

INSPECTION REPORT

TWEEDMOUTH WEST FIRST SCHOOL

Berwick-upon-Tweed

LEA area: Northumberland

Unique reference number: 122186

Headteacher: Mrs B Malkin

Lead inspector: Mr P M Allen

Dates of inspection: 6th - 8th June 2005

Inspection number: 268154

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
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	143
School address:	Osborne Road Berwick-upon-Tweed Northumberland
Postcode:	TD15 2HS
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr David Cairns
Date of previous inspection:	12 th July 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a below average sized first school which caters for children aged from four to nine years of age. The majority of pupils live in the immediate area with a mixture of housing types. Just under a third live outside the catchment area, some from local housing estates with a degree of social and economic difficulty. There are 143 on roll with slightly more boys than girls. There are five classes, one for each age group from Reception to Year 4. Every pupil is of white UK heritage background. Thirty-two pupils are identified as having special educational needs, including three who have a statement of special educational need. Both these proportions are broadly in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average. Virtually all the pupils have had pre-school provision, the majority in the pre-school playgroup on the site. Attainment on entry varies from year to year, but overall it is slightly below that expected, notably in the area of communication, language and literacy. The school was given a Healthy Schools Award in 2003 and an Artsmark Gold in 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
17531	Peter Allen	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics History Physical education
19575	Alan Sanders	Lay inspector	
32636	Gillian Hepworth	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Music Religious education Special educational needs
29686	Stefan Lord	Team inspector	English English as an additional language Information and communication technology Art and design Geography

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **very good school** which has a significant impact on the lives of the children it serves. Pupils reach above average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2. They continue to progress well so that standards at the end of Year 4 are similarly above those normally expected. Pupils achieve very well because of the very good quality of teaching and learning. Very good leadership and management contribute significantly to making this a very effective school that gives very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school is successful because of the very good leadership and management of the headteacher who shows a sense of purpose, a clear vision and a strong commitment to providing the best for every child.
- The overall very good quality of teaching provided by the teachers and the teaching assistants motivates the pupils to achieve very well, reaching above the expected standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Children are given a very good start to their school lives in the Foundation Stage (Reception class).
- The curriculum is well planned, innovative and, with a very good range of extra-curricular activities, matches the needs and interests of pupils very well.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good being underpinned by the pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships.
- Outdoor play in the Foundation Stage is adversely affected by the lack of a secure, designated area and a lack of resources to support the physical area of learning.
- The quality of marking and the setting of individual targets are insufficiently effective to enable pupils to clearly understand what they need to do to improve their work.
- The quality of handwriting and presentation of work is insufficiently high.

The school has made a good improvement since its previous inspection in July 1999. The key issues have been dealt with and the school has progressed in many areas. The school's well-organised, successful programme of improvement has led to it being more effective than previously. The staff have a clear commitment, high aspirations and the capacity to further build on the school's many strengths.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A – very high; 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.*

Given the relatively small numbers, standards at the end of Year 2 can vary from year to year. In 2004 standards were in the highest five per cent nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Across the school **pupils achieve very well** relative to their capabilities. A very good start is made in the Reception class; the vast majority are likely to reach the goals children are expected to reach by the end of the Reception Year with a small minority likely to exceed them. Currently standards are above average in reading, mathematics and science and well above in writing by the end of Year 2. The good progress continues over the next two years, so that by the end of Year 4 these

good standards are being maintained. Across the school standards of handwriting and presentation are insufficiently high. There are no significant differences between the achievements of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates because of the very good support they receive. Standards in information and communication technology are broadly in line with those expected nationally. Standards in religious education are good and exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. **Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good.** Attendance is currently below the national average; it is adversely affected by a small but significant minority whose attendance is poor. Punctuality is good with pupils arriving eager to start the school day.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a very good quality of education; the quality of teaching and learning is very good overall. Virtually all the teaching observed was good or very good. Teaching assistants provide very good support. Very good relationships underpin the teaching and learning and promote the very positive attitudes of the pupils who aspire to do well. Pupils become well engaged in their work and show good levels of co-operation. There are good systems for tracking pupils' progress in English, mathematics and information and communication technology with firm plans to further develop those in science. The quality of marking is inconsistent across the school. Pupils lack clear personal learning targets to enable them to understand clearly what they need to do to improve their work. Key features of the work of the school are the highly developed promotion of thinking skills, including the use of philosophical skills. The staff provide a wide, interesting and innovative curriculum in which good links are made between the subjects and the use of art, music and drama are well promoted. The curriculum is well enriched partly through the very good provision of extra-curricular activities. The very good quality of pastoral care is a feature of this school in which every child is valued equally. The school enjoys a good partnership with parents and benefits from good links with other schools and the local community. The accommodation is well managed, clean, attractive and well used. Resources are good overall. As a consequence of funding difficulties there is a lack of a proper outdoor play area for Reception children. This and a lack of large apparatus to support the physical area of learning means that the children are denied important learning experiences. The school is well aware of this shortcoming.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The **headteacher's very good leadership** is a major factor in the success of this **well-managed** school which fosters a very effective team approach. Her skills are well complemented by the very good work of the deputy headteacher. The roles of the curriculum co-ordinators are well developed. Governance is good and meets statutory requirements. Governors are knowledgeable and very supportive of the school and its headteacher. The school constantly improves its provision for pupils whilst ensuring their well-being and happiness.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils express great satisfaction with the school. Pupils love coming to school and speak with affection of the staff. Virtually every pupil spoken to referred to how many friends they had. Children know that they are valued and this is one of the reasons why this is a very special school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Strive to provide an outdoor play area which is appropriately resourced.
- Improve the quality of marking.
- Develop individual target setting that involves the pupils.
- Improve the quality of handwriting and presentation.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Throughout the school pupils achieve very well. This is because of the overall very good quality of teaching they receive. Pupils' level of performance rises significantly from being slightly below what is expected on entry to Reception, to standards that are above national averages at the end of Year 2 and above those expected at the end of Year 4. The above average standards identified at the time of the previous inspection have been well maintained.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make a very good start and achieve very well in the Reception class.
- Standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are above those expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 4.
- The very good provision for pupils with special educational needs enables them to achieve very well.
- Pupils reach very good standards in writing.
- Standards of handwriting and presentation are insufficiently high.

Commentary

1. Children achieve very well in the Reception class because of the very good teaching they receive from the teacher and the teaching assistants. They are enabled to make very good progress through the 'stepping stones' which lead to the Early Learning Goals for children of this age. The vast majority of children are likely to achieve the national goals in each of the six areas of learning by the end of the Reception Year and a small number are likely to exceed them. Children's progress is most significant in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and in knowledge and understanding of the world. These children are prepared well for their next stage of learning when this very good progress continues through Year 1.
2. Judgements about the standards reached in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are based on evidence gained from a detailed examination of pupils' work, teachers' records of pupils' progress, observations of lessons and discussions with pupils and teachers.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	18.6 (14.8)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	17.4 (14.2)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	19.6 (15.8)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 22 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Given the relatively small numbers, overall standards can vary from year to year. Currently, pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well and often very well. Standards at the end of Year 2 are above the national average in reading and mathematics and well above in writing. These standards are lower than those reached in the 2004 tests by a significantly higher attaining year group; standards in reading, writing and mathematics were well above average when compared with all schools nationally being in the top five per cent of all schools. In comparison with similar schools the results were in the top five per cent in reading and writing. The school has worked hard and successfully to raise standards in written work. In mathematics they were well above average. Standards in science at the end of Year 2 are above the national

average, whereas in the 2004 teacher assessments, standards were well above the national average, being in the top five per cent nationally in most areas of the work.

