

INSPECTION REPORT

ST GILES' AND ST GEORGE'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Barracks Road, Newcastle

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124266

Headteacher: Mrs L Evans

Lead inspector: Mrs Julie Moore

Dates of inspection: 16th - 18th May 2005

Inspection number: 267785

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:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	197
School address:	Barracks Road Newcastle Staffordshire
Postcode:	ST5 1SL
Telephone number:	(01782) 616 891
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Appropriate authority:	Local education authority
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Judith Stevens
Date of previous inspection:	14 th June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Giles' and St George's Primary School is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled school. It is situated in the town centre of Newcastle, in Staffordshire, and is an average size. There are 197 pupils on roll and they come from a diverse range of social, cultural and economic backgrounds. A small number are refugees or asylum seekers. Many children have very limited skills and understanding when they start school and there is much ground to cover before they reach an average standard. This holds good for many of the pupils who join the school at different times in the school year. Most pupils in schools are from White British backgrounds but an increasing proportion of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds are joining the school, enhancing its cultural diversity. Many of these pupils and their parents have little understanding of the spoken or written English language. Their main languages are Bengali, Turkish and Shona. An average percentage of pupils are known to be entitled to free school meals, and a below average percentage of pupils are identified as having special educational needs. These are for moderate learning difficulties or for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. A small percentage of this group have a statement of special educational need. The school has received a number of national awards in recent years. These include the *Basic Skills Quality Mark* and the *Investor in People* award, both in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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14814	John Turnock	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

St Giles and St George's Primary School is an **effective** school that provides a good education for its pupils. The management of the school is very good and the leadership of the headteacher is outstanding. Teamwork is excellent. Standards vary from year to year and they are improving. Currently, they are below average in English and broadly average in mathematics and science. A high percentage of pupils move into and out of the school all the time and there is much work to cover before they reach a satisfactory standard for their age. Two-thirds of the current Year 6 group did not start their school life at this school. That said, pupils' achievement is good because they are taught well, enabling many of them to make speedy progress. The school has received two awards in recent years. These are the *Basic Skills Quality Mark* and *Investors in People* award. The school provides **good** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The excellent leadership of the headteacher, who is well supported by her very able deputy.
- Standards in English are not high enough and pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not have enough opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills.
- There are very good systems for assessing how well pupils are doing. These help staff to track pupils' progress and achievement so that any gaps in learning are speedily tackled.
- Achievement is good across the school and this is due to strong teaching. Pupils' achievement is excellent in Year 6.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and the school takes very good care of every pupil.
- Relationships are very good and this helps all the pupils to have positive attitudes to learning and to school life generally.

The last inspection was six years ago and there has been a **very good** improvement since then. There were no significant issues and just two minor issues, both of which have been tackled successfully. The school has continued to improve at a very good pace, focusing on improving teaching and learning styles, adapting the curriculum to match the needs of all the pupils and improving its systems for monitoring and evaluating its work.

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	C	D	D
mathematics	E	D	E	E
science	C	D	E	E

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.

Achievement is **good**. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates, as do pupils from minority ethnic heritages. Test results (2004) in the chart above show that standards were well below average in mathematics and science and below average in English, with an identical picture in relation to similar schools. Standards vary

year on year because of the reasons mentioned in the first section of this report. Currently, the eleven-year-olds are achieving just below average standards in English, and broadly average in mathematics and science. This is because new systems for making learning more effective have boosted standards across the board. Standards for the seven-year-olds are at very similar levels to those for the eleven-year-olds. What all of this data masks is the steady improvement in pushing up standards across the board. This year, many of the Reception children are on course to achieve their Early Learning Goals¹ by the end of the Reception Year. This is a good improvement on previous years. Pupils have very positive attitudes to school life generally and they are eager to learn. Their personal development is very good, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance is good and most pupils arrive at school punctually.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good**, with very good features in most subjects and in the Foundation Stage. The strongest teaching is in Year 6, where there were a number of outstanding lessons during the inspection. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well, as are pupils from minority ethnic heritages. Pupils' good achievement is due to effective teaching across almost all the age ranges from the Nursery onwards. The constant focus on targets helps pupils to concentrate on doing well.

The school has an innovative approach to the curriculum, which is planned around a series of themes. Literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are used and practised regularly, boosting achievement across the board. The curriculum is good. There are very good links between the subjects and a good range of extra activities that enhance the basic curriculum very well. Accommodation falls short of expectations but this will be resolved when the school moves into its new premises in a few months. Resources are good. Pupils are cared for very well and there are good links with parents and the community. Links with other schools are satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good**. The headteacher is the driving force behind the school's successes and the partnership between the head and the deputy is a real strength of the school. Many of the subject leaders are new to their post and extra training has enhanced their effectiveness well. Governance is very good and all the statutory requirements are met. Everyone knows where the strengths and weaknesses lie and they pull together exceptionally well to overcome all the barriers to learning in this school. The school is moving onwards with confidence. It is well ahead of many other schools in its approaches to teaching, learning, assessment and the curriculum.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very pleased with the school and they appreciate what it does for their children. Pupils like school, they enjoy being there and they are happy.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- To continue the drive to boost standards, especially in English and in speaking and listening in Years 1 and 2.

¹ The targets five-year-olds are expected to achieve by the end of the Reception Year.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is **good** overall. Standards are improving steadily. They are average in mathematics and science by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards are just below average in English in the same year groups. A high proportion of pupils join the school each year and many of these pupils have limited literacy skills; alongside this, a significant number of pupils also leave the school for family reasons. For example, around two-thirds of the current Year 6 did not start in the Nursery at St Giles' and St George's, all of which holds back standards as pupils adjust to new learning situations.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good for higher-, average- and lower-attaining pupils, with excellent achievement in Year 6.
- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well and they make good progress.
- Standards are below average in English.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they have good support from the teachers and teaching assistants.
- The achievement of pupils from minority ethnic heritages is good.

