

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **GRANGE PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Sunderland

LEA area: Sunderland

Unique reference number: 108765

Acting Headteacher: Mrs M Cartwright

Lead inspector: Mrs E Graham

Dates of inspection: 25th – 27th April 2005

Inspection number: 274108

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: Primary  
School category: Community  
Age range of pupils: 3 – 11 years  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 230

School address: Swan Street  
Sunderland  
Tyne and Wear  
Postcode: SR5 1EA

Telephone number: 0191 5535570  
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Appropriate authority: The governing body  
Name of chair of Mrs J Morris  
governors:

Date of previous 14<sup>th</sup> February 2000  
inspection:

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

This average sized primary school takes its pupils from three to eleven years old. At the time of the inspection, there were 215 pupils attending full-time and a further 31 attending the nursery on a part-time basis. The school is situated close to the centre of the city of Sunderland and draws its pupils from an area of high socio-economic disadvantage. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is increasing and is currently above average. Their needs cover moderate learning difficulties, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, speech and communication difficulties, autism, visual impairment and physical disabilities. The attainment of pupils on entry is below average and is well below average in communication, language and literacy skills. A higher than average number of pupils enter and leave the school each year. One child in the nursery is from a heritage other than white British and is in the early stages of learning English. At the time of the inspection, the deputy headteacher was acting headteacher of the school and there were two temporary teachers covering for absent teachers.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
16431	Mrs E Graham	Lead inspector	Art Design and technology
11368	Mrs K Lee	Lay inspector	
32439	Mrs M Bennett	Team inspector	English Special educational needs English as an additional language Personal, social and health education and citizenship
31622	Mrs Richardson L	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education Religious education
1550	Mr M Pinch	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Geography History

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a satisfactory school with many good features.** It provides a very supportive community in which its pupils are very well cared for and very good relationships flourish. Pupils enjoy learning and have good attitudes to their work. Although standards in English and mathematics are below average, most pupils achieve satisfactorily overall. The leadership and management of the school are undergoing a period of change and are well placed to consolidate recent work to raise standards. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in English and mathematics are not high enough for some average attaining pupils.
- The school provides a very supportive environment that encourages good attitudes, very good relationships and a strong commitment to the school in its pupils.
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well provided for because of the school's strong commitment to inclusion.
- Much of the teaching is good.
- Methods for monitoring and tracking how well pupils are learning and for giving them information about how they can improve are unsatisfactory.
- The school involves its pupils very well in its developments by seeking their views.
- Leadership and management have been slow to focus on raising achievement but this is now a strong priority for the school.
- Attendance is below average.

The school has made satisfactory progress in the key issues identified in the last inspection. Its provision for information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education are now satisfactory. Subject leadership has improved and the governing body now has a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Although standards in English are still below average this is partially due to the high levels of mobility of pupils that has an effect on the balance of ability levels in Years 3 to 6.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	E	E	E	E
Mathematics	E	E	E	D
Science	E	C	E	D

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average  
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

**Achievement is satisfactory overall.** Standards in the national tests in English, mathematics and science were well below average in 2004. However, the school has a higher than average number of pupils who move into the school between Year 3 and Year 6 and this had a significant impact on standards in Year 6 in 2004. Standards are higher in Year 6 this year than in 2004 and pupils are on course to reach the national average in science. Standards in English and mathematics are still below average and are not high

enough for average attaining pupils, some of whom are underachieving. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well and more capable pupils achieve at satisfactory levels between Years 3 and 6.

Many children start the nursery with standards of attainment below those usually found and well below in their communication, language and literacy skills. They achieve well in the Foundation Stage and, although their attainment remains below average in aspects of language and literacy, they reach the expected learning goals in all other aspects. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well. Pupils attain in line with the national average in reading although standards remain below average in writing and mathematics. Standards in ICT, history and religious education are in line with expectations throughout the school. Standards in personal, social and health education are above average. Other subjects were only sampled but standards are in line with those generally found.

**Pupils' attitudes and personal development are very good and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.** Pupils enjoy school and are keen to take part in all the activities that are provided for them. Their behaviour is generally very good and they have very good relationships with one another and their teachers. The rate of attendance is below average, despite the good efforts made to improve it.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is good overall.** Much of the teaching is good throughout the school. In the best lessons, work is challenging and interesting. Teachers and teaching assistants support pupils well in their learning. Great skill is shown in making sure that pupils with disabilities and special educational needs of all types are fully included in lessons and, as a result, these pupils achieve very well. In some lessons, the grouping arrangements for teaching the older children are not supporting pupils of average attainment well enough and their learning slows. The systems used for checking the progress that pupils are making and for giving them information about how to improve are unsatisfactory.

The school provides a good curriculum. It has a good partnership with parents and their involvement often contributes well to pupils' achievements. The school is well staffed with teachers and teaching assistants. The accommodation is good. Teaching and learning resources are satisfactory.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are satisfactory.** The governing body carries out its statutory duties and has a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Currently, the deputy headteacher is providing good leadership. In the short time she has led the school, she has identified changes that have helped to focus the school's work more effectively on raising achievement. Since the last inspection, the school's priorities have been to improve the accommodation and to maintain its very positive climate for learning. In these aspects, it has been most successful. The management of the school, which is satisfactory, is now in a good position to improve standards and effectiveness.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents are very supportive of the school. There was no area in which a significant number would like to see improvements. Pupils are very positive about school and like the way they are asked for their views.



## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- raise standards in English and mathematics;
- improve the assessment and tracking of pupils' learning and achievements so that work can be better matched to their abilities;
- develop more effective methods for giving pupils information about how they can improve their work;
- make sure that the priorities identified in the school development plan are based on rigorous monitoring and review, and are clearly focused on raising achievement;
- continue to improve attendance.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects**

Achievement is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Standards are below average in English and mathematics and average in science.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- In Years 3 to 6, some pupils of average ability underachieve in English and mathematics.

#### **Commentary**

1. Children enter the nursery with attainment that is below average and well below average in communication, language and literacy skills. They achieve well up to the age of seven and by the end of Year 2, their attainment is broadly in line with the national average in reading but remains below average in writing and mathematics. National test results show an upward trend in Year 2. In recent years, the national test results at the end of Year 6 have been well below the national averages in English, mathematics and science and not as high as at the time of the last inspection. However, the school has a higher than average number of pupils who move in to the school between Years 3 and 6 and the ability levels of these pupils vary considerably from year to year. In 2004, almost a third of pupils taking the national tests in Year 6 had not been through Years 3 to 6 in the school. The current Year 6 pupils' attainment is below national expectations in English and mathematics but in line with expectations in science and other subjects. When taking into account the below average attainment of pupils when they start the school and the high levels of mobility, their achievements are satisfactory overall.
2. Throughout the school, the achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good, and very good in the Foundation Stage due to the high levels of support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants. Boys do as well as girls in the school, which indicates that the school's actions to improve the achievement of boys are effective.
3. On starting the nursery, the standards that children reach are well below average in communication, language and literacy skills and below average in all other areas of learning. An effective Foundation Stage team is well led and managed and works very well together to provide a stimulating learning environment that motivates children successfully.
4. The teaching is good in the nursery and reception and the high level of support from teaching assistants is very effective in making sure that children of all abilities, especially those with special educational needs, learn effectively. The curriculum and teaching methods used meet the needs of the children very well. As a result, children of all abilities make good progress and achieve well. Although their attainment is still below average in communication, language and literacy skills, most children have met the early learning goals in all other areas of learning by the end of the reception year.

5. By the time they are seven, pupils have attained levels that are broadly in line with the national average in reading, but standards are below the national average in writing and mathematics. Teaching is generally good and is helped by high levels of support provided by teaching assistants. As a result, pupils' learning is good and all pupils achieve well in relation to their abilities in writing and mathematics and very well in reading. Standards in science are in line with the national average. However, an over-reliance on worksheets in science and some aspects of mathematics restrict progress for some pupils in developing aspects of these subjects, such as following their own lines of enquiry. Standards in other subjects are at expected levels.