4. Pupils achieve well and sometimes very well in Years 3 and 4. Two years ago the current Year 4 class reached below average standards in the end of Year 2 national tests. It is the perception of the school that this was caused by staffing difficulties with significant disruption for the pupils during their time in Year 1. This meant that the pupils did not perform as well as they should. Since that time the pupils have progressed well as part of a process of 'catching up'. Whilst there are no national averages for the end of Year 4, it is to the credit of the school that all the evidence indicates that standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are broadly above those expected for this age group, as they were at the time of the previous inspection.
5. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because of the very good support they receive. The clear and appropriate targets for improvement on their individual education plans enable them to make very good progress in their learning. These targets are reviewed and revised on a regular basis, with very good contact with parents. The early identification of any difficulties and the very effective support provided make a significant contribution to the achievement of these pupils. Although over recent years, the school has become more effective in targeting the needs of the higher attaining pupils in literacy and numeracy by providing appropriately challenging activities, there are occasionally times when more could be expected of the higher attainers in such subjects as history and geography. The school is committed to, and largely successful in, meeting the needs of those pupils identified as gifted and talented.
6. Although standards in written work are above and sometimes well above those expected nationally, this is not reflected in the pupils' presentation of work in books and in their handwriting. A review of pupils' work during the inspection, including a review of exercise books in all the various subjects indicated many examples of careless presentation and poor handwriting. This detracts from the quality of pupils' work and is at odds with the school's ethos of care across all elements of its work.
7. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with those normally seen. This is similar to the judgement of the previous report, although national expectations are higher now than they were six years ago. Standards in religious education are above those expected and exceed the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Given the time constraints of the inspection, it was not possible to make firm judgements about standards in the other subjects, except for geography where standards are good.
8. The school's own 'value-added' analysis shows that almost all pupils achieve well compared with their prior attainment. There are no significant differences between the achievement of boys and girls. The school is successful in its aspiration to maintain and raise standards. Challenging but realistic targets are being well met. The leadership of the school successfully fosters a shared commitment amongst the staff to continue to raise standards and to continue to improve the quality of education provided. The high effectiveness of the school is clearly reflected in the above average standards reached at the end of Year 2 and Year 4, especially given the attainment on entry which is slightly below that usually expected.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. Currently pupils' attendance is well below the national average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- School systems for promoting attendance are very good.
- Pupils' confidence and esteem are very good.

- Pupils' self-knowledge and spiritual awareness are very good.

Commentary

9. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and most pupils try very hard in lessons. Their achievement is enhanced by the positive way they approach lessons. Boys and girls both commented on their enjoyment of school and, in particular, the many varied extra-curricular clubs they belong to during the lunchtime break and after school. The school is successful in fostering opportunities for pupils to work independently. Pupils have responsibilities in the school, such as 'playground friends' and classroom monitors. Pupils also assist and take part in school assemblies. The school council promotes citizenship and is well regarded by pupils and adults alike for the work its members are doing within the school. All aspects of personal, social and emotional development are well promoted in the Reception class and the children respond well.
10. Pupils' behaviour is very good. Pupils play well at lunchtime and playtimes and move around the school calmly. Pupils are extremely polite and courteous and a credit to their school; for example, even the youngest pupils open doors for visitors. All pupils are aware of the school's rules and reward systems and how their actions can affect others. Pupils fully understand the difference between right and wrong. The school's behaviour policy is applied consistently throughout the school. There have been no exclusions.
11. Pupils' moral development is very good and is promoted well by the school through whole school assembly themes. Teachers encourage pupils to think of others, for example, by raising money for charities. Teachers explore the spiritual dimension of collective worship themes and pupils are developing their self-knowledge and spiritual awareness well. Pupils have opportunities to reflect on issues raised in assemblies. Pupils explore and reflect on the beliefs, festivals and customs of a range of faiths.
12. All pupils show very good levels of co-operation with each other in class discussions and group activities. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive and pupils' social development is very good. Pupils have a very good understanding of their own culture and have explored aspects of global art and music. This gives them good insights into the multicultural world in which they are growing up.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.6	School data	0.1
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.

13. Attendance was well below the national average last year unlike previous years when it was above the national average. Currently the attendance of the majority is good, but overall attendance is unsatisfactory due to a small but significant minority whose attendance is poor. The school has identified these pupils and is constantly striving to ensure that they attend school regularly. Staff continue to monitor attendance carefully and receive support from the education welfare service, who visit families when requested. Pupils' punctuality is also closely monitored and lateness is followed up quickly; punctuality is good with pupils arriving eager to start the school day.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. The quality of the curriculum is very good. The very good quality of the teaching and very good levels of care and support mean that pupils are able to learn well. There is a good partnership with parents and a good partnership with the local community.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is very good overall and consequently pupils' learning is very good. The assessment of pupils' work is good, but marking and individual target setting are insufficiently effective.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' high expectations and challenging tasks have a positive effect on the attitudes, behaviour and productivity of the pupils.
- The high quality of teaching and learning is the main reason that standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 4 are above those expected.
- One of the main reasons for the positive start given to children in the Reception class is the very good teaching they receive.
- Teaching assistants are effectively deployed and make a significant contribution to the quality of teaching and learning.
- Although there are good systems for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress and achievements in English and mathematics, marking and the setting of individual targets are in need of significant development.

Commentary

14. The quality of the leadership and management of teaching and learning is very good. The headteacher's strong commitment to performance management has had a positive impact on the quality of teaching, as has the introduction of a programme of structured monitoring of teaching and learning. The overall very good quality of teaching provided by the teachers and the teaching assistants motivates the pupils to achieve very well reaching good standards.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 25 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	12	11	2	0	0	0

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

15. The table above shows the quality of teaching seen across the school. Most of the teaching observed was in English, mathematics and science. The most effective teaching and learning was seen in the Reception class and in Year 1 which was of a very high standard. Teaching observed in Years 1 and 2 was slightly more effective overall than that observed in Years 3 and 4 with a higher proportion of good and very good teaching. The quality of teaching described in the previous report has been maintained and improved upon. At the parents' meeting, in the questionnaires and in discussions with inspectors, parents and pupils responded very positively when asked for their views about the quality of teaching.
16. One of the school's strengths is the quality of teaching and learning in the Reception class. The teacher, working in close and effective partnership with the teaching assistants, plans in great detail, ensuring a rich, high-quality curriculum. There is a very good balance between adult-directed activities and self-initiated activities in which children learn through a wide range of practical experiences. Expectations of the children are very high and they respond well; they become well engaged in their learning and co-operate well with one another. They love

being in school and benefit from all it has to offer. This strong, positive start for the children is laying strong foundations for future learning.

