

INSPECTION REPORT

NEW SEAHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

Seaham, County Durham

LEA area: Durham

Unique reference number: 113996

Headteacher: Miss Bernadette Dolan

Lead inspector: Mr Andrew Scott

Dates of inspection: 11th – 14th April 2005

Inspection number: 267381

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: 4 – 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 252

School address: Byron Terrace
Seaham
Co Durham
Postcode: SR7 0HX

Telephone number: 0191 581 3046
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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of Mr Eric Watson
governors:

Date of previous 1st March 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is an average-sized primary school on the fringe of the small coastal town of Seaham. It has 252 pupils, mainly drawn from the immediate neighbourhood. Pupils tend to come from average socio-economic backgrounds. There is not much movement in the local population, although new housing developments are beginning to attract new families into the area. However, the number of pupils has been falling slightly in recent years, because of a drop in the local birth rate. The vast majority of pupils come from white British families, with a few of Asian heritage who do not have English as their first language. However, all pupils have an appropriate level of English. There are no refugees, asylum seekers or traveller pupils. The number of pupils with special educational needs is low – there are only eleven pupils, who mostly have moderate or specific learning difficulties. At present, The school was awarded Beacon status in 2001 and, because of this, has developed very good links with other schools. The school also is part of an Education Action Zone and the Excellence in Cities initiative. It is especially fortunate to be part of a government initiative, the 'Classroom of the Future' project, which focuses on information and communication technology (ICT) and the performing arts. In recent years, the school has received several awards, including an Activemark Gold and the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
27545	Mr Andrew Scott	Lead inspector	English, Religious education Geography Music Special educational needs
11358	Mrs Vicki Lamb	Lay inspector	
29989	Mr Denis Goodchild	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology History Physical education
27541	Mr John Collins	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Science Art and design Design and technology

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

New Seaham Primary School is an effective school. Standards of pupils' work have remained consistently better than average over recent years. Teaching and learning are good and so pupils achieve well. Pupils' personal and social development is very good and they benefit from a good curriculum enriched with many exciting activities. There are good links with parents and mutually beneficial partnerships with other schools. The leadership of the headteacher and key staff has produced a healthy climate for learning. **The school gives good value for money.** The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics, science, ICT, music and art and design because of good teaching throughout the school
- The very good relationships with adults ensure that pupils have very positive attitudes to work, behave very well and develop into mature and sensible individuals
- The effective leadership of the headteacher, well supported by senior staff, has ensured that the school has maintained a positive ethos and good standards of work
- The school is not sufficiently rigorous in evaluating its own development
- Although there are good procedures for assessment, teachers do not make the best use of the information gained from these to help pupils improve
- The curriculum is very well enriched by an extensive range of interesting activities and the impact of the 'Classroom of the Future' project
- The school does not make the most of opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual development and awareness of other cultures
- Children benefit from a good start to school in the reception class

The school has made good progress since the last inspection, especially because it has succeeded in sustaining standards of work that are better than average. Most aspects have stayed as good as they were and the issues raised in the previous report have been addressed well. In addition, the school has worked successfully to improve its accommodation and develop its learning resources. The contribution of senior staff is now more effective, and the provision and standards are better in ICT. However, the level of attendance has fallen and the school has not been able to halt this declining trend.

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	A	A	C
Mathematics	A	A	B	C
Science	A	A	A	B

*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.*

Pupils' achievement throughout the school is good. When children start school, their skills and abilities are broadly average. The provision in the reception class is good and so children achieve well and reach the goals expected of them by the end of the year. By Year 2, pupils continue to achieve well and have above average attainment in reading, ICT, music and art and design. In writing, mathematics, science, religious education and physical education, their attainment is average. By Year 6, pupils achieve well and standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' attainment is also above average in music and art and design, and well above average in ICT. Their attainment in religious education and physical education is average. It was not possible to evaluate attainment in geography, history and design and technology.

There is very good provision for pupils' personal development. Very good relationships between adults and pupils produce very good attitudes to work and behaviour. Pupils' social and moral development is, therefore, very good, although their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. The level of attendance is below average, but punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teaching is consistently effective in the reception class and in Years 5 and 6, and it is sometimes very good. Elsewhere, although teaching is occasionally very good, it mostly varies between satisfactory and good. The teaching of ICT is particularly good and results in high standards. There are efficient systems to assess pupils' progress but teachers do not use data skilfully to guide pupils' progress.

The school's curriculum is good. It is well structured and relevant; it caters equally for all pupils and is enriched by a very good range of extra activities. The accommodation and resources for learning are good. The school takes good care of its pupils' well-being and fosters good partnerships with parents. Links with the community are satisfactory and links are very good with other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The leadership of the headteacher is good, ensuring that the school has the right values and atmosphere. The leadership of key staff is also good because they are increasingly influencing the development of the school. However, the management of the school is satisfactory because, despite good systems for checking its own progress, the school is not incisive or objective enough in its analysis to specify the precise areas for improvement. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are very supportive but could do more to hold the school to account for its actions.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have a good opinion of the school. They believe that teaching and learning are good, and that staff's high expectations of their children result in good behaviour and attitudes to work. They particularly approve of the range of activities provided by the school and the way in which the school welcomes new pupils. They think the school is well led but a few parents are unhappy with the communication between themselves and the school. Pupils' views are similar to those of their parents, but they have more reservations about the quality of behaviour and the interest factor in some lessons. The inspection team agrees with these views but considers that the school has worked hard to improve information for

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED concerns about pupils' behaviour.

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

- be more rigorous in its self-evaluation and take appropriate action
- ensure that pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve
- improve pupils' spiritual development and awareness of other cultures

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

The achievement of pupils throughout the school is good. By Year 6, standards are above average in all the main subjects and well above average in ICT. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as other pupils. Standards have remained much as they were at the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' pupils achieve well in English, mathematics, science, art and design and music
- Standards in ICT are well above average by Year 6
- Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage

Commentary

1. When children begin school, they have skills and knowledge that are broadly average. As a result of consistently good teaching, children achieve well in all areas of learning. They are, therefore, on course to reach the goals expected of them by the end of the year in personal, social and emotional development, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical and creative development.
2. In the national tests of 2004, the standards of pupils in Year 2 were above average in reading and writing, compared to schools nationally and to those in a similar socio-economic context. Standards in mathematics were average compared to schools nationally and similar schools. In these subjects, a good number of pupils achieved the expected level but slightly fewer pupils than average achieved the higher level. In science, teachers' assessments showed that standards were below average. All pupils achieved the expected level, but no pupils achieved the higher level. Usually, there is little difference between the attainment of boys and girls but, in the past two years, girls have outshone boys in reading and writing. Standards have been slipping since 2000, and the trend over time has been below the national average. The inspection found that this was unduly influenced because assessment procedures have become more rigorous in recent years and so the test results are not a fair reflection of pupils' progress over time.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.7 (16.9)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.7 (15.2)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.8 (17.2)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 38 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. Pupils' achievement in the current Year 2 is good. Standards are above average in reading because pupils have good word skills and effective comprehension. This level of understanding is also evident in their good listening. Standards in writing and speaking are average because pupils do not have a particularly wide vocabulary. Standards in mathematics are average because pupils have sound skills in calculation.

In science too, standards are average; not enough pupils have good skills in investigation. Pupils' attainment is above average in ICT, music and art and design, and average in religious education and physical education. There is currently little significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.