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

<b>Standards in:</b>	<b>School results</b>	<b>National results</b>
Reading	16.0(15.5)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	13.4 (15.2)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	15.2 (16.9)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 33 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

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

<b>Standards in:</b>	<b>School results</b>	<b>National results</b>
English	23.9 (24.5)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	24.5 (25.2)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	26.3 (28.9)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 44 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

6. By age eleven, standards remain below national expectations in English and mathematics, although standards in reading are at the levels expected nationally. Pupils are grouped by attainment in these subjects and, while this is very effective in Year 5, where pupils of all capabilities are achieving well, in Years 3, 4 and 6, it is less effective. In these year groups, lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well and the most capable pupils achieve at satisfactory levels. However, some pupils of average ability, who are taught with the more capable, are underachieving because the work is not sufficiently well matched to their needs. In addition pupils are not given sufficient information about how they can improve their work, particularly through marking.
7. Standards in science are in line with the national expectation and pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. Much of this improvement is due to an increase in the amount of curriculum time devoted to the subject and a particular emphasis on investigative work. Standards in ICT, history and religious education are in line with those expected and they are above average in personal, social and health education. Other subjects were sampled and the evidence available shows that standards are at the expected levels.
8. Where ICT is used to support learning in English, mathematics and history it is helping to improve achievement. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills across the curriculum. Pupils apply their mathematical skills successfully in science and ICT but so far this has had only a limited impact on standards because these opportunities are too infrequent. Pupils use their competent reading and research skills well to access work throughout the curriculum, For some lower attaining pupils, their limited writing skills have an effect on their achievement in subjects such as religious education and history.

## **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils' attitudes and personal development are very good and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Behaviour is good overall, and often very good in lessons. Attendance is below the national average, but is improving because of recent actions taken by the school.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a positive attitude to school and work well on their own when given the opportunity.
- Pupils enjoy very good relationships with the staff and one another, and are considerate and respectful.
- The behaviour of pupils in lessons and around school is often very good.
- Staff provide very good role models to develop pupils' ability to consider the needs and feelings of others.

## Commentary

9. Attendance is below the national average despite the good efforts made by the school towards improvement. This is mainly due to a small number of pupils who are irregular in their attendance or who take holidays during school time. A minority of pupils arrive late for school.

### Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.1	School data	0.0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

10. Pupils' attitudes and values remain at the high standard found at the time of the last inspection. Attitudes to learning are good, including those of pupils who have special educational needs. Pupils respond well to the praise and rewards they receive for good work and behaviour. They are proud of their good efforts and appreciate the approval they receive from staff. In most classes, teachers present lessons through interesting, challenging and enjoyable activities that prompt enthusiastic and keen participation from pupils. Pupils approach activities positively. This is because teachers and teaching assistants provide an encouraging, supportive atmosphere for learning through their sensitive, considerate and good-humoured approach. However, in a small number of lessons where pupils are given too few opportunities to take an active part in their learning, pupils are less attentive.
11. Pupils enjoy very good relationships with each other. Their relationships with staff are good and this results in high levels of trust. This is because staff are considered to be kind and are seen to take pupils' concerns seriously, dealing with them effectively. Staff also provide good role models and this develops pupils' ability to consider the needs and feelings of others.
12. Pupils' behaviour in and around school is very good. Although there were three fixed-term exclusions in 2004 there have been none in the current year. In lessons, pupils show respect for staff and try hard to follow instructions. This is because staff have high expectations, make frequent positive comments and praise good behaviour. Pupils place a high value on this praise and rewards. Teachers also have very well established, clear routines and lessons are generally well structured so pupils know what is expected. This means that pupils work well independently of adults. These routines extend to pupils' movement around school, which, as a consequence, is well ordered and calm.

### Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

### Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
230	3	0

*The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

13. Pupils are orderly and calm during breaks, and conduct themselves well. They organise games such as football and skipping and play well together. This is because all staff have high expectations of them and pupils try hard to meet them. Pupils are well supervised during breaks and at lunchtime and staff and pupils often take opportunities to talk together and build good relationships at these times.
14. Spiritual development is satisfactory. Pupils develop a growing understanding of their own feelings and they also show good understanding and respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. This is because they are given good opportunities to explore these issues through self-expression, such as contributing to an interactive display on poverty in Africa, which enable pupils to share their thoughts. Moral and social development is very good. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong and, because of the high expectations of the staff and the very clear guidance given, their actions demonstrate willingness to abide by the agreed rules. The school has a very inclusive approach, and staff go beyond what is normally expected to make sure that pupils feel welcome and secure. In addition, pupils' independence in managing their contacts with each other successfully is well developed because they are taught about fairness, sharing and taking turns.
15. Pupils' cultural development is good as a result of the opportunities provided to interact with the local community and to explore the beliefs and way of life of other people through the curriculum. They also benefit from the enrichment provided by visitors to the school and school visits. They also enjoy learning about their own culture and how it has changed, through their work in local history and geography.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education is good overall. Teaching is mostly good and results in good learning. The curriculum is good and is enriched by a good range of additional activities. Pupils are very well cared for and they receive good support and guidance for their personal development. Relationships with parents, other schools and the community are good.

### **Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teaching in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 is good and it is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. However, the checks made on pupils' progress and achievements are unsatisfactory, except in the Foundation Stage where they are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage, Year 1 and Year 2 are good and result in good achievement for pupils.
- There is particularly good teaching in Year 5.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and as a result, pupils have very good attitudes to learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants make sure that all pupils are included in activities that help them to learn.
- Marking does not help pupils to improve their work sufficiently.
- Monitoring of how well different groups of pupils are doing and setting targets as a result is unsatisfactory.

### **Commentary**

16. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. It is very good in the nursery. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together. They know the children very well and match the levels

of challenge in the activities they provide very well to meet children's needs. They plan and teach a variety of interesting and motivating activities in a way that helps children of all capabilities to learn effectively. The school's commitment to an inclusive approach is very evident in these early years and can be seen in the way in which teachers and teaching assistants include children with significant levels of special educational needs in whole-class and small group activities. As a result these children are very well integrated and make good progress throughout the school. The assessment of children's progress and achievement is good in the Foundation Stage.

17. Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are mostly good and some are very good. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils, which have a very positive effect on pupils' attitudes and learning. Teachers use praise and positive comments well, encouraging and supporting pupils to try their best. This gives pupils confidence and as a result, they try hard. Teachers and teaching assistants generally set clear and high expectations, and pupils' behaviour is managed in a consistent way. This helps to promote good achievement because there are few disruptions to learning. In most subjects, teachers match activities well to pupils' capabilities. However, in some subjects such as mathematics, science and history, too much of pupils' individual work is carried out on worksheets which restrict opportunities for pupils to learn how to organise their work independently and to develop their reasoning. In lessons where the same worksheet is provided for the whole class, there is sometimes insufficient challenge for more capable pupils. In addition, the lower attainers are unable to read the text sufficiently well to carry out the tasks. Although teachers mark pupils' work regularly, they give insufficient help to enable them to improve their work.
18. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching and learning is more variable. Most lessons have the good qualities that are a feature of the teaching elsewhere in the school, such as very good relationships, consistent management of pupils' behaviour and the provision of interesting and varied activities taught in a stimulating way. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are organised by their levels of attainment for English and mathematics. The skill with which teachers match the work to pupils' needs varies. In Year 5, staff provide appropriate levels of challenge and support for pupils of different capabilities and as a result, all pupils make good progress. In other year groups, pupils of average attainment and the more capable are taught together and lower attaining pupils are supported separately. Whilst this arrangement is helping the lower attainers to achieve well, it is less effective for the average attainers. Some of these pupils are finding the work too difficult because teachers are not adapting it sufficiently to meet their needs.
19. Pupils with special educational needs are often very well supported. Where they have specialist support, this is very effective. Skilful use of specialist equipment allows some pupils to reach standards above those expected nationally. A good example of this was seen in a lesson in which a pupil was able to contribute to a literacy lesson using a computer-based programme that included a voice synthesiser. In general, however, the high levels of classroom support that help the younger pupils to make good progress are not available in Years 3 to 6 and problems are not always picked up during lessons. The school provides well for a small number of pupils who are gifted in literacy and numeracy by arranging for them to work with the year group above their own. This helps them to achieve well. Although work is marked regularly, feedback to pupils is not related to individual targets and does not help them to understand how they can improve. Overall systems for checking the progress that pupils make in their work are unsatisfactory. They are not sufficiently rigorous and are not being used well enough to evaluate the effectiveness of plans and teaching methods or to make the necessary changes to delivery that would improve achievement.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 37 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	6 (16%)	19 (51%)	11 (30%)	1 (3%)	0	0

