previous inspection.
26. The breadth and balance of the curriculum are good overall. All subjects of the National Curriculum, together with religious education, are woven well into the programmes prepared for different year groups. These are sometimes taught under different topics which link pupils' learning effectively. Mixed year groups are also catered for appropriately. The school has made a firm decision to integrate sex and relationships education, together with a drugs awareness programme, into the everyday curriculum, and this works well. Statutory requirements are met including the need to have an act of daily collective worship for all pupils.
27. The curriculum is well planned to support pupils with special educational needs especially those with communication difficulties and those with English as an additional language. Pupils identified on the special educational needs register are well known to their teachers who use the pupils' individual education plan targets sensibly and well to check their progress. The curriculum also helps to define and support more able or talented pupils, but the school recognises more needs to be done to improve their achievement. Alongside personal development, the curriculum reflects the school's particular emphasis on literacy and numeracy, and the time allocated to these subjects is appropriate. In order to raise standards, the school has begun to examine how these important areas can be reflected and experienced across the full curriculum.
28. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good and indicates good improvement for the youngest children since the previous inspection. All areas of learning are covered well and there is particularly good emphasis on nursery and reception children working together as appropriate. Teachers' planning between the year groups is good and effective use is made of the recent improvements in both the indoor and outdoor facilities.
29. The school tries to ensure all its pupils benefit from the wide range of extra-curricular activities available. In any 12-month period, pupils can join clubs such as the Penny Whistle, aerobics, breakfast club, Spanish, sports clubs and wildlife explorers. Attendance at these and other clubs is high and they are eagerly looked forward to. In addition, the curriculum is enriched by a wide range of visiting expertise combined with many outdoor visits, including a residential weekend on Holy Island in Northumberland.
30. There is a satisfactory range of both teachers and support staff to help meet the learning needs of pupils. Adults are used effectively across the school. The accommodation is good, including both indoor and outside facilities. The Foundation Stage has an exciting new nursery building and the main school has some spare capacity, which is used well to develop ICT, library skills and creative activities. Learning resources are good overall. They are particularly strong in ICT ensuring standards in that area are above average by the time pupils transfer to the high school.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes **very good** care of pupils. Provision for the support and guidance of pupils is **satisfactory** and the school involves pupils well in the development of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for the care and health and safety of pupils is very good and ensures a secure learning environment.
- The quality of pupils' relationships with staff ensures good personal support and guidance.
- The school values the views of pupils and enables them to participate in the development of the school.

- Educational guidance for pupils in English and mathematics is not always sufficient to help pupils to improve.
- The communication centre successfully promotes the inclusion of its pupils into the mainstream school.

Commentary

31. Care of pupils is a strength of the school and has improved since the last inspection. Well-established routines and procedures to ensure pupils' health, safety and protection are in place and are monitored by the governing body. The Premises Officer is fully involved in ensuring safety on the school premises. The health and safety issue identified at the last inspection has been effectively eliminated. Supervision is good and lunch times are well organised. There is strong provision in the curriculum to help pupils learn how to keep themselves and others safe, and to follow a healthy lifestyle. The school has very good links with other agencies to provide care and support according to the needs of individual pupils.
32. Pupils trust teachers and feel able to go to them with their troubles. Some of them feel that they can tell buddies and receive help. Parents also have confidence in teachers and tell them of events at home, which may have an impact on the child's well being at school. Teachers know pupils well as individuals and understand their strengths and difficulties, but there is no provision to formally monitor pupils' personal development as they move up the school. Teachers do not always give pupils enough information on how they can improve in English and mathematics, and marking in books is not consistently clear and helpful or specific to each pupil.
33. Staff in the Foundation Stage take care to introduce children sensitively and gradually into nursery and reception classes and are responsive to their needs. Pupils joining school at a later stage make friends and settle down well. Staff in the communication centre provide good quality care and support to their pupils. This is reflected in the high quality relationships that exist between adults and pupils that help them to fully engage in their learning. These close and supportive relationships are the key to the progress made by the pupils, who are very settled and secure in the centre. The teacher holds high but realistic expectations of what each child can achieve and rarely accepts less than their best efforts, gently pushing them to achieve more.
34. Pupils have opportunities to express their views and put forward ideas every week at class councils. These sessions are also used to discuss issues that have affected pupils and to offer support. Pupils' suggestions are considered at meetings of the school council and some funds are made available to enable selected proposals to be put into effect. The school also seeks their views through questionnaires. In one example of this, pupils' responses to a questionnaire on reading led staff to promote reading for pleasure through visitors and activities in Book Week.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has developed **good** links with parents and other schools and **very good** links with the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers are friendly and approachable; they listen to parents' concerns and act upon them.
- The school works hard to improve community resources for parents and children.
- Links with other schools and the community contribute to the variety of learning experiences and pupils' enjoyment.