4. In the national tests of 2004, pupils in Year 6 achieved standards that were well above average in English and science compared to schools nationally and those in a similar socio-economic context. Compared to schools with similar prior attainment, standards were average in English and above average in science. In both these subjects, many pupils achieved the expected level and more than is typical achieved the higher level. Standards were above average in mathematics compared to all schools nationally and those in a similar socio-economic context. However, they were average compared to schools with similar prior attainment at Year 2. Although girls tend to perform slightly better in English than boys, there are not usually any significant differences in the respective attainment of boys and girls in any of these main subjects. Over time, standards in English and science have been relatively stable, but, in mathematics, they have been more erratic and dropped sharply in 2004. The trend in all subjects over time has been below the national average and pupils' achievement between Year 2 and Year 6 was below the average level. It is important to note, however, that the inspection team considers that assessment procedures in Year 2 have become more rigorous, which means that conclusions about achievement over time must be treated with caution. It is the judgement of the inspection team that the achievement of pupils throughout their time at school is good overall.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.7 (28.4)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	28.4 (29.9)	27.0 (26.8)
science	30.5 (30.4)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 40 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

5. In the current Year 6, standards in English, mathematics, science, art and design and music are above average. Pupils read confidently and expressively, and their writing is well organised although their choice of vocabulary is not as imaginative and rich as it could be. Pupils have good mental agility in mathematics. In science, pupils are good in investigative work although not skilled at planning their own experiments. Pupils have a good range of techniques in art and design and, in music, they are good at composition and performing. Attainment in ICT is well above expectations because all pupils have confidence and expertise with a variety of computer applications. Pupils' attainment in religious education and physical education is average. Pupils' achievement is good over time. Assessment systems have improved and now show a clearer picture of pupils' progress.
6. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as other pupils. The good, targeted support enables them to achieve the individual goals they are set. There was not enough evidence during the inspection to be able to judge levels of attainment in geography, history and design and technology.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils show very good attitudes to school and to learning, and their behaviour is very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. The level of attendance is below average but pupils' punctuality is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff foster very good relationships throughout the school and these have a very positive effect on pupils' self-esteem
- Pupils respond well to the school's high expectations of their behaviour
- Teachers ensure that pupils have strong social skills in both their immediate environment and the wider world
- There are not enough planned opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual and multi-cultural awareness

Commentary

7. The strong ethos of the school pervades all it does and creates an atmosphere in which pupils feel valued and are able to flourish. Pupils clearly enjoy school, and this is evident in their enthusiasm for learning and their eager participation in the wide range of activities provided. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 respond very well to positions of responsibility. They enjoy looking after younger children and having roles of responsibility, which include supervising some lunchtime clubs. Older pupils have also organised activities to support charities. Pupils are taught to respect each other, and are set a very good example by adults who clearly enjoy good, supportive relationships with each other and with pupils. As a result, pupils are open, self-confident and welcoming to visitors.
8. Behaviour in lessons, around the school and at playtimes is very good and has improved since the last inspection. There are very visible signs around the school of the importance attached to good behaviour. A clear system of rewards and sanctions is well understood by everyone. This means that where pupils do present challenging behaviour, it is dealt with quickly and effectively, without disrupting other pupils' learning. Pupils understand the reasons for rules very well and are involved in reviewing them. For example, each class draws up its own code of conduct. The school council provides an effective voice for pupils in the running of the school; it has been consulted, for example, about behavioural issues. The effective and consistent approach to the management of behaviour means that the atmosphere of the school is calm, friendly and relaxed. Pupils and parents say there is no serious bullying, racist or sexist behaviour and there have been no exclusions in the past year.
9. Provision for moral and social development is particularly good. Pupils are developing a very good understanding of the responsibilities of living together in a community and respecting each other's feelings and values. The school has useful links with the local community to give pupils a sensible understanding of their own culture and their responsibilities as members of a community. They have been involved in re-cycling projects, for example. The school uses the art curriculum imaginatively to explore other cultures. Pupils have studied Indian hand-painting, as well as fabric and pattern design through the work of a felt-maker. There is a thorough programme of visits to art galleries, the theatre, and various museums while the pupils themselves put on plays and concerts.
10. Pupils' awareness of the values and beliefs of other cultures is supported satisfactorily by their work in art, music and through the use of ICT. Some younger pupils have visited a local church and a Buddhist monk has visited the school to talk to pupils about

his beliefs. However, teachers do not plan sufficiently to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the multi-cultural aspects of our modern society through, for example, visits to cultural centres. Although assemblies are sometimes used to raise pupils' spiritual awareness, the school does not ensure regular enough opportunities for reflection, self-awareness and appreciation of the less obvious things in life.

Attendance

11. The level of pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory. A significant minority of parents do too little to ensure that their children attend school consistently throughout the year. Despite requests from the school, a quarter of pupils have taken holidays during term time in the current academic year. The school is right to have adopted a firm stance over authorising unreasonable absences, as such absences are considered detrimental to the continuity of pupils' learning. On the other hand, parents are very good at informing the school when there are genuine reasons for their child's absence. Parents are also good at making sure their children arrive punctually at the start of the school day.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.4
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	1.2
National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education that the school provides for pupils is good. Teaching and learning are good overall. The curriculum is good and very well enriched by many activities. The good relationships between staff and pupils ensure that all pupils are well looked after and cared for. There are good partnerships with parents, very good liaison with other schools and satisfactory links with the local community, all of which improve pupils' learning.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Assessment of pupils' progress is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' planning is thorough and effective so that lessons are mostly brisk, clearly focused and purposeful
- Teachers are knowledgeable, are very good at explaining new concepts and ask probing questions; as a result, pupils learn readily
- Teachers do not do enough to ensure that pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve
- The working atmosphere in classrooms is very good because teachers expect high standards of behaviour, but they do not always insist that pupils produce the highest quality work
- Teachers use resources skilfully to clarify and consolidate learning

Commentary

12. The school has maintained the standards of teaching seen at the last inspection. Although still good, the quality of individual lessons varies from satisfactory to very good, but is never less than satisfactory. However, teaching is consistently good in the reception class and Years 5 and 6. Throughout the school, teachers have an efficient approach to planning their teaching. Lessons have very clear objectives, and these are well shared with pupils so that they know precisely what they are expected to learn. There is a good balance of activities in lessons which keeps pupils motivated and keen to learn. In a Year 2 English lesson, for example, pupils thoroughly enjoyed dreaming up words to describe aliens and then delighted in playing a game to guess which alien their partner was referring to. In addition, there is little time lost between activities and so lessons have a happy momentum which encourages pupils to concentrate.
13. Teachers are generally confident about their subjects. They are good at explaining mental strategies for solving problems in mathematics, for example, and grammatical issues in English, such as paragraphs and spelling patterns. The recent focus on ICT and music has meant that teachers have increasing confidence in teaching key skills in these subjects. Because of this, teachers are adept at explaining new learning clearly and logically and, as a result, pupils are motivated and acquire new skills with relative ease. Teachers are good at asking pupils questions to check understanding and to assess how well they have understood. However, not all key skills are well taught. In science, for instance, pupils are not given enough scope to conduct their own

investigations. Teachers could also do more to improve pupils' research skills in the library and their mapping skills in geography.