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*



## **The curriculum**

The school provides a good curriculum overall and there is a good range of additional activities outside normal lessons. The accommodation and resources are good in the Foundation Stage and are satisfactory in the rest of the school.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is very good because it includes them in all activities.
- The curriculum is enriched by visits, visitors to the school and a good range of activities outside lessons.
- The provision of pupils' personal, social and health education is good.
- Some aspects of the ICT curriculum are under-emphasised and the use of ICT does not support the curriculum in other subjects enough.
- Too many tasks are presented to pupils on worksheets and this limits their opportunities to work creatively.

## **Commentary**

20. The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides well for the pupils in the school. The acting headteacher has a clear vision that places pupils' access to curricular opportunities at the heart of the school ethos. This is being successfully realised in the school's practices. The curriculum has improved since the time of the last inspection and fully meets statutory requirements.
21. The school is beginning to make good use of cross-curricular links between subjects to make learning interesting and meaningful. For example, pupils in Year 5 studying 'Life in Britain since 1948' in history were also able to develop skills in English, art and design, music and researching a range of media. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good use of the school's garden and wildlife area by searching for and recording plants and animals as part of their work in science. In these activities, pupils enjoy collaborative practical work as well as the opportunity to explore and investigate. This makes a good contribution to their social, cultural and aesthetic development as do lessons in German that are taught across the school. One subject in which links are not as strong is ICT, as pupils do not have enough opportunity to practise their skills within the classroom. For example, in their work in literacy, word-processing skills are not used sufficiently to draft and present their writing. In too many lessons, the same tasks are presented on a worksheet to all the pupils and this practice does not take sufficient account of their different needs.
22. The curriculum provision meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs well. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal development through its strong ethos, very good relationships and personal, social and health education lessons. Drugs and sex education is effectively given within the framework of the curriculum. Pupils have good opportunities to play an active part as citizens through their contribution to the day-to-day running of the school and by participating in the school council.
23. Arrangements for transition between the key stages are effective, particularly between reception and Year 1. There are good arrangements in place to welcome children into the school, for example through home visits in the nursery, and transition into the reception classes. Effective links with the local secondary school enable good transition into Year 7 by pupils in Year 6 who visit the school.

24. Provision of opportunities for learning outside the school day is good and pupils engage in a wide range of activities, such as football supported by Sunderland AFC, and a gardening club ably led by the caretaker. Within the curriculum, further experiences to enrich pupils' learning are also provided through educational visits and visitors to the school.
25. Resources are generally satisfactory and accommodation is good throughout the school. The school building is clean and attractive, with very good displays of work in classrooms and in corridors, providing a stimulating and secure environment in which pupils learn. Staffing and curriculum resources are used efficiently although insufficient use is made of computers in classrooms. The ICT suite is used well and equipment such as the interactive whiteboards and digital cameras are beginning to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. The school has made very good use of the inner courtyard, where pupils' own designs and artwork have been used alongside a practical garden and a rich wildlife area. This has resulted in an attractive environment for learning that supports many areas of the curriculum and is a stimulating resource that pupils enjoy. Staff are suitably deployed and contribute effectively to the good provision for support and care offered to pupils in the school.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The school provides very well for the care, welfare, health and safety of its pupils. Pupils receive good support and guidance, especially for their personal development. The school involves pupils very well in its work.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school gives all pupils very good support and guidance to promote their good behaviour and personal development.
- The school council makes a very good contribution to the life and development of the school.
- There are very good procedures to ensure the care and welfare of pupils.

### **Commentary**

26. Very good relationships throughout the school promote pupils' good behaviour and personal development. Pupils like the rewards of the 'Star Cards' to encourage their achievement and effort in class. Pupils in Year 6 act as monitors and are very sure of their role to look after younger pupils and those with particular needs.
27. The school mentor, in particular, gives very good support to any pupils who find school unsettling or who lead difficult home lives. This support is very effective in enabling these vulnerable pupils to cope well in school. The pupils themselves talked positively about being able to speak to the mentor any time that they had a problem that they wished to discuss, and all said that they felt better afterwards.
28. At the centre of the very effective procedures to involve pupils in the work of the school is the school council. This consists of two elected representatives for each class from Year 1 to Year 6. It is very well organised. At the start of the year, class meetings talk about what pupils like best about school and what they would like to be improved. The whole council then draws up a programme to allocate these topics to the weekly meetings when classes meet to discuss them. In this way, the full council receives the views of all pupils. Topics cover a very wide range from play equipment on the yard to changes to assemblies to include more involvement of pupils. Members of the council are convinced that their views are taken very seriously and

that they are making a difference in school. This system very effectively develops pupils' understanding of the democratic process and their responsibilities of living in a community.

29. The school has the care and welfare of pupils at the heart of its work. Child protection arrangements are fully in place and there are very clear procedures to care for pupils with medical needs. The breakfast club and the wrap around care are very good examples of the school's provision to support pupils and to ease the induction of children into the nursery. Parents are very sure that their children are well cared for and consider this to be a strength of the school.
30. The processes of assessing and monitoring pupils' achievement and progress as they move through the school are not thorough enough to ensure that teachers know if pupils begin to fall behind in their work. All teachers mark their pupils' work regularly but this marking is more helpful in some classes than others. Some teachers miss this opportunity to help pupils understand how they can make their work better. For example, praise is sometimes given for work that is not up to the expected standard. The exceptions are in the Foundation Stage where monitoring and tracking of children's progress are good and the monitoring of pupils who have a special education need is also good. This helps them to achieve well.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school promotes good links with parents, other schools and the community. This all helps to benefit pupils' learning and experience.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good links with parents involve them well in the work of the school.
- The school takes many opportunities to link with the community and other schools to promote pupils' personal development and learning.

#### **Commentary**

31. Parents are very supportive of the school because they feel that they are made welcome, that the school always has time for them and that any concerns and questions are dealt with straight away. The school is very active in supporting parents through the efforts of the school mentor's work with individual parents and families who are having difficulties. Parents also show their support of their children's learning by ensuring that homework is regularly carried out. This is having a good impact on pupils' achievement. However, the governing body is concerned at the number of pupils taken on holiday during term time and has felt it necessary to warn parents of the effect this has on their children's learning. The school keeps parents very well informed about its work through the regular fortnightly newsletters, which also contain information on community events. Annual reports on pupils' progress are written in a clear style for parents to understand what their children do well and what they find difficult. The nursery also works well in partnership with parents, for example by providing them with an assessment booklet in which they can play their part in recording their children's achievements.
32. The school uses its links with the community and other schools well to extend pupils' experiences. For example, the very good partnership with Sunderland Football Club has led to regular coaching and skills sessions at lunchtime on fitness and promoting teamwork. A local bakery sponsors the breakfast club and parents report good support from the community police officer. Pupils have also benefited from sports sessions run

by staff from the local secondary school. The school choir often performs for the local community.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Governance, leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The acting headteacher, staff and governors are successful in providing a secure and positive learning environment in which all pupils are valued and fully included.
- The governors and acting headteacher have a clear vision for improving the school.
- The acting headteacher is providing strong and focused leadership during a time of change.
- Insufficient emphasis has been placed on raising achievement since the last inspection.