Commentary

1. In the 2004 national tests for eleven-year-olds, standards were below average in English and well below average in mathematics and science when compared to all schools in the country. When compared to similar schools, standards were at the same level. The tests for the seven-year-olds presented a similar picture. Standards were below average in reading and mathematics and average in writing.
2. Standards have improved this year and are at similar levels to the last inspection. Standards are broadly average for both the seven- and the eleven-year-olds in mathematics and science and below average in English. This is due to differences in the percentage of pupils with special educational needs and the number of pupils who moved in and out of Year 2 and Year 6 during the school year. Pupils' achievement is good. Progress and achievement accelerate rapidly in Year 6 and this boosts standards very successfully. Last year's targets for Year 6 pupils were exceeded and it is likely that the targets for this year will also be exceeded. They are challenging for the year group.
3. In Year 6, standards in speaking and listening are broadly average for the higher and average attainers but lower attainers are not at this level. The more capable readers

have a deeper understanding of the meaning in their books and much of their writing is lively and thoughtful. Standards for this group are average. Other pupils' understanding is less secure and standards are lower than expected for many of them. All pupils have good access to a range of different types of writing and their skills are developed well. The presentation of written work is variable and it falls short of expectations too often. Mathematics skills are developed very well and pupils have a growing adeptness at solving problems and working out their number facts speedily. The focus on science investigations means that pupils' enquiry skills are good. They are able to work independently and test out their ideas in appropriate ways.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.4 (26.8)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	24.9 (26.0)	27.0 (26.8)
science	27.2 (28.0)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- In Year 2, pupils' speaking and listening skills are below average. Many of them have a limited vocabulary and they find concentration difficult. Reading skills are developing satisfactorily. Books are enjoyed and more capable pupils can talk about the characters in their books. The others find this more difficult and their limited vocabulary and speaking skills holds back their learning. Writing is well structured and the quality of writing reflects the work that has been undertaken in school. The presentation of work varies in Years 1 and 2, as it does in Years 3 to 6. Pupils are getting to grips with the four rules of number and their understanding is secure. In science, pupils record their work and observations in a variety of ways, and they use their writing skills well.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.9 (13.3)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.5 (12.2)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	15.7 (13.9)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 26 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- Across the school, standards and achievement in religious education (RE) and information and communication technology (ICT) are average. Inspectors found very little difference in the achievement of boys and girls.
- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well. When children join the Nursery, their skills and understanding are usually well below those expected for children of similar ages, although this year their skills and understanding were below average. Most children are on course to achieve their targets by the end of the Reception Year in all areas of learning.

7. Pupils with special educational needs are given work that is well matched to their age and attainment level. They achieve as well as their classmates. Pupils are included in all activities and they are provided with a full range of opportunities. Their talents are fully explored. Pupils work well together, are well behaved, and are proud of their achievements. Pupils from minority ethnic heritages have good support and they too achieve as well as their classmates.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, relationships and personal development, including the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects, are **very good**. These elements are strengths of the school. Levels of attendance and punctuality are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff is very good.
- Pupils are keen to learn and very enthusiastically engage in all aspects of school life.
- The school cultivates pupils' personal development very well, helping them to become more mature, confident and independent.
- Pupils rise to the very high standards of behaviour expected. They are very thoughtful and considerate of others in lessons and at play.
- Measures to raise attendance levels are proving effective.

Commentary

8. The very good relationships, both between pupils and between pupils and staff, enable learning to flourish. Pupils want to learn and are very enthusiastic about their lessons. For example, in a very good design and technology lesson, Year 4 pupils were eager to share their previous learning and worked productively on a series of designs. Both infants and juniors enjoy taking part in a range of clubs. From the Nursery to Year 6, they work and play happily so that the atmosphere is conducive to learning in a school where everyone, irrespective of gender and race, is included and valued. Parents comment that these attitudes and relationships will stand pupils in good stead when they transfer to secondary school.
9. Pupils' personal development has improved; it is now very good overall. Pupils understand they are part of the school community and are very well aware of what privileges and responsibilities this involves. From the moment children enter the Nursery, the school enables them to take growing responsibility for their work and actions. They grow in confidence and maturity. For example, members of the school council weigh up suggestions to see if they are possible and practical. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good. Pupils greatly value fair play and have a very strong moral code. They treat each other and adults with great respect and compassion and are prepared to listen to each other. Spiritual awareness is catered for very well; both the local churches make considerable contributions of high quality. Pupils' good understanding of their own and others' culture has been maintained.
10. Behaviour remains very good. Staff insist consistently on very high standards of behaviour. The pupils understand the parameters and respond very well to praise and rewards. They have a very good understanding of the consequences of their actions. Any inappropriate behaviour is checked very quickly and improvement is supported in a variety of suitable ways. Pupils are only excluded as a last resort and all exclusions are fully justified.

11. Since the last inspection, the level of attendance has risen. Now, the school rings any family whose child has not arrived at school and for whom no reason for absence has been given. This first day contact programme has helped to raise the level of attendance and the school is on track to raise attendance further. It has a rigorous policy regarding unauthorised absence and vigorously enforces it, determining holidays in excess of five days as unauthorised absence. Lessons start on time and are not disrupted by pupils arriving late.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (2003/4)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.8	School data	0.4
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.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese

Exclusions in the last school year

Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
135	8	1
4	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
2	0	0
8	0	0
3	0	0
4	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good**. There are many very good features across the different year groups. The very good links between all the subjects make learning more meaningful for the pupils. Pupils' achievement and progress are tracked very well and there are very good systems for assessing how well pupils are doing.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good, with some very good strengths throughout the school.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills in Years 1 and 2.
- Individual and group targets help pupils to know what they have to do to improve the standard of their work.
- The curriculum is well planned and is based on different themes. This allows pupils to work to capacity and use their skills and understanding to support learning in a range of subjects, boosting achievement across the board.
- There are very good systems for tracking how well pupils are doing and for recording their progress and achievement.

Commentary

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection. New systems for improving teaching and learning styles have had a very good impact on boosting pupils' achievement across the board. Teaching is good overall. It is very good in Years 3 to 6, and good with many very good features in the Foundation Stage. The main weakness is in Years 1 and 2 where pupils have limited opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 33 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
3 (9%)	15 (45%)	13 (39%)	2 (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.

- There is some good teaching in the Foundation Stage and this is why the children's achievement is good. There is a strong focus on personal, social and emotional development in both the Nursery and Reception classes. This underpins every aspect of the curriculum, enabling children's learning to be productive. This year, many children are on course to achieve their targets in all areas of learning² by the end of the Reception Year. The reasons for this are improvements in teaching and learning styles, which mean that a higher proportion of children are achieving well.
- The whole-school approach to planning the curriculum enables all staff to plan in similar ways, basing their curriculum planning on different themes or topics. This consistent approach allows pupils' skills to be developed in a cross-curricular way as they have many opportunities in the school day to practise and reinforce their skills. ICT skills are used and applied very successfully in all subjects and year groups. Pupils are adept at using the interactive white boards – as are the staff – and this is a real aid to developing effective learning across all subjects.
- Tasks are planned at appropriate levels for the higher-, average-and lower-attaining pupils, as well as those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. This is because the school's systems for assessing and tracking

² The name given to the curriculum that Nursery and Reception children follow.

pupils' progress and achievement are very good. Staff have accurate knowledge of the level at which their pupils are working because of the efficacy of their systems. Individual and group targets are well focused to boost standards and enhance achievement. All of which are significant strengths in the teaching at this school.