14. Although teachers know how well pupils are progressing, they are not constructive enough in enabling pupils to overcome readily their weaknesses in learning. Marking, for example, praises pupils' efforts but is often desultory and contains little precise advice on what pupils need to do to improve their work. Similarly, teachers praise pupils sensibly in lessons for their contributions but do not all correct errors enough in, for example, speech or writing. Pupils' individual targets for the main subjects can be very precise but others are vague and offer little practical help. For example, the literacy target of one pupil in Year 3 includes the clear guidance of 'use full stops', but another one simply states 'remember punctuation' without any further clarification.
15. Mostly, classrooms are happy, productive places. Teachers are thoughtful, encouraging and supportive of pupils' ideas, and so pupils feel valued and achieve well. In the more effective lessons, in the reception class and Years 5 and 6 for example, learning is more challenging and so pupils gain a greater sense of achievement and derive pride from their efforts. However, teachers do not always monitor how well pupils work on their own in lessons to ensure maximum effort. Teachers sometimes spend too long with one focus group and do not keep a sharp enough eye on the progress of all pupils or issue crisp deadlines for the completion of work. In addition, not all teachers demand high quality presentation from pupils and so handwriting in particular suffers.
16. The school makes shrewd use of human and physical resources to support pupils' learning. Teachers liaise well with classroom assistants so that groups of pupils in particular need have more adult guidance. In a lesson in the reception class, for example, the teacher and classroom assistant developed children's speaking skills well, by prompting discussion as they cut up material to make a collage of 'The Ugly Duckling'. In English, mathematics and ICT lessons, pupils with special educational needs benefit from close support, and sometimes it is more able pupils who receive the extra input from staff that they need to achieve fully. Teachers make effective use of learning resources to motivate pupils and stimulate learning. One excellent example was seen in a Year 3/4 lesson for personal and social education, in which the teacher digitally photographed the pupils' caricatures of themselves as they were working. He then displayed these on the interactive whiteboard so that the pupils could be proud of their work and other pupils could try to guess whose caricatures they were.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 41 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	11 (27%)	19 (46%)	11 (27%)	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.

The curriculum

The school provides a good curriculum that is enriched by a very good range of extra activities. Good accommodation and very good resources support the curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A strong curriculum allows all pupils to develop at their own pace

- The school places a high priority on the personal development of pupils
- Effective development of the ICT and music curriculum has succeeded in raising standards
- Teachers do not make the most of opportunities to develop literacy, numeracy and ICT across the curriculum
- A very good range of lunchtime and after-school clubs extends and enriches pupils' skills
- The effective accommodation and exciting resources have a positive impact on pupils' learning

Commentary

17. The curriculum is robust, as it was at the last inspection. The school uses recognised national schemes of work which provide a strong structure for learning. Despite the difficulties of the mixed year groups, teachers work hard to make sure that pupils benefit equally from the curriculum. This is certainly the case with the acquisition of knowledge but, sometimes, skills are not always taught progressively enough in subjects like geography and history. Pupils with special educational needs have good individual plans for learning which mostly specify clear targets for improvement. Children in the Foundation Stage also have an effective curriculum, a sensible blend of teacher-directed and independent activities. This curriculum is well adjusted in the term before children begin Year 1, so that they are able to familiarise themselves with the subjects of the National Curriculum.
18. The school does very well in enabling its pupils to become mature, responsible and aware of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. The very good range of sporting activities encourages pupils to keep fit and develop very good social skills through teamwork, as well as coping with winning and losing.
19. Pupils learn how to become caring by participating in the school council, for example, and taking part in residential visits and charitable fund-raising. The very good relationships within the school help pupils to co-operate, support each other and accept personal responsibility. This is well seen in the way older pupils willingly plan and run activities outside normal lesson time for the younger pupils. The school meets statutory requirements, including provision for sex and drugs education.
20. The 'Classroom of the Future' project has made a significant impact on the provision for ICT and the performing arts, especially music. The school and the pupils rightly take great pride in their work in this area. Comprehensive staff training in ICT, for example, has enabled staff to have the necessary skills and confidence to plan a stimulating curriculum. As a result, pupils have very good basic skills, are very knowledgeable about the use of ICT in everyday life and are skilled in using ICT in communication. For example, they expertly use the digital film-making facilities to record and present extracts from lessons and performances in the arts. In music, specialist staff ensure good opportunities to compose and perform music.
21. Pupils develop their basic skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT satisfactorily through other subjects. For instance, they use the Internet for research in history topics and they word-process some of their stories. In English, pupils in Years 5 and 6 develop their writing by re-telling Greek myths and by producing their own lyrics in music lessons. However, such opportunities are not an intrinsic part of everyday planning and so chances are lost. In mathematics, for example, there are few instances of pupils producing computer-based graphs. In religious education, geography and history pupils do not write down much to reinforce their learning and teachers sometimes talk too much, denying pupils the chance to develop their own speaking skills.
22. The school has an impressive variety of activities which extend pupils' classroom learning and provide different experiences. Many sports, such as football, tag rugby, athletics, gymnastics, hockey, netball, badminton and rounders are available after school, and pupils regularly compete with other schools. In addition, there are clubs for such pursuits as percussion and ICT. There are also evening activities, including a youth club for Year 6 pupils, together with pupils from Year 7 in the adjacent secondary school, as well as an evening performing arts club for Year 5 pupils. Many pupils

perform in a range of 'extravaganzas', singing, dancing, reciting and playing music. The good number of educational visits and visitors also significantly help to enrich the curriculum.

23. Resources for teaching the curriculum are very effective, particularly in ICT, music and English. The school abounds with computers, including Macintosh computers specifically designed to support the work in digital film-making. Classrooms benefit from interactive whiteboards so that teachers can clarify learning by using dynamic and diverse presentations. Digital cameras are widely used. In music, the range of percussion and guitars, as well as electronic recording facilities in a small studio, motivates pupils to gain good skills. The library is bright, central and well stocked. Outside, pupils have a very large playground and field to promote their physical education, although children in the reception class do not have their own secure area for independent outdoor play.

Care, guidance and support

Procedures for care, welfare, health and safety are good. Support, advice and guidance provided for pupils are satisfactory. The school has established good procedures to seek and act upon pupils' views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are well cared for in a clean, safe environment
- The school has good systems for checking how well pupils progress but does not set consistently effective targets for pupils to improve
- Pupils have very good, trusting relationships with adults in school
- The school is very good at welcoming children when they first begin school

Commentary

24. Staff work in the best interests of pupils to safeguard their welfare and protect them from harm. Teachers and teaching assistants ensure that each pupil is well known, promote healthy living and have appropriate procedures in place to maintain a safe environment. Health and safety are rigorously monitored and issues responded to with enthusiasm and a good understanding of what is needed. The school follows the local authority guidance for child protection and this is made available to teachers and their assistants. Staff are conscientious in sharing any concerns with a more senior person but training has not been provided for everyone in school in recognising possible signs of abuse and knowing how to proceed formally. However, the staff responsible for managing child protection issues are suitably trained. Overall, the provision for pupils' well-being is as good as it was at the last inspection.
25. The school is well aware of the academic progress of its pupils. It has introduced regular and well-focused testing in English, mathematics and science, and the assessment results are stored very efficiently on computerised records. An analysis of the data shows trends of progress and specific areas within subjects where pupils have weaknesses. As a result, teachers know where they should focus extra teaching or deploy specific learning support. However, teachers do not always use the data to set clear and effective targets for pupils to improve. Some targets are very specific but many are too general to be helpful. A reminder to use capital letters for names, for example, is far more productive for a Year 2 pupil than advice to 'increase vocabulary' is for a Year 6 pupil.