## Commentary

33. Leadership and management were good at the time of the last inspection. Since then, the school has maintained its strengths in many aspects of its work, and governors and staff continue to share the same vision of inclusive education for all. At the present time, the leadership and management of the school are undergoing a period of change. A new headteacher has been appointed to start in the autumn term and many of the governors are relatively recent appointments, having served for under a year.
34. The deputy headteacher, as acting headteacher, is currently providing good leadership to the school. Since taking on the role at the beginning of the year, she and the senior staff and governors have completed a full self-review of the work of the school that has highlighted the need to refocus the school development plan on raising standards. Currently, the priorities in the plan are insufficiently related to the weaknesses in achievement that an analysis of school performance data is indicating.
35. Since the last inspection, leadership and management have focused on: improving the environment for learning; creating a secure, inclusive and positive climate for learning; making sure that the curriculum is interesting and varied; and providing for pupils' personal development. In all these aspects, the school has been most successful. However, insufficient emphasis has been given to assessing pupils' achievement and tracking how well different groups of pupils are doing as they move through the school. As a result, school priorities and decisions on the allocation of resource have not been driven by accurate information about how well pupils are achieving. For example, much of the support from teaching assistants has been concentrated in the younger age groups. While this is resulting in good learning and achievement up to age seven, some older pupils are underachieving.
36. The school has invested time and effort into improving the skills of subject co-ordinators so that they are better able to monitor the quality of provision throughout the school. Leaders of the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are beginning to analyse standards and progress, and they are providing satisfactory but improving leadership and management in these subjects. All subject leaders have produced subject development plans but these do not always focus well enough on raising standards. Other team leaders in the school, such as phase leaders, are providing good leadership to their teams. The leadership and management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs are good.
37. There has been a satisfactory approach to staff development that is clearly linked to performance review procedures. However, there has been insufficient specialist training in subjects such as mathematics to ensure that all teachers have adequate subject knowledge to bring about the rise in standards that are needed. New staff have been very well supported and newly qualified teachers are making a significant contribution to the development of the school.
38. The school's finances are managed well. The school is very aware of the impact of the declining number of pupils attending the school and plans are being made to deal with the effects of this in future years.
39. The governance of the school is satisfactory. The role of governors in the life and work of the school is developing well. They have a good overview of the main strengths and weaknesses and a clear vision for its future. The recent process to appoint a new headteacher has helped to focus them on the need to extend their work into challenging and supporting staff in their

efforts to raise achievement. They, together with the new leadership and management team, are in a good position to help the school to move forward.

**Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005**

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	755,565
Total expenditure	735,334
Expenditure per pupil	3,197

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-4,036
Balance carried forward to the next	16,195

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

#### **The Foundation Stage**

40. Five lessons were seen in the nursery and reception classes. Inspectors examined children's work, discussed their learning with them and spoke to staff.
41. **Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good.** Children enter nursery with a wide range of capabilities but overall standards are below average for their age. However, they achieve well and the majority of children are on track to reach the early learning goals by the end of reception except in the area of communication, language and literacy where their capability is below the average expected for children of this age. There are many more boys than girls in the reception class and meeting the needs of both groups has been a challenge for the school. However, the achievement of both groups is good because teachers and other staff have a carefully considered, effective approach to encouraging all children to learn in purposeful, active ways. All children achieve well because the teaching is good overall with many very good features. The Foundation Stage is well led and efficiently managed. Teachers and other staff work together very well and they have a very inclusive approach to all children. This is evident in the very good quality provision for children with special educational needs and is the reason why these children make such good progress. There have been significant improvements to the internal and external accommodation since the last inspection, which means that all children now learn through an appropriate and rich curriculum that is well matched to their needs and interests. The strong links with parents and the pre-school care facility based at the school make a positive contribution to the children's learning.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers and staff provide many opportunities for children of all abilities to approach activities positively and confidently with growing independence
- There is a strong sense of community because of the very inclusive atmosphere throughout the Foundation Stage.

#### **Commentary**

42. Children have very well developed personal, social and emotional skills throughout the Foundation Stage, and a significant number are on track to exceed the expectations for their age. This means that children's achievement is very good given the below average capability on entry to nursery. Their behaviour is generally very good; they listen and follow instructions well and work and play constructively. This is because teachers and staff have high expectations that are frequently and positively made clear to the children. In this way all staff in the Foundation Stage effectively add to the consistency of the positive behaviour management systems in place throughout the school. There are some children with significant special needs in the Foundation Stage and they are included very successfully in the large majority of whole-class and small group activities. Staff provide good role models for children so their



relationships with each other are very supportive. For example, children make friendly gestures to each other where spoken communication is difficult and have learned greetings in sign language so all can be included at the beginning of every nursery session. The understanding shown by children is remarkable given their age. Children of all capabilities work well in small groups and independently. They take turns waiting patiently, share equipment when working together, and concentrate for sustained periods without direct adult support. A good example was seen in the reception class when a small group of boys and girls worked together well to build a tall, complex construction.

43. There are very well established routines in the nursery and reception classes so that children know what to do and what is expected of them. These add to the secure, calm and orderly atmosphere so that children focus their attention on the learning provided in the activities.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a clear emphasis on developing basic skills in reading and writing.
- Teachers and staff provide good role models to develop children's spoken language but there are too few planned opportunities where adults are involved with children's play to encourage them to talk.

### **Commentary**

44. The majority of children are not on track to reach the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage in communication, language and literacy. However, most children achieve well and make good progress from very low starting points because the teachers and other staff have a very positive approach to this area of learning. There is a great deal of print on display in both classrooms and the early stage of the reading scheme is used well to interest children in reading. This is particularly evident in the nursery where children make life-size models of the main characters and use them in their play. Their high level of interest in books is clear when they ask for books they have seen earlier to share together in a small group. During such activities the children show a good early understanding of the conventions in reading, such as reading from left to right.
45. The majority of the activities for reading in the reception class are in line with the national strategy for teaching literacy. Children are developing satisfactory skills for using letter sounds to read simple words. The teacher has been successful in developing children's interest in books; boys as well as girls frequently choose to look at books during their free choice time. The more capable children take great delight in recognising words such as 'everyone' and pointing out that there is a full stop at the end of a sentence. In addition the weekly short session for learning some very basic German adds an enjoyable, active opportunity to develop children's reading skills.
46. Many opportunities are provided for children to develop writing skills throughout the Foundation Stage. The more capable children in the nursery use their developing skills to write signs confidently for the role-play area and for the three-dimensional model garden. The reception class teacher's very encouraging approach to writing prompts some children to do some at home as well as in the class. This is because the teacher places a high value on the activity by rewarding children's efforts.

47. The majority of children enter nursery with well below average capability in spoken language; consequently few speak confidently and freely. This is despite the teachers and other staff providing good models in their use of appropriate specific vocabulary to extend children's knowledge. All staff use talk a great deal in guided activities with children and their descriptions and explanations are clear. However, there are too few prompts for children to develop their ability and confidence to talk more during their play.

## **Mathematical development**

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well to reach standards that are in line with their capabilities at the end of the Foundation Stage.
- Many appropriate and practical opportunities are provided for children to develop their understanding and knowledge of mathematics.