- The school does not provide all parents with enough information to enable them to help their children at home.

Commentary

35. Parents are very pleased with the school and the education their children receive. They find teachers to be very approachable so that communication is good and supports pupils' welfare and learning. The school sends parents letters and a half-termly newsletter so that they are well informed about the school and coming events. Written reports on pupils' progress are satisfactory, and there is good provision for parents to meet teachers and discuss their children's education.
36. Links with the parents of pupils with special educational needs are good; parents are kept well informed about the progress of their children and their attendance at regular review meetings is good.
37. Pupils regularly take home a book to read and a reading diary, which is used by many parents to communicate with the class teacher. An outline of what pupils will be learning is sent to parents each half term, and some parents have asked teachers for extra help to enable them to support their children with mathematics homework. This help is willingly given; however, the school does not regularly provide parents with guidance on how best to support their children's work at home.
38. The school works hard to involve parents in a variety of ways, but has found it difficult to interest parents in meetings or workshops. The school seeks parents' views through questionnaires and acts on the information received, for example by providing a booklet on identification of pupils' special needs. A few parents help with school activities and a grandparent regularly supports staff by hearing readers and raising funds. Parents attend school events to see their children perform, and enjoyed an open session when they could meet teachers and see their children in the school environment.
39. The school provides facilities for local organisations to meet. The headteacher has been proactive in working to obtain a new community hall in the area, although this has not so far been successful. Sure Start is involved in providing services for parents and children in the school, and the governing body is working with them to designate surplus accommodation within the school for use by the local community. The school has also arranged bus trips for local people to see football and hockey matches. A variety of links with the community and visits within the area support pupils' learning and personal development. For example, drama students from Newcastle University visited to support history with Year 6, and pupils attended an event at Northumbria University to promote diet and healthy living. There are good links with the local cluster of schools, and close liaison with the local secondary school ensures a smooth transfer to Year 7. Pupils have benefited in particular from extended opportunities for sport, the arts and ICT.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Governance, leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher, staff and governors are successful in providing an inclusive, secure and positive climate for learning.
- Financial management is good and is helping the school develop its educational priorities.
- Special education needs provision is well managed.
- Subject leaders' roles do not sufficiently focus on raising standards and in improving the practice of others.
- Steps to improve weak teaching have not always been successful.

Commentary

40. The leadership and management of the school were good at the time of the last inspection. Since then there have been some positive developments, for example in the school's continued development of good quality provision for special educational needs. The headteacher, staff and governors are fully committed to providing an inclusive, secure and positive climate for learning for all. They have been successful in achieving this aim and the vast majority of pupils enjoy their time in school. An able deputy headteacher takes responsibility for developing the curriculum. In co-ordinating special educational needs she is effective at linking with outside agencies and ensuring that the large number of individual education plans are well focused. There is a strong commitment to the personal development of pupils, which enables them to have very good relationships and supports their learning.
41. The senior management team and subject leaders place a satisfactory emphasis on raising achievement. The process of self-review and of monitoring performance is satisfactory and has led to some positive developments to raise achievement. For example, recent participation in the Intensifying Support Programme has provided a sharper focus on raising standards. Priority has also been given to the development of systems for tracking pupils' progress. The system is effective and teachers use the information to plan improvements in pupils' achievement. This approach has also led to an effective programme for staff development. However, the performance management of staff has not always addressed areas of weakness sufficiently. The roles of some key members of staff do not provide enough responsibility for reviewing performance and leading improvement strategies, as part of a team. Strategies to improve weaknesses in teaching have not always been successful. Several key members of staff have the capacity to support the school's improvement more fully but they have too few opportunities to influence or improve the practice of others. The headteacher and deputy work together effectively on day-to-day management issues. Checks are made on the curriculum and there are examples of effective teamwork amongst staff, such as in the mixed Year 3 and 4 classes.
42. The headteacher and governors share a clear vision and sense of purpose when seeking to promote the achievement and inclusion of pupils with special educational needs. Consequently the provision for these pupils (including those with autistic spectrum difficulties, based in the communications centre) is well led and well managed. The school has established an effective whole-school approach to the delivery of appropriate and effective support to pupils with special educational needs and this is evident, for example, in the frequency with which they meet the challenging yet realistic targets set for them in their individual education plans. The special educational needs team is well led and works in close partnership with specialist services provided by the local education authority.
43. The governors' role in the life and work of the school is now well established. They understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are, therefore, able to work effectively towards improvement. They share a commitment to raising standards. The headteacher provides informative and critical reports about the progress of the school towards its development targets and increasingly about its performance in relation to other schools. This means the governing body is also developing its capacity to challenge and support the school's strategic leadership.
44. It can identify priorities and has put in place a detailed action plan, which reflects its determination to improve standards and the quality of education it provides. This has enabled the governors to develop long-term plans for the development of the school, an area of weakness identified at the last inspection. There is good management of both finances and school resources. The significant balance carried forward from the previous financial year was well planned to provide funds to support ICT and staffing levels. This has been an effective strategy. Financial decisions are made in accordance with the principles of best value. However, until recently the governors have provided insufficient challenge in relation to the school's performance in national tests.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	919656
Total expenditure	895005
Expenditure per pupil	3118

