

INSPECTION REPORT

RED ROSE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Chester-le-Street

LEA area: Durham

Unique reference number: 114008

Headteacher: Mrs E J Lees

Lead inspector: Mrs Paula Allison

Dates of inspection: 23rd - 25th May 2005

Inspection number: 267544

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 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	235
School address:	York Terrace Chester-le-Street County Durham
Postcode:	DH3 3NA
Telephone number:	0191 388 6251
Fax number:	0191 389 4861
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Glenn Steel
Date of previous inspection:	March 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a community primary school of average size, with 235 boys and girls on roll. It is a popular school with a stable roll. The school is situated on the edge of the small town of Chester-le-Street and serves the local area, which is a very mixed area of private and council owned housing. However, some pupils are transported from a more socially deprived area. Overall, socio-economic circumstances of families are broadly average. Free school meal eligibility is 7 per cent, which is below average. Mobility of pupils is usually below average, although recently a few pupils have joined the school during the school year. Most children have some form of nursery education prior to entering the reception class. Attainment on entry is broadly in line with what might be expected for children of this age.

The school has 31 children in the Foundation Stage, most of whom are taught in a reception class. A few children are taught alongside Year 1 pupils in a mixed age class. All pupils are of white, British ethnic background. There are no pupils for whom English is not the home language. Around 10 per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is below the national average. Their special educational needs relate to moderate or specific learning difficulties or behavioural, physical or speech difficulties.

The school has received several awards, including 'Healthy Schools' in 2003 and 'Active Mark' and an 'International Award' in 2004. The headteacher plans to retire at the end of the current term and a successor has been appointed.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21420	Mrs Paula Allison	Lead inspector	The Foundation Stage English as an additional language Information and communication technology Religious education
13723	Mrs Jean Overend	Lay inspector	
15551	Mrs Pat Mitchell	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Geography History
18370	Mr Kevin Johnson	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology
32518	Mr Kevin Reid	Team inspector	Science Music Physical education

The inspection contractor was:

CfBT Primary Associates
Suite 13 West Lancs Technology Management Centre
Moss Lane View
Skelmersdale
Lancashire
WN8 9TN

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	1
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	3
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	6
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	11
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	13
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	26

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very good school, providing a high quality of education for its pupils, with a particularly strong and effective emphasis on their personal development. Pupils make very good progress in lessons and achieve very well during their time in the school. Standards are well above average and well above those in similar schools. The school is very well led and managed and gives very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in Year 2 and 6 are well above average and this represents very good achievement for these pupils, given their prior attainment;
- The headteacher purposefully leads the school; she is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and other key staff;
- Pupils' personal development is excellent; they enjoy school and behave in an exemplary manner;
- The quality of teaching is very good; teachers plan their lessons carefully and they challenge, care for and support their pupils very well;
- Links with parents are very good and they support the school very well.

Improvement since the last inspection has been very good. All issues from the last inspection have been addressed, with particular improvements made to the quality of teaching and assessment. Improvements have also been made to the curriculum, to information and communication technology (ICT) and to teachers' planning, which have had a positive impact on achievement. Standards are higher than they were and all pupils now achieve very well.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

A indicates a result in the top 5 per cent.*

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

Achievement is very good. Standards are well above average and this represents very good achievement from pupils' starting points. In the 2004 national tests, standards in Year 6 were well above average in English, mathematics and science. Compared with similar schools, pupils had made very good progress from what they had achieved in Year 2. Currently pupils are on course to reach similar high standards. In 2004, standards in Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics were above average and were similar to those in similar schools. Standards in the current Year 2 class are well above average.

Attainment on entry to the reception year is broadly in line with what might be expected for children of this age. Children in the reception classes make very good progress and as most are on course to reach the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception and many exceed these, standards overall are above average.

Standards in other subjects are above or well above expectations. As a result of improved provision, pupils are rapidly gaining ICT skills and are beginning to apply these in other subjects. Standards in ICT currently are above expectations in Year 2 and in line with expectations in Year 6.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are excellent. Pupils enjoy school and they attend extremely regularly. They are attentive and responsive in lessons. They are keen to learn and work hard on the tasks they have been given to do. Behaviour in and around school is exemplary. Provision for pupils' personal development is outstanding. Excellent relationships underpin the work of the school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Most teaching is good; with a high percentage being very good or excellent. Teachers plan very effectively for the range of pupils in their classes, so pupils of all ages and abilities work at an appropriate level and make very good progress. Teachers encourage and challenge their pupils and insist on high standards of behaviour. As a result, pupils are interested and apply themselves well. Assessment is good and much improved from the last inspection.

The curriculum is very good. It is well planned and a wide range of enrichment activities and experiences is provided. This is achieved despite accommodation that is only just adequate. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The Foundation Stage is very well managed and effectively meets the needs of the youngest children. Pupils are cared for well. The school's partnership with parents is very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher provides reflective and purposeful leadership. She is actively involved in teaching and developing the curriculum. She is very ably supported by the deputy headteacher, who has a particularly influential pastoral role. Key staff have worked hard and effectively in areas such as ICT and literacy. The work of the governing body is very good. Governors are committed to the school and support it well. Statutory requirements are complied with.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very supportive of the school and have positive views of it. They are particularly happy with the progress their children make, the quality of the teaching, the high expectations of staff, the way in which the personal development of their children is promoted, the leadership of the school and the good range of activities provided.

Pupils are very happy with their school. They particularly like being with their friends and feel their teachers are kind and give them interesting things to do.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The school has no serious weaknesses and no key issues to address.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards in Year 2 and 6 are well above average. Pupils' achievement is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are high and are improving all the time;
- Children in the reception year make very good progress towards the goals they are expected to reach by the age of five;
- The school has high expectations of all pupils, so pupils of all abilities achieve very well;
- Parents are very happy with the progress their children make and the standards the school achieves.

Commentary

1. Standards in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science are well above average and well above those reached by pupils in similar schools. These high standards are reflected in results of national tests in 2004 and in work seen currently in school.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.5 (30.0)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	29.1 (30.4)	27.0 (26.8)
science	30.9 (30.4)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 34 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. In national tests in 2004, standards in Year 2 were above average in reading, writing and mathematics and were in line with similar schools. Work seen in school and the school's own assessments show that standards are now well above average.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.5 (16.9)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.8 (15.4)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.2 (16.8)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 34 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Standards in the Foundation Stage are above what might be expected. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. Most children are on course to reach the goals they are expected to reach by the age of five and many exceed these, particularly in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, communication, literacy and language and mathematical development.