### **Commentary**

48. Teachers build mathematics' learning skilfully into everyday activities and this helps to develop children's understanding well. Much of the counting is done through number rhymes and songs, for example in the nursery, where the routines for the day are described through a number song in which children count to 10. The activity in both classes to set out the day's activities is also used effectively to develop children's sense of time and the ability to sequence.
49. The majority of children in the reception class count confidently to 10 and the more capable write the numerals to 10 legibly. Children at all levels make clear progress and most can match objects accurately to numbers up to 5. By the end of reception class the majority of children achieve well and reach standards that are in line with expectations for their age. This is because the work is well matched to children's capabilities and provides good levels of challenge for the more able such as in the nursery when children are asked how many more balls are needed to fill the empty spaces up to 6.
50. By the end of reception class children are developing a sound understanding of other mathematical concepts. They confidently name common two-dimensional shapes and sort objects well. The staff make good use of additional facilities such as the school garden for children to consolidate and practise their mathematical skills through first-hand observations and experiences.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers provide good first-hand opportunities through observation and investigation to stimulate children's interest and arouse their curiosity.
- There is a good range of role-play activities to help children make connections between areas of learning.

### **Commentary**

51. Children in the nursery have good opportunities to learn about how plants grow through planting beans and dictating a diary about their observations. This results in the more capable children remembering the words 'roots' and 'shoots' in preparation for the independent planting activity. Role-play activities are also linked to the garden centre theme, which helps children to extend their knowledge of the tools and

equipment found in garden sheds. However, when there is no adult to build on their very limited knowledge through role-play language, children playing in this area do not achieve as much as they could.

52. Staff in the Foundation Stage make good use of the school's garden to increase children's knowledge of animals and plants by giving them first-hand experience in observing changes. Children's capabilities are below those expected for their age in this area of learning with only one child in the nursery being able to name small garden and field animals with confidence.
53. Children in both classes have access to a computer and by the end of reception they achieve well to reach standards that are in line with their age in using a mouse successfully to draw, colour and print a picture. However, there are too few opportunities for children to use everyday technology and programmable toys to support their learning, which limits their achievement.
54. Teaching is good overall in this area of learning. Good opportunities are provided for children to learn to select appropriate materials and how to join them together as they make and construct objects. Staff provide just the right amount of support, for example in demonstrating how best to use a sticky tape machine. This results in children achieving well; most demonstrate good levels of independence and confidence in using these skills throughout the Foundation Stage. However, children's lack of spoken language skills hamper their ability to explain the choices they make.

## **Physical development**

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is good teaching to develop children's dexterity.
- There are insufficient opportunities for children to develop physically through energetic play moving in a large area.

### **Commentary**

55. Children are developing their ability to use and control small tools and equipment well and are on track to reach the early learning goals in this aspect of physical development. They achieve well because of good teaching. All staff provide the right amount of support and guidance to help children accomplish challenging tasks successfully and to develop their independence. In the nursery children display great delight in accomplishing the fiddly task of manipulating a strip of card through a narrow slit. The more capable children in the reception class have good control of crayons and scissors so that colouring and cutting are generally careful and neat.
56. There are adequate resources in the outdoor learning area for children to develop their ability to climb, balance and move with awareness of their own and others' safety. However, there are too few large wheeled toys for children to learn how to control the speed and direction of travel as well as to provide sufficiently good levels of physical exertion. Currently reception class children have just one lesson of physical education each week, which is inadequate. This has been recognised as part of a whole-school evaluation of provision for physical education and there are plans to increase this amount of time as part of the programme to raise standards.

## **Creative development**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching for creative development is good overall and sometimes very good.
- A very good range of activities is provided which interests and enthuses the children.

## Commentary

57. Teachers and staff have considerable strengths in creative development, which they use effectively in activities that interest and engage the children. It is because of the often very good teaching and the frequent, well-structured activities in this area of learning that children achieve very highly in some aspects and are on track to exceed the early learning goals. For example, during an exceptionally good quality music activity in the reception class led by a teaching assistant, children were able to choose appropriate instruments and write simple symbols to guide their playing as they represented animals in a song. Children achieve so highly because of the teaching assistant's very good knowledge of the subject and of how to involve children actively in learning. Almost all children enjoy singing the songs that reinforce the daily routines throughout the Foundation Stage; they keep together and remember tunes and words as would be expected for children of this age.
58. In the nursery, children respond very well to opportunities to create items to add to their role-play such as the decorated canopy for the garden centre. They also demonstrate good levels of concentration and creativity in making a three-dimensional model of the school garden. This is because the teacher works on her own aspect of the garden alongside the children, engaging them through her talk about what she is doing.
59. The children do not achieve as much as they could in imaginative role-play because they do not speak freely and their responses are mainly just one or two words in length even when prompted by an adult. In addition too few opportunities are provided for children to play imaginatively with adults.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in reading from the very low skills they have on entry to the school.
- Pupils' listening skills are good, but there are insufficient opportunities in some classes for pupils to develop their spoken language.
- Standards in writing are not high enough and the current school development plan is not detailed enough to bring about improvement.
- Marking is inconsistent and does not provide pupils with a clear view of how they can improve.

## Commentary

60. Standards in the Year 2 national tests have shown an upward trend since the last inspection and in 2004 they were in line with the national average in reading and below the average in writing. Pupils' attainment in reading was well above that of similar schools and in line with it in writing. At Year 6, standards in 2004 were well below the national average and those of similar schools and there has been a downward trend since the last inspection. However, high levels of mobility of pupils into the school between Years 3 and 6 have had an impact on attainment levels at Year 6. In 2004 almost a third of pupils had joined the school between Years 3 and 6 and there was a high proportion of lower attaining pupils in the year group in 2004.

61. Pupils currently in Years 1 and 2 are achieving well and are building on the good achievement they make in the Foundation Stage in developing their communication, literacy and language skills. Pupils make good progress particularly in Years 1 and 2 in overcoming the linguistic and other barriers to learning that so many pupils have to overcome before they can speak, read and write at expected levels. Their good progress is due to the high levels of support from teaching assistants and the good teaching and learning. This ensures that the work is well matched to pupils' abilities and is delivered in an interesting and stimulating way that motivates the pupils effectively. For older pupils, achievement is satisfactory overall. The grouping of older pupils by their levels of attainment is not always effective. In Year 5, grouping pupils by ability into three groups is used effectively by teachers to provide challenge for all pupils. In Years 3, 4 and 6, when pupils of average and higher ability are taught together, the work for average ability pupils is not always well matched to their needs. There are not the levels of additional support that are available in Years 1 and 2 to ensure that these pupils can access the work and as a result some pupils underachieve. Inspection evidence indicates there is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls. Despite an increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs, these pupils achieve well because of the high levels of individual support, individual learning plans and specialised resources which meet their needs very well and which enable them, in some cases, to attain standards above expectations.
62. Pupils enter Year 1 with standards of speaking and listening well below those usually found. In most classes, pupils concentrate well and their listening skills are good. However, the teaching of these aspects varies across the school. For example, pupils in Year 1 and 2 successfully used speaking and listening skills to devise their own questions in response to a shared Big Book about toys. The teacher skilfully questioned them so that they were able to construct questions, find the information using 'contents' and 'index' and make their own sentence answers, which they shared in class discussion. One lower attaining pupil was able to read and write effectively about a mechanical toy: "It needs to be wound up with a key." In some classes, drama and role-play are used well to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. In Year 5, pupils worked in groups to perform the poem *From a Railway Carriage*. However, in some classes, particularly in Year 3, there are fewer opportunities for such discussion and progress is slower. The school has identified speaking and listening as an area for further development so that there are consistent approaches in all classes.
63. In reading, standards are in line with those expected nationally by Year 2 and Year 6. This represents good achievement, particularly by the end of Year 2. The teaching of basic reading skills is good. Younger pupils are heard to read on their own and in groups, and extra reading sessions are provided for older pupils. Reading is well supported by parents listening to their children read at home. Reading diaries are used effectively as a means of communication between home and school and, as a result, pupils throughout the school have good attitudes and enjoy reading. Since the last inspection, the library has been extensively developed. It is currently in a temporary location because of building work, but it has a very good range of catalogued fiction and non-fiction books. The very good library provision supports pupils' ability to read for pleasure and the development of research skills. The school rightly places a high emphasis on developing these skills and pupils make good progress across the school. In the best lessons, for example in Year 5, pupils applied their research skills when using the Internet and CD-ROM to access information for a project on 'Life in Britain since 1948'.