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	52647
Balance carried forward to the next year	77298

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

45. The overall provision for children in The Foundation Stage is good. Numbers in the reception age group have fallen in recent times and during the inspection, 24 children were taught in a single class, all being full-time since the previous September. A further 25 children are taught in the nearby nursery. Almost all reception children transfer from the school's nursery unit. Two teachers and two full-time support staff (nursery nurses) form the main complement of staff working alongside the children. Attainment on entry to the nursery and reception is low, particularly in relation to personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. All children make significant progress and achieve at least satisfactorily in all areas of their learning. However, the low starting point for many children means significant numbers do not attain the standards anticipated for their age by the end of the reception year. Teaching and learning are consistently good in both classrooms and the needs of the children are well met, particularly their social and emotional needs. The current leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory although there are some drawbacks in the appointed co-ordinator teaching elsewhere in the school. Nevertheless, the strong team of adults work well on a daily basis, helping children to make a good start to their school lives. The planning of the curriculum is thorough and all children experience a wide range of activities that adequately supports each area of their learning. Of particular interest are the afternoon sessions whereby the nursery and reception classes combine and children enjoy a carousel of activities supervised by all available adults.
46. The assessment of children's work is good and leads to an accurate appraisal of what individual children have achieved, together with what needs to be provided next for their overall development. Careful records are maintained. Any children with specific learning difficulties are monitored and supported well, as are children for whom English is an additional language. The induction and transfer of children are handled well. Although parents are made welcome, few are involved in supporting Foundation Stage activities on a regular basis. The accommodation is now good, including an attractive and well-used outside area. Resources are plentiful and well used. The improvements made in overall provision for this age group since the previous inspection have been good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is strong and well organised.
- Most children make significant gains in this area as they grow in confidence.
- There are many opportunities for children to play and relate well to each other.

Commentary

47. From a very hesitant start, many children soon grasp the routines of nursery or reception life and learn to share and take turns. Achievement is good and significant numbers are on course to reach the standards expected for their age by the end of the reception year. Teaching and learning in this area are good. Children behave well and relate well to all adults and others in their class. Activities are planned effectively to encourage both individual and group working and some children will play happily together for long periods or without direct adult supervision. Others are adept at putting equipment away but a few are quite shy and reluctant to join in.

Reception children are given opportunities for more independent learning, such as dressing and undressing, and many can choose activities for themselves. There is little time lost when moving between activities. During class time, nursery children are mature enough to recognise the meaning of temper and moodiness and can say how they try to cope. By undertaking role-play, children in both classes develop their interests and are stimulated to try new things. The adults build up good relationships as a matter of priority and children are quickly rewarded for things they do well. Both classrooms have easily understood 'golden rules' which are frequently referred to.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Despite achieving satisfactorily many children do not reach the standards expected for their age.
- All staff try to promote communication and language across all areas of learning.
- Resources are used well to stimulate oral language in particular.

Commentary

48. Teaching and learning in this area are good. Most children have a low starting point and significant numbers are unlikely to reach the average standards for their age by the end of the reception year. Nursery children, in particular, lack confidence to speak at any real length and many are slow to put their ideas forward. Teachers compensate for this well and often engage them individually to help develop some sort of fluency. Activities such as jigsaws, water, sand and the 'Kenton Bar Shop' all help to stimulate early communication and language development. Quiet corners are provided in both classrooms for children to pour over books and try out their letter formation or practise sentence writing independently. Nursery children have a rich array of books but few have any real idea as to how books work or how words convey meaning. All, however, enjoy hearing stories read and listen well. Reception children learn a range of sounds, letters and words and a few show good promise with their early reading books, often shared with classroom adults and sometimes with their parents. Hearing stories is an integral part of everyday activities. Writing skills, even in reception, are somewhat limited. A few children are able to write their names or some simple sentences independently, but the majority are limited to forming individual letters by copying from a card or from the teacher. The staff use resources and the available space well, displaying and modelling words where and whenever they can. The achievements of most children are satisfactory as few children make up for their low starting points and reach average standards by the end of reception.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good emphasis is placed on practical number practice and teaching children to understand what number is all about.