16. There are few weaknesses in the teaching that act as barriers to effective learning. The main one is the limited opportunities in Years 1 and 2 for pupils to extend and expand their speaking and listening skills. For example, there were missed opportunities to develop learning points at the end of a Bible story, and in a mathematics lesson, the higher-attaining pupils did not have an opportunity to check things out or to explain their task and this held back their learning.
17. Marking is mainly of good quality, giving pupils clear pointers about what needs to be done to improve. Homework supports and extends classwork well and parents like this. However, in some subjects and classes, teachers accept work that is presented inadequately and this is not good enough and is a weakness. Teaching assistants play a valuable role in promoting effective learning. They usually, but not always, work with pupils who have learning difficulties and their input boosts achievement very well. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, like their classmates, as do those pupils who have English as an additional language.

The curriculum

The curriculum is imaginatively planned, of **good** quality and covers all National Curriculum requirements. It enables pupils to achieve well throughout the school. A good range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors enrich the curriculum well. Accommodation is unsatisfactory and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well planned and delivered innovatively, with close links between the different subjects.
- Children get a good start to their education.
- There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- There is a good range of extra-curricular activities.
- The accommodation has weaknesses that will be rectified when the school moves into its new premises in January.

Commentary

18. The curriculum is well planned to ensure that pupils of all abilities are given a curriculum that meets their needs and covers the National Curriculum requirements. It is broad, balanced and enriched through its thematic³ approach to learning and focus on experiential learning. Better arrangements are made for the monitoring of work for pupils in mixed age groups than at the previous inspection. Effective monitoring means that any gaps in the curriculum are identified speedily and tackled straight away. Pupils of all abilities and ages work on a curriculum at an appropriate level for their needs. Planning is rigorous to ensure progression and continuity. Pupils are set according to ability in mathematics at the junior phase. This has had a good impact on teaching and learning. More opportunities for investigational work in mathematics and science have been provided and these have enhanced learning well.

³ This means planning through themes with a focus on pupils working things out independently and practically.

19. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Children are helped to settle in quickly and work from an imaginative curriculum in the Nursery. This is much improved compared to the time of the previous inspection. Both in the Nursery and Reception classes, there are a good range of very interesting experiences. Children are helped to develop the social skills necessary to learn successfully. As a result, they achieve well and enjoy learning.
20. The challenging and interesting curriculum is an important factor in the pupils attaining improved standards and good achievement. Projects such as the Great Fire of London (Year 2) and Britain since 1930 (Years 5 and 6) are carefully planned to encourage learning. Cross-curricular themes are securely in place and residential activities such as the visit to Chasewater by Year 6 add an extra dimension to the curriculum for the older pupils. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection, particularly in the use of ICT to support learning.
21. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. There has been good improvement in the provision for pupils with special educational needs since the previous inspection, when it was reported as being good. Pupils are provided with a very good range of activities which match their individual need and ensure that pupils achieve well.
22. There is good support for learning outside lessons. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities to cater for all tastes. These are popular with boys and girls, ensuring that the breadth of activities found in lessons are extended in the extra activities. For example, the Choir club helps pupils further develop their musical skills and they are keen and enthusiastic in their approach. A good range of trips and visits support pupils' learning. The good range of visitors, including storytellers, theatre groups and community personnel, play a valuable part in enriching the curriculum and preparing pupils for adult life. Pupils especially enjoy musical games, cycling and dance activities.
23. Accommodation is unsatisfactory overall. The school is very old. A good job has been done to bring the accommodation up to standard, but it remains unsatisfactory. The accommodation is clean and well cared for but there is no outdoor grassed area at present. There are many internal weaknesses, with damp affecting the decoration; however, a new purpose-built school is due to open in January 2006. The school is busy appointing Eco Knights in order to become an environmentally friendly Eco school in the future. Staff make full use of all the space in the existing school in order to encourage pupils to work independently. They are successful. The school is well resourced with learning equipment and books and there are sufficient suitably qualified staff.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils is **very good**, as are the support, advice and guidance provided for them throughout their time at St Giles' and St George's. These aspects are a strength of the school. The school involves pupils in the life of the school very well, valuing their suggestions and ideas.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff build up very good relationships with pupils, providing them with very good role models.
- Very good care is taken of the pupils in this happy cohesive community.

- Staff know the pupils very well and very effectively support their personal development.
- Pupils have a very good idea of how they can improve their knowledge and understanding.
- Every child is valued and achievement in all aspects of school life is celebrated very well.
- Pupils are fully involved in the life of the school, knowing their ideas and suggestions are respected.

Commentary

24. All staff work together in this caring community, where nearly all pupils feel they can turn to a supportive adult. Members of staff are approachable and ready to listen to pupils' ideas. Pupils reflect the respect and kindness they receive from the staff and the resulting rapport enhances learning very successfully. Throughout the school, induction arrangements are good, helping pupils to feel welcome; they settle down quickly, feeling valued members of the school community. The staff know the pupils very well and the friendly environment encourages pupils to do their best. Pupils are prepared well for the next stages of their learning throughout the school and Year 6 feel they will be ready to transfer to secondary school at the end of term.
25. Very good all-round care is taken of the pupils by staff. The headteacher has recent and relevant training in child protection and her staff are well aware of the procedures. Health and safety are given a high priority and the governing body is fully involved. For instance, they analyse assiduously the record of accidents, taking appropriate action where necessary. The trained first-aiders deal with accidents very competently. All staff ensure the school environment is as safe as possible and the janitor handyman and cleaners make a positive contribution to this. The before- and after-school club on the school premises makes an important contribution to pupils' welfare by providing care out of ordinary school hours, so that pupils who arrive on site early and go home late are looked after suitably. Wraparound care also extends to part-time Nursery provision and a lunchtime club.
26. Teachers plan very well and, as a result, most of the pupils are working at just the right levels of challenge to meet their needs. Pupils have a very good idea of how to achieve more, comprehending what they are expected to learn. They grasp opportunities for self-evaluation and take part in peer appraisal capably. Pupils with special educational needs, including the gifted and talented, are supported very well throughout their time in the school and consequently achieve as well as their peers. Pupils with English as an additional language also receive support which ensures they achieve as well as their classmates. Everyone's achievements are tracked carefully and celebrated in the classroom and in assemblies. This helps to build the confidence and self-esteem of all. The school's very good programme of personal, social and health education makes a substantial contribution to support and guidance for pupils. It is very successful in building up a sense of trust and community in spite of the high pupil mobility.
27. Pupils are profitably involved in the life of the school with their views being sought both informally and more formally. The school council carefully discusses ideas and suggestions, asking for money when it is needed. The house captains are also proud of their role and know their contribution matters. Pupils are able to see that they can make a difference and this contributes to their feeling of being appreciated.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents and the community are **good**. Overall, there are sound links with other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very pleased with St Giles' and St George's School.
- Communication with parents and carers is good.
- Most parents support children's learning well, although there are a small number who do not give assistance or encouragement.
- The school has successful links with the community.
- There are few links with secondary schools and this hinders the continuity of the curriculum between primary and secondary education.

