

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **MONKHOUSE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

North Shields

LEA area: North Tyneside

Unique reference number: 108576

Headteacher: Mrs. H. Purdy

Reporting inspector: Mr. C. D. Taylor  
Rgl's Ofsted No: 23004

Dates of inspection: 18 – 22 September 2000

Inspection number: 182244

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

© Crown copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

|                              |                                                     |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Type of school:              | Infant and Junior                                   |
| School category:             | Community                                           |
| Age range of pupils:         | 4 - 11                                              |
| Gender of pupils:            | Mixed                                               |
| School address:              | Wallington Avenue<br>North Shields<br>Tyne and Wear |
| Postcode:                    | NE30 3SH                                            |
| Telephone number:            | 0191 200 6350                                       |
| Fax number:                  | 0191 200 6350                                       |
| Appropriate authority:       | Governing body                                      |
| Name of chair of governors:  | Mr M Bowie                                          |
| Date of previous inspection: | 12 - 16 June 1995                                   |

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members                           |                      | Subject responsibilities  | Aspect responsibilities                                                          |
|----------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Christopher Taylor<br>Ofsted No: 23004 | Registered inspector | Geography                 | What sort of school is it?                                                       |
|                                        |                      | Music                     | How high are standards?<br>a) The school's results and achievements              |
|                                        |                      | Religious education       | How well are pupils taught?                                                      |
|                                        |                      |                           | How well is the school led and managed?                                          |
| Judith Menes<br>Ofsted No: 11468       | Lay inspector        |                           | How high are standards?<br>b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development |
|                                        |                      |                           | How well does the school care for its pupils?                                    |
|                                        |                      |                           | How well does the school work in partnership with parents?                       |
| Terence Aldridge<br>Ofsted No: 27426   | Team inspector       | Mathematics               | How good are curricular and other opportunities?                                 |
|                                        |                      | Physical education        |                                                                                  |
| George Brown<br>Ofsted No: 21060       | Team inspector       | English                   | N/A                                                                              |
|                                        |                      | Art                       |                                                                                  |
| Raymond Cardinal<br>Ofsted No: 22695   | Team inspector       | History                   | N/A                                                                              |
|                                        |                      | Special educational needs |                                                                                  |
|                                        |                      | Deaf support centre       |                                                                                  |

|                                   |                |                        |     |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|------------------------|-----|
| Linda Spooner<br>Ofsted No: 17685 | Team inspector | The foundation stage   | N/A |
|                                   |                | Information technology |     |
| Nigel Stiles<br>Ofsted No: 17522  | Team inspector | Science                | N/A |
|                                   |                | Design and technology  |     |
|                                   |                | Equal opportunities    |     |

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Limited  
Demeter House  
Station Road  
Cambridge  
CB1 2RS

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

# REPORT CONTENTS

|                                                                                                       | Page           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>                                                                  | <b>7 - 10</b>  |
| Information about the school                                                                          |                |
| How good the school is                                                                                |                |
| What the school does well                                                                             |                |
| What could be improved                                                                                |                |
| How the school has improved since its last inspection                                                 |                |
| Standards                                                                                             |                |
| Pupils' attitudes and values                                                                          |                |
| Teaching and learning                                                                                 |                |
| Other aspects of the school                                                                           |                |
| How well the school is led and managed                                                                |                |
| Parents' and carers' views of the school                                                              |                |
| <br>                                                                                                  |                |
| <b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>                                                                             |                |
| <b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>                                                                        | <b>11 - 14</b> |
| The school's results and achievements                                                                 |                |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development                                                    |                |
| <b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>                                                                    | <b>14 - 16</b> |
| <b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>                         | <b>16 - 18</b> |
| <b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>                                                  | <b>18</b>      |
| <b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>                                     | <b>18 - 19</b> |
| <b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>                                                        | <b>19 - 21</b> |
| <b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>                                                  | <b>21 - 22</b> |
| <b>DEAF SUPPORT CENTRE</b>                                                                            | <b>22 - 23</b> |
| <br>                                                                                                  |                |
| <b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>                                                             | <b>24 - 27</b> |
| <br>                                                                                                  |                |
| <b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b> | <b>28 - 44</b> |