Commentary

49. Children achieve satisfactorily but a majority are unlikely to attain the expected standards for their age. The quality of teaching and learning is good ensuring children do plenty of counting and matching activities in order to build up their early mathematical experiences. Nursery children are happy to show visitors their number charts or to explain the story of the 10 little monkeys or five little ducks. A few children can differentiate between circles, diamonds, squares and triangles. Reception children can handle simple amounts of money in their shop and count with reasonable confidence and accuracy numbers up to 20. Some children were able to dress two figures with the same number of spots but others struggle with the concept of 'more than' and 'less than'. While some children can add single digits together many others do not understand how numbers grow, sometimes in equal amounts. Reception children develop a greater awareness of shape and learn some basic properties. Teachers keep close records of the assessments made of individual children and use resources well to make numeracy interesting and productive.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide a good range of activities and experiences for the children.
- Although children's standards are below average most achieve satisfactorily.

Commentary

50. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers realise children have limited experience of things and places beyond their immediate environment and arrange a wide range of activities to develop skills, knowledge and understanding. Adults ensure that children handle materials and objects, which can be both new and familiar to them and encourage them to describe what they see and feel. Reception children work out the 'filling' materials of various soft toys and nursery and reception children show adeptness with a computer mouse or moving objects around on an interactive whiteboard. A few more able children made a good effort at designing a toy that will have moving parts. Constructional equipment is used widely and successfully. In both classrooms, children are encouraged to examine musical instruments carefully and try to work out what helps to make the noise. A significant feature of teachers' planning is to centre children's learning on half-termly themes such as 'Myself', 'Festivals', 'Minibeasts' and 'Toys'. These themes are used particularly well by staff to increase children's experiences in this area of learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most children achieve well and are likely to reach the standards expected for their age.
- Good use is made of both indoor and outside facilities.
- Children thoroughly enjoy this area of their development and show a good response to learning.

Commentary

51. Teaching and learning in this area are consistently good and a majority of children are on course to reach the expected standards for their age by the end of the reception year. Children achieve well and make rapid progress. Staff make good and frequent use of both the school hall and the specialised outside area to develop the gross motor skills of all the children. Nursery children run, skip, climb and weave in and out of obstacles as befits their age, whilst reception children are able to perform to music and explore the ways different animals move. When preparing for activity lessons in the hall, all children dress appropriately and fully understand the space needed by others. In the classrooms, children handle a wide range of equipment including pencils and scissors which helps develop their fine motor skills and overall co-ordination.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers are imaginative and effective in providing for children's needs, ensuring they achieve well.
- Work is well displayed to encourage reflection and further improvement.

Commentary

52. Teaching and learning are good and children and staff are enthusiastic about and proud of what is achieved. Children try particularly hard in this area and many are on course to reach age-related expectations by the end of the reception year. Classroom displays are well presented, inviting children to see the efforts of others and to give fresh ideas for further work. In Reception, children combine their creative skills with literacy when making New Year cards in the 'school office' whilst others model small animals using malleable material or make exotic shapes in the sand trough. Nursery children achieve satisfactory standards in their self-portraits and glitter/sand collage work whilst those in reception explore a wide range of colours when writing and drawing their favourite characters from Cinderella. Both classrooms are organised to provide the maximum space for children to model, draw and create for themselves; the forms of self-exploration which result enable them to achieve well over time. If children tire they are quickly brought to the carpet for nursery rhymes or informal singing where they perform well. The weekly visit from a specialist musician helps to extend the singing repertoire of all the children and teaches them more about the possible uses of different musical instruments.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's opportunities to read have been developed well.
- In the best lessons, teachers model technical vocabulary and uses careful questioning to develop pupils' understanding.
- There is insufficient emphasis in planning on vocabulary to improve speaking.
- The sessions aimed at improving children's writing are not effective.

Commentary

53. Standards seen in lessons and also through the scrutiny of children's work are well below those expected nationally in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Although there has been little change in standards since the last inspection, pupils make satisfactory progress against their low starting points.

54. Standards of speaking and listening are low. Children enter school with poor skills with regard to speaking. In most classes children listen attentively. However, their ability to speak in sentences is poor on the whole. In effective lessons, the use of talking

partners is used well to encourage meaningful discussion between children and helps them to explain their thoughts and decisions to others. In the best lessons, the technical vocabulary is modeled by the teacher and there is careful questioning of pupils to probe their understanding more thoroughly. However, the identification of the key vocabulary is not addressed in the teachers' planning and this means that a focused approach to language development is missing and pupils' progress is limited.