4. There is an upward trend in standards. Improvement trends for both Year 2 and 6 are above the national trend. There can be slight fluctuations from year-to-year, usually because of the number of pupils with specific needs in a particular year group, but overall high standards are maintained year-on-year. Standards have improved since the last inspection, particularly in Year 2. Recent work by the school in addressing some identified weaknesses in writing has been very successful in raising standards in this area. The school has high expectations of pupils and sets itself challenging targets, which are usually successfully reached.
5. Achievement is very good throughout the school. The quality of the provision in the reception year ensures that children make very good progress and achieve very well. Careful planning and good levels of support and challenge enable children to make rapid progress in gaining skills and confidence across all areas of learning. Pupils continue to make very good progress in Years 1 and 2. The careful teaching of skills enables them to reach high standards by the end of Year 2. A high percentage of pupils reach the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics and many exceed these. This represents very good achievement. Parents are very happy with the progress made by their children.
6. Progress is consistently very good through Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, which is an improvement from the last inspection when there were some weaknesses in the teaching. Comparisons with similar schools show how much progress pupils have made since Year 2, indicating very good achievement. The value added by the school is very high. Virtually all pupils reach expected levels in English, mathematics and science and a very high percentage reach higher levels. This is an indication that pupils of all abilities are achieving very well. Boys and girls achieve equally well.
7. The leadership of the school focuses on all pupils achieving as well as they can. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well. There is a wide range of different ways of providing help and support that is very well thought out to meet individual needs. Some pupils receive additional help in the classroom from special needs support assistants. In English and mathematics, they are taught in smaller groups where they receive more individual help and have work set at the right level of difficulty. Some are withdrawn from lessons for extra help from a specialist teacher where work is carefully structured and taught in small steps. This enables them to achieve very well and they often reach national expectations by the ages of 7 and 11. Those pupils who have been identified as being more able or talented are increasingly well provided for. For example, they have been given the opportunity to join with pupils from other local schools to work in areas such as thinking skills and drama. They achieve very well.
8. High standards are also reached in other subjects, including religious education where standards are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Particularly high standards are achieved in art and design, physical education, music and design and technology, where the enthusiasm and the expertise of the subject leaders have had considerable impact on achievement. Provision for ICT has been much improved. Better resources, more careful teaching of skills and the very effective guidance of the subject leader have resulted in pupils making very good progress. They are rapidly acquiring skills and beginning to apply them in their work across the curriculum. Standards in Year 2 are better than usually seen and in Year 6, they are in line with what is expected for children of this age.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance and punctuality are excellent. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are outstanding. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a consistently very high attendance rate;
- Excellent relationships underpin the work of the school;
- An excellent ethos makes children aspire to do their the best;
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is of a very high order.

Commentary

9. The children clearly enjoy coming to school and their attendance and punctuality reflect this, comparing very well with the national picture year-on-year. There is no unauthorised absence and the school day gets off to a very rapid start. This effectively underpins learning. Pupils in this school make excellent progress towards becoming mature individuals. Parents reported that people from outside the school and other schools' staff say they can tell children from Red Rose School by their good behaviour and mature approach. Pupils' attitudes are supported by an atmosphere where there is no fear of failure and a culture where all will have a go because their efforts are valued. The school has met its aim to foster an atmosphere of respect for one another. Pupils like their teachers, friends, work and play. Even the youngest children get quickly absorbed in their activities and are willing to share and work together very well. In an observed reception music lesson, none of the instruments lying in the centre of the room were touched until the children were told to, showing their excellent level of self-control.
10. A very small minority of parents expressed some concern over bullying, though not about the general behaviour. In fact, the behaviour is excellent and supports the learning very strongly. No aggressive play was observed at all. There have been no exclusions in the last 12 months. Pupils and the parents spoken to were happy that if bullying started, it would be dealt with quickly and effectively.
11. The school promotes pupils' spiritual development extremely well. Assemblies are planned to be enjoyed and produce an atmosphere of thankfulness. Pupils' own work and ideas are used in assemblies and their achievements celebrated. Staff work very hard to show pupils they are valued and to raise their self-esteem so they can aspire to do well. Opportunities for prayer and reflection are taken throughout the day. The children are encouraged to understand their feelings and to express them. Activities are planned to allow the pupils to experience the wonder of the natural world, such as having chicks hatch and live in their classroom. The development of thinking skills and involving children in their targets helps them understand themselves and their own progress better.
12. Pupils' understanding of right and wrong is excellent and they show this in their excellent behaviour. The reward systems are consistently applied and staff have very high expectations, which the pupils are willing to live up to. Staff also have very good classroom management skills to bring about the right learning ethos and behaviour. Pupils take part in ethical debates, such as about fair trade, children's rights and about their own school rules. Care for the environment has been responded to by using compost bins and not dropping litter. They learn about many charities and are taught that they can make a difference. The plight of the tsunami victims has clearly touched these children.

13. Excellent opportunities are provided for pupils' social development, including the many responsibilities they receive, such as preparing for assemblies and selling break time drinks. The very broad range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors provides them with different social settings in which to react, while the links to the local Co-op give them a clearer picture of the world of work and of the wider society. Involvement with the school council develops their sense of responsibility for their school and to their peers.

14. The school has worked hard to improve the provision for pupils' cultural development and it is now very good. Visitors and visits to such places as Beamish, Washington Hall, the Roman Fort and the Hermitage help to raise pupils' cultural understanding and make them more aware of their historical heritage. The children have a very strong involvement in the sporting and ICT culture of today. They are encouraged to celebrate Christian and other religious festivals. Many subjects of the curriculum are used to promote their own and other cultures, such as through art and music. Having links with a French school and especially with Yorogo in Ghana, has given pupils a clearer understanding of another culture. The post cards exchanged between pupils of the two schools help them share issues that concern them and so builds understanding and tolerance. The 'International Award' gained by the school recognised the quality of its development education.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.9	School data	0.0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. There are major strengths in the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning, in the breadth of the curriculum and in the partnership with parents.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are very good. Assessment is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers encourage and support pupils, expecting the most from them;
- Very high standards of behaviour are maintained in every classroom;
- Support staff make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching and learning;
- The support for pupils with special educational needs is very effective.

Commentary

15. Teaching throughout the school is of a very high standard and enables pupils to learn effectively and achieve very well. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. All elements of unsatisfactory teaching have been addressed and there is now much more dissemination of good practice. Teachers work together, support each other and are willing to learn from each other. This is actively encouraged by the leadership of the school and has had a major impact on the quality of teaching. Teaching is well monitored and supported by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other key staff, who all provide good role models in the quality of their own teaching, their positive involvement with pupils' personal development and their professional and reflective approach. Parents are very confident in the quality of the teaching that their children receive. Pupils like their teachers and enjoy their lessons.

