

INSPECTION REPORT

STANNINGTON FIRST SCHOOL

Stannington

LEA area: Northumberland

Unique reference number: 122228

Headteacher: Mrs C Ramm

Lead inspector: Mr G R Alston

Dates of inspection: 20th - 22nd June 2005

Inspection number: 267981

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	59
School address:	Church Road Stannington Northumberland
Postcode:	NE61 6HJ
Telephone number:	(01670) 789 276
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs P Fennell
Date of previous inspection:	July 2003

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Stannington First caters for pupils between the ages of four and nine. It has one site and lies in the heart of Stannington, a small rural village community, ten miles north of Newcastle. The school is smaller than average, with 59 pupils on roll, 35 boys and 24 girls, of whom 17 are in the Reception Year. Children arrive at school with the full range of ability levels but overall standards on entry to the Reception Year are slightly below average. Pupils are organised into three classes; a Reception class, one infant and one junior class. Housing locally is mainly owner-occupied semi-detached and detached property. It is an area of average mobility. Almost all of the pupils are white and there are none from minority ethnic backgrounds. No pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English as an additional language. A below average percentage of pupils have free school meals, although a number of families who are entitled do not take up the offer. Fifteen per cent of pupils are on the register of special educational needs; the majority have either moderate learning or behavioural difficulties and one has a Statement of Special Educational Needs. These figures are about average. In 2005, the school gained an Investors in People award. The headteacher took up her post in January 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20794	G Alston	Lead inspector	Mathematics Science Art and design Design and technology Information and communication technology Geography Special educational needs
13462	Mrs R Mothersdale	Lay inspector	
17763	Mrs J Foster	Team inspector	English History Music Physical education Religious education Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school that is improving. It benefits from good leadership, sound management and the strong support of governors, parents and pupils. Over time, pupils achieve well because of good teaching. Standards are above average by the time the pupils leave at the age of nine. Pupils' personal development is strong due to the good provision the school makes. The school no longer has any serious weaknesses and gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- In the 2004 national tests for seven year olds, standards were well above average in reading and mathematics.
- In mathematics, pupils' mental skills are not as sharp as they should be for their ability.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good leading to good pupil achievement, including those with special educational needs.
- The headteacher provides good leadership and, with the strong support of governors and staff, sound management.
- Effective provision for pupils' personal development leads to very good attitudes, relationships and behaviour; pupils are well cared for.
- The school has a sound curriculum but opportunities to extend pupils' writing skills across all subjects are not sufficiently well planned or focused upon in lessons in the infant class.
- There is no secure outdoor play area for Reception children to use in lesson time.
- Links with parents and the community are very good.
- Pupils do not always know what they have to do improve in order to raise the standard of their work.

There has been a good improvement since the last inspection in 2003. The school has maintained the strengths identified in the last report and improved the areas identified as weaknesses, so that now:

- The quality of teaching has improved in Years 3/4 resulting in pupils making good progress.
- There is good leadership by the headteacher with sound management systems developing.
- Satisfactory systems are in place to check on and record pupils' learning and the procedures for Child Protection and Performance Management are satisfactory.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2003
reading	A	B	A	B
writing	A	A	D	E
mathematics	A	C	A	A

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

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

Pupils' achievement is good. The results of national tests, which show a fluctuating picture over the past three years, should be treated with caution because of the small numbers of pupils in Year 2 each year. Good achievement in the Foundation Stage ensures that by the time they enter Year 1, nearly all children reach the expected level in all areas of learning, with significant numbers exceeding them in personal, social and emotional, mathematical and creative development. They continue to achieve well and in the current Year 2 standards are above average in reading, mathematics and science and average in writing. Standards in Year 4 are above the expected level

for pupils of this age in English, mathematics and science. Standards in Year 2 and Year 4 are above national expectations in information and communication technology (ICT) and at the level expected by the Locally Agreed syllabus in religious education. Standards achieved in mental mathematics across the school, and in writing in Years 1 and 2 are not as high as they should be.

Pupils with special educational needs and higher-attaining pupils make good progress. There is little difference in the performance of girls and boys. The targets set by the school in national tests are sufficiently challenging.

Overall, pupils' personal development is good. Provision for pupils' moral, social, spiritual and cultural development is good overall but opportunities for pupils to develop their awareness of modern multi-cultural society are few. Particular strengths are the very good attitudes and caring relationships and good behaviour that are fostered. Pupils like school and attendance levels are above average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Overall, the quality of education is good. The quality of teaching is good. About one fifth of the lessons seen were very good, a further half were good and the rest satisfactory. In the very good teaching, subject knowledge is used very well, planning is highly effective and the diverse needs of the children are met successfully. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good with good support from teachers and teaching assistants. Overall, the curriculum is satisfactory and is enriched by a wide range of activities both in and outside of school hours. All pupils benefit equally from what the school has to offer. However, there are not enough opportunities for Year 1 and 2 pupils to write at length in all subjects. Pupils receive good support and guidance and the steps taken to ensure their care, welfare, health and safety are effective. A particular strength is the development of very good and trusting relationships with adults. Links with parents and the community are very good and sound links have been established with other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides good leadership and has a clearly articulated vision for the school that embraces strong academic and caring values. Sound management systems are developing but there is not always a strong enough focus on monitoring and evaluating the impact of new developments. The headteacher has very strong support from all staff, who are beginning to develop successfully in their management role and show initiative. The work of the governing body is good. Governors are supportive, inquisitive and are beginning to check closely on the work of the school. They ensure compliance with all statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils have very positive views of the school. Parents are very pleased with the progress their children are making, the quality of teaching, the caring atmosphere and teachers' expectation of hard work. The pupils enjoy school very much, like their teachers a lot and feel that their lessons are always very interesting with plenty of exciting things to do. Pupils say they do not always know what they should be aiming at in their work or what they need to do to improve.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise pupils' skills and confidence in mental mathematics.
- Revise current procedures for making pupils aware of how they can improve.
- Continue to improve, refine and develop current management systems, especially monitoring and evaluating new initiatives aimed at raising standards.
- Provide a secure area for outdoor play for Reception children.
- In Years 1 and 2 increase opportunities for pupils to write at length in all subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement overall is good. It is good in reading, mathematics and science. Standards in reading, mathematics and science are above average and average in writing in Year 2. In Year 4 standards in English, mathematics and science are above the expected level for pupils of this age. Pupils attain standards in ICT that are above expectations in Year 2 and Year 4.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children get a good start in the Foundation Stage and make good progress in all areas of their learning.
- In Years 1 to 4, pupils continue to achieve well.
- There are limited opportunities for Year 1 and 2 pupils to use their writing skills in all subjects.
- Standards in mental mathematics across the school are not high enough.