55. Pupils' achievements in reading are satisfactory. The teaching of reading is well supported by a plentiful supply of books for use during the literacy hour. Pupils take their reading and library books home regularly and there is a useful home/school reading record in which both the teachers and parents record pupils' successes and difficulties. Through these approaches, pupils generally gain enjoyment from reading. Good teaching is improving pupils' achievement through the use of high quality texts. In Year 6, one boy, for example, was keen to read the class storybook even though he "didn't like reading much". Reading has been a whole-school focus for development through the Intensifying Support Programme. The school has identified inference and deduction as key focuses for development. Each class has targets for reading and most meet or exceed them. However, not all children are aware of the targets they have been set. The school is currently piloting a phonics programme but this is limited to one group and it is too early to measure its impact. There is a good focus across the school on the development of high frequency words and spelling. However, class work on spelling does not always accurately match the needs of the various groups of pupils.
56. Since the recent introduction of the Intensifying Support Programme, targets for writing have been successfully agreed and are having a positive effect in literacy lessons. Teachers are using them to focus on the development of writing but pupils are often not yet sure of what they are. Teachers are clearer now about differentiated targets for children and the progression of skills for writing. Since the last inspection, extra time has been set aside for the development of writing. These sessions have not been well enough planned to ensure the development of writing skills. Where it is used well, the use of ICT as an interactive teaching tool is improving learning, especially amongst boys. For example, in a Year 3/4 lesson boys were very keen to answer the teacher's questions and then be involved in manipulating text on an interactive whiteboard.
57. Leadership and management are satisfactory and some good monitoring procedures are in place. Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection. There has been an improvement in assessment, which has led to more accurate target setting. The role of the subject leader does not provide enough responsibility for reviewing performance and in taking a lead in improvement strategies. Not enough opportunity is given to influence or improve the practice of others.
58. Since the last inspection a school library has been established and children are confident about finding books on their own. Classes visit the library weekly and pupils have the opportunity to borrow from a range of fiction and non-fiction.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

59. Pupils' restricted use of language slows their progress in other subjects. For example, in a history lesson, pupils in Year 3/4 found it hard to clearly explain their thinking and ideas. Direct intervention in a good lesson by the teacher helped to overcome such difficulties. Teachers also employ strategies such as talking partners to help develop speaking in other subjects such as history. In the best lessons, pupils' writing is

supported through the use of writing frames, for example as a basis for their experimental report in science.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well below average.
- Pupils have good attitudes towards mathematical learning.
- The teaching of pupils in 'ability sets' enables the teachers to focus on the needs of more individual pupils.
- Some pupils, especially the higher attaining, underachieve in Year 2, due to some weak teaching.

Commentary

60. The recent results in the national tests reflect a downward trend in attainment and this was backed up by the results of inspection. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 in particular are struggling to match the standards recorded in previous years. In Years 2 and 6 few pupils currently reach the higher standards for their age and this drives the average scores down in relation to those from even similar schools. Some of this is due to teaching and learning which are not focused or particularly strong enough to compensate those pupils with weak mathematical backgrounds. Progress overall is satisfactory due to better teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 and the good achievement in Year 6.
61. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily, particularly in Years 3 to 6, but those in Year 2 underachieve because the teaching and learning are not consistently sharp enough to move pupils on in small but definite steps over time. Pupils of all ages find retention of number facts difficult and many lack strategies to develop their mathematical understanding or to work at speed. Many also find the use of mathematical language difficult to master as well as recording their work correctly and in an organised way. Their use and application of mathematics are also too variable in quality. The work achieved in mathematical sets containing pupils of broadly the same aptitude has gone some way to raising standards but this has not been fully evaluated as to it being the best way forward.
62. Pupils in the Year 6 mathematics set achieve well because the teacher uses assessments carefully to prepare work that is well suited to the needs of the pupils and makes mathematics fun and interesting. During a lesson in Years 3 and 4, the pupils achieved well because the teacher taught a particular strategy well and then compiled some everyday problems to help make the learning and application more meaningful. Not all of the work prepared and attempted is of this standard and some is unnecessarily repetitive and lacks challenge, particularly for the higher attaining pupils. Despite this, most pupils enjoy mathematics and achieve some success. They work hard and collaborate well when asked to do so. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress against their targets.
63. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Year 6 and in parts of Years 3 and 4. It is weaker in Year 2. In general, teachers do not always provide sufficient range, pace and context in which pupils can apply their knowledge and understanding and practise

their various strategies. This applies particularly to the more able pupils and where teaching is weak. Where teaching is most effective, pupils experience a range of methods, understand what their targets are and know how best to improve. Although assessments are carried out across the school, the results are not used sufficiently well to pinpoint the weaknesses of individual pupils, so that work can then be prepared to compensate for any shortcomings that exist in their knowledge and understanding. The marking of pupils' work is not always consistent and sometimes leaves them unsure as how to improve.