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Monkhouse is a large primary school for boys and girls aged 4 - 11 years old. It has 376 pupils including 20 pupils in the North Tyneside Deaf Support Centre. Numbers have remained fairly steady over the last five years. The majority of pupils join the reception classes with levels of attainment close to the national average. Nearly 12 per cent of pupils - broadly in line with the national average - are known to be eligible for free school meals. Seventy four pupils - close to the national average - have special educational needs. Twenty one pupils have statements of special educational needs, most of whom have profound or severe hearing impairment. The majority of other pupils with special needs have moderate learning difficulties or emotional and behavioural difficulties. Only one per cent of pupils are from ethnic minorities and no pupils speak English as an additional language.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Monkhouse Primary School is an effective school with a good ethos. Teaching and learning are good, pupils' attitudes to work are good, and behaviour and relationships are sound. Standards in mathematics and science are above the national average at both key stages and standards, overall, are in line with national expectations by the age of eleven. The Deaf Support Centre provides excellent support for deaf pupils, and other pupils with special needs also make good progress. The leadership and management of the headteacher and senior staff are good. Expenditure is below the national average and the school provides good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Standards are above the national average in mathematics and science at both key stages.
- The school's distinctive character ensures that pupils' attitudes to learning are good and attendance is good.
- Teaching is good. Ninety nine per cent is satisfactory or better. As a result, pupils learn effectively as they progress through the school.
- Provision for pupils' social and cultural development is good.
- The Deaf Support Centre provides excellent support for pupils with profound and severe hearing impairment, and other pupils with special educational needs also make good progress.
- The good leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff ensure clear educational direction in the work of the school.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards in writing are below the national average at Key Stage 2.
- Standards are below national expectations in information and communications technology (ICT) at both key stages because, until recently, pupils have had little direct teaching and few opportunities to practise skills. There is little use of ICT to assist teaching and learning in other subjects of the curriculum.
- Provision for children in the foundation stage could be improved by more precise planning and better assessment of children's individual learning needs.
- Teachers' knowledge of child protection procedures needs updating.
- The governing body should ensure that the school prospectus and annual report contain all the statutory information for parents.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made good progress overall in addressing the key issues highlighted in the previous report in June 1995. The school has made good progress in increasing staff and governors' involvement in long-term strategic planning. It has worked hard to involve the governing body in the life of the school and to provide opportunities for governors to enhance their overview of the curriculum. The school has reviewed its assessment, recording and reporting procedures and now has good assessment procedures that are used effectively to inform planning for pupils of all abilities. Sound progress has been made in reviewing and developing the role of subject co-ordinators. Most of the inadequacies identified in accommodation and resources have been addressed. In addition to these key issues, there have been other areas of significant improvement. The proportion of teaching that is good or better has risen from just over half at the previous inspection to 62 per cent. Standards in science have improved further, and the school has continued to

maintain high standards in both mathematics and science at both key stages. Only in writing in English at Key Stage 2 have standards fallen since the previous inspection. The Deaf Support Centre continues to provide excellent support for deaf children, and provision for other pupils with special educational needs continues to be good. The school has identified appropriate areas for development and has a good capacity to make further improvements.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National curriculum tests.

| Performance in: | compared with |      |      |                 | Key                                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                 | All schools   |      |      | similar schools |                                                                                                                                         |
|                 | 1998          | 1999 | 2000 | 2000            |                                                                                                                                         |
| English         | B             | D    | E    | E               | well above average    A<br>above average        B<br>average                    C<br>below average         D<br>well below average    E |
| Mathematics     | B             | B    | C    | C               |                                                                                                                                         |
| Science         | C             | B    | C    | C               |                                                                                                                                         |