Commentary

1. The results of national tests are not reliable indicators of how well the school is performing or pupils achieving due to such small numbers of pupils in the Year 2 cohort. National test results in 2004 show standards in Year 2 were well above the national average in reading and in mathematics but below in writing. When compared to results in similar schools a similar picture emerges. The figures indicate a significant fall in writing. Proportions of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 were well below average in writing. Over the last three years, results in reading, writing and mathematics have varied. This reflects the ability of the groups of pupils taking the tests. The fall in results in writing spurred the school to introduce new initiatives aimed at raising standards. This has proved successful, but less so in Years 1 and 2. The school does well in meeting the targets it is set by the local authority.
2. When children started school in the Reception class this year, test data shows that their knowledge, skills and understanding were very variable and overall were below average. They get a good start in the Foundation Stage class that helps them to achieve well. As a result, by the time they reach Year 1 the attainment of the vast majority is likely to reach the goals in all areas of learning, with significant numbers exceeding them in personal, social and emotional, mathematical and creative development.
3. In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve well because of the good provision. This includes pupils with special educational needs who are especially well supported by teaching assistants. Higher-attaining pupils also do well and respond well to challenges they are set. This has led to standards that are above average in English, mathematics, science and ICT. However, writing standards are average and pupils are not confident in mental arithmetic or skilled in the quick recall of multiplication facts. Pupils achieve at the level expected by the locally agreed syllabus in religious education. A knowledgeable teacher monitors the progress of both Years 1 and 2 well; ensuring there is continuity in practice and a good quality is maintained. The good achievement is also linked to good teaching. Well-planned lessons with interesting tasks that take account of pupils of all abilities are a strength. The good relationships between staff and pupils make pupils feel valued and cared for. As a result, they try very hard with all the tasks they are set and show great interest in all activities. This has helped pupils to achieve well.
4. Pupil achievement is good in Years 3 and 4. This is closely linked to the monitoring and evaluation of individual pupils and effective teaching that is present in all lessons. Lessons are well organised, ensuring that all pupils are suitably challenged, including those with special educational needs, lower and higher-attaining pupils. Pupils receive regular, good quality

teaching from an enthusiastic teacher. Their lessons are made interesting and lively, and build well on past learning. The pupils respond with great enthusiasm, concentrate well on tasks and produce lots of work of good quality reflecting their ability. Humour is used well to develop warm relationships that create an effective working environment. This has led to standards that are above average in English, mathematics, science and ICT. As in infant classes, pupils are not confident in mental arithmetic or skilled in the quick recall of multiplication facts. Pupils achieve at the level expected by the locally agreed syllabus in religious education.

5. The satisfactory curriculum impacts positively on pupils' achievement. The school is beginning to consider ways to link subjects to create interesting topics. Pupils apply their reading skills appropriately in other areas of the curriculum. The skills of handwriting, spelling and punctuation are taught appropriately in literacy lessons, but pupils do not always apply these skills to their written work. Good use is made of pupils' writing skills in all subjects in Years 3 and 4. Achievement in writing in Years 1 and 2 is affected negatively because there is not a sufficiently strong focus on using and further developing pupils' writing in all subjects. Most aspects of basic mathematical skills are taught well and these skills are further developed in other subjects. Good use is made of ICT to support learning in other subjects.
6. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well. Class teachers assess their needs and progress, and discuss them with the co-ordinator for special educational needs, and draw up and monitor individual educational plans. This close co-operation and frequent reviews of their targets contribute significantly to the good progress made by these pupils. The school's strategies for assessing and identifying targeted support are beginning to have an impact on the progress pupils make towards their targets. Teaching assistants provide strong support and other pupils are always happy to help. Gifted and talented pupils' needs are met through the challenging tasks that are provided in lessons and the good opportunities which they and other pupils have to take part in out-of-school clubs, particularly in sport and music. Throughout the school, girls and boys perform similarly. Higher-attaining boys and girls do equally well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes are very good and their behaviour is good. Pupils' personal development, which includes the opportunities they have for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good overall, although multicultural awareness is underdeveloped. Pupils attendance is very good and punctuality satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attendance is well above that of other schools.
- Good systems and procedures are in place to ensure that bullying cannot flourish and good standards of behaviour are promoted.
- Pupils' interest and enthusiasm for learning and taking part in school activities, especially after school clubs, contribute to their confidence and sense of self-esteem.
- Opportunities for pupils' personal development are well embedded in the school but there are few chances for pupils to develop their awareness of modern multi-cultural society.

Commentary

Attendance

7. Attendance and punctuality have improved since the previous inspection and, in the last reported year, attendance was well above that of similar schools. Unauthorised absence was just below the national average. However, attendance has improved even more over the current school year and there are now no unauthorised absences. The school is conscientious in following up reasons for absence and encourages families not to take holidays in term time.

Punctuality is satisfactory. A few families still bring pupils into school just after the registers have been taken and disrupt the start of the first lesson.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.3	School data	0.3
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.

8. The school's code of conduct is well known to pupils and consistently applied by staff. Bullying and any form of harassment are not tolerated, as this was previously an area that gave some concern to parents and pupils. The school places a priority on promoting an ethos that encourages responsibility for others and caring for each other. The introduction of Buddys in the playground and a Buddy bench to go to when feeling lonely or troubled has been well received by pupils. All the staff, including lunchtime supervisors, follow procedures advocated by the Local Authority's behaviour support team. Pupils spoken to commented on individual acts that could be considered as bullying, but they are not worried about any aspects of this as they are confident that school would deal with any issues immediately and properly. As a result, behaviour is good, although lessons and assemblies are prone to minor disruption, especially when support for a teacher is not there.
9. Pupils are all very proud of their school and particularly like being in a small school with a compact community. In lessons they are keen to share ideas, respond to questioning and contribute with ideas. For example, when discussing insects prior to a minibeasts hunt, one pupil in Reception was very keen to explain the difference between an insect and an arachnid; to the last leg and detail of thorax. Pupils persevere well with tasks and are not easily distracted when they find the subject matter challenging. For example, a group of Year 4 pupils working out a mathematical problem connected to logical analysis, Su Doku, were focused intently on their task despite a whiteboard exposition going on in the same room to another group of pupils. Pupils also work well independently, and are responsible when working with new technology such as the whiteboard and computers, and confident to access these resources without support. They are keen to help and take on areas of responsibility, for example offering their help to the school cook on a break time. They help willingly around the classroom, for example caring for Bubble and Squeak, the gerbils, and they stay after school to take part in a range of extra-curricular activities such as karate and kids get fit. Virtually every boy in the school of an age appropriate to join an after school club attends the football practice for the school team. Girls are just as enthusiastic about football and are planning their own team. As a result, their social development is good. There have been no exclusions in the year prior to the inspection or during the current year.
10. Spiritual opportunities are celebrated in lessons. By challenging Year 3 and 4 pupils to think, for example, about the deeper meanings of myths in literature, after reading a particular myth a pupil's reply that 'Love is strong, but Evil can get round it' demonstrated an awareness of discovering the true nature of a character from their actions. Through religious education pupils are taught the key principles and celebrations that support the Christian faith and some of the other major world faiths. There is regular emphasis on good moral values, as seen and experienced in the everyday classroom setting and also during acts of worship. The siting of the school, which is opposite the village church, consolidates aspects of spirituality on a daily basis. The school makes satisfactory efforts to introduce pupils to a wide range of cultures and faiths. Pupils have visited a temple in Newcastle. Religious education lessons offer pupils a satisfactory opportunity to study comparative faiths, but the school does not focus enough in bringing awareness to pupils of the rich diversity of ethnicity outside their immediate community.
11. Time has been set aside for the Reception teacher and the manager of the adjoining nursery to plan a secure transition of children from nursery provision to full time education. Pupils who