64. Leadership and management are satisfactory although some weaknesses in these areas need to be eliminated as soon as possible. Whilst some good monitoring procedures are in place and improving assessments have led to more accurate target setting, any changes for the better have not, as yet, had sufficient impact on standards and pupils' achievements. The co-ordinator's role has not been reviewed or redefined sufficiently well enough so that priorities for subject development can be planned and acted upon.

Mathematics across the curriculum

65. Pupils enjoy limited opportunities to apply mathematics in other areas of the curriculum, although the work in ICT is undoubtedly supporting mathematical learning. The handling of science data and measuring tasks in geography and design and technology are among the few examples where mathematics is used more imaginatively. Pupils currently have too few opportunities to use mathematics to help solve everyday problems.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory.**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy and benefit from good opportunities to learn from first hand observation and investigation.
- Pupils still need more help to know what they must do to demonstrate their emerging knowledge and understanding through their writing and in tests.

Commentary

66. Standards in science throughout the school are well below the national average. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 achievement is satisfactory but too few pupils achieve the higher levels in written tests. Standards in science as measured by Year 6 tests have fluctuated during the period since the last inspection, rising briefly towards national averages before falling back to their present level.
67. The school provides a good, broad and balanced science curriculum that places appropriate emphasis on scientific investigation. Evidence of this type of work can be seen throughout the school. In a Year 2 lesson pupils investigate and report on the effect of simple push and pull forces on resistant and pliable materials while being taught to use appropriate descriptive words. Later, in Year 3 pupils work more systematically. By altering the position of an object relative to a light source they can change the shadows formed and good teaching helps them to reflect upon and use better scientific vocabulary. By Year 6 pupils are using their knowledge of surface area

and capacity to discuss design and carry out an investigation that fairly tests rates of evaporation. During these lessons teaching develops pupils' use of language well and this is then used to stimulate and structure their scientific thinking effectively. This is particularly evident, for example, when pupils discuss how and why they will control experimental variables. However, too few pupils have the literacy skills necessary to accurately reflect the quality of their understanding or learning in science through their written work.

68. Teaching methods are usually imaginative and lead to a high level of interest. Teachers group pupils sensitively in ways that play to their strengths and weaknesses. This allows them all to contribute well to practical and investigative activity. Lessons involve challenging but realistic opportunities for pupils to talk about and be involved in their own learning. Teachers and teaching assistants relate very well to all pupils and respect their emerging ideas well. In this way they provide good role models to encourage less confident learners to feel secure and to take risks, especially in their verbal communication. Assessment arrangements in science are much improved since the last inspection and are now satisfactory. They are used to target and track the achievement of all pupils. Work is marked regularly and pupils are increasingly aware of the overall quality of the work they complete; however, pupils need more guidance to know what they must do to reflect the quality of their knowledge and understanding in science through their writing.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision for ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards and pupils' achievement in both key stages have improved and by Year 6 are good.
- Teachers are more confident in using ICT than at the previous inspection.
- Improved resources and access to computers have improved pupils' achievement.
- Pupils' enthusiasm for the subject makes a significant contribution to their good achievement in most lessons.

Commentary

69. By Year 6 standards in ICT are above national expectations, which is an improvement on the previous inspection when they were judged to be satisfactory. Improvement is due to the better resources available for teachers to use in lessons, and training that has enabled them to gain the confidence to teach ICT. Teachers now use the new resources in the ICT suites effectively to teach pupils the basic skills they need to support their learning in other subjects.
70. By the end of Year 2, standards are in line with those expected nationally. Pupils are using the computer to make pictures and write text. The oldest pupils make use of word-processing to present information and understand how to input information to direct the movement of a robot. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 have well-developed skills in using multimedia. For example, they can confidently use PowerPoint to make presentations with images, animations and sounds. Higher attaining pupils can use software to create their own databases and web pages with animations. Pupils in Year 4 can use word and art software, and copy and paste text and images from elsewhere

when producing their own documents. Pupils are confident when using email to communicate with each other and with teachers.