In English, the school's results in 2000 were well below the national average for all schools in the country, and well below the average for schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. Over the past three years, standards have fallen compared with the upward national trend, though standards improved markedly in 1998 before falling back again in 1999 and 2000. Inspection findings indicate that standards of attainment in reading and in speaking and listening in the current Year 6 are in line with national expectations, but standards in writing are below the national average. In mathematics and in science, the results of the 2000 tests were close to the national average for all schools, and close to the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Inspection findings indicate that attainment is above the national average in both subjects in the current Year 6. Standards are in line with national expectations in all other subjects except information and communications technology, where standards are not as high as they should be because, until recently, pupils received insufficient teaching and had too little opportunity to practise their skills. Marked fluctuations in test results from year to year reflect the significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs. There was an exceptionally high percentage of pupils with special needs, for example, in the Year 6 group who took the national tests in 2000. Realistic targets have been set to improve standards in English and mathematics in the National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds in 2001. To meet these targets, the school has focussed on improving writing skills, effective support for pupils with special needs, additional literacy support and booster classes for pupils in Year 6. Inspection findings indicate that the school is likely to meet its targets in mathematics but may not fully achieve its targets in English.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect                                 | Comment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Attitudes to the school                | Good attitudes to work. Most pupils are enthusiastic and keen to learn.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms    | Sound, overall. Most pupils behave well in class, though some classes have a number of challenging pupils who are controlled firmly. Outside classrooms, behaviour is satisfactory, but there are isolated incidents of silly behaviour. There is very little bullying and there have been no recent exclusions. |
| Personal development and relationships | Sound. Pupils take initiative when given the chance, but they are not yet given enough opportunities to take personal responsibility at this stage of the school year. Relationships between pupils and staff, and between pupils, are sound overall and often good.                                             |
| Attendance                             | Above the national average. Authorised absence is below average;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

|  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|
|  | unauthorised absence is minimal. |
|--|----------------------------------|

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils:  | aged up to 5 years | aged 5-7 years | aged 7-11 years |
|----------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Lessons seen overall | Satisfactory       | Good           | Satisfactory    |

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.*

Teaching was satisfactory or better in 99 per cent of the lessons observed. It was good in 43 per cent of lessons and very good in a further 18 per cent of lessons. Teaching was excellent in one per cent and unsatisfactory in one per cent of lessons seen. Overall, teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory, with much good teaching, at the foundation stage and at Key Stage 2. In the foundation stage, teachers' planning is satisfactory for literacy and numeracy, but does not cover all the other learning areas in sufficient detail. Teaching of numeracy is good throughout the school. Teaching of English, including the basic skills of literacy, is good at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, where it is sound, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to write in different styles and for different purposes across all subjects of the curriculum, and pupils do not use a wide enough range of interesting vocabulary. Strengths of teaching across the school include good subject knowledge, good class management and good use of support staff and resources in all year groups, and effective planning at Key Stages 1 and 2. The school meets the needs of higher and lower-attaining pupils well. As a result, pupils generally work at a brisk pace and make sound progress in acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding in most subjects. Teachers often start lessons by recalling what was learned in the previous lesson before introducing the objectives of the current lesson. This reinforces previous learning as well as making it clear to pupils what they are about to learn. Good use of plenary sessions at the end of lessons also reinforces what pupils have learned, and helps teachers to assess pupils' progress. Teachers and support staff work effectively as a team, and deaf pupils are fully integrated into lessons with the help of signing by staff. Where teaching could be better, unsatisfactory class control means that time is lost waiting for pupils to pay attention, and the pace of learning becomes too slow. In information and communication technology (ICT), many teachers have insufficient expertise, and until recently there have been too few opportunities for pupils to use computers and practise their skills.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect                                                                                      | Comment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The quality and range of the curriculum                                                     | Satisfactory overall. All statutory requirements of the National Curriculum are met. The school has effectively implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. There is insufficient use of information and communications technology to assist teaching and learning in other subjects of the curriculum. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities and residential visits to broaden pupils' interests and to develop their social skills.                                                           |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs                                         | Good. Pupils with special needs make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Pupils in the Deaf Support Centre receive excellent support and make very good progress.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Satisfactory overall. Provision for pupils' social and cultural development is good. Provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development is satisfactory, with clear teaching of right and wrong in assemblies and in class circle times.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| How well the school cares for its pupils                                                    | Satisfactory overall. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are sound, but staff need more training to update their knowledge of child protection procedures. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are generally good and are used well for setting and to plan future lessons. In the foundation stage, however, children's progress towards the early learning goals is not monitored sufficiently except in literacy and in numeracy. The school's links with parents are sound and |

|  |                                                                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | the quality of information provided for parents, including reports, is satisfactory. |
|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect                                                           | Comment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior staff ensure strong direction and clear purpose in the work of the school. There is insufficient co-ordination, however, in the provision for children in the foundation stage. The school's aims and values are reflected in all its work.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities             | The governing body carries out its statutory duties effectively. A few items of information are omitted in the prospectus and annual report.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| The school's evaluation of its performance                       | The school monitors and evaluates its performance well. It has a sound understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| The strategic use of resources                                   | Educational priorities are supported well through the school's financial planning. All major spending decisions take into account the principles of best value. Overall, the accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory, but there are insufficient large toys to further the development of young children's gross motor skills, there is no fence around the children's play area, and the children's toilets need refurbishing. Staffing meets the needs of the curriculum well and support staff work very effectively alongside teachers. |