do not attend the nursery prior to induction, may visit and get to know staff and familiarise themselves with the school before their admission. Parents are especially supportive about these procedures and consider that induction is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education. Strengths include the good care shown to pupils and the consistently good teaching pupils receive. A wide range of interesting visits and visitors enrich class projects, helping to bring the curriculum alive for the pupils. There are very good links with parents and with the community and sound links to other schools that are also of benefit to pupils. Overall, staff make best use of the good accommodation and resources to fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** and the needs of all pupils are well met. In the lessons seen, the teaching was at least satisfactory, the majority was good and about a fifth was either very good or better. As a result, pupils achieve well throughout the school. What pupils know, understand and can do is checked carefully in all subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good.
- In Year 1 and 2 pupils' writing skills are not extended across all subjects.
- Pupils with special educational needs are taught well.
- Although class and individual targets are set they are of little value.
- The teaching of mental skills in mathematics is not effective in helping pupils respond confidently and speedily to working things out in their heads.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 15 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	3	8	4	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

12. Across the school, the quality of teaching has been raised since the previous inspection. This is especially true in the junior class where it has risen from unsatisfactory to good. The main reasons for this improvement are:

- An improved approach to planning work.
- Two new members of staff who have brought fresh ideas and good teaching skills.
- Better understanding of subjects by teachers because of well-focused training opportunities.
- Sound procedures and practices for judging pupils' levels of attainment. This has led to more informed teaching that caters for all pupils, including higher-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs.

As a result, the pupils' standards are rising and pupils are achieving more.

13. Across the school, teaching is effective because the teachers:

- Have great enthusiasm and keenness to engage pupils in worthwhile, challenging and well matched activities.
- Have good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach.
- Plan well for lessons, groups of lessons and for the overall programme.

- Enjoy very good relationships and expect a lot of the pupils.

In return, pupils are highly motivated learners who enjoy their lessons and seek to complete the tasks they are set with great enthusiasm. Pupils produce a lot of work, reflecting their capabilities, and their books show progression and improvement over time. Both parents and pupils consider that the school stretches the youngsters and they are pleased about this.

14. Further improvement is needed where the teaching fails to make good use of the skills that pupils have been taught because not enough use is made of Year 1 and 2 pupils' writing skills across all subjects. Similarly, some skills are not taught effectively, for example in the mental/oral starter to lessons in mathematics, questions are too narrowly focused. Teachers fail to allow pupils to explain their strategies and questions are not always well matched to the pupils' learning needs. At times, little use is made of whiteboards to ensure all pupils are fully involved or for teachers to check on their learning. As a result, pupils are not confident or as competent as they should be in answering mental mathematical questions.
15. Pupils with special educational needs learn well and their achievement is good by the end of Year 4. Several factors have a particular impact on their learning:
 - Targets on individual plans for their learning are precise.
 - Tasks are planned that cover the same type of work as the rest of the class but are tailored to their special needs and specific targets.
 - Teachers and teaching assistants give good support during lessons.
 - Gifted and talented pupils' needs are met through the challenging tasks that are provided in lessons and the good opportunities which they and other pupils have to take part in out-of-school clubs, particularly in sport and music.
16. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and have improved since the last inspection, when they were an area for improvement. In English and mathematics, teachers assess their pupils effectively in all activities, based on the lesson objective, to highlight any areas of strength or difficulty. This information is then used carefully to plan work to meet the pupils' needs. Pupils are formally tested in English and mathematics each year. This information is also used as a means of checking their learning. Tracking systems are in place and show the progress that pupils are making towards the targets they have been set and whether this is good enough. These targets are reviewed to identify pupils who are not doing as well as they should. Reasons why these pupils are underachieving and ways forward for them are then discussed. This ensures that they all achieve as they should. This sound practice is also in evidence in other subjects and helps staff plan lessons that build well on past learning. Although class and individual improvement targets are set in English and mathematics they are of little value. They are often too technical for pupils to understand for example, 'make sure narrative shows that ideas are sustained' and many pupils do not know what their improvement targets are. Not all staff consistently give pupils good verbal feedback on their work and the marking of work is not always helpful. It does not give pupils a clear picture of whether they have learnt what was intended.

The curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is **satisfactory**. A good range of extra-curricular activities and visiting artists, writers and actors enrich the curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good provision for the youngest children although there are weaknesses in the planned use and organisation of outdoor facilities.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Cross-curricular links are incidental and not sufficiently well planned.

- Opportunities for enrichment are good and support for learning outside the school day is very good.
- Accommodation and learning resources are good.
- There are not enough opportunities for infant pupils to use skills learned in English in other areas of the curriculum.

Commentary

17. The school curriculum is sufficiently broad to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education is in line with locally agreed syllabus. The school's commitment to ensuring equality of access and opportunity for all its pupils is achieved by good support from teachers and teaching assistants in lessons. The planning cycle is currently being developed. When completed it will further ensure that the needs of different age groups are met and that pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are systematically developed. All pupils on the special educational needs register have individual action plans highlighting their individual needs, which are regularly reviewed. They have full access to the same curriculum as their peers. The school provides a good range of after-school and lunch activities; this shows improvement since the last inspection where this area was judged to be unsatisfactory. Pupils' experiences are extended by the cultural visits organised. Poets, artists and actors are used well by the school to support the interesting activities that enrich the curriculum. Pupils are well motivated by such organised events, which in turn enhances their achievement. Visits and visitors help pupils make good use of their learning and successfully build on what they already know.
18. The quality and range of purposeful learning opportunities for the youngest children are good and make a significant contribution to the good progress all children make towards the early learning goals. Careful attention is paid to providing well-structured activities for the children in communication, language and literacy. However, the planned use and organisation of the outdoor facilities, restricts the opportunities for vigorous play and limits the development of physical skills and also the skills related to knowledge and understanding of the world.
19. The school is successfully implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies alongside its own procedures. However, in Key Stage 1, opportunities to practise purposefully the skills and knowledge learned in English in other areas of the curriculum are often overlooked.
20. There are sufficient teachers and support staff, who are suitably qualified and deployed to teach the curriculum effectively. The school has recently been successfully refurbished. The accommodation and learning resources to cover all aspects of the curriculum are good. However, there is no secure outdoor play area for Reception children.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils is good. The school provides pupils with satisfactory support, advice and guidance and there is satisfactory and improving provision to involve them and listen to their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Health and safety procedures are well organised and child protection training for staff is up to date.
- The school makes good arrangements for the physical, emotional and behavioural needs of pupils but has few formal arrangements for listening to their views.
- Induction arrangements are well organised.