16. The teaching for the Foundation Stage is very good. The reception class teacher has a secure understanding of how children learn and she plans very carefully to provide an appropriate curriculum. Both teachers and support staff in the reception year involve themselves in children's learning and encourage them to develop their skills and understanding. Children learn very effectively and achieve very well during their first year in school.
17. Teachers in Years 1 to 6 plan meticulously to make the best use of time and available resources. Lessons have a good pace and pupils are kept involved and motivated. Teachers have high expectations and challenge pupils to do the best they can. As a result, pupils learn effectively, apply themselves and are very productive. This shows in the high standards that are reached across the curriculum. All pupils are involved in lessons and have the opportunity to participate. A particularly strong feature of the teaching is the quality of discussions that take place. All pupils are encouraged to express themselves and make a contribution. This is the reason why speaking and listening skills are so good and the confidence this gives pupils makes a positive impact on their achievement. Such discussions can be quite difficult in the large classes in Years 3 to 6, but the skills of the teachers make it possible.
18. Very high standards of behaviour are maintained in every classroom, making them effective learning environments. Pupils attend very well and apply themselves to the tasks they have been given to do. They concentrate very well and are able to work independently or collaboratively. Relationships are positive and pupils feel valued. This gives them confidence and they are willing to try things out and are not afraid of failure.
19. Supporting adults, where available, are deployed effectively and make a very valuable contribution to the quality of teaching and learning in the school. Their work is well planned, they work with a high degree of expertise and commitment and have the same high expectations of pupils. Other resources are used very well. Teachers are confident in using ICT and there are many examples of interactive whiteboards being used very effectively to enhance the quality of teaching and learning across the curriculum.
20. The teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is very good. When they are withdrawn from lessons they receive either individual or small group teaching by a specialist teacher. Work is carefully prepared based on the targets set in the pupils' own individual programme, a wide variety of strategies are used and pupils try very hard. They show increasing confidence as they make very good progress. Pupils who are in the smaller groups for mathematics and English are very well taught. For example, in a Year 2 literacy lesson for a group of 12 pupils, a wide range of strategies was used to help pupils to learn how to spell words, how letters sound and what words mean. Pupils enjoy the lessons, work hard throughout, and are keen to answer questions and do their own writing. Where pupils are supported in the classrooms by learning support assistants, they are helped to take a full part in the lesson to complete their work successfully.
21. Teachers know their pupils well and they plan carefully to meet the needs of individuals on a daily basis. They assess pupils' work thoroughly and know what the next stages in their learning are. Assessment procedures are particularly effective in literacy and pupils are involved in setting their own targets. This has had a considerable impact on their motivation and achievement. This involvement of pupils in their own learning is not yet as well developed in other subjects. Marking was an

issue at the last inspection and teachers have worked on this to bring about improvements. There is some very good practice now, particularly in literacy and increasingly in other subjects. Pupils now have a much better understanding of what they have done well and how they can improve.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 41 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3 (7)	18 (44)	17 (42)	3 (7)	0 (0)	0 (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 breadth of the curriculum is very good. Opportunities for enrichment are very good. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are provided with a wide range of curricular experiences;
- There are excellent opportunities for enrichment, to which many members of staff contribute;
- Curricular development is consistently built on established good practice;
- The curriculum is very inclusive and ensures all pupils individual needs are met very well.

Commentary

22. All statutory requirements are met and development of the curriculum can be seen, through examination of planning documentation, to have been built up over a number of years. This approach has ensured that good practice has been consistently built upon over time, resulting in the very good curricular provision currently experienced by the pupils. The excellent behaviour and attitudes of pupils means that the teachers are able to prepare a good range of activities to deliver the National Curriculum, despite the cramped classrooms. In science, for example, the central role played by practical experiments in developing knowledge and understanding, means that pupils are much more excited by the subject and stimulated to enjoy it than would otherwise be the case. The progress made in the curriculum, since the last inspection, has been made possible through good leadership and management in this area. Work in the arts is also very strongly promoted. Every pupil contributes in some way to the two annual school performances, whether through dance, music or scenery and costume making. Regular visits from dancers, artists, musicians and story tellers also help to fire pupils' imaginations.
23. Pupils enjoy a very wide range of opportunities for enrichment of the curriculum through extra-curricular activities. This aspect of the children's experience is able to happen through the commitment of the entire staff, whose goodwill enables many of the clubs to run. Pupils of all interests are catered for in the range of after school activities provided. Clubs for sports, arts, creative and academic enrichment all form part of the opportunities on offer for the pupils. On the Tuesday of the inspection, for example, there were five clubs running, including flute lessons, recorder club, chess club, web design (for the school website) and a 'K'nex' club in which pupils used equipment for model making and building. In the morning before school, a cricket club overseen by an adult, was running. The skills demonstrated by the pupils were above average for their age.
24. Provision for pupils who have special educational needs is very good and they are respected and valued members of the school. Pupils are identified at an early age; their needs are assessed and carefully thought-out strategies are put in place to help them to succeed. Individual programmes are written, which identify the next stages in learning and how these are to be achieved. These programmes are used very well to plan work at the appropriate level both in class and when pupils are withdrawn for additional teaching. The special needs co-ordinator works very effectively with

teachers, parents and the pupils themselves to review progress made and set new targets. Pupils' views are recorded. For example, one commented, 'If I get it wrong, I say the sound and build it up'. They are pleased with the progress they make and they know what their new targets are, which helps them to be involved in their own learning.

25. Pupils who are more able or talented are identified and there is a range of provision in place to enable them to achieve very well. Challenging work is provided in English, mathematics and science and pupils reach well above average standards. The extensive range of additional activities provided by the school, for all pupils, allow more able and talented pupils, in particular to develop their talents. There is also a range of joint provision with local primary and secondary schools, specifically for the more able and talented pupils. These include a mathematics day for Years 5 and 6, a science course at a local high school, a theatre group, a thinking skills day and an art workshop.
26. The accommodation is only just adequate for the delivery of the curriculum and has many weaknesses. The buildings are old and were not purpose built for today's curriculum. They constitute a constant drain on resources and management. The space in many classrooms is limited, although the extension of the middle school classrooms out into the corridor has provided a better working environment for these classes. The Year 5 and 6 classes have no access to water or nearby toilet facilities. However, the school makes very good use of all the room it has and areas such as the new computer suite double up for many purposes. The excellent relationships and good will of staff, caretaker, pupils and governors manage the buildings so that children's experiences are not limited. Top quality displays around the school ensure all spaces form part of the learning environment and prevent the buildings impacting on the excellent ethos.
27. There is a good balance of expertise and experience among teaching staff and the stability they bring to the school is a strong contributory factor to pupils' achievement. However, the number of learning support assistants is low when compared with schools of a similar size. The headteacher recognises that this is not ideal, but with the agreement of governors and staff has taken reasonable measures to reduce the impact of the shortfall. By setting pupils according to their ability for mathematics in Years 3 to 6, class sizes for those lessons have been reduced. The employment of a part-time teacher also means that potential underachievement is identified and dealt with early, so lessening possible difficulties when pupils reach the upper junior classes.
28. There is a satisfactory range of learning resources which are used very effectively by teachers. ICT resources have improved and this is reflected in the way the subject is used by teachers and pupils throughout the school. The need to renew some equipment for outside learning in the Foundation Stage and upgrade practical science resources has been identified by the school.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is good. The school provides very good support, advice and guidance. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent relationships ensure children can readily seek support;
- Very good use is made of tracking data;
- Support for all groups is very good;
- Induction into the school and transition to secondary school are very well considered;
- The school consults pupils and acts on their views.