64. Standards in writing are below average by Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well in writing due to the good and often very good teaching. Teachers provide work that is interesting and pupils therefore enjoy learning. They develop and practise their writing skills through a wide range of activities. In Years 3 to 6, whilst achievement is satisfactory, pupils do not achieve as well as they do in reading. Pupils write for an increasingly wide range of purposes, including letters, instructions, diaries and stories. Pupils write short extracts from different styles of writing but they do not have sufficient opportunities to write detailed imaginative stories, diaries or accounts. The writing of all pupils, including higher attaining pupils, lacks flair and whilst it is clear that pupils have limited vocabulary, there is insufficient emphasis on encouraging pupils to use interesting words or phrases. There are not enough opportunities for them to re-draft their work to improve its quality, for example through the use of computers. Although there is a whole-school policy for spelling, there are variations across the school and teachers miss opportunities to encourage the use of dictionaries and thesauri or pupils' own spelling books. Handwriting has been an area for development and a consistent approach for joined writing has been introduced. However, standards of presentation still vary across the school and taught handwriting skills are not always transferred to work in other subjects. All work in books is regularly marked and praise is given for good work. However, marking does not always inform pupils of how they can improve.
65. Subject leadership is satisfactory and is improving. The subject leader is a good role model for colleagues. Monitoring of planning takes place and test results are analysed to identify weaknesses. However, tracking of pupils' progress, setting them targets to improve and monitoring of provision through scrutiny of work and classroom observation are not yet rigorous enough. The school development plan does not provide a clear enough view of how standards in English are to be raised. The management of the subject is satisfactory. There is good support for staff and resources are well organised and of good quality.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

66. Most pupils are competent readers and have well-developed research skills. Many enjoy reading. These skills help them access work throughout the curriculum successfully. Their comparatively weaker skills in writing restrict the achievement of some pupils, in religious education and history for example. However, there is some good use of other subjects to extend pupils' reading and writing skills, for example in history and science. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 label diagrams, use charts and describe experiments in science efficiently. Across the school, insufficient use is made of ICT to support and extend skills in literacy. However, older pupils use computers effectively for research and to produce *PowerPoint* presentations.

## **MATHEMATICS**

The overall provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well in number work because the school has concentrated on the basic skills in mathematics.
- Pupils have good attitudes to mathematics, which enable them to make good use of their time in lessons.
- The school has been slow to sharpen the focus on raising standards across the full range of aspects of mathematics, particularly in Years 3 to 6.



- There is good support for lower ability pupils and those with special educational needs.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and many of the good features are seen in Years 1 and 2.

## Commentary

67. Standards reached by pupils in Year 2 in 2004 in the national tests were well below the average in comparison with all schools nationally. This is similar to the picture at the time of the last inspection; however, the trend since then shows a slight improvement although this is not consistent from year to year. The results in 2004 were in line with those in similar schools. Boys did slightly better than girls and better than boys nationally which indicates that the school's plans for improving the achievement of boys are having a positive effect. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in mathematics continues to be well below the national average. Currently, the work of pupils in Year 2 indicates that they reach standards in number work that are mostly in line with expectations for their age. They count on and use number lines accurately and they make successful links in their learning to add multiples of 10. They make sensible estimates and explain their reasoning well. For example, a higher ability Year 2 pupil used the phrase "is more than" very well in explaining how he knew that 10 was closer to 9 than 14. Less capable pupils are not so quick to spot patterns to help with counting; nevertheless they make good progress in number work from low levels on entry to the school.
68. Since the last inspection standards reached in the national tests by pupils in Year 6 have declined and in 2004 were well below the national average. The results were also below the average in similar schools. The school has recognised that pupils are capable of achieving more and have put in place measures to improve the provision, particularly for pupils of different abilities throughout Years 3 to 6. Good use is being made of the opportunities presented through a local initiative for raising standards and improving pupils' achievement. Additional teachers are employed and, along with the limited number of teaching assistants, this is improving the learning opportunities for pupils. As a result pupils' achievement is improving, particularly in Year 5 where work is well matched to pupils' needs. In Year 6 the standards seen in pupils' work indicates that they are on track to reach higher standards this year. The more capable pupils achieve well and show a good understanding of equivalent fractions. They convert percentages successfully in calculations and they use negative numbers accurately. The majority of pupils, including the most capable, have poorly developed language skills, which hamper their ability to explain their thinking clearly. The achievement of lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs is good because they are provided for well by additional staff and their work is usually well matched to their ability.
69. Throughout the school the often very good relationships between teachers, staff and pupils have a very positive effect on pupils' attitudes to learning. In all lessons pupils listen and respond well. Teachers use praise and positive comments well and they encourage and support appropriately. Consequently pupils have good levels of confidence and try hard. In all classes pupils' behaviour is generally very good. This is because teachers and other staff set out clear, high expectations and there is a consistent response to pupils. The very good management of behaviour results in a positive atmosphere in lessons and no disruptions to learning.
70. Teaching in mathematics is satisfactory overall with some good features across the school. In a very good lesson in the mixed Year 1/2 class the teacher provided tasks

that involved pupils actively and led an excellent final part of the lesson that built on pupils' knowledge to extend their thinking very well. Where teachers' planning is good it focuses on what the pupils will learn rather than what they will do but this is not consistent in every class in the school. Lessons are usually based on materials in the National Numeracy Strategy and match the age-related expectations for the majority of pupils in each year group. However, too much of the work set for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is based on worksheets which restricts the opportunities for pupils to learn how to organise their work independently and to develop their reasoning. Throughout the school, teachers' marking is generally accurate and up to date. However, too little guidance is given to develop pupils' understanding of how they can improve their work.

71. In a small number of lessons, such as that in the Year 1/2 class, learning is particularly good because resources such as interactive whiteboards are used to demonstrate key points clearly. However, in other lessons such as that for Year 6 pupils on the properties of two-dimensional shapes, the teacher's explanations were not as clear as they needed to be because of the ineffective use of resources. Some teachers give pupils the opportunity to explain their thinking to a partner and this is beginning to improve their ability to explain and reason.
72. The leadership and management of mathematics are satisfactory and improving. Pupils' achievements and progress are now checked regularly to ensure that they have work that is well matched to their needs and capability. Aspects of mathematics that hinder pupils' learning have been chosen as whole-school targets and this sharper focus on standards is an improvement since the last inspection. A good example of this is the current drive to improve pupils' quick recall of number facts. However, there has been significant movement of teaching staff over recent years and there has been insufficient specialist training so far to ensure that all teachers have the secure subject knowledge needed so that standards rise and pupils' achievement improves.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

73. Pupils handle information and present it clearly and have sufficiently well-developed basic mathematical skills, which they apply successfully across the curriculum. They are given opportunities to apply their skills particularly in science and ICT. So far there is only a limited impact on standards because the opportunities are not planned systematically across the whole-school curriculum.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in science are rising because of good teaching and pupils' positive attitudes to their learning.
- Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in science have improved because of an increased emphasis on investigative work.
- Opportunities for pupils to follow their own lines of enquiry are sometimes limited by the use of prescriptive worksheets.
- Some aspects of the leadership and management of the science curriculum do not contribute to the good progress being made in raising standards.