Commentary

21. Health and safety procedures although the ultimate responsibility of the headteacher have been recently audited by the Governors, who are now taking action to keep up to date over a range of health and safety issues. Assessments of risks, for example for out of school visits, and day-to-day procedures are well organised. Child protection procedures are designated to a trained and named person and follow the specified child protection guidelines. All staff have attended recent training on how to respond to child protection issues and first aid matters. The school encourages a healthy lifestyle by providing healthy meals for pupils and is devoting a whole week to promoting healthy eating in school. To this end, parents are asked not to send their children to school with sweets and chocolates, and fresh fruit is provided on a daily basis. Parents are also frequently reminded of the dangers to children when they park on the road or pavement directly outside of the school rather than using the car park near the church and walking their children a short distance to school. Unfortunately, many parents choose to disregard this request and so put others at risk in order not to inconvenience themselves.
22. Time has been set aside for the Reception teacher and the manager of the adjoining Nursery to plan a secure transition of children from nursery provision to full time education. Pupils who do not attend the nursery prior to induction, may visit and get to know staff and familiarise themselves with the school before their admission. Parents are especially supportive about these procedures and consider that induction is good.
23. The attention given to including all pupils in all that the school offers is good, particularly through the monitoring of pupils with special educational needs. Procedures for assessing, monitoring and recording pupils' personal and academic development are satisfactory but targets set for groups detract from individual personal, social health and citizenship assessment and pupils are not always clear about what they have to do to improve. However, pupils are well known to staff and teachers are aware of pupils' personal situations and pupils said they feel comfortable to talk to an adult they trust, for example over lunchtime. Plans are in place to create a school council in September 2005. The school hopes that this will give pupils an opportunity to make a contribution to the running of the school.
24. The school's efforts to create a healthy and safe environment for all its pupils ensure parents are happy about the care given to their children and they said that they feel all children are treated fairly.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has very good links with parents and with the community. Satisfactory links exist with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- School is very well regarded by parents.
- It is in regular contact and consultation with them for their views.
- There is a good range of information for parents that they regard as useful.
- Very close links to the local community help pupils' personal and social development.
- There is a close working partnership with the Nursery and childcare provision next door and this helps pupils during their induction stage.
- The school is aware of what it has to do to improve links to other schools in the area.

Commentary

25. Parents are in school on a daily basis helping, fund raising, seeking advice, having a chat or, as on one occasion after school, selling school uniforms. They can also come into school once a term and spend time observing lessons, or even take part in them. Parents receive good quality information through newsletters, the website, and directly from the teachers. The

active parent teacher association has contributed to the provision of whiteboards and other equipment in the school and is currently engaged in improving play activities by improving the adventure playground. Annual written reports to parents have been general and impersonal, offering no targeted advice on how a pupil could improve their work and generally reporting on areas covered by the whole class and not what each pupil knows, understands and can do. A new format is planned for the current year. Parent and volunteer helpers are well represented in the school and parents receive regular questionnaires, for example most recently on school lunches. As a result of these measures, most parents feel very comfortable in the school and judge that they are kept well informed about their children's progress.

26. The school is very outward looking in its links with the community. Local residents from the village are invited into school to share lunch with pupils, the school website celebrates the school's role in village life and fund raising activities organised by the PTA are enjoyed by the whole community. A group of volunteers from the village has created a collection of Story Sacks to support all aspects of the curriculum but especially literacy. The school has participated in tree planting activities in the area, set up squirrel boxes to support local red squirrel populations and nurtures the concept of the school as a community resource. Pupils are given every opportunity to know the area they live in, for example visiting local beaches and the immediate community surrounding their own school, which is rich in history. This supports pupils' social development and enables them to explore their local traditions and culture, such as the history of St Bede.
27. The school has created a satisfactory range of partnerships with other schools. It has identified a need to link up with other first schools and is already implementing this through opportunities for pupils to play football matches and participate in cricket coaching with pupils from other schools. Links between the Reception class and the next door Nursery provision are being consolidated through a Sure Start training scheme and planned playtime opportunities and shared lunchtimes. This supports pupils' induction into the Reception class. To assist the transfer of pupils from first to middle school education, pupils share a joint literacy project with other feeder schools. Parents are very supportive of the school's efforts in these areas as they recognise the importance of establishing good social links for their children in a rural area.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is **good**. This represents good improvement since the last inspection when leadership and management were judged to be unsatisfactory. The leadership provided by the headteacher is good and key staff provide sound leadership. The management of the school is satisfactory. The governance of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors are involved well in the school's work and have good understanding of its strengths and potential for development.
- The headteacher has high aspirations but management structures are not sufficiently well developed in order to bring rigour to monitoring and evaluating new developments.
- The management of the Foundation Stage is good.
- Strategic planning does not identify financial costs.
- The administrator makes a significant contribution to the smooth running of the school.

Commentary

28. Since its previous inspection, the school has been through a period of considerable uncertainty with a number of both governor and staff changes, including a new headteacher. It has emerged strongly from these changes and is now moving forward. The headteacher leads the school effectively; she has high aspirations for the school and is committed to improvement. She is anxious for pupils to do well academically and to develop into confident

and responsible young people. She has a large teaching commitment and in such circumstances it is not always easy to develop a school systematically or bring about rapid change.