Commentary

28. The parents value what this school offers and achieves. They are particularly pleased with the way in which their children settle down and become a valued part of the school community. They appreciate the caring Christian ethos and are supportive of its values.
29. Home-school links have been nurtured well through the open door policy, giving parents and carers easy access to information and help. Parents are encouraged to take part in their children's education and in the life of the school on a daily basis. For example, a group of parents has been involved with the creation of the well-loved storybook bags. Families come from a variety of faiths and cultures and they are invited to talk about these within the school community. Workshops over the last year have focused on spelling, mathematics, handwriting and ICT, giving parents greater understanding of these subjects. Such initiatives as this have enabled them to support their children's learning better. The school greatly values the parental support given both at home and in school, which has a positive effect on pupils' progress. However, there are a small number of parents who, despite the school's efforts, do not take part in their children's education or support homework. The school has several initiatives planned, including one linked to Newcastle College, to try to combat this.
30. The school effectively communicates both orally and in writing with parents and carers. The formal summer term surveys help to identify any matters of concern. The new Parents' Forum was set up last year and has formed a basis for discussion for such topics as sex and relationships and drugs education. Most parents believe the school listens to them and their views are taken into account. Every term parents are offered a formal meeting with teachers and teaching assistants when their child's progress and development are discussed. This is augmented by an evaluative annual written report detailing targets, all subject areas, personal development and attendance. There is also space for comments by parents and children. Since the last inspection, the issue regarding the inadequate way progress was detailed in Nursery reports has been fully addressed. A whole range of helpful booklets has been the result of the school and parents working together to ensure parents have information about various subjects and the way that children learn. These enable them to better support their children's learning at home.

31. The school continues to have strong links with the community. The two churches support the spiritual, social and moral development of the pupils by contributing to assemblies and RE. The school goes to church on various occasions such as festivals, but also the buildings are a focus for local studies. The importance of local culture is recognised, with visitors and visits enriching the curriculum. Pupils take part in a wide range of activities in the locality; examples are singing alongside the Newcastle Male Voice Choir, planting a civic garden bed and laying a wreath on Remembrance Day. The new school will have a community room which will be used by parents and other groups; this has the potential to strengthen links with the community further.
32. There are informal links with a variety of primary schools in Yorkshire, Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex which have encouraged innovative ways of working. There are sound links with Clayton High School regarding modern foreign languages. However, there are no mechanisms to promote curriculum continuity, such as bridging units between St Giles' and St George's and secondary schools to help pupils transfer with greater support. There are good links with the before- and after-school club.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

As at the time of the last inspection, the leadership and management are **very good**. The headteacher's leadership is outstanding. Subject leadership is good. Governance is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The deputy headteacher provides an excellent role model for her colleagues.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher work together as an excellent team.
- The governors have a very clear insight into the school's strengths and weaknesses and very effectively support the headteacher and all staff.
- The school has excellent systems for self-review and for analysing performance data.

Commentary

33. The headteacher has successfully established high-grade communication between all members of the school community. As result, all staff and governors feel valued and fully involved in the school's development. The headteacher has also created an atmosphere in which all staff and governors work together as a highly efficient and committed team. In addition, she has laid down an excellent and clear vision for the school's future with a particularly strong emphasis on pupils learning through a practical 'hands on' approach wherever possible. The excellent leadership by the headteacher has meant that the good rate of school improvement has been sustained over recent years. Very high quality systems for school self-review and development planning established by the headteacher result in the school working proactively to seek ways of improving the quality of provision, for example the innovative approach adopted towards planning and teaching the curriculum and the careful and detailed planning carried out to aid the best possible transfer into the new school building next year. St Giles' and St Georges's school is fully inclusive, no-one is left out.
34. Through her excellent teaching, the deputy headteacher provides a very strong role model for all of her colleagues. She also provides very high quality support for the headteacher and together they work as an outstanding team, constantly reviewing and analysing ways in which the school can be improved. In particular, they have established rigorous monitoring and performance management systems for all staff. This results in all staff having a very clear understanding of targets for improving pupils' performance and the quality of teaching and

learning. Coupled with this, the excellent analysis of all performance data and the clear understanding that all teachers have of how the information applies to their pupils means that a well-defined approach is always adopted to improving pupils' achievement. Very clear systems have been established to set the parameters for the way in which teachers carry out their subject responsibilities and this means that overall, areas of the curriculum are well led and managed, with leadership and management of special educational needs provision being especially good. Very good systems are in place to ensure all opportunities for staff to improve their skills through training, on a regular basis.

35. The governors work very effectively with the headteacher and all staff. They visit the school on a regular basis and are fully informed about, and involved in, all aspects of the school's overall management. They have established very good systems to liaise with subject co-ordinators and are fully involved in all aspects of reviewing the school's development and laying plans for future developments. As a result of all of their activities, they have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are often proactive in seeking ways to refine school systems and procedures; for example, much detailed analysis was undertaken recently to check on areas of health and safety and risk assessment. Working closely with the headteacher, they keep a careful check on the allocation of the school's budget and ensure that the best value is gained from all expenditure. All statutory requirements are met in full.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	539,010	Balance from previous year	14,000
Total expenditure	553,010	Balance carried forward to the next year	0
Expenditure per pupil	2,807		

36. Given the very strong overall leadership and management and the good quality of education that results in pupils achieving well, the school provides good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good** and there has been a good improvement since the last inspection in curriculum planning and resources. The children enter the Nursery class on a part-time basis in the year in which they are four and a minority have attended some pre-school provision. They enter the Reception class in the year in which they are five. Attainment on entry is usually well below average. This year it is below average. The curriculum is good and is planned to provide a range of interesting and relevant activities which are matched well to the children's needs. All children, including those with special educational needs, achieve well because the teaching is good. Staff work well as a team and children's progress is monitored well. All adults set very good role models for the children and manage them well. There is a good ratio of adults to children, ensuring that the needs of all are well met. The accommodation is old; however, displays make it purposeful and stimulating indoors, and the outdoor classroom is developed well.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good because of the good teaching and high expectations of staff.
- Behaviour is very good.
- Every opportunity is taken to promote the children's confidence and independence.