Commentary

29. The school provides a high standard of care for all pupils. Staff know the pupils and their backgrounds very well and work hard to meet their needs effectively. Child protection arrangements are thorough and secure. The co-ordinator is well trained and has ensured all staff have high levels of awareness and are vigilant. Risk assessments are in place for a range of activities. All staff have received first aid training. The building is not easy to maintain as a safe environment, but the staff and caretaker manage this well and are proactive in using available expertise and training. All staff work as a team to ensure that health and safety provision is good. The school also teaches children how to keep themselves safe and to adopt healthy practices for long-term good health.
30. The school closely monitors pupil achievement and personal development. The progress made by groups and individuals is very carefully tracked and the results analysed and used to set targets and to plan lesson content. Pupils with special needs receive very good extra support from planned work and from classroom assistants. Children designated as gifted and talented receive more challenging work and attend events planned within the cluster of schools.
31. Parents are very happy with the induction process into the Foundation Stage and there are very good procedures to help the children settle quickly and facilitate the exchange of information between parents and the school. Links with the main secondary school are very good, providing support for the pupils and including curriculum links in a range of subjects. Adults talk to and listen to children constantly. 'Circle Time' is particularly useful for children to express their views and concerns. Class councils decide if there are any issues or ideas they wish the full council to discuss. This way all children have the opportunity to have their ideas considered fairly for action. Although no budget has been allocated to the school council, the children are empowered to take the best ideas and act on them for the good of the school. An example of this is the healthy tuck shop agreed on by the council, an idea which came from a member of Year 4.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are very good. The school's partnership with the community is good. Links with other schools and colleges are very productive.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very happy with the school and hold it in high regard;
- School seeks the views of parents and acts on them;
- Community links are well planned and impact well on the learning;
- Links to other schools and colleges raise staff expertise and enhance learning.

Commentary

32. Parents express a very high level of support and regard for the school. They are particularly happy that teaching is good, the school is well led and managed, children behave well and staff help the children to mature very well. A small minority of parents would like more support to help their child learn and the school has already planned a

response to this. Information is sent home weekly in newsletters and parents evenings are well attended and appreciated by the parents. There have also been curriculum evenings for parents. End of year reports to parents meet statutory requirements, but do not consistently share helpful next steps for learning or an indication of the progress made.

33. The school has consulted parents often on small practical matters, such as whether the price of a visit is acceptable, or on the children's use of ICT. However, full questionnaires have also been sent out and the results analysed. This has then been fed back to parents, including the school's response to the issues raised.
34. The school has productive community links which broaden learning experiences and make them more relevant. These include the community police, fire service and school nurse. The long-term link with the local Co-op is particularly helpful in supporting health education, providing funds and for teaching concepts of Fair Trade. The school is outward looking and encourages children to know they can make a difference in the community. This causes the children to support charity initiatives very enthusiastically, such as the annual Sponsored Tottle for Cancer Relief which took place in the inspection week.
35. The link to Yorogo School, Ghana, has been a wonderful two-way link and learning experience. Links with local schools and colleges have been improved and they are now very good. The children take part in local education authority and district leagues and competition broadening their social education. Provision for gifted and talented children has been extended through links with cluster schools. Staff are also building and sharing their expertise and best practice through the cluster links for staff development. There is a real partnership with the main secondary school which contributes to children's learning experiences as well as supporting the transition process.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher and key staff provide strong leadership and the school is very well managed. The work of the governing body is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides purposeful and very effective leadership;
- The deputy headteacher has established an influential role in maintaining the positive ethos of the school;
- Key staff have worked very hard to bring about improvements and they set high standards for the school;
- Governors are committed to the school and work hard at maintaining its values.

Commentary

36. The headteacher provides purposeful and reflective leadership. She has high aspirations for the school and is actively involved with the development of the curriculum and ensuring that all pupils achieve as well as they can. Her teaching commitment is extremely valuable in enabling all pupils to achieve well in mathematics. It keeps her closely involved with and knowledgeable about, what is going on in the school. The deputy headteacher supports the headteacher very well; they work together effectively as a team. He has a well established and very effective pastoral role, which does much to maintain the positive ethos that is such a feature of the school and in which pupils thrive.
37. Other key staff make for a strong team. They have worked hard in such areas as literacy and ICT to make sure that the school is reaching high standards. The

leadership team all provide very good role models, both in the quality of their own teaching and the high expectations they have of other staff and pupils. The thoroughly professional approach of the leadership is reflected in the high standards and the quality of provision of the school. Parents are very confident in the way in which the school is led and managed. School development planning is realistic and focuses on appropriate priorities for maintaining the high standards currently being reached. It does, however, currently tend to focus on consolidation of strengths and on some curriculum innovation. There is a lack of a more detailed long-term strategy to fully realise the school's aims.

38. Governors are committed to the school and they play an effective role in maintaining the values of the school that are central to its ethos. They have given a lot of time and thought to the appointment of a new headteacher in order that the school should continue to provide a high standard of education when the current headteacher retires. Governors bring a range of expertise to their role and they take the job seriously, putting a lot of time into ensuring that they meet all statutory requirements. They are knowledgeable about the school and take an active role in self-evaluation.
39. Self-evaluation involves all staff and governors. It is well established and effective. Performance data is used well to monitor progress and any weaknesses are soon identified and addressed. Staff development is a priority and good use is made of links with other schools for the sharing of good practice. Performance management is used well to bring about improvements in teaching and the curriculum. Currently the focus is on developing the role of teachers as subject leaders. This is having a positive impact on the quality of provision in many areas.
40. The school is very well managed on a day-to-day basis. Administration is efficient and unobtrusive. Parents feel welcome in the school and are confident that their needs and those of their children are met. Financial administration is of the highest order. Financial planning is effective and the school uses its resources well. However, the spending on staff is less than in other schools and the large classes and limited support in the older year groups make life very hard for the teachers concerned. The old building is a continuous drain on resources. Staff at all levels work hard to maintain and develop it and against all odds make it into the positive learning environment it is.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	556,451
Total expenditure	540,799
Expenditure per pupil	2,272

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	29,236
Balance carried forward to the next	44,888

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

41. Most children in the Foundation Stage are taught in a reception class, but a few are taught in a mixed Year 1 and reception class. Both classes have access to a shared area of 'continuous provision'. They also have access to an outdoor area, which has recently been developed in order to enhance the opportunities for learning. Most children have some form of nursery education prior to entering the reception year, although this is in a range of different settings. Attainment on entry is broadly similar to what might be expected for children of this age. By the time children leave reception, most have reached the goals children are expected to reach by this stage, and a number have exceeded them. Standards overall are above average. As a result of the very good quality of provision, children make very good progress; achievement is very good.
42. The reception teacher provides very good leadership and management for the Foundation Stage. She has a thorough knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children and plans meticulously for the range of activities and experiences children are provided with every day. Learning objectives are clear, so that all adults know the purpose of each activity and can focus effectively. There is an appropriate balance between adult-focused activities and opportunities for choice and independent learning. Teaching overall is very good and adults who support in the reception year make a very valuable contribution to the overall quality of teaching and learning.
43. Parents are very confident in the quality of provision for the youngest children and in the arrangements for settling in. The high standards in provision and teaching which were identified in the last inspection have been maintained and in some aspects the achievement of children is better than it was then. The accommodation is limited by its age and is not ideal for delivery of an early year's curriculum, but the very best use is made of what is available and the adults work hard to ensure that there is a bright, welcoming and stimulating learning environment.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average; achievement is very good;
- Teaching is excellent;
- Attitudes and behaviour are excellent;
- Relationships are excellent.