29. The good contribution that governors make to the leadership and management of the school is rooted in their close links with its day-to-day work. All governors are linked to a subject and this link gives them a good appreciation of the school's work, its strengths and areas for development. They make a good contribution to the implementation of the school improvement plan by identifying time scale and responsibilities.
30. Leadership and management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs are good. Teachers are well supported in both writing and reviewing individual education plans. The management of the Foundation Stage is good. The Reception class teacher has developed good systems, which ensure the unit runs smoothly.
31. The overall management of the school is satisfactory. The headteacher is developing systems to evaluate its performance and to plan systematically for future improvements. The school improvement plan is a useful working document, which focuses clearly on pupil achievement. There are good strategies in place for evaluating how well it is doing in order to plan for the future. However, when areas are identified and new initiatives are introduced, the monitoring and evaluation of the impact these are having is not rigorous enough. For example, writing has been a key area for improvement and although opportunities to write in all subjects was highlighted by staff this initiative is inconsistent between infant and junior classes. Lack of rigour in monitoring has resulted in this not being recognised. Similarly, although teaching in lessons has been monitored it has lacked precision and focus in terms of how teaching can be improved and hence limited impact on raising the quality of teaching.
32. Financial management is sound. However, the school improvement plan does not identify where or how much money should be allocated and this makes it difficult to prioritise, monitor or evaluate the use of financial resources. At this stage, management structures overall are not sufficiently developed to rigorously monitor and evaluate in order to gain a clear picture of the impact of spending.
33. Key staff are focused in their efforts to develop learning opportunities. They act as good role models through their own practice and through their enthusiastic promotion of curricular and extra-curricular activities that enhance the curriculum and raise pupil achievement. As a result of staff changes since the previous inspection, there has been little time to develop some co-ordinator roles, such as, evaluating the impact of new initiatives, and this makes it difficult for them to have significant influence on achievement in the subjects for which they are responsible.
34. The administrator is new to the school but already is establishing systems that support the school well in its day-to-day running. She is helpful and accommodating to staff, pupils and visitors and makes a significant contribution to the life of the school.
35. Parents appreciate the improvements that have been achieved. They feel the school is open and welcoming and that their views are taken into account. They now feel well informed and have greater confidence in the school's future.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	151,339
Total expenditure	134,662
Expenditure per pupil	2,161

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	8,799
Balance carried forward to the next year	16,677

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**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good, helping the children achieve well in all areas.
- The management and organisation of facilities and resources for learning outdoors are not as strong as for other activities.
- The curriculum is creative and stimulating.
- A very good range of visits and visitors enhances learning.

Commentary

36. The good quality in provision has been maintained since the last inspection. Overall, the quality of teaching is good in all areas of learning and this is having a positive impact on children's learning. The teacher has a good understanding of the curriculum and what children are expected to achieve. She interacts sensitively when working with small groups and individuals, managing the children well and providing a good balance of stimulating teacher-directed activities. This was seen in a very good session where a range of exciting art activities were undertaken. However, there was little evidence of child-chosen activities to enhance the development of independent skills.
37. Children enter school with varying skills but overall attainment on entry is slightly below average. The good links with the pre-school group on site means that there are good induction procedures, which help children to settle quickly into school. Achievement is good and all children make good progress during their time in the Reception class. By the time that they are ready to start in Year 1, most have attained the early learning goals in all areas of learning, with significant numbers exceeding them in personal, social and emotional, mathematical and creative development.
38. The curriculum is satisfactory overall, topic work is planned and written plans show appropriate emphasis given across all the nationally recommended areas of learning. The indoor accommodation is used well to support learning. However, there is no access to a dedicated outdoor play area to extend the learning environment. This restricts the opportunities for purposeful, vigorous play and has a limiting effect on physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. This is because it inhibits ready access to imaginative play areas and large-scale activities, such as investigating sand and water and large construction toys. The school attempts to mitigate these factors by making use of the playground for some physical activities and by using the grounds to study mini beasts. The management of the Foundation Stage is good and the teacher has developed good systems, which ensure the unit runs smoothly.
39. The school has only a small number of children in the Foundation Stage. Their work was sampled and so no overall judgement on provision can be given for each area of learning. A high priority is rightly placed on children's **personal, social and emotional development** and so children achieve well in this area. Very good relationships between the teacher and children help children to develop considerable confidence and self esteem. Children respond well to high expectations to wait their turn and their behaviour is good. They make good progress in **communication, language and literacy**, and the good questioning helps children to develop their speaking and listening skills well. A good example of this was seen in art when both teacher and a highly skilled teaching assistant took every opportunity to involve and question children to develop their language skills. Children are gaining confidence in letter sounds through activities such as identifying rhyming sounds and patterns and all could

identify the caterpillar, the apple and the worm. Children are developing satisfactory writing skills through regular practice. All children can copy a sentence and the teacher is rigorous in expecting more able children to try to write on their own. Children make very good progress in **mathematical development** and many achieve above expected levels for their age in this area. They enjoy acting out a good range of lively number games for improving their counting skills so that most can count to at least 20. Good examples of this were seen when the teacher used 'Mary the fairy' to count along the number line and children had to guess the number rule as they put their numbers in or out of the hoop. In developing **knowledge and understanding of the world**, children enjoy taking part in a mini beast trail where they are encouraged to investigate, make charts and use reference sheets. They use the Intel microscope well to magnify snails, observing the spiral patterns and antennae. In **physical development**, children show good control when using a variety of implements such as scissors and pencils. However, restricted space means that children do not have regular opportunities to use large wheeled toys or climbing equipment to develop larger movement skills. Children achieved well in their **creative development**. There is much evidence of the good progress that children make in this area. Good examples of children's work are on display and in progress such as bees made from tissue, spiral snails and snails made from clay. Sketchbooks are used well to record pencil sketches of snail shells.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Year 4, standards in English are above the expected level for pupils of this age.
- Pupil response to the subject is very enthusiastic and, along with the good teaching, this helps them achieve well over time.
- Good support is given to pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils do not always have precise short-term targets for improvement to help them understand how they can achieve a higher standard of work.
- Although there is a strong focus on raising standards in writing, there is a need to provide more opportunities to use learned literacy skills across all subjects in Years 1 and 2.

Commentary

40. There has been a significant improvement since the last inspection. By the end of Year 2, standards are now above average in reading and speaking and listening and average in writing. This does not reflect the school's national test results for Year 2 pupils in 2004 but these are not reliable indicators of how well the school performed owing to such small numbers of pupils in the Year 2 cohort. The results of national tests in Year 2 show a fluctuating picture over the past three years because of the small numbers involved. In the 2004 tests, nearly all Year 2 pupils reached the expected level and an above average number reached the higher level in reading but a below average proportion in writing. In comparison with similar schools, the Year 2 results were above average in reading but well below in writing. Current standards reflect that the small current cohort of pupils are more academically able than the Year 2 pupils in 2004. Standards in Year 4 are currently above the expected level for pupils of this age in reading and writing and in speaking and listening. There has been a strong focus on improving writing in the school after concern in the 2004 Year 2 test results. New initiatives are beginning to impact successfully, particularly in Years 3 and 4.
41. The pupils achieve well overall. From an average starting point in Year 1 pupils' progress in speaking and listening is good across the school because teachers promote pupils' skills and provide good opportunities for discussion. Most pupils listen well and have a good vocabulary for describing their ideas and experiences. A significant number of pupils entered the school

with a wide vocabulary and these pupils have sufficient vocabulary to understand the difficult words they meet in books or to add interest to their writing. There are regular opportunities to act out a role in front of others and this good practice has been in place long enough to have an impact in Year 4. As a result, Year 4 pupils have no difficulty adapting their speech to the audience and they ooze confidence when they speak in front of others. Teachers frequently encourage pupils to extend their answers when they ask pupils questions or give pupils activities in which they talk at length, which builds up their skills.