## Commentary

74. Standards in science are in line with the national average by Year 6, and, compared with pupils' attainment on entry to the school, which is below average, this represents good achievement. National test results over the past four years have been inconsistent and either below or at the national average, as they were at the time of the last inspection. In 2004 test results were well below average in Year 6 and teacher assessment shows standards below average in Year 2. A particular emphasis on investigative work throughout the school, along with more time given to science, has led to the higher achievement of all pupils, including those who have special educational needs.
75. Pupils begin to develop their understanding of scientific method at an early stage. They are encouraged to identify problems to be solved, such as testing the water resistance of fabrics. They suggest simple hypotheses through challenging questioning by the teacher; for example, "Why do you think a rabbit would need to have good sight and hearing?" Throughout the school, pupils develop a good range of scientific skills such as sorting, counting, classifying, measuring and applying criteria, which they use effectively. They also learn a clearly structured format based on conventional scientific method and how to collect and record data. However, the breadth of enquiry undertaken by more capable pupils is often confined by the use of too many worksheets. As a result, pupils make slower progress in developing scientific understanding, and individual lines of enquiry are obstructed. In Year 2, pupils used the enclosed garden to good effect for collecting and identifying different kinds of plants and animals. This provided a good opportunity to undertake a first-hand investigation and they were excited about what they discovered.
76. Teaching is good overall and this, together with pupils' enthusiasm for science, enables them to make good progress. In the best lessons, pupils are challenged with interesting problems and are encouraged to solve them by applying the skills and knowledge they have learned previously. Teachers usually give good explanations and tell pupils what they are expected to learn and this provides them with a clear focus. However, occasional factual inaccuracies and lack of guidance on how pupils can improve their work make progress slower.
77. In the course of recording data and findings in science, opportunities to make best use of pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are missed. This is because pupils are often directed in their tasks rather than being encouraged to design and record their own investigations, following well-structured and detailed class and group discussions.
78. The leadership and management of science are satisfactory. The introduction of a clear approach to the teaching and learning of scientific methods and an emphasis on investigative work are having a positive effect on pupils' achievement. However, teaching and learning in science are not sufficiently well monitored and an effective system to assess and track pupils' individual progress is not in place. Because of this, teachers often set the same task for all pupils in the class, irrespective of their capability. The school has developed a good range of suitable resources for science and they are used effectively.

## Information and communication technology (ICT)

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

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of the well-equipped computer suite.
- Particular emphasis is given to the modelling and control elements of the curriculum in Years 5 and 6 and pupils understand their practical applications.
- Insufficient use is made of ICT to support other subjects in the curriculum.

## Commentary

79. Standards are in line with national expectations by Year 2 and Year 6, as they were at the time of the last inspection. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and as a result pupils' achievement in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is satisfactory and they make steady progress. Pupils learn computer skills in a systematic progression as they pass through the school. By the time they reach Year 1 most pupils have good control of the mouse and can operate simple programs to make a story or paint a picture. They make steady progress and by the end of Year 2 most can create simple sentences and have learned the skills of simple word processing. Pupils continue to develop and broaden their range of skills and by Year 6 most develop competence in researching, communicating and controlling using computers. Some pupils have computers at home and with the opportunity for extra practice they generally make very good progress, including those who have special educational needs.
80. In the most effective lessons teachers use their good subject knowledge to ensure that pupils have opportunities to be creative in learning and practising their ICT skills. Teachers use effective questioning to consolidate prior learning and in the introduction of new objectives and skills. They anticipate and deal with likely technical difficulties that pupils may encounter, and this enables pupils to make progress, for example, in learning to use capital letters and spaces on the keyboard in Year 2. Some of the younger pupils are able to carry out complex operations with confidence and skill, for example logging on, locating a file, word-processing sentences, saving their work and logging off.
81. Some good teaching in Years 5 and 6 enables pupils to achieve well in the communication aspect of the subject. As a result, pupils devise multimedia presentations using *PowerPoint*, and are also able to use 'desk-top publishing' programs and the Internet for research in history. Pupils also acquire skills in modelling and control technology, first by learning to program vehicles such as 'turtles' and then by developing their skills to a higher level to simulate operational traffic lights. All pupils are well motivated and work collaboratively, taking turns sensibly at the computer in order to complete tasks successfully. Occasionally, pupils lack strategies when they encounter difficulties and, through an over-reliance on the teacher, they passively wait too long for assistance.
82. Whilst good use is made of the well-equipped ICT suite, pupils generally lack opportunities in the classroom to practise newly acquired skills. Classroom computers are often underused. Occasionally there is some good use of computers outside the ICT suite. Pupils in Year 5 made effective use of the Internet to research facts about Britain since 1948. However, pupils do not always benefit from using the range of available hardware and software that could support learning in other subjects; for example, pupils' use of digital cameras, the Internet, logo and control technology, measurement using sensors and other available software was less apparent. Pupils also have insufficient opportunities to evaluate, predict and interpret the use of ICT.

83. The subject leader recognises the need to develop the ICT curriculum further, providing opportunities for assessment and links with other subjects. Opportunities for monitoring and evaluating ICT provision would inform further planning and purchasing of resources. Staff expertise in ICT is currently variable and the school has a training programme in place to increase teachers' skills in aspects such as the use of interactive whiteboards. Adequate arrangements are in place to monitor the development of pupils' skills in ICT. The leadership and management of ICT are satisfactory overall.

### **ICT across the curriculum**

84. Lessons in the ICT suite reflect good work in skill development that has the potential to be used to support other subjects across the curriculum. Where ICT is used to support learning in subjects such as literacy, numeracy and history, it is useful and effective. However, this occurs too infrequently. Insufficient use is made of the classroom computers to support the lessons taught in the ICT suite. This means that pupils are not able to practise their ICT skills in supporting key concepts being taught in other curriculum areas.

### **HUMANITIES**

85. It was not possible to see sufficient lessons in **geography** to form an overall judgement about the provision in that subject. Pupils' work indicates, however, that standards are broadly average.
86. Pupils have good opportunities to explore the local area and build up their knowledge and skills through first-hand experiences. Younger pupils explore nearby streets and houses while older pupils use old maps to find out how the area in which they live has changed over time. Visits and field trips provide pupils with additional opportunities to increase their geographical understanding. Good use is made of the local environment to extend skills and consider issues of importance such as land use and environmental improvement. Some good work in Year 5 on the journey of a river is well illustrated in wall displays and demonstrates pupils' knowledge of the specialist vocabulary associated with landforms. In some other classes, pupils' work consists mainly of worksheets, and in these classes, progress is slower.

### **History**

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is some very good teaching of the subject and this ensures pupils' understanding of the use of evidence in their enquiries.
- Sometimes teachers use artefacts well to bring the subject to life.
- Pupils make good use of primary and secondary evidence to enable them to draw conclusions.
- In some classes there is insufficient emphasis on concepts and skills.

### **Commentary**

87. Standards of attainment by Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly in line with those usually found, and represent good achievement for the pupils, including those with special educational needs. Standards are similar to those at the time of the last inspection. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Where teaching is best, teachers create a sense of excitement and challenge to solve problems in an open-ended way. In one very effective lesson on exploring 'Life in Britain since

1948', pupils developed their research skills using a range of topics such as transport, music and technology as a focus. They used their ICT and literacy skills very effectively to gather and sort relevant evidence from primary and secondary sources before drawing their conclusions. This lesson had high challenge as well as excitement for the pupils and it served to develop their understanding and stimulate their interest in the subject. As a result of lessons like this one, pupils are keen to learn about history, develop their historical knowledge and gain a good understanding of the historical concepts and issues. Most older pupils have a clear understanding of time and this is gained through matching contemporary events and artefacts.

88. In some classes, lessons focus much more on facts about the period studied and pupils are given less opportunity to draw conclusions for themselves. These lessons are satisfactory for conveying knowledge, but offer less opportunity for pupils to develop skills and understanding through their own investigations. Work completed in respect of some topics consists only of completed worksheets and this results in slower progress.
89. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall. Increasing emphasis is placed on the use of investigative work in history. Teachers are aware of what pupils know but the assessment of what they can do and how much they understand is inadequate. The curriculum is supported by visits and visitors and they enhance the subject. An interesting collection of historical artefacts is being developed to give pupils first-hand experiences and so encourage their empathy and understanding.