17. Teachers and teaching assistants are very committed to the school and its pupils, aspiring to improve their own work; they are supportive of one another. The quality of planning is usually very good and takes good account of the stage of learning of the pupils in the class. Much of the planning reflects increasing links between the different areas of the curriculum. Very good relationships underpin the teaching and learning. Teaching assistants are well briefed and make effective contributions so that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well. The pupils behave well and the orderly atmosphere of lessons promotes the good and often very good learning. In a significant majority of lessons seen, pupils were well engaged in their work which interested them and offered appropriate levels of challenge. Teachers are usually effective in providing appropriate work for those who are higher attainers, including those identified as gifted and talented, although occasionally more could be expected of the higher attainers in subjects such as history and geography. In the two lessons which were only satisfactory, expectations were not as high and as a consequence the pupils did not work as hard or as carefully as they could so that less progress was made than that typically seen.
18. A current target of the school is to improve speaking skills. This is working well; as a consequence of the focus on improving thinking skills, including the use of philosophical skills, pupils' speaking and listening skills are being well developed. Most pupils are confident to articulate their thoughts. Homework, mostly English and mathematics, is given on a regular basis to extend and reinforce learning. Good use is being made of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning across the various curricular areas and the school has firm plans to continue to develop this aspect of its work. The recent introduction of the interactive whiteboards into each classroom is helping to further engage the pupils in their learning.
19. There are excellent systems in place in the Reception Year to assess and monitor the children's progress as they move towards and usually reach the national Early Learning Goals in the six areas of learning. There are good systems for tracking progress in English, mathematics and information and communication technology with firm plans to further develop those in science. Each individual pupil's performance and potential is reviewed on a regular basis; this helps to identify pupils who are not achieving as well as they could and who need extra help. The staff gain good insights into pupils' achievement through the monitoring of the progress of small 'focus groups' within each year group. The school's analysis of data shows that most pupils throughout the school achieve very well and make good progress. The tracking of progress in English and mathematics leads to setting targets based on National Curriculum levels. The sharing with pupils of individual targets for improvement is in need of further development, so that pupils are closely involved in their own targets and know exactly what it is they need to do to improve.
20. The assessment co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop a coherent, manageable whole-school approach to the setting of targets; this can better enable the pupils to share the school's high aspirations for them. Similarly the necessary improvement in the quality of marking across the school can give the pupils very clear insights into how they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work.

The curriculum

The school offers all pupils a broad, well-balanced, interesting and innovative curriculum, enhanced by a very good range of extra-curricular activities. Resources and accommodation are good and support the effective delivery of the curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are given a very good start to school life in the Reception class.
- Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- There is a lack of a proper outdoor play area for Reception children.

Commentary

21. Pupils enjoy a rich, varied and stimulating curriculum which includes valuable experiences in art, music and drama. Increasingly effective links are being made between the curricular areas. The curriculum is well planned. In Reception and Year 1 the quality of planning is very high. The curriculum is regularly reviewed and updated to take account of new developments and to improve its relevance to the pupils. Examples of this are the school's involvement in a 'creative partnership' and 'philosophy for children'.
22. The curriculum for children in Reception is of a very good quality and provides a range of learning experiences which gives them a very positive start to their education. However, as a consequence of funding difficulties, there is a lack of a proper outdoor play area for Reception children which has a negative impact on the curriculum for the physical area of learning.
23. Extra-curricular activities, including sporting and creative activities, help pupils to develop into confident and rounded young citizens by the end of Year 4. These activities make a very good contribution to pupils' social and physical development and include opportunities for pupils to learn to play instruments, join the choir and take part in dance, drama and many sporting activities. Many enjoyable school performances within school and the wider community are organised. There is a club that caters for pupils before school and parents appreciate this facility.
24. The school provides very well for pupils who have special educational needs. These pupils have full access to all the opportunities provided. This very good provision ensures that the school takes account of pupils' needs when planning their learning and pupils achieve very well. There are good quality individual education plans and very good support is provided by teaching assistants and the special educational needs co-ordinator. Teaching assistants are deployed flexibly and work in close liaison with class teachers, on a one-to-one basis or in groups. Reviews are completed effectively with good parental involvement.
25. The ethos of the school is very good. It ensures equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. A very good programme to develop pupils' personal, social, health education and citizenship is in place. This is well supported by the work in 'philosophy for children' which helps to develop pupils' confidence, critical thinking and respect for others. Pupils are very well prepared for their next stage of education; this is characterised by the strong links between the middle school and the pupils in Year 4.
26. There is a good match of teachers and support staff to meet the needs of the curriculum. The operations manager (caretaker) ensures that the school's accommodation is very well managed and clean. He is fully involved in the life of the school and is rightly very well respected by the staff, pupils and parents. The school makes very good use of the well kept, attractive grounds to support and enhance pupils' learning. Learning resources are well organised and of a good quality. The school's accommodation and its resources support the effective delivery of the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides very good care and support for its pupils. The school effectively promotes the pupils' health, safety and welfare. The school is very good at seeking and taking into account pupils' views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has very good health and safety arrangements.
- The school works well in partnership with external agencies to ensure that pupils are well cared for and supported when necessary.
- The school is well maintained, clean and tidy.
- Pupils' have very good and trusting relationships with adults in the school.

Commentary

27. Procedures for ensuring the care and welfare of pupils are very good. Pupils feel well cared for and enjoy the many and varied opportunities the school has to offer them. This has a positive effect on their attitudes to school. The school building is well maintained, clean and tidy. Adults and pupils appreciate that the school is a welcoming place to be. The school's procedures for ensuring health and safety are very good. Designated staff have completed first aid training and are aware of their responsibilities and the procedures to be followed in an event of an accident. Very good procedures for ensuring that children are safe are in place; for example, controlled entry to the school ensures that all visitors are monitored. All teaching and support staff are fully conversant in respect of matters relating to the child protection policy. Partnerships with outside agencies work well and the school does not hesitate to use the outside support that is available, as was evident during the inspection.
28. Support, advice and guidance for pupils is good. Well-considered procedures are in place for monitoring pupils' progress. Pupils are confident that they know who to go to if they are worried or upset, and that any problems will be sensitively dealt with. The school is committed to considering the views of the pupils in all aspects of its work; this is particularly effective through the well-organised school council.
29. Procedures for the resolution of any conflict are good. Any oppressive behaviour is dealt with promptly and all pupils understand that poor behaviour will not be tolerated. At lunchtime there is a very good atmosphere and many of the teaching staff have their meal with the pupils. Pupils are well mannered and respect each other's points of view when discussing what they have been doing during the day. Lunchtimes run smoothly and are very well supervised. Healthy eating options are available on the menu.
30. Lunchtime supervisors are called 'Nanny' and are well involved in the care of the pupils; recent training has helped to ensure that all pupils are involved in well-organised activities both in lunchtime school clubs and outside in the playground. The well-maintained and pleasant school playing field is very well used during the lunchtime break when all pupils play happily and safely together. Induction procedures include visits to the pupils' homes as well as to school by pupils with their parents, thus boosting confidence and knowledge of the school. Pupils are well prepared for the move to their next stage of education.
31. The school identifies pupils with special educational needs well and when appropriate uses the expertise of the local education authority support staff to assess their difficulties effectively. Liaison with outside agencies is well established and effective in providing very good support for pupils with specific difficulties. This caring support was evident during the inspection. There is an ongoing programme of training for the staff that further strengthens the school's procedures and strategies for pupils' guidance and support.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

There is a good partnership with parents who are very supportive of the school. There are also good links with the local community and other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good information is provided to ensure parents understand what is being taught within the curriculum.
- Parents are very happy with the school and give it very good support.
- Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress.
- The school appropriately seeks and acts on parents' views.