71. Pupils' achievement is generally good. In some lessons, older pupils work with younger, less confident pupils. This collaboration between pupils raises achievement, especially for low attaining pupils. This approach was particularly effective where Year 4 pupils were helping Year 3 pupils to use shortcuts to useful websites. Very useful links have been made with the local secondary school. In Year 6, this enables access to a better range of control technology resources and improves achievement.
72. Teaching in ICT is mostly good and in lessons teachers exploit pupils' enthusiasm for the subject. Teachers familiarise themselves with applications they are to use and most lessons begin with a confident demonstration which keeps all pupils interested and eager to learn. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, as observed in a Year 2 lesson on control technology, teaching is at a slow pace and explanations are confusing. As a result, learning stops and pupils quickly become bored and drift off task. Most teachers have the confidence and skill to help pupils' use of the Internet to research topics to support their learning in history and science. Year 4 pupils are currently using the Internet to research the Anglo Saxon invaders and Year 6 are able to use video-conferencing.
73. The school has two well-resourced computer suites that are networked so that teachers and pupils can share resources. Using the network in this way is relatively new to staff and not fully embedded into the way some work. The ICT co-ordinator is very proficient and manages the development of curriculum and staff very well. She is working on a whole-school assessment and pupil tracking system, which should help identify more accurately the school's ICT priorities. Resources are well managed and the support from a part-time technician is highly valued.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

74. The use of ICT across the curriculum is good. The ICT suites provide the mainstay of teaching basic ICT skills and there are opportunities to use the suites independently to support learning in other subjects. All classrooms have a computer and teachers are finding ways to maximise the use of computers in the ICT suites and integrate ICT into the wider curriculum.

HUMANITIES

75. Two lessons were observed in history and one in geography. Inspectors also looked at samples of pupils' work including displays but there is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about provision in either subject.
76. The evidence seen indicates that standards in history and geography are in line with national expectations. Both subjects are well planned and the range of work seen in books and on display indicates that there is appropriate coverage of both programmes of study. Teaching was confident and vibrant and helped enthuse the pupils well. Teachers made particularly good use of the interactive whiteboards to help structure the pupils' talking with their partners and to develop their speaking and listening skills while also developing and using appropriate subject vocabulary.
77. There is good coverage of historical topics and effective use of associated resources to ensure the National Curriculum is covered in sufficient depth. By Year 2 pupils have

been taught to think about past events in a chronological order using pictures and appropriate descriptive words, for example when studying the development of domestic kitchens through the Victorian period. By Year 6 the development of the key historical skills of enquiry and interpretation continues to be well supported by use of primary source material such as large scale maps, 1841 census data and contemporary sketches, as pupils learn how the present day urban locality grew from quiet rural village origins. Pupils enjoy their work in history and respond well to effective teaching that makes good use of sources of information such as photographs, opportunities to discuss their own ideas and artefacts from the period being studied.

78. Similarly, in geography good use is made of the local environment. By Year 2 pupils demonstrate a satisfactory knowledge of their own locality developed at least in part through local studies, and more able pupils use geographical terms associated with simple maps showing routes to school well. By Year 6 most pupils have developed a more critical understanding of their own locality as well as knowledge of places further afield. Teaching makes particularly good use of maps and photographs in both history and geography, for example to help make topical events such as a Tsunami more tangible to the pupils. Pupils have good attitudes to geography because the curriculum is taught through relevant and interesting activities supported by an adequate range of resources and good use of ICT. However, while pupils questioned could speak confidently about their work in geography, their limited writing skills restricted the extent to which their written work reflected the quality of learning seen in lessons.
79. Leadership and management of both subjects are satisfactory overall with some good features; for example, pupil progress is carefully tracked and samples of pupils' work have been compared with national expectations for their age. However, while teachers know how well pupils are doing there was little evidence in the work seen that marking was being used systematically to help pupils to improve and this meant opportunities for them to work at the higher levels were being missed.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a well-planned curriculum that supports pupils' progress.

Commentary

80. Standards in religious education are in line with the requirements of the local agreed syllabus. Standards in religious education are satisfactory. Pupils build on their knowledge and understanding with regard to Christianity. In Year 1, children consider what God may be like and learn about the importance of the Christian harvest. By Year 6 they have extended their knowledge by researching their own facts with regard to Christianity. They know that Jesus was Jewish and that his followers believe him to be the Son of God.
81. By the time they leave school children demonstrate a knowledge and basic understanding of some of the faiths they have studied. They are able to make comparisons and identify some similarities between Christianity, Islam, Judaism and Hinduism. For example, pupils understand that these different faiths all have holy

books, places of worship, leaders and special celebrations. Pupils know that Christianity is a worldwide faith and that, in this country, people from many faiths follow their own religion.

82. Planning for religious education follows the Newcastle Agreed Syllabus. The curriculum is organised into two yearly topics to cater for pupils in mixed age classes. Teachers deliver well-planned and resourced lessons, which help pupils to develop their understanding and knowledge of Christianity and also different religions. However, the use of visitors and visits to religious buildings is underdeveloped. Assessment, which was found to be unsatisfactory in the last inspection, is now sound. Teachers are provided with assessment guidance for the end of each unit. The school has also created portfolios of pupils' work. However, these have not as yet been annotated with levels.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

83. Apart from in physical education, too few lessons were seen to judge provision in any subject in this curriculum area. One lesson was seen in each of design and technology, music and art and design. Inspectors gathered evidence from these lessons, examined pupils' work in books and on display, and had discussions with staff and pupils.