## **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The agreed syllabus for religious education is taught in an interesting way.
- Good links are made to other areas of learning to deepen pupils' understanding.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to have first-hand experience of aspects of other religions.

### **Commentary**

90. Significant improvements have been made to the provision for religious education since the last inspection. The curriculum now includes all aspects of the locally agreed syllabus and it is taught in a way that interests pupils. As a result, pupils have good knowledge about the key elements of an appropriate range of religions and faiths. They have a good understanding of the beliefs of Christians and the symbolism central to ceremonies such as baptism. Standards are in line with those expected by Year 2 and Year 6 and achievement is satisfactory. However, pupils' achievement is not as good as it could be because of their poorly developed language skills which hamper their ability to explain and reason. This has been recognised by the school. For example in the very good lesson on Buddhism with the Year 2 class, pupils were given time to discuss the issues, which helped to develop their understanding.
91. Recently, regular visits to assembly by a local church leader have begun and pupils enjoy visiting the local church where they participate in a Harvest Festival. Displays in shared areas around the school provide pupils with information about other religions. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to experience at first hand the richness and diversity to be found across a wider range of religions.
92. Teaching is good. Teachers make good links between religious education and other aspects of pupils' learning. Assemblies make a good contribution in prompting pupils' thinking about moral and spiritual issues, for example in the collection of their thoughts about poverty in Africa. In lessons, teachers help pupils to develop their understanding

of significant points by relating them to pupils' everyday experiences. A good example was seen in a Year 3 lesson in which pupils discussed stealing in the context of the Ten Commandments.

93. Subject leadership for religious education has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Monitoring of the curriculum ensures that the curriculum covers statutory requirements and staff training is provided to ensure that teachers have sound subject knowledge.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

94. No lessons were seen in art and design; one was seen in design and technology, one in music and two in physical education. Too few lessons were seen to make firm judgements about provision in these subjects. Inspectors examined pupils' work in books and on display, looked at documentation and had discussions with staff and pupils.
95. Examination of pupils' finished work and of the plans and drawings they have produced in preparing for their work, show that standards in **art and design** are in line with those expected nationally by Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils have good opportunities to work with a wide range of materials and they are exposed to the work of established artists in wide-ranging fields of art. A very good example of how effectively teachers use the work of other artists to help pupils improve their understanding of a technique was seen in Year 6. Pupils had examined how artists, such as Marcel Duchamps, show motion in their work and were able to apply the technique effectively to their drawings of sportsmen and women in action. Pupils have good opportunities to enhance their experiences beyond the classroom. Many pupils from across the school, including some with special educational needs, attend an after-school art club and whole-school projects such as the impressive courtyard garden provide experience of working on large projects.
96. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject co-ordinator has carefully planned an art curriculum that addresses the issue from the last inspection that skill development was not adequately planned for. There is now good progression in the teaching of art skills throughout the school.
97. In **music**, high standards in singing were reported in the last inspection and these continue to be seen throughout the school. This is because the teaching of singing by the subject leader, in particular, is good. Singing is highly valued by staff and makes a very positive contribution to the sense of community in large group occasions such as assemblies. Pupils enjoy the opportunity to sing in the choir out in the community and are proud of the choir's achievements, such as singing live for the local radio in the city shopping centre. These good opportunities for singing promote good attitudes in pupils.
98. Pupils have some opportunities to listen to, appreciate and watch live musicians in school but there are too few planned lessons as part of a structured programme for pupils to develop their ability and skills in composing music themselves. Neither have pupils developed their understanding of appropriate methods for recording their music for future reference. Pupils also have limited knowledge of famous composers or a range of musical styles and traditions. This is because opportunities are missed for pupils to listen to and appreciate music as part of their everyday curriculum.
99. Leadership and management of music are satisfactory. As a result of the self-review process, the lack of opportunities for pupils to play instruments has been recognised and the school is beginning to address this through the subject action plan. However, there is insufficient

monitoring and evaluation of standards and achievement across the full programme of study for music.

100. In **design and technology**, standards by Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly in line with those expected nationally. Much of the work in the subject is taught as part of themes that link several subjects. This helps to give purpose to the work for pupils. The topics are well planned and resources well managed. For example, in a Year 1 topic about fruit, the teacher had provided an excellent variety of unusual fruit for pupils to study. They used it as inspiration for work in art, used it in literacy lessons and tasted samples. They therefore had a good knowledge of a wide range of fruit and its properties before designing their own fruit salads. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in working with a range of materials and by Year 6 they are able to apply their knowledge of electrical circuits and their ICT skills to design and make moving vehicles that they can control.
101. In **physical education**, standards are in line with those expected nationally. Good links have been established with other organisations such as the local college so pupils have some lessons taught by specialist coaches. Standards seen in a Year 5 lesson led by a rugby coach were in line with those expected of pupils of that age. Achievement was not as good as it could have been because the organisation of the lesson did not make best use of the class teacher's time. This meant that the girls were given less time to develop and practise their skills. In a well-taught lesson in Year 6, a good range of challenging activities helped pupils to improve and refine their gymnastic skills. The teacher gave pupils good information about the quality of their performances and as a result they were able to improve the quality of their work. Pupils display positive attitudes and enjoy the challenges provided for them.
102. Leadership and management of the subject are good. There is an appropriate plan for improving provision that reflects the significant development in physical education as a result of the school's involvement in the national sports' co-ordinators' programme. The views of pupils and staff have been collected as part of a review of the quality of the curriculum and to help identify priorities for improvement. The main priorities are appropriate and include increasing the time allocated for physical education each week to bring the school in line with national recommendations, and providing more opportunities for pupils to engage in more sport by taking part in local events. However, there is currently insufficient evaluation of the standards reached by pupils across the school and of how well they are achieving.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The well-planned curriculum enables pupils to make good progress and develop their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- The headteacher and staff provide very good role models and there is a wide range of opportunities for pupils to practise their personal and social skills.

### **Commentary**

103. There is good provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship and pupils of all abilities achieve very well. Pupils are supported well and make good progress in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding through a well-planned curriculum. This is taught through designated lessons and also through other



subjects. The good provision is enhanced by the school's supportive ethos and the individual support provided for pupils. There is a very positive atmosphere in which behaviour is well managed and as a result, pupils have good attitudes.

104. The school provides well for health education by working with outside agencies. For example, drug education is supported by the police, and sex and relationships education is supported by the school nurse. Work on anti-bullying has been provided by the 'Tackle It' programme with Sunderland Football Club. Other aspects of health education are taught effectively through topic work and work in subjects such as science. For example, in a good lesson in Year 4 about healthy eating, pupils carried out research into their dietary needs. As a result of the varied and interesting teaching, pupils have a good understanding of health issues.
105. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop a sense of responsibility and citizenship. For example, class rules are developed and agreed by pupils and displayed in each classroom. Year 6 pupils show a good understanding of democracy when they describe how elections are organised for the school council. The school council effectively represents the views of pupils on issues such as assemblies, playground equipment and school lunches and has influenced changes to them. Pupils support a range of local, national and international charities.
106. Individual pupils, some with special educational needs, are well supported in developing their social and collaborative skills through initiatives such as the gardening club, very well led by the school caretaker. The school's learning mentor gives very good support to pupils experiencing problems in or out of school and helps them to deal confidently with difficult situations. Older pupils have a wide range of jobs in school, for example as register monitors, selling fruit, undertaking door duties and taking care of equipment. Pupils across the school show very good care for pupils with disabilities. They show high levels of consideration and are helpful and supportive.
107. The strength of the school's provision in this subject is demonstrated through the range of awards it has achieved. These include the Charter Mark, Heartbeat Award, Citizenship Award and the Water Safety Roadshow Award.
108. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. However, systems to assess how well pupils are making progress are not yet fully in place and pupils are insufficiently involved in monitoring their own progress and setting personal targets.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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