26. The rapport between pupils and adults is a strong feature of school life. Staff get to know pupils very well and respond conscientiously to their personal needs. Pupils approach staff confidently for help and to share their ideas and news. The positive atmosphere around the school encourages pupils' confidence and self-esteem, and successfully promotes their independence and awareness of personal responsibility. The headteacher, for instance, keeps her door open at lunchtimes for pupils to talk with her about any concerns, and staff and pupils work together to negotiate class rules at the beginning of each year. Older pupils regularly support younger ones alongside staff during breaks and lunchtimes and several pupils are given responsibilities for planning and leading some extra-curricular activities.
27. Induction arrangements are very good for children starting school in the reception class. Staff visit nurseries to meet the children and learn about their individual needs, skills and levels of ability. This forms a very good basis for supporting their progress from their earliest days in school. A very good range of opportunities is created for new starters and their parents to get to know the school staff and activities. This helps children to feel secure and settle confidently into school life.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has good links with parents and very good partnerships with other schools and colleges. Links with the community are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Productive partnerships are established with partner schools that support pupils and staff
- Parents are well involved in the life of the school
- The school works hard to take account of parents' views
- The school has established very good mechanisms to help pupils transfer smoothly to secondary school
- Although satisfactory, links with the community are not fully exploited

Commentary

28. The school is closely involved with local primary and secondary schools. There are regular meetings between senior staff that have resulted in mutually beneficial initiatives that, for example, improve the provision for pupils with special educational needs and provide training for staff. Staff share their expertise in ICT with staff in other schools and are developing a joint programme to enhance opportunities for gifted and talented pupils. Links are established to help raise pupils' attainment in English, mathematics, science and ICT across the partnership of schools and to provide opportunities for them to take part in a range of sporting activities. Such links are an improvement since the last inspection.
29. On the whole, parents and staff work well together to help pupils develop good attitudes to school. Parents ensure that their children are properly equipped and arrive at school on time although many parents continue to take their children out of school for holidays. Parents are provided with a good range of information about the curriculum, school activities and their children's progress but some information that they are entitled to receive is omitted from the prospectus. The school is aware of this and will address this shortcoming. The school welcomes parents who want to work

voluntarily in school and is currently supporting a few parents in their studies towards recognised qualifications for employment in childcare. There is always a very high turnout of parents and other family members to special events, and parents are generous in donating items to support topics, fund-raising and social activities.

30. The school has developed a good range of procedures to enable parents to be actively involved in their children's education. It does well to seek parents' views formally, via questionnaires, and informally; where possible, it acts upon their views. For instance, the school has introduced open days in order to enable parents to have more opportunity to meet teachers. This is in addition to the regular consultation meetings when parents and teachers meet to talk about how children are getting along. Although the school does its best to deal with any concerns that individual parents have, it does not always succeed in pleasing all parents all of the time. A few parents have concerns that some staff at the school are not very approachable or amenable, but this was not evident during the inspection.
31. The school works closely with partner schools to prepare pupils for moving to the next stage of their education. Pupils transferring to secondary school take part in an extensive range of pastoral and curriculum programmes during their last weeks in school that continue for the first few weeks in their new school. This helps them to get to know staff, other pupils and the school's procedures. It also enables staff to share vital information about pupils' achievements, individual needs and the curriculum in both schools. In addition to taster days, when pupils visit secondary schools to prepare specifically for their first day there, they take part in projects, special exhibitions and workshops, often alongside pupils from other primary schools, and these events make a very good contribution to their personal development. For instance, they have participated in joint musical productions and a poetry workshop. Pupils have also taken part in design and technology projects and been introduced to a new language by specialist staff from secondary school.
32. Links with the community are not as good as they were at the last inspection. There are a number of beneficial links with institutions like, for example, the local church and pupils use the locality for topic work in geography. However, there are few partnerships with businesses or other organisations that would help to broaden pupils' experiences.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good, overall. The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is good. The governance and management of the school are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good leadership of the headteacher has ensured that the school has developed well and maintained good standards of pupils' work and behaviour
- The contribution of senior teachers is effective in supporting the headteacher and in the development of some key subjects
- The school's evaluation of its own development is not objective and analytical enough to enable all of its plans for improvement to be sharply focused
- Governors do not monitor the progress of the school with sufficient rigour
- The school develops staff skills well and has done very well to implement the necessary reforms to its workforce
- The staff make very good use of ICT to support teaching, assessment and administration
- The school uses its funds to good effect

Commentary

33. The headteacher is a thoughtful, well-intentioned and decisive leader. She has succeeded in keeping the school as successful and positive as it was at the time of the last inspection. As a result, the school rightly continues to be well regarded by parents and the community. She has done particularly well in involving staff, especially senior staff, in the development of the school. In so doing, she has generated a strong sense of teamwork and more self-belief among the staff. This is very evident in the extra time that teachers freely give to activities outside the school day. She has also done well to introduce the 'Classroom of the Future' project smoothly and efficiently, so that it is now well established, already improving standards in ICT and music and poised to have more benefit for other subjects.
34. The headteacher has worked hard to ensure that the contribution by senior staff has improved since the last inspection. It is now good overall. The headteacher and deputy headteacher, for example, are a compatible and significant partnership, with differing skills that complement rather than conflict. The senior management team enjoys its developing role in liaising with colleagues, championing their area of responsibility and having a major influence on the school's development. Some subject leaders are especially effective. In ICT, for instance, the subject leader has spearheaded the development of all the new ICT facilities and resources, and standards have subsequently improved. It is a similar picture in English, music and the Foundation Stage. However, some subject leaders do not have a good enough overview of their subject to be able to develop it fruitfully.
35. The school has good systems for monitoring its progress. Frequent testing enables teachers to know how well pupils are achieving and in which areas they do well or need help. Subject leaders are increasingly monitoring planning and observing colleagues' teaching to improve their perception of subjects. The headteacher and deputy headteacher regularly assess the performance of teachers. However, the school is not skilful enough at drawing appropriate conclusions and making clear enough decisions for improvement. In the monitoring of teaching, for example, areas for development are often quite minor, and advice does not sufficiently address significant areas of concern such as marking or level of challenge. In addition, the school's overall view of its effectiveness is too generous. It considers all of its provision to be very good, whereas the inspection has found that, overall, it is good.
36. The governing body is hardworking and supportive of the school. Meetings are well attended and governors ensure that all the school's statutory requirements are met. Governors, who have a subject responsibility, give their time willingly to visit school in order to see how the subject is developing. The chairman is often in the school and has a good partnership with the headteacher. However, the governing body is not as effective as it could be. Governors are not sufficiently questioning of key developments and do not hold the school to account enough for any apparent shortcomings, such as pupils' performance in science in Year 2 or the quality of pupils' writing. They do not find out enough for themselves, tending instead to rely too much on information from the headteacher.
37. The school is well ahead in its development of staffing arrangements required by the government. Support staff are very well deployed so that teachers can concentrate on teaching and spend much less time on routine or administrative activities. Subject leaders benefit from increasing time to monitor their subjects. Most of the assessment of pupils' work is processed externally, as is the analysis of data. The amount of planning has been thinned down to reduce the workload of teachers and this has not

had negative impact on standards. Staff training is regular and pertinent to the school's priorities.