Commentary

37. Teaching is good and, as a result, all children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well in their social development. Most children are on course to meet their Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception Year. A significant number are on course to exceed these. Teachers and support staff in Nursery and Reception classes provide very good role models for the children. They have high expectations of behaviour. This reflects the emphasis the school places on developing the whole child. Staff have established secure routines so that the children feel confident and safe. Children have many opportunities to work alone and in small groups. As a result, they are co-operative, confident and friendly. They are developing good independent skills, such as when they manage their own clothes or use the computer. The children enjoy playing games and as a result take turns and work effectively as a team. Staff use every opportunity to praise children's independence, for example when they paint pictures of *Mr Gumpy's Outing* or role play in the theme corner.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's speaking and listening skills are developed well.

- Achievement is good because teaching and learning are focused on developing children's skills through an interesting curriculum.

Commentary

38. Most children are on course to meet the expectations in this area of learning by the end of the Reception Year. This area is weak when children join the Nursery or Reception classes. All children, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress as a result of the many opportunities they are given to talk and listen. Good teaching in both the Nursery and Reception classes ensures good coverage of speaking and listening, reading and writing skills. The teachers take every opportunity to develop the children's vocabulary through probing questioning. For example, when talking about *Mr Gumpy's Outing*, children in the Nursery were given valuable opportunities to respond to the questions 'What happened next?' and 'What does bleating mean?'. Children enjoy re-enacting the story with the teacher. Children enjoy books and listen very attentively when a story is read to them. For example, when the teacher read the story in Reception, the children were hanging on to her every word. Children have made a good start at reading and by the end of the Reception Year, many are on the early stages of the reading scheme. They are making good progress with their writing. Most can write their name and good use is made of ICT to support their learning.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Every opportunity is taken to promote children's mathematical development.
- Achievement is good.
- Teaching and learning are focused on developing children's skills through a good practical curriculum.

Commentary

39. Children achieve well and most are on course to meet or exceed their Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception Year. Teaching and learning are good and the children are enthusiastic and confident. Every opportunity is taken to develop children's skills. Children in Nursery readily recognise numerals 0 to 5 and are beginning to solve number problems. They enjoyed playing number games and matching and counting to 20. In the Reception class, there is good development of mathematical vocabulary and children confidently count to 20. They are able to recognise the numbers 1 to 12 on a clock face. A significant minority can count up to 50 and beyond. Most children can sort and name two-dimensional shapes. They understand early addition and what doubling means. Children's interest is sustained well and practical activities prepare the way well for future learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because of good teaching which is focused on developing children's skills through a practical, imaginative curriculum.
- Good use is made of visits in the local area and visitors.
- Children have valuable opportunities to use computers.

Commentary

40. Most children are on target to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception Year. A significant minority are on course to exceed these. Teaching and learning are good and all children achieve well, including those with special educational needs. Children are adept at using the computer and their skills are developing well because they have a good range of programs to support their early learning. Children learn about festivals and cultures such as Harvest, Diwali and Chinese New Year. They are gaining a secure knowledge of nature and wildlife and enjoy growing seeds. The Nursery children enjoyed walking down Barracks Road with the staff and some parents, as part of a recent topic on 'Journeys'. In science, the children in Reception learn the meaning of making a prediction. Visitors to school make an effective contribution to children's achievement in this area of learning. Good links have been made with the local community.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A range of interesting activities is planned to promote learning in this area.

Commentary

41. Most children are on target to meet their Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception Year. A significant minority are on target to exceed these. Both Nursery and Reception children use space well and are well co-ordinated as they use large and small apparatus both indoors and outdoors. Children in the Reception class are making good progress in throwing, catching and kicking balls. They enjoy climbing over, under and through large apparatus. They also know how to use crayons and pencils carefully and accurately. Children achieve well because activities are well planned and full use is made of existing resources. Teaching is good.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because they are taught well and experience a good range of creative activities.

Commentary

42. Children's creative development is on target to meet expectations by the end of the Reception Year. They achieve well because teaching is good. Activities are well planned and resources are effectively used. In Nursery, children loved the story of *Elmer*. They looked at his brightly coloured coat and made their own patterns to look just like him. They have investigated the colours green and yellow and enjoyed painting and making good quality and brightly painted models of cars and lorries. In the Reception class, children enjoy drawing pictures of fruit and vegetables. They have mixed colours to paint their own self-portraits and created collages. They achieve well in singing and percussion work. They also enjoyed dressing up in colourful costumes and taking part in role-play in the Nursery, as they had their picnic as part of *Mr Gumpy's Outing*.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is very good in Years 3 to 6.
- The subject leadership is excellent and this is the main reason that teaching and achievement are strengths.
- Standards are improving but they are not high enough to reach the national average.
- Teaching is very good in Years 3 to 6.
- There is not enough emphasis on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills in Years 1 and 2.
- Literacy skills successfully underpin learning in all the other subjects.
- The presentation of written work varies and it could be better.

Commentary

43. The school has worked very hard to tackle a range of issues in English and to improve the curriculum, teaching, standards and achievement. It is successful. One of the main barriers to learning is the high number of pupils who join the school at any time during the school year, many of them with very limited literacy skills. The school has addressed this by adopting an approach to learning through different themes so that pupils' essential skills are developed across the whole curriculum. This works well as skills are learnt, used and applied throughout the school day. The constant reinforcement speedily boosts the achievement of higher-, average- and lower-attaining pupils as well as those with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic heritages. Boys and girls achieve equally well whatever their ability.
44. Standards in English are below average for both the seven- and the eleven-year-olds. That said, many pupils make rapid progress, especially in Years 3 to 6 where achievement is very good. Individual targets give clear guidance about the next stages

in learning and these keep pupils well focused on their task. Standards in speaking and listening are below average in the infants⁴ and broadly average in the juniors⁵, especially for the higher-and average-attaining pupils. Lower attainers are not at this level. What is missing is a strong focus on the development of spoken English and listening skills, especially in Years 1 and 2, so that pupils can get off to a good start by speaking audibly, extending their vocabulary and their ideas and listening attentively. Achievement is satisfactory in these year groups.