Commentary

32. Relationships with parents are good and the school ensures that parents receive information about the curriculum and about school events through regular newsletters. Parents are welcomed into the school and any assistance offered by parents is greatly appreciated. Although few parents help in the school on a regular basis, parents are very supportive in helping on trips and outings. Parents commented on how they appreciated the open-door policy and the opportunity to be part of the life of the school. School open evenings and social occasions are well organised and very well supported.
33. Good information is provided for parents in the prospectus and the annual governors' report for parents. End-of-year reports describe the curriculum covered and give details about how pupils have progressed over the year; there is appropriate emphasis on targets for improvement. The school is addressing how to further involve parents in their children's learning so that they are better able to share the school's high aspirations for them.
34. Responses to the parent questionnaires were very positive and supportive of the work of the school. Parents approached during the inspection had no complaints but said that when parents have raised specific concerns they have been dealt with promptly and efficiently. Parents felt their children were settled and the induction process had worked well. Overall, the school is working hard to empower parents, to give them the confidence to get involved with the school and to continue to foster the good home-school partnership.
35. Relationships with the wider community are good. Pupils go out to the community; for example, they visit the local elderly to deliver harvest produce and they perform at a local residential care home. Projects involving the community ensure that local culture is explored as much as possible. The school raises money for local charities. Relationships are good with the other schools in the area.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good overall. The headteacher provides very good leadership for the work of the school. Governance is good. The management of the school is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The clarity of vision of the headteacher, which is shared by all members of the school community, has created effective teamwork.
- Very close attention is paid to the needs of staff and the development of their areas of expertise.
- Individual pupil target setting could be managed more effectively.
- Detailed development planning is underpinned by extensive monitoring of performance.
- Governors are well aware of the strengths and development points of the school and make a full contribution to school improvement.

Commentary

36. The headteacher's very good leadership is a strength of the school. She has developed a very clear, shared educational vision for the school. The commitment to ensuring that pupils feel valued and develop positive self-esteem strongly contributes to the very good ethos for learning and underpins the achievement of the pupils and the very good quality learning found in the school. The quality of her leadership skills, along with the support of the deputy headteacher, has led to all staff and governors working successfully as a team to provide an inclusive and caring community. There are very good relationships at all levels throughout the school, with all pupils having equal access to the full range of opportunities provided and their achievements being recognised and warmly celebrated. The strengths identified in the previous inspection have been maintained and further developed.
37. The headteacher has delegated responsibilities well so that effective teams have been developed. Members of the leadership and management team provide very good role models for other staff and for pupils and play an important part in the leadership of the curriculum and teaching. The headteacher and senior management team regularly observe lessons to identify strengths and areas for development. The results of English and mathematics tests are carefully analysed to provide detailed information on the progress of individual and different groups of pupils. By keeping track of pupils' progress, targets are set for pupils and support put in place. However, the setting of individual pupil targets is insufficiently effective to enable pupils to clearly understand and have ownership of what they need to do to improve their work.
38. Very good performance management and staff development procedures have been established to manage and develop the performance of the headteacher and all staff. Performance management targets are shared and unite the staff in searching for common areas of improvement and enable the headteacher to tailor training accordingly. For example, the headteacher has effectively involved the assistance of outside consultants to join with staff in leading training on key school priorities, such as the introduction of 'thinking skills' and 'philosophy for children' into the curriculum, so that teachers are given every help in developing the quality of their teaching. Similarly, two teachers are studying for a national qualification for headship and a teaching assistant has gained an extra qualification. New staff receive appropriate training and support. There is good support for initial teacher training. In consultation with staff the school has devised practical ways in which to implement the latest 'workplace reforms', so that teachers' administrative duties are minimised and they are given quality time to plan and prepare their work.
39. The very good system of self-evaluation which involves all stakeholders provides a sharp and focused structure for identifying the school's strengths and areas for development. The school improvement plan sets down a timetable for future actions, unites the staff and governors in the pursuit of key improvements and sets an agenda for ongoing tasks. As a result the cycle of actions necessary for sustaining improvement is firmly in place. The roles of the subject co-ordinators are well developed; they are all aware of their responsibilities. All subject co-ordinators are given sufficient time to carry out their quality assurance work; they track the progress of representative pupil 'focus groups', evaluate the provision for their subject areas and create subject development plans. These arrangements have had a positive impact on pupils' learning; for example, since the previous inspection there has been an improvement in the information and communication technology curriculum.
40. The governance of the school is good and fully meets statutory requirements. The headteacher is well supported by the members of the governing body who understand their roles and responsibilities. Governors help to shape the vision and direction of the school. They meet regularly, organise their work effectively and make a good contribution to the school's improvement. They are regular visitors to school and through their monitoring procedures are fully aware of its strengths and weaknesses. This ensures that their discussions are well informed and their decisions based on firm evidence.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	259,835
Total expenditure	247,792
Expenditure per pupil	1,674

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	8,928
Balance carried forward to the next year	20,971

41. The headteacher, school secretary and the finance committee of the governing body manage the school budget very well. There are efficient systems in place to make sure that the finances are carefully controlled and expenditure regularly reviewed. There is a very good grasp of the principles of best value, which helps the school to achieve educational priorities. Day-to-day administration is very good, as are the systems of financial control. This is a very well led and managed school.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Children are given a very good start to their school lives in the Reception class. The very good quality of the work described in the previous report has been maintained and improved upon. Provision is very good, except in the area of physical development. The inside accommodation is of a very good quality. The outside accommodation is unsatisfactory as there is no secure, designated outdoor play area and a lack of large resources to support the physical area of learning.

When children start in the Reception class there is a wide range of ability, although overall attainment is slightly below what could be expected, mainly in the area of communication, language and literacy. As a result of the very good induction procedures, children settle well and feel secure. Children achieve very well because of the very good teaching and the very good range of learning experiences provided. Teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants is very good. The work of the teaching assistants impacts positively on the children's very good achievements. Assessment procedures are very good. Careful assessment on entry provides the school with an accurate picture of children's learning needs, and thorough records of ongoing achievement enable staff to build on children's learning step by step.

Children make good and often very good progress. The vast majority are likely to reach the national Early Learning Goals in each of the six areas of learning. In communication, language and literacy, a significant number may not reach the higher-level competencies in reading and writing. A small minority (around one sixth) are likely to exceed the goals expected in each area of learning. Children achieve particularly well in knowledge and understanding of the world. Progress is most marked in speaking and listening; this is due to the effective promotion of thinking skills through which children become increasingly confident in expressing their thoughts. Across all the areas of learning, children with special educational needs achieve very well in relation to their abilities.

The Foundation Stage is led and managed very well. The co-ordinator is a well-organised, reflective leader. Links with parents are very good. Very thorough information is provided when children start school and information from parents is welcomed.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships are excellent.
- Children feel secure and confident because of the quality of care.
- Independence is promoted very well in class routines.

Commentary

42. Children's social skills are promoted very well through very good teaching. The excellent relationships between adults and children are central to the very good development of children's independence and personal responsibility; when they hear 'Is this the way to Amarillo?' they know that this is the cue for tidying up after activities, which they do well. Children recognise the importance of the class rules they have created. Pupils are encouraged to explore their feelings when they write, such as about what makes them scared and what makes them special. 'I am special' wrote one child, 'because my dog loves me'. Good behaviour is promoted very well through positive praise from adults. In 'circle time', children followed the adult example and were respectful and sensitive to each other's feelings and behaved very well. The very good work in this area of learning underpins all the teaching

and learning that goes on. Children and adults are constantly smiling because they are enjoying the learning that takes place.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make very good progress in the acquisition of basic literacy skills.
- Teaching is consistently very good.
- Assessment of children's progress is very thorough.
- Thinking, speaking and listening skills are promoted very well.