Art and design

84. Teachers follow the national scheme of work and children are taught a range of skills through the provision of interesting tasks and resources. In the sampling of this work, standards are broadly in line with those expected. Children in Year 3, for example, explore the ideas for a design to represent a character by considering their design for a chair for an identified personality. This work was supported by a wide range of good quality examples which enabled the children to explore and develop their ideas with regard to shape, form and materials.
85. ICT is well used as a tool to support the teaching of art as teachers have access to samples of artists' work on the networked system. These are used as a stimulus for lessons; for example, the work of the artist John Martin was used to help Year 6 explore colour and pattern in a variety of media. Visits are also used to extend pupils' experience and knowledge; for example, Year 6 visited the quayside and studied and made sketches of bridges. This was then used to support the development of further work in class. The use of external artists to enhance the skills, knowledge and understanding is good. For example, with the valuable help of the Premises Officer, pupils of a range of ages have designed and made good quality mosaics. When completed these were placed on the outside walls showing the development a good range of skills.
86. There are good links with other subjects where art is used as a means to enrich the work. For example, in history children complete half portraits of the Tudor royal family. In Year 1 children use a paint program on the computer to make shapes and investigate colour.
87. Teachers' assessment of art is well supported by the provision of a portfolio of work. There is also a record of the children's work on the database.

Design and technology

88. Only a few lessons in selected year groups were available for inspection, so it was not possible to judge the overall quality of provision in design and technology. In the lesson seen, teaching and learning, together with pupils' standards, were broadly satisfactory. The subject has too little status in open displays although it is planned for appropriately in every year group. In one good lesson, Year 6 pupils took pride in making a Peruvian rain stick using cardboard tubes, soft nails and rice and other grains.

Music

89. In the sampling of music, the work indicates that standards are in line with those expected. Teachers provide opportunities for the children to listen to, perform and compose music in lessons. In a well-taught lesson in Year 3 children combine all three of these skills. They listen to a recorded piece of ostinato, compose their own pieces and perform these to the rest of the class. Children evaluate the performed composition against the agreed criteria. Pupils also have the opportunity to learn from experts; for example, Year 2 receive expert tuition during which they investigate and learn about a wide range of percussion instruments. Children handle, for example, an Ocean Drum and investigate the sounds that can be created by slow or hard movements. They use terms such as 'forte' with understanding.
90. In physical education standards are better than expected for the age groups concerned. Pupils play a variety of games and perform with enthusiasm. By Year 6, they understand and respect the rules of play. Higher attaining pupils can devise their own rules and play energetically in teams, showing independence and responsibility for each other. They can bowl, strike and catch well. In dance, Year 4 pupils work very well together to plan a performance representing the activities of 'Harry Potter'. Here, they appreciate each other's performance and try hard to improve their movements by moving in unison.
91. Teaching is good. Lessons are well planned to provide a variety of opportunities for all to get actively involved. Lessons are interesting with time for pupils to listen, watch, practise individual skills and then perform together. There are good opportunities for pupils to evaluate the quality of their movements or those of others. As a result, pupils understand how they can improve and they respond with energy and try hard to succeed. Where teaching is satisfactory, clear instructions are given and lessons are well organised. However, sometimes too long is spent in warming up and cooling down at the expense of developing the key skills planned. Pupils of all ages are aware of the effects of exercise on the body. Because they learn how to improve their performance, their achievements are good in physical education.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education is **very good**.

92. The school attaches great importance to personal, social and health education (PSHE). There is a well-planned and structured curriculum, which means that pupils make very good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding. The school gives pupils' personal development a high priority and provides lots of opportunities for them to share ideas and discuss issues both in lessons and during out-of-class activities. There is a very good programme for PSHE, which includes work on health, sex, drugs and personal safety. As a result, pupils are very confident of sharing their thoughts and ideas with staff and other adults. Staff listen to pupils' views carefully and explain why some of their ideas are accepted and others are rejected. PSHE is taught through planned lessons and also effectively through other subjects. Standards in PSHE are good and pupils achieve very well. This is because high expectations are set and the headteacher and staff are good role models and expect pupils to do well. During discussions pupils showed a good knowledge of healthy living. They know about balanced diets, the good effects of exercise and the dangers of drugs. Older pupils are confident in sharing their thoughts with staff and other adults. For example, they are able to talk about making choices about bullying. The school

provides a good range of opportunities for pupils to develop a sense of responsibility and citizenship. This is seen in the work of the school council where pupils make decisions about improvements that are needed in school and they learn to play an active role as citizens.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	6
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
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	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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