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | What parents would like to see improved                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children enjoy going to school.</li> <li>• The school enables children to make good progress in their work.</li> <li>• The school achieves high standards of good behaviour.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• Most parents are comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.</li> <li>• The school expects children to work hard and to achieve their best.</li> <li>• Most parents feel the school helps their children become mature and responsible.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some parents feel their children do not get the right amount of work to do at home.</li> <li>• Some parents feel the school does not work closely enough with parents.</li> <li>• Some parents feel they are not kept well informed about how their children are getting on.</li> <li>• Some parents feel the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul> |

The inspection findings support the parents' positive views. The amount of homework set is broadly in line with national recommendations. The school's links with parents and the quality of information provided are satisfactory overall, and parents are given sufficient opportunities to discuss their children's progress with the teaching staff. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities and residential visits to widen pupils' interests and to develop their social skills.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. Most children join the reception class at the beginning of the academic year in which they become five years old. When they join the school, most have levels of attainment in line with those expected for children of their age in all the six areas of learning recommended at the foundation stage. As a result of teaching that is never less than satisfactory and is often good, they make sound progress towards all the early learning goals. By the end of the reception year, the attainment of pupils is in line with national expectations in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, physical development, creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world.
2. By the end of Key Stage 1, the overall attainment of pupils is in line with national expectations in English and above national expectations in mathematics and science. Attainment is close to the expected level in all other subjects except in information and communications technology where standards are below national expectations.
3. In English, the percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard in reading was above the national average in the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 2000, but the number achieving higher levels was below the national average. Overall, standards in reading were just below the national average. The overall standard in 2000 was similar to that in 1999. In writing, the percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard in 2000 was close to the national average, but less than the national average achieved higher levels. Overall, standards in writing were close to the national average. In the 2000 tests, standards were lower than in 1999. Inspection findings indicate that standards in English in the current Year 2 are close to the national average. In speaking and listening, in reading and in writing, standards are close to the national average for seven-year-olds.
4. In mathematics, the percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard in the 2000 tests at Key Stage 1 was close to the national average, but less than the average number achieved higher levels. Overall, standards were just below the national average. In the 2000 tests, standards were lower than in 1999. Inspection findings indicate that attainment in mathematics in the current Year 2 is above the national average. In science, the percentage of pupils reaching the nationally expected level in teachers' assessments in 2000 was close to the national average, but less than the average attained higher levels. Inspection findings indicate that attainment in science is above the national average in the current Year 2. The school's results in 2000 were lower than in 1999.
5. The level of attainment pupils achieved at Key Stage 1 in the national tests in 2000 compared unfavourably with those in similar schools. In reading, writing and mathematics, the school's results were lower than schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In science, the number of pupils achieving the nationally expected level was close to the average for similar schools, but the number of pupils achieving higher levels was below the average for similar schools.
6. In English, pupils make good progress in reading at Key Stage 1. Most pupils learn to read accurately with expression and understanding, and use a range of strategies to work out new words. They read a range of fiction and non-fiction books and make choices about what they like to read. Pupils make sound progress in writing at Key Stage 1. They learn to form their letters accurately and begin to compose sentences with correct structure and a good range of vocabulary. Most use capital letters and full stops, and spell simple words correctly. Pupils make sound progress in the development of their speaking and listening skills. They listen attentively to their teacher and respond sensibly to questions.
7. Pupils' progress in mathematics is good at Key Stage 1. There is a good focus on developing basic numeracy skills, and mental mathematics skills have improved since the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. Most pupils order numbers correctly to 100 and recognise common two-dimensional shapes. In science, pupils make good progress. They classify common types of materials, and recognise the properties of different fabrics. They understand the characteristics of living things, and know which types of food compose a healthy diet.
8. At Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in information technology is below national expectations and

they make insufficient progress. Until the recent opening of a new computer suite, pupils covered insufficient work from the programme of study. They use the mouse and keyboard controls to write sentences, but have little knowledge of using images or sound. There is little use of information technology in other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with the standards expected in the local Agreed Syllabus. Pupils learn about Christian traditions by hearing stories from the New Testament, and compare the main Christian beliefs with those of Judaism and Hinduism. Pupils' attainment is close to national expectations in art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education.