38. The strong emphasis on ICT has been very beneficial to the staff. Teachers regularly make good use of interactive whiteboards to demonstrate new learning through pictures, video or substitution exercises, for example. Digital cameras are often used to celebrate and record pupils' work. The school's system of tracking pupils' progress is computerised, storing and displaying vital data quickly, and so information is easily accessible to staff. The administrative staff conduct the vast majority of their work on computer, which enables them to use their time more efficiently.

Financial information

39. The school makes good use of its finances. In recent years, it has spent a previously accumulated surplus on crucial refurbishment of the fabric of the building. As a result, the building is in very good order and a warm, pleasant place to work. The school has deployed the extra funds provided for the development in ICT and music very sensibly on providing attractive custom-built areas and up-to-date resources. Beset by a falling number of pupils and, therefore, a dropping income, the school has made good suggestions in order to balance its current budget. Even though the school has a slightly lower than average income per pupil, standards are good and pupils achieve well. As a result, the school gives good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	671,072
Total expenditure	707,836
Expenditure per pupil	2,671

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	46,193
Balance carried forward to the next	9,429

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

40. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Teaching and learning are now consistently good and sometimes better, so that most children make a good start to their education. Leadership and management are good. The teacher and teaching assistant make a strong team that makes a valuable contribution to children's learning. The provision is well managed and planned so that children benefit from good continuity as they move through the reception year. There are good links with parents and local nurseries; an increasing proportion of children attend some form of pre-school provision. Parents appreciate that induction procedures are good and help children to settle in well. Children enjoy learning and, from an average starting point, most achieve well. Although some higher attaining children are already working above the levels expected by the end of the Foundation Stage, standards overall are likely to be average by the time the children transfer to Year 1.
41. There is a good range of purposeful activities which excite the children and motivate them to learn. This is a happy classroom where pleasure and learning go hand in hand. The adults are very clear about what children will learn and this gives direction to the teaching and purpose to the work. Good resources are used imaginatively to support the activities, so that the children want to join in. The adults make detailed and accurate assessments of what children know, understand and can do, and these provide a clear idea of what children need to do to improve.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children work together well and form very good relationships because adults set a very good example for them to follow
- Staff have consistently high expectations of behaviour and praise children's efforts so that they are eager to learn and behave very well

Commentary

42. Children achieve well and most will meet the goals set for their age by the time they start in Year 1. This is because teaching and learning are very good; adults are very sensitive to individual needs and warm relationships help children to feel secure. Adults are quick to praise children's efforts and so children want to please them by trying to do their best. Adults provide a good example of co-operation and courtesy that children copy. Children are greeted politely at the start of the day, for example, and are made to feel that their arrival gives pleasure to the staff. Adults know how to build children's confidence so that they are keen to take part in activities.
43. Children know what is expected of them and behave very well because of consistent guidance by the staff that reflects high expectations. The great majority of the children listen well to instructions and put their hands up when responding to questions. They are encouraged to take turns and share in adult-led activities or activities of their own choice. The routines of the classroom are already well established, so that children

know what to do and are able to develop a good level of independence. All greatly enjoy being chosen as 'special helpers of the day'.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children listen carefully to each other and adults because of clear expectations by the staff
- There is a strong emphasis on the teaching of basic skills in reading and writing

Commentary

44. The great majority of children start with average language skills. Children achieve well, and most will reach all of the goals that are expected for their age by the end of the reception year. Teaching and learning are good and the elements of the literacy hour are already well established to prepare children for work in Year 1. Most children make particularly good progress in learning to listen to what others say and in early reading skills. The adults value talk and encourage children to describe what they are doing and explain what they have done. In question and answer sessions, children are well encouraged to develop their ideas and express themselves.
45. Children enjoy the challenges of their early reading activities and are developing a love for stories and books. The teaching of phonics is effective and, as a result, children's reading and writing skills have developed well since the beginning of the year. Children regularly look at books on their own and in groups, and all are making good progress in developing their understanding of how the text connects with the illustrations and in their recognition of common words. In writing, the teacher provides a good range of opportunities that enables the children to acquire early skills. Most children can already write some simple words and their own names independently. Adults are effective in reinforcing key skills. For example, in a good lesson on letter recognition, the children thoroughly enjoyed a game challenging them to recognise the letters a, c, d, g, q and o, and excitedly pinpointed the letters from their own names. Children are making good progress in writing skills and more able children can write sentences to re-tell the story of 'Jack and the Beanstalk'.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy learning and acquire good number skills because of lively, practical activities
- Children are developing a good knowledge of common shapes

Commentary

46. Most children will meet all of the goals expected for their age by the time they start Year 1, because of good teaching. All children show interest in numbers and a few more able children can count correctly up to 20 and beyond. In one lesson, all children could recognise the numerals 0 to 9 and correctly position numbers on a number line up to 20. This was a particularly effective session because it was well planned to capture the interest of the children so that they remained wholly focused on what they were doing. Most children understand the concept of 'more than' and 'less than', and about 30 per cent can correctly calculate one more or less than a given number.

47. Children are developing a good knowledge of common regular shapes such as the circle, triangle, rectangle and diamond; most can correctly name the shapes and put them in a correct sequence to continue a pattern. The planning of mathematical experiences has already established elements of the numeracy hour that will greatly benefit children when they move to Year 1.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities for children to learn from first-hand experiences, including the use of computers

Commentary

48. Teaching and learning are good and most children are likely to achieve the goals set for them by the time they enter Year 1. Teachers provide exciting opportunities for children to develop their skills. For example, children are already showing satisfactory computer skills in the way they have used an art package to draw a poppy. They can use the computer mouse effectively to 'drag and drop' features in a mathematical game. They have planted seeds and observed how they grew, and produced very good observational paintings of sunflowers in the style of Van Gogh. They have been on a visit to a farm and recorded their thoughts in pictures and words. They are developing a good understanding of how they themselves change as they grow, and children can sequence correctly a series of pictures to show this. Children are beginning to appreciate the beliefs of other people, which has developed from their work looking at how Muslims pray and worship.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective teaching ensures that children achieve well
- A good range of physical activities develops children's co-ordination well

Commentary

49. Many worthwhile opportunities are planned for children to develop physical skills that are in line with those expected for their age. As a result, most are on course to achieve the learning goals by the end of the reception year. In the classroom, children develop good hand-eye co-ordination and learn to control equipment such as paintbrushes, handle play models, and fit together jigsaw pieces. Children learn to control small apparatus and equipment when tracing over shapes and lines, painting, and using modelling dough to make, for example, mathematical numbers.
50. Teaching is successful in developing children's sense of space, movement and direction, as well as in developing good physical co-ordination. All children understand how to exercise safely and practise their ball control skills effectively. Adults and children all take part with enthusiasm which encourages the children to work hard and

do the best they can. As a result, by the end of the reception year, children move with confidence, imagination and safety. At present, the use of the playground gives a reasonably secure outdoor play area and this is being enhanced by the development of a planting area by the school garden club.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have very good opportunities to try out their own ideas, but adults do not make the most of opportunities for role-play

Commentary

51. Teaching and learning are good. Children achieve well, and most will meet the goals set for their age by the end of the reception year. Children paint, print and make collages, as well as models from recycled materials and construction kits. They have a good choice of materials and are given the freedom to try out the different skills they have learned. Children join in songs and choruses of familiar words with great enthusiasm and enjoyment, as was evident in the singing games such as 'The Farmer wants a wife', and 'Ring-a-ring-a Roses' during an outdoor play session. They benefit from good resources to support imaginative play in which they can act out different roles. However, adults do not always sufficiently exploit these opportunities to further develop and expand children's language skills.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective teaching throughout the school enables pupils to achieve well
- Teachers ensure that pupils have good standards in reading and listening
- However, there are missed opportunities to develop pupils' speaking and writing fully
- Teachers do not advise pupils clearly enough on how best to improve any areas of weakness
- There are good systems for monitoring and developing the subject
- The school has done well to improve the learning resources and the skills of staff

Commentary

52. Good teaching has meant that good standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Teaching is effective throughout the school, although lessons range from satisfactory to very good; it is consistently good in Years 5 and 6. Teachers plan lessons thoroughly to a reliable format so that there is a clear shape to lessons and they proceed smoothly and purposefully. They are very good at explaining new learning so that pupils are left in no doubt about what they are expected to learn. Teachers and classroom assistants work closely together to provide suitably challenging work for pupils with special educational needs, so that these pupils also achieve well.