Commentary

43. Teaching by both the teacher and the teaching assistants is of consistently high quality. Children achieve very well in developing early reading and writing skills. Speaking and listening skills are promoted very well in whole class work, group work and independent activities; most children ask and answer questions confidently. They listen very well to the adults and to each other and articulate ideas and opinions with increasing confidence and clarity; for example, when they reflect on which objects will be the most useful in 'the jungle'. Children enjoy listening to their favourite traditional stories such as 'Jack and the Beanstalk' and 'Cinderella'. Adults are very good at modelling language and children have a growing vocabulary which shows good progress over time. Children also develop very positive attitudes to books and reading.
44. The vast majority know letter names and sounds and apply these skills effectively to read familiar words in the classroom environment and in stories. Children are encouraged to take books home and parental involvement in this area of learning is good. Writing skills are developed well. The writing table and imaginative play area give many opportunities for children to practise their skills in a range of contexts. Almost all write their names without help, using initial capital letters correctly, and form recognisable letters. Most write with the help of 'sentence makers' and increasingly they are writing independently.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Counting skills are developed effectively.
- Good tasks are planned to develop children's understanding of shape, space and measure.
- Very good arrangements are in place to assess children's progress.

Commentary

45. The quality of teaching in this area is very good. Activities are carefully matched to the children's interests and abilities thus enabling the children to achieve very well. They learn very effectively to count forwards and backwards to 20 and beyond and develop a good understanding of money and coin values. Contexts such as shopping and dice games enable children to make very good progress in their counting and calculation skills. Good teaching strategies, such as counting on fingers, acting out number rhymes and illustration on the interactive whiteboard are very effective in helping children to understand mathematical concepts. The higher attainers are able to add 'doubles' and to complete simple subtraction sums.

46. Children achieve very well in developing their understanding of shape, space and measures. They readily recognise shapes they come across in toys and games and are beginning to understand comparative size and position. Children learn during short formal number sessions and informally through role-play, sand and water play and through outdoor play.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children do not have access to a designated outdoor play area with resources to promote large motor skills.
- Good use is made of the school hall for physical activities.
- Children are helped to achieve well in the development of their manipulative and fine motor skills.

Commentary

47. The teaching and the provision for children to develop fine motor skills is very good so that they have good opportunities to develop their skills in manipulating equipment such as scissors, pencils, paintbrushes and other tools and in handling equipment when making models or playing games. They also learn to manipulate pieces as they do jigsaw puzzles. They use the computer mouse with increasing control. Such activities contribute to the progress they make in this area of their learning.
48. Good use is made of the outdoor space to promote learning across the various areas of experience. However the provision is unsatisfactory because of a lack of large resources to support the physical area of learning. Children gain valuable opportunities to develop an awareness of space and develop skills of control and co-ordination through regular physical education sessions. However, in outside play children lack valuable opportunities to move, climb, balance and control large play equipment such as wheeled and co-operative vehicles. The co-ordinator is very aware of this issue and has some very good ideas for the development of an outside play area if the necessary funds become available.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

49. Very little teaching was observed in these two areas of learning. As a consequence it was not possible to make secure overall judgements, although the school's record keeping and assessment procedures give clear indications of likely standards by the end of the Reception Year.
50. All the indications are that children achieve very well in knowledge and understanding of the world. The planning indicates that children are given a very good range of experiences to help them find out about the world and their place in it. They are given valuable opportunities to learn about living things. They consider their own growth since birth, they grow broad beans and they learn to look after Frank, the class hamster. A very good curriculum helps them to develop early historical, geographical, technological and design skills.
51. In the creative area of learning, children are given very good opportunities to work with a wide range of materials and to develop imaginative skills. There is evidence of very good use of imaginative play such as that in 'the jungle', role-play and 'small world' play, creative art and design and opportunities for dance and music making. Very attractive displays celebrate the children's achievements.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment are above those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 4.
- There are very good strategies for developing pupils' literacy skills but the quality of handwriting could be higher.
- The high quality of teaching and learning enables pupils to achieve very well.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning.
- Pupils need a clearer understanding of how to improve their work.
- The subject is very well led and managed.

Commentary

52. Standards of work seen during the inspection, along with the school's assessments and formal testing, show that Year 2 pupils reach standards above the national average in reading and well above the national average in writing. Standards are similar to those seen at the previous inspection, although not as high as in the 2004 national test results. Given the relatively small number of pupils, standards at the end of Year 2 can vary from year to year. In 2004 standards of a very high attaining group were in the highest five per cent nationally in reading and writing. Standards at the end of Year 4 are above the expected levels in reading and writing. The high quality of teaching and learning results in all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieving very well. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls.
53. A significant proportion of pupils start school with below average language and communication skills. The development of pupils' speaking skills is very good throughout the school and pupils achieve very well. The introduction of 'thinking skills' and 'philosophy for children' are having a significant impact. For example, many pupils will qualify an answer to a question with a reason; this effectively develops their oral communication skills. In all classes good use is made of 'talking partners' which encourages pupils to discuss their ideas before sharing them with the class and develops their confidence in speaking.
54. When taking account of the limited pre-reading skills possessed by many children when they first start school, there is very good progress made in helping pupils to develop a range of appropriate reading skills through regular reading sessions and from the use of graded books which build upon their skills and confidence. In Year 2, pupils use picture clues, phonics and comprehension as well as drawing on a widening word bank to help them read unknown words. When reading aloud, too few pupils, especially the older ones, place sufficient emphasis on expression to fully engage the listener; this aspect of reading is in need of further development.
55. Pupils achieve very well in their writing because they are given very good structures to develop a variety of writing skills often linked to the class 'topic'. Pupils in Year 1 plan an adventure story by responding to key questions which effectively help them to organise their work into a sequence of sentences and many pupils use 'because' to extend their sentences. In Year 2, pupils are given strategies to begin sentences in different ways and are encouraged to use words for variety which make their work interesting to the reader. Good opportunities are given for pupils in Year 3 to write extensively and their work is significantly enhanced through the effective use of 'mind maps' as a way of organising their ideas. Pupils in Year 4 develop the skill of creating imagery in their writing through effective use of the five senses, although their extended writing is limited. Pupils' handwriting and presentation not always

show sufficient care and this is an area for improvement for most pupils and especially for the older ones.

56. In the lessons seen, teaching was never less than good and was often very good which shows an improvement on the previous inspection. This high quality of teaching makes a significant impact on the standards pupils achieve. Teachers show very good subject knowledge and plan lessons with clear learning objectives, which are shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons and then used to review learning in very useful final review sessions. They make learning interesting and engage the pupils well through skilful questioning, well-considered explanations and tasks that appeal to the pupils. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and their approach to work. These high expectations, together with the good pace shown in lessons, are enabling pupils to make the most of their learning opportunities. Teaching assistants make an important contribution to the overall quality of teaching. They are well informed by the teachers and so they are able to work effectively with pupils, many of whom have special educational needs, providing a very good level of support that is well matched to individual need so that pupils achieve very well.
57. The very good attitudes shown by the pupils towards their work have a significant impact on the standards they achieve. All pupils are very well behaved and listen intently. The carefully planned development of pupils' 'thinking skills' and 'philosophy for children' make a significant contribution to their confidence to ask and answer questions, which enables them to make valued contributions during lessons. The relationship between staff and pupils is very good.
58. The checking of pupil performance and recording progress is thorough. The information is carefully analysed and is helping teachers to review pupil attainment to set challenging but realistic targets for improvement. However, more needs to be done in setting pupils clear personal learning targets to enable them to understand clearly what they need to do to improve their work. Similarly, the marking of pupils' work is inconsistent in the way that pupils are informed of their achievement and what to do next to improve their work.
59. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The lead co-ordinator is the headteacher and her knowledge, enthusiasm and drive for improvement act as a stimulus to other staff. Her rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the subject has enabled her to evaluate pupils' strengths and weaknesses and target training effectively. This has led to the consistent approach to learning seen throughout the school.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

60. Oral sessions in lessons across the curriculum are used very effectively to develop speaking and listening skills. Pupils are often given worthwhile opportunities to practise their writing skills in such subjects as science and design and technology which helps them develop the ability to adapt their writing to a greater range of purposes. Pupils use word processing skills to present their work in different ways.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils achieve very well because of the overall very good teaching and learning, which leads to above expected standards by the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 4.
- Very good use is made of the interactive whiteboards.
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to the work and aspire to do well.