42. In Years 1 to 2, the rate of progress in reading is good and pupils read fluently and confidently. Year 4 pupils achieve well and have competent research skills for finding information from books and the Internet. All higher-attaining pupils read accurately and with expression. Average-attaining pupils read accurately and can successfully unlock the unfamiliar words they meet. One reason for this is that teachers do not miss opportunities in literacy lessons to promote pupils' better understanding of the texts they read.
43. Progress is good in writing in Years 3 and 4 and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Progress is not as strong in Years 1 and 2 because there are too few opportunities for Year 1 and 2 pupils to write at length in order to further develop their skills. As a result, at times, higher-attaining pupils do not achieve well enough. Teaching and learning are good in Years 3 and 4; so overall, pupils' achievement is good. Basic skills are well taught and pupils write at length in other subjects. In Years 2 and 4, most pupils write confidently and structure their writing clearly. Most Year 2 pupils punctuate their writing correctly and the standard of spelling is average. In Year 4, higher-attaining pupils join their handwriting and use a wide range of words. They can develop their ideas well and create scenes and characters. The teacher has high expectations of handwriting and the presentation of pupils' work, so the standards of handwriting and presentation are good.
44. All teachers identify early the needs of pupils who have special educational needs. Teachers and support staff give these pupils good extra help so that they achieve appropriately, and at times well, in relation to the targets in their individual education plans. There is no marked difference between the achievement of girls and boys.
45. Teaching is good. In the best lessons, the teacher sets the work at an appropriate level and promotes pupils' good learning through interesting and enjoyable activities. Other features of the good teaching are careful planning and organisation and effective use of electronic whiteboards to explain clearly what pupils are to do in the lesson. Therefore, no time is wasted and pupils work purposefully. These good features are not as evident in Years 1 and 2 as in other year groups. At times, the introduction goes on too long and pupils become restless. Pupils' behaviour is good because teachers manage them in a firm yet friendly manner. All teachers make frequent use of computers to support pupils' learning. Most marking is positive, but much of the work is not dated, which makes it difficult for the teachers to monitor progress over shorter periods. Not all work is marked regularly, and it is not consistently used to identify ways in which pupils can improve their work further.
46. The leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and is conscientious in wanting to develop her role. As yet, there has been no rigorous and systematic monitoring of all aspects of the subject. This restricts the co-ordinator's ability to introduce measures to raise standards of attainment in all aspects of English. Where initiatives have been introduced, for example, in writing, a lack of rigorous monitoring and evaluation makes analysis of the impact difficult. Whilst assessment analysis has been undertaken, pupils do not have child-friendly, short-term targets which tell them what to do better in their writing in order to improve.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

47. Not all teachers provide a satisfactory range of opportunities for pupils to use and extend their literacy skills in other subjects. However, this is a developing area and there are good examples of the Year 3/4 teacher promoting different types of writing in design and technology, history, geography and in science. This is not the case for Year 1/2 pupils. Also in this class, opportunities to practise purposefully the skills in handwriting and punctuation, learned in English, are often overlooked. On occasions pupils' reading skills are reinforced appropriately in geography and history, for example when they research information on the Internet. This is consistent across the school.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Year 2, standards are above average and in Year 4 they are above the level expected for pupils of this age.
- There is good teaching of the basic skills of computation that helps pupils work out written calculations successfully.
- The great enthusiasm that the pupils show in their lessons impacts positively on their learning.
- Target setting is not a helpful tool in letting pupils know how they can improve.
- There is not a strong enough focus on developing pupils' mental skills at the start of lessons so that they can answer mental questions with greater speed, accuracy and confidence.

Commentary

48. The school has fully addressed the weaknesses identified at the time of the previous inspection. Higher-attaining pupils are now appropriately challenged in Years 3 and 4 and there are more opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills in other subjects.
49. The results of national tests are not reliable indicators of how well the school is performing, or pupils achieving, owing to such small numbers of pupils in the Year 2 cohort. Because of this the results of national tests in Year 2 show a fluctuating picture over the past three years. Results of national tests in 2004 were well above average in Year 2. This is an improving picture. From the school's own pupil tracking system there is evidence that standards are improving across the school as new initiatives are beginning to impact. Overall, the pupils' achievement is good.
50. Pupils in Year 2 achieve well and attain above average standards. Higher-attaining pupils display good strategies for counting on in twos, fours and fives. They demonstrate a good understanding of place value and know the value of each digit in a three-digit number. Pupils' achievement is good in number when working things out on paper, but is less so in mental mathematics. Pupils' recall of number bonds and multiplication tables is weak. Average and higher-attaining pupils still use their fingers when counting to solve mental questions. However, due to the good opportunities to use and apply their knowledge in practical everyday situations, their skills in solving problems and practical application are as strong as their computational skills.
51. Pupils in Year 4 make good progress and attain standards above that expected for pupils of this age. They understand co-ordinates in four quadrants, rotational symmetry and single line graphs. They systematically add and subtract decimals to two places. Higher-attaining pupils round up decimals to three places and carry out long division confidently. Most pupils' skills in applying their mathematical knowledge in everyday practical situations or solving problems are good. However, average and lower-attaining pupils do not always answer mental questions quickly or confidently.
52. Overall, the teaching is good. Most aspects of teaching are strong with good support for pupils with special educational needs. This is the case for number calculations and data handling.

For example, in a Year 1/2 lesson, the teacher used a good range of resources to enable the pupils to learn how to double and halve numbers by inventing a good range of games. By the end of the session pupils' understanding was good. Teaching is usually effective in meeting the needs of all pupils. There are assessment procedures in place that keep teachers informed and aware of how well pupils are achieving. Good on-going assessment on the part of the teacher identified this difficulty and she was able to backtrack and help pupils gain a better understanding. Marking is supportive and indicates how pupils can learn to improve in Years 3 and 4 but this is less so in Years 1 and 2.

53. The pupils have good attitudes towards their mathematical work. They work with enthusiasm and are able to sustain their concentration over long periods of time when working independently. Where teaching is good, there are high expectations; for example, Year 3/4 pupils were asked to work out for themselves how to divide and multiply using known facts. This not only benefited their understanding but also developed their speaking skills. There are weaknesses in the teaching of pupils' mental skills. This is because the quality of the oral/mental starter at the beginning of the lesson and the discussion at the end varies throughout the school. At times, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to describe and compare strategies and mental recall is restricted to too narrow a range of examples. However, there is a good range of opportunities for pupils to use the knowledge they have gained in everyday, practical, problem-solving activities.
54. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and developing well and beginning to influence and support teaching. The school is developing the role of the co-ordinator and she has worked hard with the local authority's mathematics team. She has monitored teachers' planning, the test results and the pupils' work. As a result, the co-ordinator has gained a clear picture of strengths and areas in need of improvement. For example, problem solving is now a focus for improvement. New initiatives are being introduced to address this area. Although there is provision for monitoring these initiatives through the teaching to gain a clear picture of whether new ideas are being implemented effectively by all staff, this has not been rigorous enough to provide a clear enough picture. Formal assessment records of each pupil are kept and these are used to set either group improvement targets or individual improvement targets that are shared with pupils. However, these targets are not clear to pupils for example, '*use known number facts and place value to subtract two digits*'. Many pupils do not know what their targets are and as a result this fails to motivate them or provide parents with clear information on how they can help their children at home. Not all work is marked regularly, and it is not consistently used to reinforce previous targets and identify ways in which pupils can improve their work further.