53. Teachers generate a very good working atmosphere within classrooms. Relationships are relaxed yet focused and, consequently, pupils feel comfortable and yet eager to work. Indeed, teachers rarely have to exert their authority when pupils are working independently because pupils are mostly very responsible and appreciate working with one another. As a result, their concentration is sharp and they develop good skills in listening to one another and the teacher. Teachers are good at teaching pupils to read. Pupils learn the right ways to tackle unfamiliar words and how to become expressive when reading aloud. Although the school has many stimulating books, pupils do not demonstrate a wide range of reading and this restricts their vocabulary and creativity.
54. The development of speaking is satisfactory. Teachers ask good questions of pupils and are usually keen to involve as many pupils as possible in class discussions. In a Year 5/6 lesson, for instance, pupils were successfully encouraged to explain the story of the Good Samaritan from a different perspective. However, they do not always exploit these opportunities. In some lessons, there is too much guidance by the teacher, and so pupils miss the chance to gain confidence. It is a similar situation in writing. Pupils have satisfactory skills and are good at structuring their writing in correctly punctuated sentences. However, their vocabulary is not as wide as it might be and they are not very expressive or imaginative because their curricular diet is not sufficiently enriched by literature or other subjects.
55. Pupils achieve well but could achieve more if teachers were more constructive in their guidance. The marking of pupils' books, for example, praises good effort but there are too few comments to advise pupils what they should do to improve. There are very few comments about the quality of handwriting, and this is an area for improvement. Mistakes are not systematically corrected. Teachers work closely with pupils to set individual long-term targets in writing, and some of these are sharply focused and very effective. Others, though, are too vague and do not pinpoint which weaknesses need to be addressed. In lessons, teachers are rightly keen to praise pupils and sustain their interest but could do more to tell them when they make errors in speech.
56. The school has done well to improve its procedures for checking how well pupils progress, and they are now more rigorous than they were. Teachers test pupils very regularly, and information from these assessments is carefully analysed to give a clear picture of progress and used suitably. For example, the information helps teachers to divide pupils into classes and groups, and before national tests, the information is used to ensure that pupils benefit from the right kind of help. Through monitoring teaching and pupils' work, the subject leader has a good overview of the strengths and weaknesses of English. As such, the areas for development are clear-cut and mostly appropriate.
57. The leadership and management of the subject are good because standards have remained good. The school has wisely concentrated on developing the expertise of teachers. The introduction of thinking skills, for example, has helped pupils to reflect on the quality of their writing, and this should impact on standards in due course. The school has also invested shrewdly in its resources, especially for reading. Amid the considerable development of ICT, the school has kept the profile of English high, and the new open-plan library is a very attractive focal point of the school. There is an interesting variety of books available, although teachers do not yet make the most of opportunities to use this resource for class activities.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

58. The development of English in conjunction with other subjects is satisfactory. There are some good examples of pupils using ICT. In describing a visit to a beach, one Year 3 pupil word-processed, for example, "I saw an ice-cream van and ran over to it." There is also some evocative writing about the environment. One Year 6 pupil described fog as 'a tin of grey paint being poured over helpless faces'. Sadly, such activity is not widespread. Pupils' writing books tend to focus too much on routine grammatical activity and are not enriched with other subjects. Similarly, in subjects like geography and history, pupils do not write much down, and so miss important chances to reinforce and diversify their writing skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by the end of Year 6
- Teachers have effective strategies for teaching basic skills
- High expectations of behaviour and very good relationships motivate pupils to work hard in lessons
- Teachers do not indicate to pupils clearly enough what they need to do to improve
- Although the subject leadership has succeeded in maintaining good standards, the priorities for developing the subject further are not specific enough

Commentary

59. At present, standards are average by Year 2 and above average by Year 6. This means that standards seen at the last inspection have generally been sustained, indicating satisfactory improvement. Pupils achieve well as they move through the school, as they mostly begin with average standards. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress because their individual needs are addressed well in lessons. Teaching overall is good and is similar to that seen at the last inspection.
60. Teachers are good at demonstrating new learning and asking good questions so that pupils are quite clear about how to undertake their tasks in lessons. For example, Year 2 pupils learned how to use different strategies to add three two-digit numbers and were able to explain the methods used. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher's emphasis on the right vocabulary enabled pupils to accurately describe and represent on simple pie graphs the probability of given events occurring. All teachers set great store by the development of basic numeracy skills and strategies for mental calculations. This was seen in a Year 1 lesson when pupils were asked to explain the methods they used in adding coinage up to £1. Questions were carefully targeted to involve all pupils and so they all achieved well. Teachers make effective use of interactive whiteboards to clarify and demonstrate new concepts. This helps pupils to focus and provides scope for them to interact in a practical way.
61. In all classrooms, teachers want the best for their pupils and have high expectations of application and behaviour. Pupils recognise and appreciate this, which promotes a healthy atmosphere for learning in lessons and so pupils acquire very good attitudes to learning. They listen carefully, co-operate well and are able to work by themselves without much need for constant supervision. They concentrate very well, are productive and work is generally well presented.
62. There are good systems for assessing how well pupils achieve over time. Teachers use the resultant data sensibly to place pupils in appropriate groups within lessons and to target where specific support is required. However, whilst pupils' work is regularly marked, teachers do not identify weaknesses clearly enough or suggest what pupils need to do to overcome difficulties. As a result, pupils are unsure about how they can best improve and this restricts them from taking more responsibility for their own learning.
63. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject leader monitors the quality of teaching and learning adequately through classroom observations and checking teachers' planning. From this, a clear picture emerges of the strengths within teaching but the areas for development are not as clearly highlighted as they should be. In the same way, the analysis of national and school tests provides very useful information on pupils' strengths and weaknesses but these findings are not all rigorously defined within the subject's action plan. Consequently, the school is not as effective as it could be in raising standards further.