Commentary

61. A good number of children start school with a limited mathematical understanding. As a result of the high quality of teaching they receive, they make good progress so that standards at the end of Year 2 are above the national average. In 2004 the results of a very high attaining year group were well above the national average (being in the top five per cent of all schools nationally) and well above the average for similar schools. Standards at the end of Year 4 are above those expected. This reflects well on the progress of a year group whose end of Year 2 results were below the national average. The good standards identified in the previous report have been maintained with elements of improvement. A current priority is to improve pupils' ability to identify and use appropriate number skills when solving problems. This is being addressed successfully with many pupils doing better than previously.
62. The work is carefully planned and carried out and ensures that pupils have a very good grounding in number calculations, shape and space and handling information. By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to mentally add and subtract numbers up to 20, they can measure and weigh accurately and solve simple number problems, explaining the methods used. By the end of Year 4, pupils show good recall of multiplication facts, can count, read and write numbers up to ten thousand and show a good understanding of basic fractions.
63. Teaching and learning in the lessons seen were very good overall. Teachers plan very effectively to cater for the needs of all pupils. Teaching assistants provide very good support, particularly for pupils with special educational needs. Lessons often start with a brisk mental arithmetic session that pupils enjoy. Pupils are encouraged to develop their knowledge and understanding of number through the staff's skilful questioning and use of vocabulary. Teachers show good subject knowledge and understanding; they manage the pupils well and have high expectations of what they can achieve. Homework is used effectively to reinforce and extend learning. An area for improvement is in the presentation of the work; a review of pupils' work in exercise books revealed that much of the work is poorly presented. This does not fit with the school's ethos of care. The overall quality of marking is insufficiently high; often it fails to give pupils a clear understanding of how they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
64. Pupils enjoy mathematics lessons, encouraged by teachers and teaching assistants to achieve well. Pupils respond with great enthusiasm to their mental mathematics work. Teachers set quick-fire challenges that require the pupils to think, use previous knowledge and explain their methods. The interactive whiteboards are used very effectively to help pupils visualise the learning and pupils use them confidently to demonstrate their answers to the rest of the class. They make effective use of laptop computers to practise their number skills. Pupils show engagement and concentration and usually work productively.
65. Mathematics is well resourced, and well led and managed. The enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator has a clear understanding of strengths and areas for development in the subject. Results are analysed carefully and targets set. There are good procedures for monitoring pupils' attainment and tracking their progress. A very positive development has been in the use of 'focus' groups where in each year group the mathematics work of a representative group of pupils is carefully monitored, partly through regular minuted discussion with the focus pupils. Targets are set for individual pupils. The next area for development, where a start has been made, is for pupils to become more involved, so that they know their targets and what they need to do next to improve further. The subject is well set to continue to improve.

Mathematics across the curriculum

66. Increasingly the school is giving a high profile to cross-curricular work. As a consequence, pupils make effective use of mathematics as part of their work in other subjects and this helps them to begin to develop an appreciation of the practical uses for their skills. For example, they use graphs and tables to record data in geography and science; they use measuring

skills in design and technology. They make good use of computer programs to practise and reinforce number skills. The use of the interactive whiteboards to support mathematics is very good.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in science are good throughout the school.
- The pupils' very positive attitudes make a significant contribution to their good achievement.
- The development of thinking skills is helping pupils to gain greater understanding of how to plan investigations.
- There are inconsistencies in the marking of pupils' work.

Commentary

67. National assessments in 2004 placed pupils in the top five per cent nationally. Currently standards, although not as high, are above those expected at the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 4. These standards are higher than those described in the previous report. Across the school pupils achieve very well relative to their capabilities enabling them to reach good standards.
68. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and sometimes very good. Pupils are challenged to think and develop enquiry skills. Lessons are characterised by their practical nature. In all the lessons observed, pupils were challenged to formulate relevant questions in order to solve scientific problems. The development of philosophy is helping pupils to develop greater understanding in how to plan investigations, as well as enabling them to improve their enquiry skills. The activities are well selected which results in pupils being interested and engaged in their learning. In a very good lesson seen in Year 2, the teacher used very well judged question-and-answer techniques to draw information from pupils; the pupils' enthusiasm was reflected in the quality of responses. In all lessons seen, the pace of teaching helped pupils to maintain attention and interest because they were given new challenges.
69. Across the school, pupils behave very well, are enthusiastic and work productively in lessons, either when collaborating in groups or in whole-class activities. This was evident during a discussion with a group of Year 4 pupils who enthusiastically described what they enjoyed about science; they were able to describe the differences between liquids, gases and solids and how to set up scientific investigations. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make very good progress. This ensures their full participation in lessons. Although assessment procedures are in place, the school has firm plans to further develop the monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress in science in the way it is done in English and mathematics. The quality of marking in books is not sufficiently helpful so that pupils do not always clearly understand what they need to do to improve their work. The quality of presentation of work is often insufficiently high.
70. Good links are developing with other subjects such as design and technology, geography and history. Skills learned in other lessons are reinforced and developed in science. Examples of this were evident in the models of fire engines with attached lights as part of a display of the 'Great Fire of London'.
71. The science co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well. Observations of teaching, discussions with staff and pupils across all year groups have provided him with a clear idea of where improvements are needed in the future. The development of enquiry skills, as part of philosophy, is underpinning the planned improvements so that pupils gain greater confidence when solving scientific problems.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has successfully tackled the issues identified in the last inspection and, as a consequence, standards have improved.
- Pupils achieve well and have very good attitudes to learning.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning is insufficiently rigorous.
- Information and communication technology is applied well across the curriculum.