Commentary

44. Children are interested in everything that is going on around them and they are keen to try out new activities. They are confident and can work independently, or as a member of a group or class. They concentrate for considerable lengths of time and persevere with tasks, even when they find them difficult. For example, one boy spent a

long time at a computer fitting pieces together in order to produce the layout for a town and make it just as he wanted it to be. Children are attentive in group or class sessions and they behave responsively at all times. They are aware of the needs of others and can talk about how to be kind and caring. Most children reach the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception and many exceed them.

45. The main factor in the very good achievement is the quality of the teaching of all the adults in both of the classes. Expectations are very high. There are well established routines that provide children with a secure environment in which they feel valued, gain confidence and learn what is expected of them. The day is so well planned that children are kept busy and occupied purposefully for the whole time that they are in school, which helps them to develop a positive attitude to learning. Relationships are very positive, praise is generous and children learn to interact with adults and other children and gain a sense of belonging.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average; achievement is very good;
- Teaching is very good;
- Children effectively gain skills in language and literacy.

Commentary

46. Children talk confidently to each other and to adults. They listen attentively and some children respond to what others say with comments and questions. Children listen to and enjoy stories. They join in enthusiastically with rhymes and songs. They have a good knowledge of sounds in words. For example, most children can identify in a picture items that begin with a given sound. They are beginning to link sounds with letters and can form letters correctly. A number of children can write words using their knowledge of sounds. Most children can at least provide the first letter of the words they want to use in their own writing. Most children reach the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception and many exceed them.
47. Teaching is very effective. All adults interact with children very positively and they help to promote their language by involving themselves in conversation or role play situations. By establishing a calm and ordered environment, teachers can ensure that all children have the opportunity to speak and be listened to. For example, in a session in the reception class every child was given the chance to share their weekend news whilst the teacher and the other children listened. This was a very effective session and had considerable impact on the development of children's speaking and listening skills. Phonic skills are carefully and enthusiastically taught on a daily basis and children enjoy learning. They are challenged and rise to the challenge.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average; achievement is very good;

- Teaching is very good;
- Children effectively gain mathematical understanding and acquire skills.

Commentary

48. All children can count to 10 and above and most can provide the number before or after a given number. They recognise numerals and begin to understand addition as a means of combining groups. They sequence events, recognise and recreate patterns and can identify shapes in the environment. Most children reach the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception and many exceed them.
49. Planning for mathematical development is very good. Effective use is made of adult support to provide small groups and ensure that individual needs are met. For example, in one session a small group played games with numbers to 10 and gained reassurance in the small group and with the skilled leadership of the teaching assistant, whilst the rest of the class worked with the teacher, beginning to split numbers up and record what they had done. An effective characteristic of the teaching is the way in which number rhymes are used on a daily basis by both teachers and other adults. Children have a big repertoire of such rhymes and they join in with the words and actions with great enjoyment, reinforcing counting skills and promoting a joy in working with numbers.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average; achievement is very good;
- Teaching is very good;
- Children have a range of experiences and opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world about them.

Commentary

50. Children find out about the past from photographs. They learn about how plants grow. They talk about journeys they have been on and they know about different forms of transport. They have looked at their own local environment and can explain where familiar buildings are and what they are used for. Of particular note is the confidence with which children use computers. For example, they use a paint program to fill shapes, select different tools and create their own picture. They are all confident with controlling events on screen and regularly turn to computers to help with their learning. Most children reach the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception and many exceed them.
51. Teachers plan a wide range of activities and experiences for children and they make the classrooms into exciting learning environments. Space is a bit limited for displays of items that children can investigate and explore, but there are a lot of opportunities for them to build and construct with a range of materials. The development of the outside area has effectively enhanced the range of activities that can be provided.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are average; achievement is good;
- Teaching is good;
- Children have a range of opportunities to develop physically, but the accommodation is limited.

Commentary

52. They move with confidence and control and can stop on a signal. In sessions in the school hall, children move around in different ways, such as jumping, skipping and marching. They use all the space, but are not always aware of others. They ride vehicles with skill. They use a range of small and large equipment and gain skills with pencils, paintbrushes and scissors. Most children reach the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception.
53. Recent developments to the outside area have enhanced provision for physical development. Children have the space to move about in and a range of equipment to experiment with. However, there is no direct access to the outside from the classroom and such activity is dependent on there being sufficient adult supervision. Space within the building is limited and very little in the way of apparatus can be accommodated for times of inclement weather.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average; achievement is very good;
- Teaching is very good;
- Provision in music is particularly good.

Commentary

54. They explore colour and shape, for example in printing with different shapes and mixing colours of paint. They take part in imaginative role play and make up their own stories. Achievement in music is particularly good. Children sing a wide range of songs from memory. They play a range of musical instruments with a good level of control, keeping a steady beat and copying given rhythms accurately. What they achieve in music sessions is well above what might be expected for children of this age. Most children reach the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception and many exceed them.
55. Teaching is very good and is excellent in music. Adults provide a wide range of opportunities for children to develop skills and to use them to express their ideas. For example, in the mixed age class the teacher effectively involved reception children in a whole class exploration of mixing colours, whilst a parent in the reception class helped children to use techniques based on the work of Monet. At the same time there is a

range of opportunities for children to explore materials independently. There are many opportunities for children to use their imagination in role play and adults play a major part in this. For example, a teaching assistant involved herself in the acting out of a picnic with groups of children. This was very skilfully done and her contribution made a considerable impact on the way in which children were encouraged to use their imagination and make up their own stories. The reception teacher has an enthusiasm for music and this rubs off onto the children. They join in with songs with great enjoyment and get a lot out of the music sessions with which they are involved.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards reached at the ages of 7 and 11 are well above the national average and all pupils achieve very well;
- Teaching and learning is very good throughout the school;
- Attitudes to work are excellent;
- Leadership and management are very good and a wide range of strategies has been successfully introduced to improve writing;
- Literacy is very well supported in all other subjects.

Commentary

56. Pupils of all abilities achieve very well to reach standards that are well above average in Years 2 and 6. This is an improvement from the last inspection.
57. Standards in reading are well above average and over a third of pupils reach levels that are above the national expectation by the time they are 11. Throughout the school, pupils' love of books and stories is developed very well by the enthusiasm of their teachers. For example, pupils in Year 1 really enjoy the Beatrix Potter books and know all about her life as well as her stories. Reading skills are developed well throughout the school, both in class and by volunteer adults who hear pupils read individually on a regular basis. Reading books and lists of words that are being learnt are sent home and parents help pupils to succeed.
58. 'Guided reading' sessions take place regularly where some pupils read individually their own choice of books while others work in small groups with an adult reading the same book. These sessions are very successful in helping pupils to progress by allowing them to tackle more challenging vocabulary and by discussing the meanings of words and text. As they get older pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure in quiet reading sessions. Pupils in Year 5 are all independent readers; they read a wide variety of literature, both fiction and non-fiction that they say they really enjoy. They have put together an anthology of their favourite poems, writing why they like them and which is their favourite line. In Year 6 pupils all read the same book, currently 'Goodnight Mr Tom', which they discuss in small groups with the teacher. This session is helping pupils to read carefully and critically as they answer challenging questions about the book.

59. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and most reach the nationally expected standards by the age of 11. Additional provision is well thought out to meet individual needs. A specialist teacher assesses the pupils' needs and provides detailed individual programmes for them to follow. They receive individual or small group teaching where a wide variety of strategies are used to help them to learn. Pupils in Years 2, 3, 4 and 5 have their literacy lessons in a small group, where they are very well taught. For example, in the Year 2 lesson with a group of twelve pupils, they compare books by the same author and form preferences, giving reasons. They are eager to speak and are all involved in the discussion. Throughout the lesson basic skills are taught and reinforced as they 'sound out' words, use fans of letters to form words and learn spelling rules. They then write about their favourite character. One pupil wrote, 'I like the baby best because he says 'wibbly wobbly' and makes me laugh.' They improve in confidence and self-esteem as they make very good progress.
60. Speaking and listening skills are above average and pupils develop into articulate and confident young people whose views are valued and who listen to and respect others' opinions. These are developed very well through a variety of strategies such as discussions, thinking skills sessions, question and answer sessions and presentations in assembly. Especially effective are the 'philosophy for children' lessons in Year 4. Pupils plan and take part in an enquiry where they listen to a story, decide, in groups, which question they would like to discuss, vote for and debate it. All contributions are welcomed and appreciated and pupils learn how to express their opinion to a group and listen respectfully to others.
61. Leadership and management are very good. Teachers' planning, pupils' work and standards achieved are carefully monitored, pupils' individual progress is tracked and appropriate action taken. A wide range of strategies has been put in place that has been very successful in improving writing skills, which are well above average. A piece of writing is assessed in detail twice a year and from these pupils have individual targets to meet. Younger pupils are given a framework to help them to plan their writing. Particularly successful is the use of a basket on the table containing aids to help writing, such as sheets of verbs with pictures, spelling dictionaries, useful vocabulary and spelling sheets. Pupils use these to help them to write independently and accurately. By Year 2, they are able to write pieces of extended writing using words such as 'whimpered' and 'whooped'. One pupil starts a piece of imaginative writing with 'My name is Margaret. I work in the deep, dark mine.'
62. Older pupils are given criteria for their work to help them know what the teacher is looking for, for example, connective words, powerful verbs and use of paragraphs. Pupils redraft their work to present it accurately, often using word processing for this. They write at length in a wide range of genres, including factual writing, poetry, prose, persuasive writing, letters, book reviews and play scripts. They take a real pride in their work and present it very well taking care with spelling, punctuation and grammar. One pupil in Year 6 starts a piece of writing with 'It was a dark, gloomy day; a feisty frost frilled the room.'
63. Teaching and learning are very good throughout the school, an improvement from the last inspection. Work is thoroughly planned, based on prior assessment, to challenge pupils of all abilities. A very good range of strategies is used to help pupils to learn basic skills and very clear explanations help them to understand. There are excellent relationships between the adults and pupils that help pupils to try hard and develop confidence. For example, in the Year 2 class pupils learn how to spell multi syllabic

words with the suffix 'ful' and 'ly'. The interactive white board displays the text clearly and pupils highlight the words. Individual white boards are used for all to practice writing and group games using words such as beautiful and moodily provide reinforcement in a fun and enjoyable way. Throughout the lesson, pupils learn to sound letters, identify syllables and understand word meanings.

64. In the older classes there are large numbers of pupils in the classes which means pupils have to wait longer to speak and to get help. However, because of pupils' excellent behaviour and attitudes to their work, and the skills of the teachers, this does not limit their achievement. Marking is good and helps pupil to understand what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work. ICT is well used to support literacy: Pupils word process their work and interactive whiteboards are used effectively. Literacy lessons sometimes take place in the ICT suite where pupils co-operate well as they work on the computers. For example, pupils in Year 4 work in pairs using an interactive PowerPoint presentation to examine both points of view on the issue of whether children should be allowed to come to school on bicycles. They read the text, follow links and talk about the views. They then use the computer for making their own notes.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

65. Literacy is very well promoted in all other subjects. In science pupils write up their investigative work, produce booklets about their study of 'minibeasts' and learn specialist vocabulary. There are many opportunities for pupils to discuss issues and learn to listen to others' opinions with respect. In history, pupils in Year 6 research a topic of their choice to produce a lengthy, well researched and well presented project. Speaking and listening skills are well promoted through the curriculum, for example in discussions in religious education.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average;
- Teaching quality has improved since the previous inspection and is now very good;
- There is very effective leadership and management.

Commentary

66. Standards seen in mathematics are well above average in Year 2 and Year 6. This is consistent with previous national test data for pupils in Year 6, but shows a rise in standards for those in Year 2. These high standards are commensurate with very good achievement, given pupils' average attainment when they enter the reception class. In the past, pupils' achievement in Year 2 has been broadly consistent with that of schools in a similar context. By Year 6, achievement is much better than that of similar schools. There is no difference between the achievement of girls and boys.
67. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated and there is a very high proportion of teaching which is good or better. Some teaching seen was outstanding. Teachers' expectations are very high, so challenging targets are set for pupils. Consequently, a significant proportion of pupils in Year 2 and 6 achieve higher standards than the nationally expected levels. Very good subject knowledge helps teachers to plan lessons very well in order to stretch all pupils within the different ability groups. The quality of relationships in classes and pupils' attitudes and behaviour are exemplary and this underpins their very good learning and achievement.
68. A feature of most lessons is the way teachers try to make learning more meaningful by linking problems to pupils' every day experiences. For example, pupils in Year 6 were given the task of questioning children they know at home to find out what they most looked forward to about going to their new schools. The data they gathered was shared with partners and represented as pie charts during their lesson. The use of ICT is having an impact on learning as teachers familiarise themselves with the possibilities of interactive whiteboards. This was seen in a lesson for Year 2 pupils in which learning and achievement were outstanding. By displaying the alphabet on the whiteboard, then giving each letter a value in pence, using multiples of two, pupils not only consolidated literacy skills, but improved their knowledge of the two times table. They also enjoyed the challenges of working out how much their initials were worth and calculating the 'cost' of words such as dog.
69. Teachers choose a very good range of methods to make lessons interesting. Before one lesson, the desks were arranged in rows and columns and the pupils had to locate the coordinates they were given as they entered the classroom, in order to find their seats. Personal development is very strongly encouraged and consequently pupils are co-operative and work well in groups. The teacher asked Year 2 pupils 'What does it mean to be in a team?' The pupils' answers were used very well to set the scene for the activity and to raise expectations and ultimately promote some very good learning about tessellating shapes. All teachers use the time at the end of lessons very productively to consolidate learning and to move pupils' thinking forward. A clear example was seen in Year 3 when pupils progressed from locating squares to locating intersecting points on a grid.
70. Teachers use assessments very well to plan step-by-step learning and lessons usually begin with a recap of previous work to ascertain what pupils understand, before moving on. Marking is evaluative and challenges presentation of work, as well as accuracy. This results in work which is neatly and logically set out.
71. Leadership and management are very good. Standards and teaching quality are closely monitored by the subject leader, who gives help and support where it is

needed. Pupils' work is scrutinised to ensure consistent standards across the school. There are very effective systems for tracking progress and setting targets. The subject leader is an excellent role model for staff and pupils.