Mathematics across the curriculum

64. Teachers give pupils adequate opportunity to develop their numeracy skills in other subjects. Their work in design and technology, for example, contributes to their understanding of the attributes of two- and three-dimensional shapes. Pupils use computer programs to practise and consolidate basic number skills and spreadsheets to explore the relationship of length and width to area. They collate scientific data and

they use their ICT skills to construct bar graphs on healthy foods and line graphs plotting heartbeat against exercise. However, such activity is not extensive and regularly planned, so that teachers miss other opportunities to strengthen numeracy.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective teaching has produced consistently good standards over recent years
- Pupils learn well because teachers make good use of resources and establish a positive atmosphere in lessons
- The school is not effective enough in its development of the subject

Commentary

65. Standards by the end of Year 6 are above average, as they were at the last inspection. The school has done well to ensure that standards have remained mostly high in recent years. The school is, however, unlikely to achieve this result this year because there is a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6. By the end of Year 2, standards are average. Although teachers' assessment indicates that more pupils in Year 2 will achieve the higher level than last year, current inspection evidence suggests this may not be the case. The school does not provide enough scope for pupils to achieve these higher levels by, for example, developing skills in recording data from investigations.
66. The overall quality of teaching is good and is particularly effective in Years 5 and 6. All teachers make good use of resources to stimulate and interest pupils in the activities they have planned. Particularly good use is made of ICT to reinforce pupils' knowledge and understanding. In a good lesson in Year 4/5, for example, the teacher used the interactive whiteboard effectively to demonstrate the effect of different growing conditions on plants. Similar good use was seen in other lessons. Teachers are consistent in expecting good behaviour and this has helped to establish the very good relationships that exist between pupils and adults across the school. The conducive learning environment that results enables pupils to achieve well.
67. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject leader supports and advises his colleagues well. The monitoring of teaching and learning across the school is developing well but is not yet systematic or rigorous enough to build up a clear overview of the subject and ensure well-focused priorities for improvement. There is not enough insistence that teachers mark pupils' work so that pupils fully understand what it is they have to do next in order to improve. Marking is mainly supportive but rarely has precise enough advice. The school is aware of this issue but has not yet done enough to address it.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision for ICT is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improved provision has succeeded in raising standards
- Teaching is very good and makes sure that pupils have very good basic skills
- Pupils have a very good understanding of the uses of ICT in everyday life and in communication
- Very good leadership and management have improved resources and the quality of teaching and learning

- Teachers could do more to develop ICT in tandem with other subjects

Commentary

68. Standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6. Standards are better than those seen at the last inspection and this represents good improvement. All pupils thoroughly enjoy their work in ICT and this very positive attitude helps them to make the best use of time in lessons and, therefore, achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as other pupils because work is well matched to meet their needs.
69. Overall, teaching is very good. Teachers are very knowledgeable, consistently use the right technical terms and structure lessons carefully. This ensures that pupils acquire basic keyboard skills progressively and are able to access and use computer programs at an early stage. For example, in a very good Year 1 lesson, small logical steps helped pupils to appreciate the use of ICT as a research tool. They confidently logged on, accessed a geography program and then, with help, learned how to navigate their way through a story about Barnaby Bear in Australia. By the end of Year 6, pupils' skills are well advanced. This was evident in a very good Year 6 lesson where pupils were required to research the history of Durham Cathedral's Sanctuary Klocker. Skilled questioning helped pupils to refine the search criteria, thereby reducing the number of sites located by a search engine from over 100,000 to 50.
70. Pupils are very knowledgeable about how ICT is used and applied in everyday life. In discussion, pupils in Year 2 were able to give examples of domestic and commercial use, and also many examples of use in education. By Year 6, pupils appreciate the importance of communicating information and are skilled in its use. Pupils use word-processing to write extended reports and combine these with graphic programs to make *PowerPoint* presentations. They have had the opportunity to use digital cameras and recorders, as well as electronic instruments in their work in music. They successfully combine images, graphics and sound in digital film-making to present to a wider audience many aspects of school life.
71. The school has done very well to establish the 'Classroom of the Future' project. This opportunity for the development of ICT has been a great boon to the school. Very good leadership and management of the subject have meant that pupils have more opportunities than most pupils to learn new skills and develop ICT as a vital learning tool. The subject leader has produced a very detailed and innovative action plan that has, among other things, ensured very good resources and accommodation. The three separate areas for ICT are very well equipped and very well used by all classes each week. In addition, extensive staff training has improved the confidence and skills of teachers considerably. All these factors have contributed to raising pupils' standards.

Information and technology across the curriculum

72. Overall, the use of ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory. There are good examples of effective activity. In English, for example, pupils word-process some of their writing which produces good editing skills. In music, pupils occasionally record their compositions and performances digitally. Pupils use the Internet for some research. Nevertheless, despite the 'Classroom of the Future' project, teachers do not yet involve ICT systematically and regularly with other subjects. The use of ICT to research in geography and history is not extensive, for example, and pupils rarely record their scientific findings on spreadsheets or computer graphs.

HUMANITIES

73. Few lessons were observed in geography and history during the inspection, so there was too little evidence available in both subjects on which to base judgements about attainment. Therefore, it is not possible to make judgements on provision in either subject.
74. Pupils follow an appropriate curriculum in **geography**. They study aspects of their own area, as well as locations overseas, such as in India and Kenya, and they display a reasonable understanding of these cultures, such as typical village life or the impact of tourism. They conduct simple research and deduce information from photographs on occasion. However, teachers do not make the most of opportunities to develop pupils' all-round skills. A tendency to use worksheets means that pupils do not write down much, and so miss chances to strengthen their factual writing. They do not regularly use diagrams or pictures to reinforce learning and improve skills in mathematics, ICT or art. In addition, teachers do not insist on neat presentation, and so much of the pupils' work is untidy.
75. The curriculum in **history** is appropriate and ensures that pupils encounter a suitable range of topics. By the end of Year 6, pupils will have studied periods of history including the Victorians, the Egyptians, Greeks and Romans, and also specific events like the Great Fire of London. ICT is sometimes used as a research tool and to produce presentations, such as those on Greek myths and legends. The subject leader has developed an action plan which identifies the need to further develop history skills. However, this is not specific in detailing what action needs to be taken and, therefore, is not effective enough.

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers ensure that pupils appreciate key aspects of major religions
- There are limited opportunities for pupils to experience religions at first hand
- The subject is enthusiastically led but is not being developed with sufficient clarity or urgency

Commentary

76. The standard of pupils' work is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection for pupils by Year 2, but not so good as it was for pupils by Year 6. Currently, pupils have an adequate understanding of Christianity and other major religions, such as Hinduism and Islam. Teachers focus on particular features of religions which gives pupils a good insight into how religion influences people's lives in different ways. For example, pupils in Year 5 know how Hindus regard vegetarianism and how important Mecca is to Muslims. As a result, pupils are able to appreciate the similarities and differences between religions. Teaching and learning are satisfactory throughout the school. It is not better than this because pupils do not learn enough from religion, in drawing conclusions and relating them to their own life.

77. Pupils benefit from some contact with organised religion. Local clerics visit the school periodically to lead assemblies and acquaint pupils with Christian worship. On a recent visit, a Buddhist monk enlightened pupils in Year 2 about features of this philosophy. However, other visits and visitors are infrequent. Pupils visit the local church at least once in their time at school but they do not visit other places of worship, such as mosques or temples, which would give them a valuable awareness of the different approaches to worship. In addition, the school does not methodically plan to improve pupils' spiritual development in the everyday curriculum. Pupils are not encouraged enough, for example, to reflect on important issues and to consider concepts from different viewpoints.
78. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject leader is keen to develop the subject and is beginning to expand her supervision of teaching and learning. At present, though, there is little regular observation of teaching and analysis of pupils' progress. As a consequence, the action plan to improve the subject is not sharply focused. There is too much emphasis on the overall curriculum instead of on recording skills and learning from religion.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

79. No lessons were observed in **design and technology** during the inspection, so it is not possible to make judgements on provision. The limited evidence suggests that pupils experience appropriate aspects of designing, making and evaluating their work. The curriculum ensures that skills are taught progressively as pupils move through the school. From work seen, pupils use numeracy skills satisfactorily in measuring and making models, and ICT skills for research, for example in the vehicle-making topic in Year 3. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have designed and made weight-bearing bridges and pupils in Years 1 and 2 have used their cutting, shaping and joining skills to make the characters from their literacy work on 'The Gingerbread Man'.