9. Overall, the attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with national expectations. Standards in the current Year 6 are below the national average in English, but are above average in mathematics and science. Attainment is close to national expectations in all other subjects except in information and communications technology where standards are below national expectations.
10. In English, the percentage of pupils attaining the nationally expected level in the National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds in 2000 was well below the national average, and the percentage of pupils attaining higher levels was also well below average. Overall, the standard of attainment was well below the national average. In the 2000 tests, the school's results were worse than its 1999 results, although results had improved the previous year. In mathematics, the percentage of pupils attaining the nationally expected level was close to the national average, and an average number of pupils attained higher levels. Overall, the standard was close to the national average. In the 2000 tests, the school's results were similar to its 1999 results. In science, the percentage attaining the nationally expected level was well above the national average, while the percentage achieving higher levels was close to the national average. Overall, the standard was close to the national average. The school's 2000 results were similar to its 1999 results.
11. The level of pupils' attainment in the English tests at Key Stage 2 in 2000 was well below the average in schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In mathematics and science, pupils' attainment was close to the national average for similar schools. The lower standards gained in the test results in English in 2000 reflect the exceptionally high percentage of pupils with severe hearing impairment and other special educational needs in the Year 6 group who took the tests.
12. Inspection findings indicate that standards of attainment in English in the current Year 6 are below the national average. Attainment in speaking and listening and in reading is close to the national average, but standards in writing are below the national average. Pupils failed to achieve the targets set for the National Curriculum Key Stage 2 tests in 1999 and 2000. Pupils make sound progress in listening and speaking. Most pupils answer questions fluently at length and explain their work clearly. Pupils make sound progress in reading and the majority of pupils in Year 6 read fluently and predict and deduce from what they have read. Progress in writing is unsatisfactory. Work is not always presented neatly enough and handwriting could be better formed. Pupils write at length, but do not use a sufficiently wide range of interesting vocabulary, or write in a variety of styles and for different purposes across all subjects of the curriculum.
13. In mathematics, inspection findings indicate that attainment is above the national average in the current Year 6. Pupils make good progress, and standards have improved since the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. Results exceeded the targets set for the National Curriculum Key Stage 2 tests in 1999 and 2000. Pupils are becoming more confident at solving practical problems, and there is a positive effort to develop and use mental methods of calculation. Most pupils divide four-digit numbers by two-digit numbers, while higher-attaining pupils have a good understanding of shape, space and data handling.
14. In science, inspection findings indicate that attainment is above the national average in the current Year 6. Pupils determine what is a fair test and identify what they want to observe. They make informed predictions, test their hypotheses in a wide range of contexts, and draw sound conclusions. Pupils undertake their own investigations to test the displacement of air and how the heart rate varies with exercise.
15. Pupils' attainment in information and communications technology is below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils have sound word-processing skills, and use 'cut and paste' techniques for simple desktop publishing. Year 6 pupils understand how to use a spreadsheet, but have had insufficient experience of data handling, research strategies and control technology.

16. Pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with the standards expected in the local Agreed Syllabus at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils understand the significance of some of the main festivals and traditions of Christianity, Judaism, Sikhism, Buddhism and Islam. They compare the rituals of prayer in Islam and Christianity, for example, and study the significance of dietary rules in Judaism. Pupils achieve standards close to national expectations in art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education.
17. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress at both key stages. At Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress towards their literacy targets in reading and spelling. They make good progress in mathematics by adding different combinations of money and by counting in tens. In science they make good progress in learning about waterproof materials. At Key Stage 2, pupils with special needs, including those with behaviour targets, make good progress in their use of computers. In science, they make good progress, for example, when selecting relevant information from the text.
18. There is no significant variation in attainment by gender, race or background. Differences in attainment between girls and boys generally follow national trends.
19. Pupils' literacy skills are close to national expectations at Key Stage 1 but are below national expectations at Key Stage 2. The 1999 and 2000 national test results were disappointing as pupils performed poorly in writing. The literacy hour has been introduced effectively in all classes. The school has not yet planned sufficient additional opportunities for extended writing across the curriculum. Pupils should apply the new knowledge and skills gained in the literacy hour more effectively to improve their writing in, for example, science, history and geography.
20. Standards in numeracy are currently above the national average at both key stages and pupils' understanding and use of number is developing well. The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced effectively in all classes. Pupils are carrying out mental calculations with increasing accuracy and showing confidence in manipulating numbers and using multiplication tables. There is appropriate use of numeracy skills in other subjects such as science and geography.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

21. Pupils' attitudes to their learning are good and have a positive effect on achievement. Pupils enjoy coming to school, and most take a keen interest in their work. They respond well to their teachers, concentrate hard and are eager to participate and answer questions. They are willing to listen to each other without interrupting, and are keen to offer their own ideas, for example, when suggesting synonyms in a literacy lesson. In a music lesson, pupils in Year 1 were completely silent while listening to the sound of a triangle ringing. The extra-curricular activities on offer are well attended by enthusiastic pupils.
22. Most pupils behave well in lessons and some behave very well. Most come into class quietly at the beginning of the session and follow established routines calmly and sensibly. They listen carefully to instructions and are able to work independently. A minority of pupils do not settle well, are restless and easily distracted, leading to some lapses of work quality. Behaviour around the school and at lunch and break times is satisfactory. Although most pupils move around the school sensibly, a minority of pupils can be disorderly and, despite good supervision in the corridors, find it difficult to resist the temptation to distract their fellows. Lunchtimes tend to be noisy, but pupils relate well to each other and behaviour in the playground is satisfactory. There is little evidence of oppressive behaviour or bullying and parents are confident that this is dealt with quickly if it occurs. There were no exclusions in the last year. The high level of integration of deaf pupils into mainstream classes has enabled other children to understand and accept them and has encouraged some to learn sign language, as in the very successful signing choir.
23. Pupils are encouraged to develop independence as soon as they start school in reception when they learn where their own pegs and milk are to be found and quickly learn routines. Even the smallest children in this large school are expected to take registers to the office. Pupils take the initiative to develop their own learning during lessons when they are given the chance, but they are not yet being given enough opportunities to take personal responsibility for their work at this stage of the school year. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 take on whole school responsibilities when they come to school early to distribute milk, ring the bell for the end of lessons or break, and supervise the library. Older pupils sometimes take the initiative in fund raising for charity. They participate in the

school council and have the opportunity to visit an outdoor activity centre in the Lake District for a week or a weekend where they are often surprised at what they are able to achieve.

24. Levels of attendance are good and unauthorised absence is negligible. Punctuality is satisfactory, although some pupils do arrive at school a little late. Lessons begin promptly.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