Mathematics across the curriculum

72. Mathematical skills are used effectively in science, geography, design and technology and in independent surveys and research which require pupils to handle data. However, the use and application of mathematics is not a feature of planning for subjects across the whole curriculum. The subject leader is aware of the need to monitor this more closely to ensure pupils are given a full range of opportunities to develop their skills.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are very good throughout the school;
- Teaching is always at least good, and often better than good;
- Pupils have a very positive attitude to science;
- Teachers provide exciting and stimulating practical activities.

Commentary

73. On the basis of teacher assessments in 2004, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level at the end of Year 2 is above average. The percentage achieving higher than this is well above average. The results of statutory assessments at the end of Year 6 show that standards have steadily risen every year for the past four years. Standards are well above average compared to all schools and similar schools. Evidence from observations of lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work during the inspection shows that attainment in science is currently well above national average at the end of both key stages. Pupils achieve very well in science.
74. Standards achieved are very good for a number of reasons. First and foremost, the attitude and application of pupils is never less than very good and frequently excellent. This factor, combined with teaching which is never less than good and often better, means that pupils achieve very well in science. Both of these features are underpinned by very good planning systems and methods of working, which are consistent across the school and are built upon improvements made over a number of years.
75. Good practice has been disseminated through the school. The subject is well led and managed by the subject leader, who has a good knowledge and awareness of standards in the school. All areas of the National Curriculum are effectively covered. The use of practical investigation as the basis for learning and achievement is a strength of science teaching in the school and of great benefit to the pupils in improving their prediction skills and ability to draw conclusions from evidence. For example, in a Year 2 lesson the teacher gave all pupils the chance to think through the work they had done with planting seeds and to discuss exactly why it was that some grew better than others. As this was based on a practical activity they had organised for themselves, they were able to talk about what they had done and to come to their own conclusions. This resulted in a high level of scientific thinking.

76. The opportunity is also taken to use science experiments to develop vocabulary throughout the school and specific science vocabulary books are in use throughout the school for this purpose. Children from Year 2 onwards also consistently use experimental write ups to develop their report writing skills, to very good effect. There is a need to improve on the range of equipment available for teaching, which is satisfactory but could be of higher quality and more fit for the purpose.
77. Pupils are always enthusiastic about science lessons and this is reflected, not only in their attitudes, but also in the quality of the work they produce which is extended to their displayed work around the school. For example, during the inspection the science display theme in the school hall was of a very high standard, covering a range of topics including forces, plant life and health and safety in electricity. Such high quality display contributes well to the profile of science in the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils gain good ICT skills and are beginning to apply them across the curriculum;
- Teachers are confident in teaching ICT and they use resources well;
- The subject is very well led and managed.

Commentary

78. Standards in Year 2 are better than usually seen. For example, pupils work with text and graphics to complete such tasks as arranging poems on a page or creating a poster to advertise a puppet show. They confidently use a 'paint' program to create a picture, selecting appropriate tools and reviewing and evaluating their work. Standards in Year 6 are in line with what is expected. One example of this is the level of work produced when pupils created multi-media presentations using information gathered from different sources and combining text, pictures and sound. Some pupils were able to adapt their presentations to meet the needs of a specific audience. Achievement throughout the school is very good. Pupils gain skills and are now beginning to effectively apply the skills in other subjects.
79. Teaching is very good. Teachers have developed their skills and they confidently use resources such as the ICT suite, interactive whiteboards and digital cameras. They teach skills carefully and can adapt to individual needs. For example, the Year 3 teacher was working with a group of pupils on databases. They found the work difficult, but the teacher paced the lesson appropriately and used lots of demonstration so that the pupils gained confidence. By the end of the lesson, most had grasped the ideas and their learning had moved on considerably. Teachers are now making the use of ICT an integral part of their teaching in many subjects.
80. Provision for ICT has improved considerably since the last inspection. The subject leader has worked very hard, and with a high level of expertise and enthusiasm, to get the subject to where it is now. She has had good support from the headteacher and some good levels of funding for resources. Teachers and other staff have been keen to go along with the developments. The recent award of Naacemak* accreditation is evidence of how far the school has moved on.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

81. Pupils are now gaining ICT skills very effectively and are beginning to use them well across the curriculum. For example, Year 4 pupils were taught to use a branching database as a means of classification in science. In a literacy lesson, they explored an interactive presentation as an introduction to discursive writing. In art and design, Year 2 pupils created pictures based on a study of Van Gogh's work. Year 5 pupils used digital photographs to record their historical visit to a Tudor hall.

**Naacemmark for Primary Schools: An award made by the National Association of Advisers for Computers in Education.*

HUMANITIES

82. **History** and **geography** were sampled and thus no overall judgements are made on the quality of provision or standards. **Religious education** is reported on fully.
83. There are schemes of work for history and geography, based on national guidelines, which are adapted to meet the needs of the school. There is a new subject leader, who is presently re-examining the curriculum and has identified strengths and areas to improve. For example, one area identified for development is the more systematic teaching of map skills, including field studies.
84. Good use is made of the local environment and visits to places of interest to help bring these subjects alive for the pupils, such as visits to local museums. There is good support for literacy and pupils write extended pieces of work. For example, Year 4 write about Boudicca and what it was like to be a Saxon child. Pupils in Year 6 use old photographs to decide what is fact and what is opinion. ICT is well used by pupils in Year 3 to produce the front page of a newspaper on VE Day.
85. By the time they reach Year 6 pupils are able to produce well researched historical projects. They use a variety of means of research including books, magazines, interviews, the Internet, photographs and visits to museums. They put much time and effort into presenting these very well using ICT as well as photographs and artefacts.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus;
- Pupils are encouraged to discuss issues that are important to them;
- Learning in religious education makes a positive contribution to the personal development of pupils.

Commentary

86. Standards in religious education are better than expected by the locally agreed syllabus and they achieve very well. Pupils gain a good knowledge and understanding of religion and different faiths. Year 2 pupils understand how and why Buddhists celebrate Wesak and can talk about how the teachings of Buddha are important to Buddhists and how they live their lives. Year 4 pupils know how a Bible is organised and have a good knowledge of what it contains and its role in Christian life.
87. But what is also a significant strength of their achievement, is how well pupils respond to ideas about meaning and purpose, values and responsibilities in the context of religion. Year 1 pupils talk about belonging and what it means to them and relate this to the way in which Christians belong to the Church. Year 2 pupils share their thoughts on how to be a light to others, related to how Buddhists use the symbol of candles in their celebration. By Year 6, pupils can discuss ideas such as why rules and laws are important and what makes a good friend. The quality of pupils' responses to the task of linking a colour to their idea of God, and then to their experiences in their current

school, showed a level of informed thought and maturity beyond what might be expected of pupils of this age.