Art and design

Provision for art and design is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers make learning interesting and ensure that pupils acquire good basic skills
- Pupils' learning is enriched by a variety of important influences
- The subject is effectively led but the plans for the further development of the subject are limited

Commentary

80. Pupils' attainment is above average throughout the school and they achieve well. This means that standards since the last inspection have been sustained by Year 6, and have improved by Year 2, due essentially to the consistently good teaching across the school. Teachers show a good knowledge of the subject and plan stimulating activities that motivate and interest all groups of pupils. For example, an effective lesson was seen in Year 3 where pupils were asked to explore shade and light in their drawing. The teacher's sensitive demonstration spurred their curiosity and enthusiasm, and the insistence on careful observation encouraged the pupils to be deliberate and accurate with their work. As a result, most pupils concentrated very hard and were pleased with their end-product.

81. Pupils learn readily from the work of major artists and other influences. Pupils in Year 6, for example, have developed good skills in mixing colour and using pastels in an Impressionist style. Older pupils have produced very striking watercolour landscapes and still-life studies in the style of artists such as Picasso, Matisse and Cezanne. Older pupils were introduced to sculptures effectively in a Year 4/5 lesson through good use of their own local environment as they studied pictures of 'The Angel of the North', and 'King Coal'. Younger pupils have made clay thumb pots in their design and technology topic. All pupils experience a good range of styles and materials as they progress through the school. Pupils' work is attractively displayed and helps to enhance the overall appearance of the school.
82. The subject has developed well because of the effective leadership and management. The subject leader has acquired a good range of resources that interests and motivates pupils. The school has ensured that teachers have good subject knowledge and they use this well when demonstrating techniques and skills. The action plan for improvement is satisfactory. Although there is a sensible priority for developing the use of sketchbooks, there are no other areas mentioned, such as cross-curricular activity, for example. The subject leader has a reasonable overview of the subject, but does not regularly analyse pupils' progress or the quality of teaching. Overall, improvement since the last inspection has been good.

Music

Provision for music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective leadership and management have ensured that the subject has developed well
- Teaching and learning are good and there is a healthy emphasis on composing and performing music
- Teachers do not always offer enough advice to pupils on how best to improve
- The school has very good resources which motivate pupils and support learning

Commentary

83. Pupils' attainment has improved since the last inspection and is now above average. As part of the 'Classroom of the Future' project, the subject leader has succeeded in raising the profile of music and enabled it to be developed well through other subjects, especially ICT. The appointment of specialist staff and specific staff training have been very instrumental in improving the quality of teaching. Pupils are very appreciative of the skills they encounter and so respond with considerable enthusiasm and a sense of responsibility. The special provision in Years 5 and 6, whereby groups of pupils benefit from weekly tuition, is particularly effective.
84. Pupils are good at creating their own music. Pupils in Year 2, for example, know how to explore rhythmic patterns with percussion instruments and can record complex, repetitive sounds by writing down suitable symbols. By Year 6, pupils know how to write and read notation so that they can set their lyrics to music efficiently and accurately. They appreciate the need to experiment with sound and have enough skills to be varied and imaginative. A minority of pupils can play percussion instruments effectively and most can produce chords on a guitar. Pupils also sing strongly with a good sense of rhythm and cohesion, although not very melodically, and they know how

to record their work on a four-track system. As a result, they produce good music, sometimes together with their music tutor, and the school celebrates pupils' achievements annually by producing a CD of their performances.

85. Teachers generate lively atmospheres in lessons. Pupils have clear guidelines about what is required of them, but they are encouraged to be creative and relaxed. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, for example, work in small groups and their social interaction is excellent, especially when listening to one another's suggestions respectfully. However, pupils do not always benefit from clear enough guidance to be able to develop their skills further. In a Year 4/5 lesson, for example, the expectations of the pupils, the enthusiasm of the teacher and the identifying of problem areas in their singing were very good, yet there was not enough scope for the pupils to practise the uncertain parts of the song. Similarly, in a Year 6 lesson, there was plenty of focus on stage presentation, but not enough on musical skills and the quality of composition.
86. The school has done well to accumulate a wide range of instruments and equipment. These serve not only to inspire pupils but also to enable them to have plenty of hands-on experience. The many guitars, for example, mean that the music tutor can teach large groups together. The excellent drum kit allows pupils to improve their co-ordination and skills on proper percussion. The digital recording facilities are very good at helping pupils to hone their skills in composition by layering or re-recording tracks, and also allow pupils to appraise their own work in a high quality recording. The school is fortunate to have a separate music room so that pupils have the necessary freedom to investigate the possibilities of musical sounds.

Physical education

Provision for physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good expectations by teachers encourage pupils to develop a positive attitude to physical activity
- Teachers do not always succeed in matching work to the pupils' abilities
- The leadership of the subject is satisfactory but plans to develop it are not sharply focused enough

Commentary

87. Standards are broadly average by the end of Years 2 and 6, as they were at the last inspection. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory because teaching is satisfactory overall, although it can sometimes be much better than this. In all lessons seen, teachers were well prepared and organised. They expected and achieved very positive attitudes from the pupils; pupils listened carefully, followed instructions and co-operated well during team games. In a very good Year 6 lesson, clear explanations, good demonstrations and suitable group activities enabled pupils to make good progress in learning passing skills in basketball.
88. On occasions, teachers do not select activities and apparatus that are appropriately matched to the ability of the pupils, and this inevitably restricts swift achievement. For example, in a Year 3/4 lesson, pupils were expected to develop catching and throwing skills in quick-fire ballgames but found it difficult to do so, because they lacked the basic control in handling tennis balls. Teachers understandably use more able pupils to

demonstrate techniques, so that less confident pupils can learn from their peers. However, teachers do not encourage pupils enough to evaluate their own performances and those of other pupils, in order to recognise what they have achieved and how they can improve.

89. The subject leader is enthusiastic and knowledgeable, and ensures that there is a good curriculum which covers all the necessary aspects of the subject. For example, all pupils have the opportunity to learn to swim and the majority are able to swim 25 metres by the time they leave school. The school places a strong emphasis on the physical development and health of its pupils, and provides a very good range of additional opportunities, outside normal lesson time, for pupils to extend and practise their skills. However, the school's plans for developing the subject are very sketchy and do not, for instance, suggest ways in which teaching and learning could improve. Therefore, the leadership and management of the subject are not better than satisfactory.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

90. Personal, social and health education is an integral part of the whole-school curriculum. The provision, which includes sex and relationships education as well as drugs awareness, contributes to the good preparation for the next stage of pupils' education. The school provides specific lessons each week to explore personal issues and wider social topics. The provision is further strengthened by the very good relationships that permeate the school, and pupils speak enthusiastically about their time in school. Some pupils learn to play an active role as citizens by participating in the school council and also by supporting charities. Pupils also contribute well to school life by organising and managing school clubs such as in ICT and football. The school promotes a healthy life-style through a very wide range of extra-curricular sporting activities.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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