45. Reading skills are developing well and a minority of pupils are achieving the level expected for their age. Few pupils are achieving the higher levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and this depresses overall standards. Achievement is satisfactory overall. Books and reading are enjoyed but not every pupil has the opportunity to read at home. The school makes sure that all pupils have an adult to read to at some time during the school day or week. This boosts pupils' confidence in their ability to read as well as giving them enjoyment and pleasure. In Year 6, higher-attaining pupils have a deeper understanding of the meaning in their books and their standard is broadly average. Average attainers are not so sure, and they need more support to explain how their story moves forward. Lower attainers have few strategies to identify unknown words and they quickly lose the 'flow' of their reading. Standards are lower than expected for many of the average-and lower-attaining pupils. Year 2 pupils read clearly, attempting to put expression into their reading with some success. The higher attainers use a range of strategies to establish the meaning of their words and sentences but their limited vocabulary holds them back from time to time, as it does with the average and lower attainers.
46. The recent whole-school focus on improving pupils' writing skills is boosting standards successfully and significantly more pupils are attaining average standards from low starting points. Achievement is good across the school. There is a cohesive whole-school approach and the teachers' marking, alongside clear targets, gives clear pointers about what pupils need to do to improve their work, for example, in Year 6, *To move more quickly to the exciting part of the opening...* Every pupil has access to a wide range of writing experiences across the whole curriculum and this develops their skills very well. Throughout the school, writing is purposeful. It successfully builds onto and strengthens pupils' knowledge as well as their skills. Year 6 work shows lively and thoughtful writing in a variety of genres and in Year 2, well-structured work develops the action of the characters as the story expands. The presentation of work is variable; at best the standards are good but, at their weakest, standards of presentation are unsatisfactory.
47. Teaching is very good in Years 3 to 6, as is pupils' learning, and their achievement reflects this. The cross-curricular approach to learning provides many opportunities for literacy skills to be developed at a speedy pace. Planning is very good and pupils know what they are expected to learn. The very good systems for tracking pupils' progress and achievement mean that tasks are pitched at the right level. What is missing is a co-ordinated approach to developing pupils' speaking and listening skills in Years 1 and 2, where teaching is satisfactory.
48. The leadership of the subject is excellent. Standards, achievement, teaching and learning are all monitored with the utmost rigour and this enables the senior staff to identify any gaps and take immediate steps to overcome them so that learning does not slow.

⁴ Years 1 and 2.

⁵ Years 3 to 6.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

49. Literacy skills are used well to support work in other subjects. The cross-curricular approach to learning enables every pupil to have many opportunities throughout the school day to practise and consolidate their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. ICT is used very successfully to help pupils present their written work to the whole class or group. Pupils use a range of resources to research, retrieve and collate information, making sure their learning is productive.

FRENCH

Although French is part of the school's curriculum it was not taught during the inspection.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved as a result of good teaching and pupils achieve well.
- Pupils have very good attitudes and enjoy problem-solving tasks.
- The subject is very well led.
- Assessment of pupils' work is good and the information used well.

Commentary

50. In recent years, attainment in mathematics has been below or well below average. New systems for improving teaching and learning, and to overcome the issues raised by high pupil mobility, have been put in place across the school, with positive results. Standards are now broadly average for both the seven-year-olds and the eleven-year-olds. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
51. By Year 2, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in developing their numerical skills, including multiplication. The good use of practical investigation and problem-solving aids pupils' understanding well. Planning is good and tasks are pitched at the right levels so pupils make good progress and they achieve well.
52. By Year 6, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic heritages, also achieve well as the result of good teaching. They show confidence when using mathematical vocabulary and this, together with their confidence to apply mathematical learning to different everyday situations, is a strength of the school's practical approach in mathematics. Higher-achieving pupils have a very good level of competence in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, and apply this knowledge effectively to solving problems or exploring numbers. Pupils are in ability groups in Years 3 to 6. Teaching is very focused on successfully boosting standards.
53. The quality of teaching and learning is good. In Years 1 and 2, well-planned activities interest pupils and the effective use of time ensures successful learning. A strong feature seen in all teaching is the insistence on good behaviour. Pupils respond well, show very good attitudes and complete increasing amounts of accurate work. Relationships are positive. Pupils behave very well and this aids learning. In an

excellent lesson with older pupils, the teacher made learning fun because of the challenge provided. The pupils became fascinated with the probability scale and enjoyed showing how likely an event was. There was excellent consolidation of pupils' learning at the end of the lesson through questioning and sharing the questions the pupils had written. Pupils confidently recorded on the probability scale and interpreted data from it.

54. The subject leader is having a positive impact on the subject and leads it very well. Monitoring of planning and pupils' work is giving a clear picture of strengths and weaknesses. Teaching, planning and learning are monitored well. Assessment is well organised and the information used well to assess pupils' strengths and weaknesses. Marking is detailed and includes helpful comments to enable pupils to understand what they have done well and areas indicated that need more attention. Improvement since the previous inspection is good, with improved planning, setting for mathematics in the junior phase and the increased attention given to problem-solving all having a positive impact on standards.

Mathematics across the curriculum

55. Good use is made of pupils' numeracy skills in other subjects. In science, pupils measure and record data from their investigations, and present the results in suitable graphs. In ICT, good use is made of spreadsheets and graphs. In art and design, ICT has been used well to explore patterns in Year 6. ICT is also used well to support learning in mathematics lessons. This helps reinforce their understanding of mathematical concepts by using them in practical and relevant ways.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils often show above average standards in the scientific enquiry aspects of their work.
- Good teaching ensures that the pupils achieve well.
- There is a very good emphasis placed on helping pupils to learn through practical investigations.
- Teachers plan lessons very well to ensure that work matches precisely with the needs of all attainment groups.
- ICT supports learning well.