Commentary

72. Only two lessons were observed in information and communication technology during the inspection. Evidence from the lessons, samples of pupils' work, teachers' planning, and discussion with pupils and staff indicate that standards in Year 2 and Year 4 are in line with those seen in most schools and some pupils exceed them. Standards are better than those reported at the previous inspection because national expectations are now significantly higher than they were previously. Pupils in the school now have a much broader experience of information and communication technology. They make good progress and are achieving well. The school is well placed to continue to raise standards in the subject.
73. There has been good improvement in the resources and overall provision for information and communication technology since the time of the last inspection. The school worked towards creating a computer suite, but evaluated the effectiveness of this provision and found that it did not fully meet the needs of the pupils or the development of information and communication technology across the curriculum. Recently a decision was made to equip every classroom with six laptop computers, an interactive whiteboard and Internet connection. This has resulted in all pupils having regular opportunities to practise and develop their information and communication technology skills and apply them across a range of subjects so that they achieve well.
74. Information and communication technology skills are taught systematically through a scheme of work following national guidance and this is an improvement on the previous inspection. Pupils in Year 1 can control the sequence of events of various devices; for example a 'Pixie'. In Year 2, pupils use a program to search a simple database and save the information. Pupils in Year 3 gather and exchange ideas using e-mail. In Year 4 pupils combine text and graphics, using 'Power Point', to create a simple presentation. Most pupils in Years 2 to 4 can use word processing skills and images to enhance their work, which demonstrates a growing awareness of the way texts and images can be changed. Most pupils save their work successfully into individual files and confidently retrieve their work.
75. In the two lessons observed the quality of teaching and learning was very good in one and satisfactory in the other. The better teaching demonstrated a very good understanding of how pupils learn, had very good pace and provided a variety of related activities matched to all pupils' needs so that they achieved very well. The effective use of the interactive whiteboard supported teaching and learning very well. In both lessons teaching assistants provided very good, focused support, mainly with pupils who had learning difficulties so that these pupils achieved as well as their classmates. All pupils showed very good attitudes to their work, were enthusiastic, confident to ask questions, on task and well behaved which contributed to their overall achievement.
76. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The joint co-ordinators have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and their enthusiasm and drive for improvement

act as a stimulus to other staff. They have audited staff competency and identified training needs and resources and produced a long-term development plan. These developments have had a positive impact on raising standards across the school. However, monitoring of teaching and learning is underdeveloped. There are good systems for tracking pupils' progress in the subject.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

77. The introduction of laptop computers into all classrooms has given all pupils a greater opportunity to use information and communication technology to support learning in a range of subjects. This was seen in a Year 3 numeracy lesson when pupils used a program to compare familiar fractions. Similarly, in a Year 4 literacy lesson a group of pupils used a word bank to support their understanding of compound words. Information and communication technology is used effectively to support 'topic' work; for example, Year 1 pupils developed their knowledge and understanding of grid references by programming a 'Pixie' to travel around a map of 'Mr McGregor's Garden' and used the laptops to click and drag garden features to the correct box. Teachers use information and communication technology to effectively enhance their teaching; for example, through the use of interactive whiteboards which are installed in all classrooms.

HUMANITIES AND CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

The work in geography and history and in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education meets statutory requirements. These subjects were not specific areas of focus for the inspection and only a limited range of evidence was sampled. As a consequence there is insufficient evidence to make overall judgements on the quality of the provision, except in geography.

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above those expected at the end of Years 2 and 4.
- The high quality of teaching and learning results in pupils achieving well.
- Pupils' presentation of work is in need of development.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes towards learning.

Commentary

78. Standards in geography are above those seen in most schools and have improved since the previous inspection. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in their knowledge and understanding of places and in the development of geographical enquiry skills.
79. A scheme of work is in place, based on national guidelines, which helps teachers to plan for continuity and progression in the teaching and learning of geographical skills. The school is becoming very effective in linking learning in geography to other curriculum subjects to make learning exciting. For example, in Year 3, the skills of comparing and contrasting localities are effectively developed through a well-planned and resourced study of life in a village in India. This study widens pupils' perspectives and makes learning interesting by making relevant links to other curricular areas such as art and design, design and technology and religious education.
80. A review of pupils' work indicates that there are occasionally times when all pupils are given the same work; for example by completing the same worksheet or copying a piece of text. When this happens too little is expected of the higher attaining pupils. Overall, older pupils

could benefit from more opportunities to practise their writing skills through extended pieces of work in the subject. The studies of India and Kenya make a significant contribution to pupils' cultural development.

81. In the lessons seen the quality of teaching was very good overall. Teachers usually make learning interesting and practical through the very good use of resources. For example, in a Year 4 lesson about Kenya, pupils sampled food, examined artefacts, observed photographs, viewed a slide show on the interactive whiteboard and listened to music. The lesson enthused pupils and resulted in very good progress in their understanding of the differences and similarities in rural and urban life in Kenya.
82. Teachers use very good strategies to enable pupils to respond to a range of geographical questions and to communicate their findings. For example, in a Year 3 lesson pupils watched a video clip of a child's life in a village in India, then the teacher encouraged them to discuss with a partner the child's needs, write them on nine pieces of card and using their 'thinking skills' organise them into a diamond shaped hierarchy. Each decision had to be supported with a reason which resulted in good achievement. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to the quality of teaching and learning; for example, in a Year 1 lesson, pupils with special educational needs achieved very well in their understanding of grid references as a result of the focused support they were given.
83. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards their work and behave well in lessons which have a positive impact on their achievement. However, an examination of pupils' books indicates that many pupils, particularly the older ones, demonstrate insufficient care in the presentation of their work; this is an area for improvement.
84. The subject is well led and managed by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator who provides a good role model for other staff. Pupils' work is assessed at the end of each unit of learning which helps teachers to plan the next stage in learning. The co-ordinator checks on pupils' progress but the monitoring of teaching and learning is underdeveloped.

History

85. No lessons were seen during the inspection and, as a consequence, there is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about the quality of teaching and learning or about standards. A scrutiny of pupils' work and planning documents indicates that pupils are receiving an appropriate curriculum. The work is based on a series of topics, which follow national guidance. Good use is made of the local area including visits to the local museum and to Holy Island and Lindisfarne. These visits, plus ones further afield to places such as Cragside and Newcastle, enhance the work and make lessons more exciting.
86. Increasingly, good links are being made with other areas of the curriculum, such as English, science, art and design and design and technology. For example, in a study of 'The Great Fire of London', Year 2 pupils wrote a diary in the style of Samuel Pepys and designed and made fire tenders using bulbs and batteries. Year 3 pupils dressed up and created a Greek museum with exhibits such as masks and boats. Pupils make good use of information and communication technology to research projects. There are times when pupils' work is marred by poor presentation. Literacy skills are sometimes being appropriately developed in history, but there are times when all pupils have exactly the same task to do; when this happens much more could be expected of the higher attainers and pupils could be enabled to achieve more.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Subject leadership provides good support for all teachers.
- Pupils have good opportunities to learn about world faiths.
- Presentation of work is not sufficiently high and marking is not consistent.

Commentary

87. Evidence from the one lesson observed, from teachers' records, from a review of pupils' work and discussions with pupils indicates that standards exceed the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus as they did at the time of the previous inspection. Achievement is good overall and pupils enjoy learning about different faiths. In a successful Year 4 lesson, pupils learned about the Ten Commandments. They created their own commandments, which in turn helped them to understand the need to establish rules within a community. The pupils behaved in a very mature manner and this contributed very well to the success of the lesson.
88. From the work seen and from talking to pupils, it is clear that pupils are developing a sound understanding of a range of religious beliefs. A group of Year 4 pupils discussed the similarities between Islam and Christianity, referring to holy books and buildings. The subject contributes significantly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in various ways and through topics. The work of 'philosophy for children' helps to develop pupils' critical thinking and respect for others and this makes a very positive impact on the provision for religious education.
89. Although most of the teaching and learning is oral, the small amount of work in books is not always well presented and marking is not as useful as it could be. Pupils do not always understand what they need to do to improve their work. The range and quality of resources are good and provide effective support for all teachers. There are a great many multicultural artefacts on display around school. These provide pupils with a greater understanding of the cultures that are an integral part of Hinduism and Islam. The timetables show that each class is allocated sufficient time to cover the work.
90. Curriculum leadership is good and the co-ordinator has good subject knowledge. Questioning the pupils from the focus groups informs the co-ordinator about progress in religious education across the school. The policy and the scheme of work have both been improved and help to provide support to staff when planning lessons.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