25. The standard of teaching is good overall. As a result, pupils quickly gain new skills and knowledge and learn effectively. Teaching was satisfactory or better in 99 per cent of all lessons observed. In 43 per cent the teaching was good, and in a further 18 per cent it was very good. Teaching was excellent in one per cent of lessons and unsatisfactory in one per cent. The standard of teaching has improved since the previous inspection.
26. Teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and is sound overall with much good teaching in all the areas of learning in the foundation stage and at Key Stage 2. Teaching is good in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 1, as well as in music. It is satisfactory in art, physical education and religious education, but unsatisfactory in information and communications technology. No lessons were observed in design technology, and insufficient lessons were seen in geography and history to make an overall judgement. Teaching is good in the core subjects of mathematics and science at Key Stage 2, as well as in design technology. It is sound in English, art, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education, but is unsatisfactory in information and communications technology. Teaching that is good or better (62 per cent of all lessons observed) is a major factor in ensuring that pupils make good progress, especially in the core subjects of mathematics and science. In the one unsatisfactory lesson, pupils did not concentrate sufficiently and learn enough during the lesson.
27. Teachers' subject knowledge and understanding are generally good at both key stages. In English, mathematics and science, all teachers have at least sound subject knowledge and some have very good understanding. Good use is made of the music co-ordinator's expertise to lead hymn practices and to accompany the singing in assemblies. Other teachers' musical expertise is generally sound, but where musical expertise is limited, this occasionally results in teaching which is technically incorrect. In information and communications technology, most teachers lack confidence and the school recognises that further training is required to increase teachers' skills and subject knowledge.
28. Teaching of appropriate skills in literacy and numeracy is good at Key Stage 1 and sound at Key Stage 2. The structure of the literacy hour is used effectively to develop pupils' literacy skills. Teachers plan their English lessons well and follow the structure of the National Literacy Strategy confidently. Opportunities for developing and consolidating writing skills, however, are not followed up sufficiently in subjects such as geography and history. Teaching of numeracy includes plenty of games and interesting activities for pupils to practise and consolidate their learning. Teachers use mental mathematics sessions well to build up pupils' recall and to develop analytical thinking and mathematical vocabulary. Good use is made of the final plenary sessions to consolidate learning and to prepare for the next lesson. Numeracy skills are re-inforced appropriately in other subjects, for example, when studying timelines in history and when drawing temperature and rainfall graphs in geography.
29. Teachers' planning is good at both key stages. Both long-term and medium-term plans show a logical progression of skills and knowledge, and lesson plans have clear objectives which are usually explained to pupils at the start of lessons. In English and mathematics, teachers prepare lessons thoroughly and benefit from following the guidelines in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. In science and most other subjects, lessons are planned effectively using guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. In information and communications technology, until recently there have not been enough planned opportunities for pupils to learn, develop, and practise new skills.

30. Teachers' expectations of pupils' work and behaviour are usually high at Key Stage 1 and are sound at Key Stage 2. Work set in literacy and numeracy, for instance, is usually matched well to pupils' individual ability and prior learning. This helps teachers to work to appropriate expectations for both higher and lower attainers, and to match activities to pupils' needs. High expectations in science lead to pupils testing their own hypotheses effectively, for example, when analysing the effect of pouring water onto different substances. Staff act as good role models and children learn to behave well from the examples before them.
31. Teaching methods and organisational strategies used by teachers are good at Key Stage 1 and sound at Key Stage 2. In many lessons, teachers refer back to the previous lesson to re-inforce pupils' learning before moving on. They usually go over the learning objectives at the start of the lesson and review what pupils have learned at the end. This helps pupils to understand what they should know by the end of the lesson. In literacy and numeracy lessons, for example, plenary sessions are used effectively to enable pupils to explain what they have learnt, to listen to others and to extend their learning. Teachers give helpful instructions to pupils. In geography, for example, pupils are given clear oral and written instructions which enable them to move forward and learn independently. Teachers make good use of probing questions, for example in science, while in mathematics, teachers ask challenging questions which encourage pupils to think mathematically. In English, teachers use questioning skills well, and encourage pupils to improve their speaking skills by engaging in class discussion. Teachers use a wide range of methods and groupings during lessons, for example, working with the whole class, smaller groups, pairs or individuals according to the needs of the topic or activity. In science and mathematics, there is a good emphasis on developing investigative skills, while in geography there is a good focus on practical activities, for example conducting a litter survey. In history, good use is made of personal research from different sources and in religious education, pupils visit different places of worship.
32. Sound relationships between teachers and pupils help to produce a pleasant, hard-working and creative atmosphere in most classes. The management of pupils is generally good, though teachers' control of activities limits pupils' initiative in some classes. Occasionally, some teachers allow pupils to talk out of turn, and this leads to unproductive noise and pupils straying off the task. Where this is the case, time is lost while waiting for pupils to pay attention and the pace of the lessons becomes too slow. In most lessons, enthusiastic teaching leads to a keen response and an eagerness to participate in learning. Good class management is generally reflected in pupils' sound behaviour and positive attitudes. Teachers group pupils effectively. In literacy and numeracy, pupils often work in ability groupings so that appropriately challenging work can be set. In other subjects such as music, for example, pupils are often taught in mixed ability groups so that less confident pupils can learn from those with more expertise.
33. Most teachers use time well. In literacy and numeracy lessons, for instance, teachers time different activities well and lessons generally move at a brisk pace. As a result, pupils work productively and maintain a busy pace of learning. The use of support staff is particularly good. Teachers and support staff work very effectively as a team. When assisting deaf pupils and others with special needs, they work closely together to ensure pupils make good progress. Teachers make good use of a variety of teaching resources. In science, for example, good use is made of appropriate resources such as foodstuffs and different fabrics. In geography, good use is made of maps, photographs of the local area and toy vehicles. In music, appropriate use is made of a good range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. There is little use of information technology, however, to aid learning in other subjects of the curriculum such as mathematics, geography and history. In many subjects there are attractive and interesting displays of pupils' work and suggestions for further study in the classrooms and corridors.
34. The quality of ongoing assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding is sound. Teachers make regular assessments of pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics, and use the results to guide their planning and teaching. In other subjects, informal assessments through questioning and scrutiny of pupils' work are used to modify teaching as the lesson proceeds and to plan for the next lesson.
35. The day-to-day use of homework to reinforce and extend what is learned in school is satisfactory in most classes. Most pupils regularly take reading books home and are set an appropriate amount of work to do at home in English and mathematics, and occasionally in other subjects. Marking of pupils' work is carried out regularly by teachers and comments are often added to help raise pupils' self-esteem. Some teachers include helpful comments that indicate how pupils might improve their