Commentary

56. Pupils achieve well and by Years 2 and 6, most reach overall average standards. This is an improvement on the test results (2004) where standards were well below average at the end of Year 6 and teacher assessment indicated that most pupils achieved a satisfactory standard by the end of Year 2. However, because of the very strong emphasis the school places upon ensuring that pupils learning through practical exploration wherever possible, their skills of scientific enquiry are often above average.
57. Throughout the school, teachers provide a very wide range of very good practical investigations that very effectively enrich the science curriculum. For example, Year 3 pupils use lots of different sorts of equipment such as syringes and tubes in an exploration of how you can 'squeeze air', whilst Year 6 pupils design, set up and carry out a wide range of

different investigations to show the effects of forces on speed. As a result of all the practical work that they do, pupils develop a good understanding of concepts such as the principle of fair testing. They also become confident with recording their results and, by Year 6, most pupils are good at predicting outcomes of testing and drawing conclusions based on their scientific understanding. Across the school, pupils make very good use of ICT to research, investigate and record their ideas in text, tables and graphs. For example, Year 6 pupils explored an Internet site that showed them the variation of car crash impact with different speed.

58. Because teachers prepare very interesting practical sessions for them, pupils enjoy science and work enthusiastically. They also collaborate very well with one another, as was noted in a Year 5 lessons during which pupils consulted carefully with one another to decide the best methods of moving forward with their investigations. A combination of looking at pupils' samples of work and lessons shows that the quality of teaching across the school is good. Teachers have confident subject knowledge and explain concepts very clearly to pupils. This generally results in lessons moving at a good pace because pupils have been given a clear understanding of what to do.

Example of outstanding practice

Getting Year 6 pupils intensively involved in setting up their own investigations

The teacher provided the pupils with an excellent range of opportunities to test the effect of forces on speed. Through ICT presentations and skilful questioning, she helped all individuals develop lots of ideas for setting up their own investigations. Her detailed planning and preparation meant that as the lesson progressed, pupils worked in an increasingly independent manner, realising the need to repeat their tests to get meaningful results. The classroom became very much a 'test laboratory' with all furniture cleared to one side and all groups working in a very motivated way to set up their investigations. The pupils were clearly very familiar with working in this way and this meant that they also worked at a rapid pace and in a confident manner.

59. One of the key features of the science teaching in all classes is the way in which teachers always ensure that activities are specifically geared to different attainment groups within their class. This holds good for pupils with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic heritages. As a result, all groups of pupils are fully challenged and their learning is good. Teachers also use a very good range of resources to very effectively boost pupils' learning. For example, very good use of the interactive whiteboard in a Year 3 lesson accelerated pupils' learning and helped them rapidly gain understanding of the concepts taught. Also in a Year 4 lesson, the use of a wide range of science artefacts and opportunities for pupils to study video clips on the laptop computers gave pupils a very detailed understanding about how different animals are adapted to live in a specific habitat.
60. The subject is well led and managed. Through monitoring planning and work, the science co-ordinator has a clear view of the quality of work across the school. Assessment information is used very well to help teachers plan future lessons. Whilst standards are broadly similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection, provision in science has been strengthened, particularly in terms of giving pupils the chance to develop their skills of scientific enquiry.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very effective use is made of ICT to support work in other subjects.
- Pupils show a confident approach to using ICT.
- The subject is very well led and managed.

Commentary

61. The wide range of opportunities provided for ICT work across the school help all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic heritages, to achieve and learn well in this subject. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils attain average standards by Years 2 and 6. However, the school's provision for ICT has strengthened since that time, with a wide range of resources now available and ICT regularly used to support all subjects. For example, Year 2 pupils researched facts about the Great Fire of London on the Internet, have used branching databases, edited stories they have written using ICT and have created graphs on the computers for mathematics and science work. The range and breadth of ICT usage is even greater for older pupils. Year 6 pupils use computers to plan, design and construct programmes of work, successfully demonstrating how to use the resources in physical education. They are adept at using control programs to make geometric designs and they make very effective multimedia presentations of history work. ICT is used extensively to present stories, poems and written accounts in an attractive and interesting way. In a large proportion of the lessons seen during the inspection, groups of pupils were seen making very effective use of the school's laptop computers to enhance their learning.
62. Overall, most pupils across the school show average knowledge skills and understanding with ICT, but they possess a broad range of knowledge at this level and this ensures they work with plenty of confidence. As a result, ICT is seen by the pupils as being a very important tool to help them to improve their work and they work with motivation and enthusiasm when using the facilities.
63. Although no direct teaching of ICT skills was observed, the samples of work scrutinised, conversations with the pupils and their confident use of the equipment strongly indicate that they have been well taught. Also, the adept usage of computer projectors and the interactive whiteboard in one classroom and discussions with the subject co-ordinator indicate that the teachers generally possess confident skills and have a good understanding of how best to use ICT. This is also backed up by the clear and detailed manner in which ICT is included within all of the lesson planning.
64. The subject is very well led and managed. The co-ordinator shows very good subject knowledge and a clear vision of how the subject should develop. She has ensured that the best use is made of available resources and that all staff, including the teaching assistants, are trained to the requisite level. A good quality action plan has been constructed to show the way forward. Good systems are in place to assess pupils' attainment and progress on a regular basis and clear procedures are established to monitor the quality of work across the school.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

65. As mentioned above, ICT is used very effectively in all subject areas. For example, older pupils use sensor equipment to monitor sound, light and temperature in connection with science projects. Across the school, pupils make extensive use of ICT for research and to present their work in interesting and attractive ways.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is covered well and there are very good links with other subjects.
- Christianity through the arts has a strong focus that is enjoyed by pupils.
- Pupils' achievement is good in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2.

Commentary

66. Standards are broadly average across the school and in line with those expected in the locally-agreed syllabus for religious education, as they were at the last inspection. Pupils' achievement is good overall and this includes those pupils with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic heritages. Discussions with pupils indicate that achievement is better than this in Year 6, where most pupils are achieving very well.
67. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. It is stronger in Years 3 to 6 where teaching is good. Lessons are well planned and are pitched at the right levels so that learning is productive. This is because the school has very good systems for assessing how well pupils are doing and this information is used well to plan the next stages in learning.
68. The whole-school approach to planning the curriculum means there are no gaps in the school's provision. The recent revisions to the curriculum have sharpened its focus, enabling religious education to fit into the school's thematic approach to learning very well. There are very good links with other subjects such as geography, music, dance and the creative arts and this gives the pupils a good understanding of Christian beliefs and how they contribute to the wider world.
69. The curriculum is enriched successfully through the use of visitors to school and visits to places of religious significance. The Year 5 visit to Lichfield Cathedral enables pupils to study a range of religious festivals, extending their understanding of the importance of these in the church calendar. Year 6 are involved in a project on *Christianity through the Arts*. As part of this project, pupils visit the local church of St George, working with a dance group who are involved in innovative work linking dance to worship, all of which enhance pupils' understanding of worship. Other world religions such as Judaism and Islam are studied alongside Christianity, successfully broadening pupils' own knowledge of the traditions and customs of other faiths.
70. The subject is led and managed very well by the deputy headteacher who is covering this role on a temporary basis. A close check is kept on standards, progress and achievement and staff have very good support from senior staff that enables them to do a good job.