88. Teaching of religious education is very good. Teachers are confident in teaching the subject and have a good understanding of what they teach. They plan interesting lessons with a good use of resources that keep pupils involved and attentive. A particular strength of the teaching is the sensitivity with which teachers approach the subject. They often provide a spiritual dimension to the lessons, for example when the Year 2 teacher had pupils lighting candles and gave them time for reflection. All teachers provide pupils with time to discuss issues and they value their contributions. Pupils appreciate this: 'it helps you to know what to do' said one. It has a positive impact on their learning.
89. The very good quality of provision in religious education has been maintained since the last inspection. The subject leader has effectively established the approach to the subject and supports teachers in their planning. The learning in religious education makes a positive contribution to the ethos of the school, and to the spiritual and social development of pupils. The school has a satisfactory level of resources and these are used well. Pupils have visited places of worship, but do not have sufficient opportunity to meet people from different faiths.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

90. **Design and technology** was sampled and thus no overall judgements are made on the quality of provision or standards. **Art and design, music and physical education** are reported on fully.
91. Work in design and technology was sampled. No direct teaching was seen, so no judgement on overall provision can be made. However, it is evident from the range and quality of work displayed that standards could be well above expectations. Products such as vehicles and fair ground rides are carefully designed and very well constructed. There is some notable achievement shown in the puppet costumes designed and made by pupils in Year 4 as part of a recent Marks and Spencer challenge. The subject is well led and managed and teachers are well supported in their planning. There is a very strong and effective link between art and design and design and technology.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very well planned and challenging curriculum;
- Standards are well above expectations;
- Teaching is very good;
- There is very good leadership.

Commentary

92. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are well above those typically seen. The subject leader has been leading the school's very strong drive towards the national 'Arts Mark' award. As part of this she has developed an imaginative curriculum for the school which links very well to most other subjects. Art is also given a very high profile in assemblies, for example where pupils are invited to enter competitions and through creative clubs, which meet after school. The co-ordinator has also worked hard alongside colleagues to improve their subject knowledge, especially about the work of artists. Some of the pupils' work seen in the styles of Picasso, Klimt, Leonardo Da Vinci and Lowry is impressive. Pupils' creativity is enriched by a series of visitors to the school who work on art projects. During the inspection, for example, one group of pupils worked with a visitor who taught them how to bend, shape and bind willows. Between them, the group sculpted a 'bird of paradise' which they placed in the school garden, while others in the class created their own birds using a wide range of natural objects for their collage.
93. The quality of teaching is very good. Skills are taught very well at an early age. Pupils are taught to mix and apply colours sensitively according to the effect they want to achieve. There was a burst of excitement as Year 1 pupils watched green emerge from yellow and blue paint. The teacher went on to show how it could be lightened or darkened. Pupils in Year 2 produced some delightful Beatrix Potter characters using water colour techniques, which captured the tones and shades of the book illustrations very well. Teachers and support assistants engage pupils very well. Resources are made readily available so pupils can begin work very quickly. Objectives are made clear and the enthusiasm of adults rubs off on the pupils. In one lesson the teaching assistant spent time with each group encouraging them to observe closely and to look for line and tone in the objects they were drawing. This resulted in some careful and very accurate observational work.
94. The quality of work on display is testimony to pupils' excellent attitudes and enthusiasm for art. Cross-curricular links are very evident in the work inspired by Andy Goldsworthy's natural sculptures. Design and technology skills and history were combined as pupils used their own collections of materials from the natural environment to build Saxon huts. Using brightly coloured paper squares for mosaic lettering, in posters about electrical safety, proved to be an eye-catching way of linking science, art and personal development. The quality of three-dimensional work is very good. Sculptures of rain forest creatures such as angel fish and poison dart frogs in Year 5 are outstanding. Similar achievement is seen in the collection of 'minibeasts' made from papier maché in Year 2.

Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A well organised curriculum supports the effective delivery of lessons throughout the school;
- A wide range of enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities are available to pupils to maximise their achievement.

Commentary

95. Standards are better than usually seen. Evidence from a Key Stage 1 singing lesson, from extra-curricular activities such as recorder club, music club and peripatetic

teaching of instruments, in addition to planning, display and records kept in school, show that pupils have a strong feel for musical activity. In the lesson seen the quality of teaching was good, due to the good use of the support teacher and the high expectations of the pupils. Pupils' listening skills were well above national expectations, and they not only picked up both the words and music very quickly, but also sang very well in unison. Pupils knew a wide range of songs, without the aid of written support.

96. There has been some effective development of the curriculum over the last few years and there is a useful scheme of work in place throughout the school to support teachers in their planning. The subject leader is very confident and enthusiastic about music, exemplified through the self-evaluation process which involves both the pooling of staff ideas and consultation with children. Pupils joined in the lesson seen with great enthusiasm and gusto. It is apparent in the assemblies that this keenness for music and singing runs through the school. The school has established links with the Sage Centre in Newcastle, enabling pupils to take part in workshops covering a variety of musical skills such as exploring strings and percussion.

Physical education

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of extra-curricular activities give pupils the opportunity to develop their skills;
- An enthusiastic and knowledgeable subject leader enables both children and staff to make the most of local provision for sport.

Commentary

97. Whilst there were limited opportunities to observe the teaching of physical education during the inspection, what was seen was never less than good. At the end of Year 6, pupils demonstrate levels of skill well above the average in basic team game activities. The vast majority of the oldest pupils are able to bat, bowl, throw catch and field to a very good level of competence. They are also able to work in pairs and small groups, watching demonstrations and listening carefully to the teacher in well planned and organised lessons with clear targets. Pupils in the lower juniors also showed above average levels of achievement for their age, due in part to the teaching which was never less than good in the lessons seen. All pupils participate enthusiastically in lessons and show great maturity in tackling the tasks set to develop their skills.
98. Physical education is very well led by the subject leader, who has established links with the local sports college. The wide range of extra-curricular sports activities and competitions complements those experienced in school by the pupils to their benefit. Boys' and girls' football, cross-country, athletics, cricket and aquathon are all sports that the school has entered in competition recently. A good example of widening pupils' experiences to meet their needs can be seen in the introduction of cheerleading, brought in to support the development of co-ordination for a number of children.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

99. The school has made the provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE) a very strong focus and this has given the rest of its work a very firm foundation. Assemblies are used very well for delivering important messages. 'Circle Time' is well established for pupils to discuss issues relevant to their lives. Excellent relationships between the children and staff give the pupils the confidence to tackle hard concepts knowing their answers will be valued. For example, in a Year 5 PSHCE lesson, pupils looked at stereotypes and were encouraged to challenge them and they did this in a well reasoned, fair and realistic manner. In a Year 6 lesson preparing the children for transition to secondary school, they gave surprisingly deep well thought out and honest answers when suggesting a colour to represent their school and to represent God.
100. The school has won the 'Healthy Schools' award and this is proving beneficial in helping the children acquire good habits for life. When the school council discussed the possibility of a healthy tuck shop selling fruit, it was voted for enthusiastically and unanimously. The school has also won an 'International Schools Award' for its links with schools in Africa and France. It makes excellent use of visitors and visits both

local and international and this makes the learning much more relevant and interesting.

101. The co-ordinator has ensured that all aspects of PSHCE are covered, including drugs and sex and relationships education and that the children can build on their prior skills and knowledge. Their progress is closely monitored. As a result of this provision, the children make excellent progress towards becoming mature, caring and responsible individuals concerned about their school, the local, wider and global community.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	1
Attendance	1
Attitudes	1
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	1
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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