Mathematics across the curriculum

55. Across the school, work was seen that related to number, shape and space, measurement and the handling of data. Good use is made of pupils' mathematical skills and they are well used and further developed appropriately in other areas of the curriculum. Similarly, pupils use their skills in ICT, for example to record and display data collected in surveys. The development of mathematical vocabulary in all classes makes a positive contribution to the pupils' literacy development.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Year 4, standards are above the expected level for pupils of this age.
- Teaching is good and provides lots of opportunities for pupils to investigate.
- Assessment information is used effectively to guide planning.
- The co-ordinator is beginning to lead and manage the subject well.

Commentary

56. The school has fully addressed the weaknesses identified at the time of the previous inspection. Higher-attaining pupils are now appropriately challenged in Years 3 and 4 and there are more opportunities for pupils to investigate.
57. Standards in science are above average in Year 2. In the 2004 teacher assessment of science, standards were judged as high because all of the pupils attained the level expected but none attained above average levels. This year, the attainment profile of the year group indicates that more pupils are likely to attain above average standards and none are unlikely to meet the expected level. In Year 4, standards are above that expected for pupils of this age. This is an improvement on the standards judged in the 2003 report, which were average.
58. Evidence in books indicates that pupils achieve well. By the time they leave the school, the current Year 4 pupils will have achieved well. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve as well as their peers because they are consistently well supported and provided with the right amount of challenge. A major improvement has been in the school's determination to ensure that pupils develop good scientific enquiry skills. This has been very successfully achieved with much evidence seen in pupils' workbooks and in discussion with pupils about their work.
59. Although no lessons were seen, the quality of teaching and learning are good overall, as evidenced in pupils' books and in their good scientific knowledge and understanding. Planning ensures that all aspects of the subject are covered and that pupils have many opportunities to think scientifically and work independently to solve problems. In the discussion with Year 2 pupils, it was clear they had been fully engrossed when they investigated the effects of friction on toy cars being rolled down a ramp. Good opportunities were also provided for the pupils to record their findings in graph form on the computers. In Year 4, the pupils' responses to questions showed clearly that they are developing a good understanding of electricity and had worked very productively in small groups to investigate and explain their findings about switches. Questioning of pupils indicated that the topic had effectively built on what had been learned in the previous lessons and as a result, all of the pupils achieved well. Most work is marked regularly, but it does not consistently identify ways in which pupils can improve their work further.
60. The leadership and management of the subject are sound and are developing well. The standards pupils achieve in the national tests and the work they produce during the year are carefully assessed. Areas for development in the subject are identified through the regular monitoring of teaching and planning and through the analysis of pupils' work. This ensures that the co-ordinator has a secure understanding of what is done well and a secure evidence base to set priorities for continuing improvement. Where the weakness lies is in the lack of rigour in the evaluation of new initiatives and analysing the outcomes.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good.
- In Year 2 and Year 4, standards are above expectations
- The school makes good use of the ample resources available.
- Standards benefit from pupils' interest and a high level of teacher skill.
- Leadership in the subject is becoming well established, promoting achievement effectively.

Commentary

61. There has been a good improvement since the last inspection and standards are above expectations in Year 2 and in Year 4. The improved curriculum ensures lots of opportunities for pupils to use ICT to support learning in other subjects. The purposeful approach to teaching means that pupils apply their ICT skills well across the range of subjects. The pupils achieve well.
62. Among the interesting work of pupils during the inspection, Year 2 pupils found the task of designing and creating an animated cartoon featuring a dog fascinating. They were allocated a design brief and were given support in the initial stages. Although there were occasional frustrations when the software did not operate as expected, pupils were quick to add their imaginative perspective to the design of the cartoon. A good feature of this lesson was that the teacher had prepared a more challenging task for higher-attaining pupils and had modified the basic task to take account of those pupils who find learning more difficult. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils enjoyed exploring how they could slow down or speed up the cartoon they had created of a smiley face. These pupils' skills in using the electronic whiteboard are well developed, and most could search for different 'stamps' to use. Year 4 pupils gave PowerPoint presentations of Stannington school using digital blue cameras and discussed their presentations enthusiastically. The presentations contain the everyday activities in the school and are to be used to show new children and parents about life at the school.
63. The resources available have been improved a great deal since the previous inspection when the use of ICT across the curriculum was an area of criticism. The resources are well used, especially the laptop computers and interactive whiteboards in all classrooms. Teachers have shown a great deal of interest in developing their own expertise and use this competently and confidently in lessons. As a result, teaching is good. This encourages pupils' level of interest and engagement in lessons.
64. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and experienced and provides sound leadership and management. The school is developing the co-ordinator role. This is beginning to put leadership and management in a good position to evaluate and develop the work in the subject and to promote ever improving standards. Plans are in place to monitor the impact of current practice. Computers are well used throughout the curriculum, an issue identified for improvement at the previous inspection. Resolving this issue, improved resources, greater use of teacher expertise and the development of a well-led subject have led to good improvement in the subject.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

65. Pupils' competence is well used to support learning in other subjects. For example:
- In English, pupils have good keyboard skills and this enables them to write stories directly onto the computer and to use word processing facilities to edit their work.
 - In mathematics, pupils use computers for testing their knowledge of tables and number bonds and presenting their work in graphs that they analyse and interpret.
 - In history, good use is made of the Internet using several web sites to research projects, such as how they the Vikings lived and the gods they worshipped.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

The provision for religious education is satisfactory and standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, as they were at the time of the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities for reflection and for pupils to express their ideas.
- The provision for pupils to use skills learned in English to support their learning in this subject.