Geography and History

71. These subjects were sampled during the inspection. Two lessons were observed in geography and samples of work were scrutinised in both history and geography. However, this does not constitute sufficient evidence to make judgements about the quality of provision or standards in these subjects.

72. Discussions with subject leaders, and a scrutiny of work and planning, show that both curricula are well covered. Work samples and a scrutiny of displays on classroom walls also show that pupils are given a range of projects, which capture their interest and excitement as well as providing opportunities for pupils to practise their learning skills in many ways.
73. Pupils' research skills are developed well in history as older pupils research the reasons for the welfare state. In geography, pupils carried out follow-up activities to a field trip they had made to look at a river. The work moved rapidly in the lesson and showed pupils had acquired an in-depth knowledge of features of a river such as 'meanders' and 'ox-bow lakes'. Other pupils used their local knowledge well to draw maps, using a range of evidence to gain an accurate understanding about how changes had occurred in the geographical features of Newcastle. In both subjects, pupils make the best use of ICT to extend their understanding and to improve their achievement successfully.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

74. This subject was sampled during the inspection. It is evident from teachers' planning, displays and discussions with pupils that work planned in art and design is both varied and interesting. This is an improvement on the last inspection. Standards are broadly average by Year 2 and above average by Year 6. Achievement is good for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic heritages.
75. The good curriculum for art and design is broad, balanced and relevant to topics studied. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils have created good quality block prints suitable to be used on Asian garments. Good cross-curricular links are made to history and geography and effective use is made of trips and visits. Year 1 pupils enjoyed completing pastel drawings of an old teddy, following a visit to Brompton Museum. Good use is also made of ICT to support learning. For example, Reception pupils used their skills effectively to create ICT pictures of animals after a visit to a farm. In science, they explained how they used their skills to create observational drawings of cress seeds.
76. Displays are bright and colourful around the school and the subject makes an effective contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Junior phase pupils have enjoyed stitching textiles and using watercolour to create scenes and moods during air raids in World War II. In Year 5, effective use was made of sketchbooks to develop pupils' skills, before creating collages of water and pattern and textiles in roof patterns. Good links are made to geography in the *Rivers* topic. Pupils thoroughly enjoy clay work, fabric printing and three-dimensional art and this encourages them to want to achieve well.

Design and technology

77. This subject was sampled during the inspection. Discussion with pupils and examination of displays and photographic evidence showed that they are gaining good experience of a range of materials and techniques. Standards are average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils' skills are developed successfully as they design and make a variety of products such as puppets in Years 1 and 2 and moving monsters in Year 3. Year 5 pupils have combined these skills to design and make helmets and to create machines to lift water out of a river. Year 6 pupils have created fairground rides, windmills, rockets and World War II Spitfires.
78. Teachers successfully capture pupils' interest and imagination. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic heritages, achieve well. This is due

to well-planned lessons and good development of their designing and making skills. The pupils enjoy the challenges presented by their teachers and it is clear that pupils are used to evaluating their own work and that of their classmates. Very good teaching was seen in a Year 4 lesson. Pupils demonstrated good designing skills as they created their own design for photo frames. They then collaborated very well with their partners to praise and evaluate each other's work.

79. There is good leadership and management of art and design and design and technology. Staff have clear priorities for future improvement and are working hard and successfully to implement these.

MUSIC

80. This subject was sampled in the inspection. Pupils were heard singing very enthusiastically in assembly. They sang *King of Kings* tunefully, with full awareness of breathing, diction and dynamics. The standard of singing is good throughout the school. The quality of the curriculum is very good overall. The subject makes a very effective contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The music scheme enables all teachers to be confident in teaching the subject, which is an improvement on the previous inspection.
81. In a group music session, pupils were developing a good sense of performance as they practised their compositions about *Fire*. There was good pace to the teaching and high expectations of behaviour, all of which contributed to good achievement. Concerts and performances contribute well to pupils' overall musical experience. Pupils have the opportunity to learn the recorder, and enjoy performing for others. The choir is a popular extra-curricular activity and the quality of singing in two parts is good.
82. Standards are in line with expectations by Year 2 and Year 6. There are good cross-curricular links which add an extra dimension to music. Pupils achieve well in their singing due to the very good efforts of the subject leader, who is providing good clear educational direction for the subject. There are good assessment procedures in place and good use is made of assessment to inform planning.

Physical education

83. This subject was sampled during the inspection. Pupils enjoy their physical education, which takes place in the small hall or outside on the small playgrounds. The school has no field and this curtails sporting activities if the weather is unsuitable. The school successfully works around this by using some of the facilities at the local secondary school, providing a full curriculum and many opportunities for all pupils to take part in a good range of sporting activities.
84. All areas are well covered in teachers' plans, with extra out-of-school activities and clubs soundly extending the basic provision for physical education that the school provides. Swimming is taught throughout the school and all pupils are able to swim by Year 6. Outdoor and adventurous activities take place during residential visits and everyone has the opportunity to participate. No one is left out. Pupils with special educational needs and those from ethnic minority backgrounds are fully included in teachers' planning and they participate fully in lessons.

85. The subject is led and managed well. Pupils' progress and achievement is assessed and tracked effectively, enabling staff to accurately plan the next stages in learning for their pupils.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

86. This subject was sampled during the inspection. Personal, social and health education has a key role and a high profile in day-to-day school life. Healthy eating and taking care of oneself are pivotal to the success of health education and pupils are well aware of the importance of a healthy diet and lifestyle.
87. Pupils and their parents are consulted on a range of issues and their contributions are valued and acted upon, making sure that everyone plays a full role as part of the school community. The school council provides pupils with many opportunities to participate in decision-making, helping them to be aware of what is involved in living in a democratic society like our own.
88. Pupils' personal development is very good. From the start of their school career, pupils are encouraged to take personal responsibility for their work and actions. This responsibility is extended very well as pupils move up through the school. Older pupils take care of younger pupils and fair play is greatly valued as is a strong moral code. Pupils are keen to celebrate success – both their own and the success of their friends and classmates. There is a general respect for the beliefs and feelings of others, which contributes to the friendly atmosphere in school. The very good cross-curricular approaches to learning successfully reinforce aspects of a healthy lifestyle and its impact on pupils' life and work.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
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	3

Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4

The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

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