91. Insufficient teaching and work are seen during the inspection to make secure judgements on standards and the quality of teaching and learning. The work follows national guidelines and ensures that pupils receive an appropriate curriculum which is often skilfully linked to work in other curriculum areas. A review of teachers' planning and the work on display demonstrate that pupils experience a good range of techniques and materials including pencil, pastels, paint, paper, card, fabric, papier mâché and clay. The award of the 'Artsmark Gold' is testimony to the commitment the school has for the development of the arts through the school.
92. In Year 1, pupils explore the technique of weaving, first with paper and then with coloured fabrics and threads to make their work lively and adventurous. Pupils in Year 2 investigate the use of clay by making simple thumb pots which demonstrate care and attention to proportion and design. Pupils use the work of famous artists such as Monet and Picasso and art from other cultures to act as a stimulus for their own work. For example, when studying a village in

India, Year 3 pupils observe traditional designs and patterns in art and fabrics to produce their own vibrantly painted, attractive paisley patterns for a sari. This effectively develops their knowledge and understanding of art in other cultures. Year 4 pupils show an appropriate use of line and tone in their pencil sketches of mendi patterns.

93. The subject co-ordinators have enriched the curriculum through a dedicated 'Arts Week' and art club which make a significant contribution to developing pupils' skills in the subject. Through being part of the 'Creative Partnership' they have given pupils more access to art outside the school. Assessments of pupils' achievements are made at the end of each unit of work so that teachers can check and record the progress pupils' make in art and design.

Design and technology

94. No lessons were observed during the inspection, therefore there is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements on teaching, learning and pupils' achievement. Discussions took place with the subject co-ordinator and with pupils about their work. Pupils have taken home much of their finished work so that there is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on standards.
95. Teachers use the national schemes of work. The time allocated to the subject is appropriate. Pupils enjoy the practical aspects as was evident when talking to a group of Year 3 pupils. They enthusiastically described how they made masks, boats and temples as part of a topic on Greece. They discuss and design plans before making and afterwards they evaluate the success of their final product. Models of fire engines with lights as part of a topic on the 'Great Fire of London' show that there are very good links developing with other subjects. The co-ordinator manages the subject well and there is an action plan for future improvement of the subject.

Music

96. The strengths in music indicated in the last inspection have been sustained and developed well. The rich curriculum offered to pupils promotes good achievement. There was insufficient music seen to make secure judgements on standards although there is evidence that music is well promoted. The school's commitment to the arts was recognised when, in May 2004, it was awarded the 'Artsmark Gold' standard for work in the four areas of music, dance, drama, and art and design.
97. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn to play a range of instruments, both in lessons and through extra-curricular activities. Singing in assembly is tuneful and enthusiastic. Further opportunities for singing are provided in the choir sessions and pupils take part in many school concerts and outside choral events. The African chant used routinely in a Year 4 geography lesson effectively extended pupils' multicultural awareness. In discussion with pupils in Year 4, they spoke enthusiastically about learning music. They described the performances they had undertaken and the exciting and imaginative activities that were given to them by their teachers. Currently, a good proportion of the pupils from Year 1 to Year 4 are learning to play violin, guitar, cello and recorder. Observations of violin and cello teaching show that the pupils are very enthusiastic and make very good progress because of the high quality teaching from the peripatetic music teacher.
98. During the inspection it was possible to observe just one lesson in which the quality of teaching was very good. The teacher has very good subject knowledge and skilfully taught pupils to experience sounds through the use of voices and a range of musical instruments. This helped improve pupils' understanding of long and short sounds. The quality of the teaching made the lesson a joyful experience for the pupils. As a consequence all of them made very good progress. The co-ordinator is leading and managing the subject well. She is enthusiastic and has firm plans for future development of music.

Physical education

99. No lessons were observed during the inspection, so there is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements on standards and the quality of teaching and learning. The work is following a number of schemes of work based on national guidelines to ensure that pupils receive an appropriate curriculum. A recent self-evaluation audit has helped the staff to review the work in order to improve its effectiveness. The provision benefits from a well-resourced good-sized hall, good play space and an excellent playing field which is well used throughout the year.
100. Given the school's close proximity to the River Tweed, there is a strong emphasis on water safety. Very good opportunities are provided for swimming with pupils from Years 2, 3 and 4 having weekly lessons at the local sports centre. This leads to very good standards. Pupils benefit from tuition by visiting specialists in rugby, dance and gymnastics. There is a good range of sporting activities provided outside the school day, including dance, gymnastics, sports and games clubs. There are very good opportunities for girls and boys to take part in competitions with other schools in football, beach football, 'Kwik-cricket', rounders, 'tag rugby' and swimming. A good number of pupils support these clubs which are very popular.
101. The work is well led by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator. Her current involvement in a school co-ordination project with a local cluster of schools has further developed links with other primary schools and the local secondary school. The subject is well resourced. Simple assessments are undertaken throughout the year.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Personal, social and health education and citizenship permeate all aspects of school life and reflect and reinforce the school's reflective, caring, ethos.
- Skills of independence and responsibility are nurtured well.
- The school council has a positive impact on the life of the school.
- The work benefits from very good leadership.

Commentary

102. A very positive start is made through the very good provision of personal, social and emotional development in the Reception class. There is very strong staff commitment to this area of the school's work which is taught through a local education authority scheme of work, well supplemented by other materials. The emphasis on responsibility, independence, thinking and philosophical elements promotes the pupils' very positive attitudes and confidence in articulating opinions. The work is timetabled on a weekly basis jointly with religious education and includes a strong emphasis on fairness, citizenship, the environment, personal awareness and anti-bullying. A healthy lifestyle is promoted; the school has received the Healthy Schools Award.
103. The work offers a wide range of interesting and valuable experiences for the pupils, making good use of the promotion of thinking skills. Pupils are encouraged to create 'mind maps' to help them reflect on issues, for example, during a recent 'anti-bullying' week. Pupils learn about negotiation and when it is appropriate to be assertive. These and similar activities set a firm foundation for the development of very good relationships based on respect for others.
104. During the time of the national general election the pupils took part in their own 'mock election' with manifestos, meetings and voting. The school council makes a valuable contribution to the life of the school; it gives pupils good insights into the democratic process. In a meeting observed during the inspection, pupils responded sensitively to all the issues raised.

Representatives are elected through a ballot and meet weekly along with a staff member. During the current year the school council has been helping in assemblies, working alongside 'playground friends' to prevent bullying, discussing rewards for good behaviour and reviewing the effectiveness of the lunchtime arrangements. The school offers many such opportunities for pupils to take responsibility within classrooms and around school. 'Playground friends' have to apply, seek a reference, be interviewed and sign an agreement. The pupils take their responsibilities very seriously.

105. The headteacher who co-ordinates this work has had a positive impact on the high profile given to it. She is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and provides very good leadership and management. The school's programme makes a positive contribution to its strong, caring ethos where every child is valued equally. Co-operative relationships are encouraged throughout the school and boys and girls mix very well together. Pupils develop a good awareness of how to behave in a community and they work well together in a supportive and caring way. Most become skilful at expressing their views in a careful and articulate way. The provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is one of the many features which make this a very good school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	2

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	5
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	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
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	3

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

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