Commentary

66. The subject is closely linked to personal, social and health education and many of the issues in religious education are based on social matters. Much of the work is done on a discussion basis and so there is not a lot of work that is recorded in books or folders. Whilst attainment is at an acceptable level in some areas there are areas, such as knowledge of the Bible, where pupils retain information well.
67. Only one lesson was seen, however, scrutiny of work and talking to pupils indicate that pupils' achievement including those with special educational needs is satisfactory. In the lesson observed, pupils listened with their eyes closed to a recording of Psalm 23, time was given to think about it and they made very positive contributions to the discussion that followed. One girl said *'It is like saying evil is strong but love can find a way around it'*. This is a good example of pupils responding well to the opportunities they have for reflection. They ask appropriate questions relating feelings and give good examples of what they may write inside a comforting and uplifting card. However, a significant number of pupils spent too long colouring in the card at the expense of what they were writing.
68. The management of religious education is satisfactory and the locally agreed syllabus is being implemented. The role of the co-ordinator is developing and there is a clear vision of how the subject should be developed in order to raise further the attainment of pupils. Appropriate links with other areas of the curriculum have been made and there is a programme of visits planned to enhance learning, for example Years 3 and 4 pupils visit the local church and a Hindu Temple.
69. Evidence indicates opportunities for pupils to practise purposefully the skills they have learned in English when working in religious education are often overlooked in the Year 1/2 class. In both Key Stages, there is evidence that the unnecessary colouring in of work sheets often results in the written aspects of their work being short or unfinished.

History and Geography

70. The inspection produced too little evidence to make secure judgements about history and geography and so no overall judgement on provision in these subjects can be made. The pupils' work was sampled and discussions held with the pupils. The teachers provide an interesting range of learning experiences in both subjects. In Years 3 and 4, pupils make good use of their literacy and ICT skills to develop their learning in history and geography. Though this is less evident in Years 1 and 2 at times the pupils use their literacy skills, for example, pupils in Year 2 wrote imaginatively about Florence Nightingale as well as comparing different ancient civilisations. The teacher encouraged pupils in Year 4 to develop opinions about their environment, looking at points for being 'eco-friendly' and following on from the discussions, the pupils have created squirrel boxes, a butterfly garden and grown a number of plants. Other subjects contribute well. For example, pupils use computers to communicate their learning with well-designed booklets, which include attention to layout and the use of digital photographs.

71. In geography, pupils in Year 2 were aware of differences in climates, their own locality and people's lives. Pupils in Year 4 had the expected knowledge and confidently compared and contrasted localities and developed opinions about human effects on the environment.
72. In history, topics are often used as a catalyst for the development of other subjects. For example, pupils are following up their work on Vikings with group presentations that will engage the use of literacy and speaking skills. In Year 2, pupils understand how the passage of time affects people's lives. This is clear in their comparison of different civilisations. Very good use is made of the locality to find out about the growth of the village and reasons for the changes in shops and other amenities. In Year 4, pupils present their work neatly in topic booklets showing detailed research on the Vikings including using the Internet. These topics show a secure understanding of life at that time. Although most of the sampled work appears to be stimulating, the occasional use of worksheets that are not matched to pupils' ability does not extend learning, especially of the higher-attaining pupils.
73. There are effective programmes of work that make appropriate use of external and in-house resources. Pupils have the opportunity to undertake a range of visits including to Bede's World. There are plans to develop further the monitoring of history. Whilst this represents improvement since the previous inspection, monitoring the balance of what is planned is insufficiently rigorous to guarantee the progressive development of knowledge and understanding as pupils move through the school.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

One lesson was seen in art and design and none in design and technology, physical education and music. It is not therefore possible to make a firm judgement about provision in these subjects. The pupils' work was sampled and the pupils spoke to inspectors about it. Some discussion with teachers took place and related school documents were examined.

Art and design

74. Through art and design, pupils have experienced a wide range of materials and are taught the basic skills well. Pupils in Year 1 study the use of texture to draw portraits of themselves and Year 2 pupils use their colour mixing skills well in developing Muslim patterns. By the end of Year 4, pupils have learned how to model with paper-mache and crepe paper and used this to create their three dimensional models illustrating their ideas of a favourite animal. Older pupils have developed good observational skills and have produced some good drawings of shoes. Good use is made of displays in the school, which are of good quality. Discussion with pupils shows that they enjoy their art and design and are proud to show their work.

Design and technology

75. In design and technology projects, there is a strong focus on the three key areas of design, making and evaluation in the teaching and learning. This shows an improvement since the last inspection. A strength is the way that pupils are focused on design and technology in the everyday world at the beginning of a topic. By the end of Year 2, they have experienced working with a variety of materials, measuring, marking and cutting paper, card and fabrics. After examining commercial sandwiches, Year 2 pupils design and follow their own simple recipes to create a sandwich. As pupils progress through the school, they investigate different types of packages, design and make their own raisin box and have experience of evaluating their effectiveness for attracting sales. At the end of Year 4, pupils work in solving problems concerning the use of air power as they make a pneumatic toy. An enthusiastic co-ordinator has clear plans to develop the subject but limited management experience restricts her impact as yet.

Physical education

76. School records indicate that by the end of Year 4, in physical education all pupils are able to swim the required distance of 25 meters. Although there are no opportunities for the youngest pupils to have swimming lessons, in all other areas (for example, dance, gymnastics, athletics and games), the pupils have full access to appropriate programmes of study.
77. The planned scheme of work is currently being adapted to take account of links with other subject areas and there are plans to monitor this. The school provides football and karate clubs and has good sporting links with local schools where for example pupils undertake cricket coaching and take part in inter-schools tournaments,

Music

78. In music, a specialist teacher provides most of the curriculum to all classes. The pupils sing well, paying reasonable attention to rhythm and tuning. Pupils have opportunities for instrumental tuition in violins, guitar, recorders and keyboard. Pupils also have opportunities to experience performance in assemblies, concerts and occasional productions. Their learning in music includes few opportunities either to listen to music or explore the sounds made by instruments from other cultures. The curriculum for music is satisfactory in breadth; however, the subject planning is insufficiently monitored to guarantee pupils receive an appropriate balance in their learning of music.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

79. The school sees this area of learning as one of the major building blocks that develop the positive outcomes in the life and work of the school. For example, there are lessons that deal with bullying, how to cope with difficulties and the broader issues of citizenship, such as caring for the needy. Great importance is placed on visiting places to broaden social experiences, for instance the Mosque. The school makes good use of visitors to school, the community police officer and school nurse have visited.
80. The school has started pursuing a healthy eating award. It has introduced water and fruit for pupils, including snacks at morning break. The good conduct of pupils throughout the school day owes much to the impact and worth of personal, social and health education and citizenship on school's work. The subject plays a very beneficial part in the positive attitudes of pupils in lessons and in their developing understanding of the notion of right and wrong. This is a school where 'family care' succeeds, but only as a result of much hard work and effort. The school plans to start a pupil council. The 'buddy' system is fairly new but pupils are full of enthusiasm for it. It is beginning to have a positive impact on the school as it brings opportunities for pupils to shoulder responsibility and bring their ideas and views to the notice of the school.
81. All of this is handled with insight and determination by the staff. The primary belief is that personal, social and health education is an area that should be at the core of all that goes on in the school. This approach provides a shared and strong focus for all staff members, going beyond class lessons and across the whole school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement**Grade**

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

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

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

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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