work, but marking is inconsistent, and not all teachers indicate how the work could be better.

36. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. Staff show a keen awareness of pupils' special needs in their lesson planning and when grouping pupils for activities. Individual education plans are used well. The teaching of withdrawal groups is good overall, although there is a lack of challenge in some of the teaching where assessment procedures have not yet clearly identified learning needs at the start of the school year. In the most effective teaching, pupils are fully involved and challenged in both discussion work and individual tasks. In history, for example, pupils with special needs are given additional vocabulary to support them in writing about the life of Florence Nightingale, and in religious education, tasks take full account of pupils' literacy needs during a study of places of worship. In mathematics, pupils are grouped to take account of their special learning needs with each group assigned activities that are well matched to their needs.

## **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?**

37. The school's aims are successfully fulfilled through a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development, and prepares them well for secondary education. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum, religious education, sex, health and drugs education. Helpful policies are in place for all subjects and have been reviewed since the last inspection, or are currently being reviewed. Continuity and progression in the teaching and learning of skills and knowledge is encouraged in all subjects by appropriate schemes of work, although some are currently being reviewed to ensure full coverage of the new National Curriculum guidelines. The curriculum content of non-core subjects has been effectively organised into manageable and coherent units of work each with a clear focus for learning. These follow long-term planning well and ensure continuity throughout the key stages. The time allocated for teaching subjects is broadly in line with national recommendations.
38. The school gives high priority to developing basic literacy and numeracy skills. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully introduced. Staff have received appropriate training, and the planning of the curriculum is closely linked to national guidance which ensures that pupils receive their entitlement. In the upper part of the school, setting by ability in literacy and numeracy lessons is beginning to have a positive effect in raising standards because activities are more closely matched to pupils' needs. Curriculum provision is satisfactory for pupils of different abilities. Monitoring to ensure progression and continuity in teaching and learning is satisfactory in all subjects, with the headteacher and co-ordinators closely checking long and medium-term planning. Weekly year group meetings discuss and draw up medium and short-term plans to ensure continuity and equality of opportunity in parallel classes. The school has effective policies for sex education and drugs education and these are implemented well through the science curriculum and specific teaching for older pupils.
39. All pupils have equal access to the opportunities offered by the school. Pupils work together in mixed classes, and extra-curricular clubs and activities are open to both girls and boys. Provision for pupils with hearing impairment is excellent. Teaching assistants are used well to support these pupils and to enable them to join in all lessons and activities. Pupils are provided with individual targets that are reviewed regularly as their progress towards them is evaluated.
40. The school makes good provision for other pupils with special educational needs, and the curriculum supports pupils' progress towards the targets identified in their individual education plans. Class teachers and support staff work together well to ensure tasks are set at an appropriate level to help pupils improve. The school has provided additional teachers to increase the amount of support available. The good provision enables pupils at both key stages to be withdrawn for additional support and allows setting at Key Stage 2 in mathematics and English. The school has two special needs teachers because of the large number of pupils on the register, and they take responsibility for those with less and more marked degrees of difficulty respectively. There is a clear and useful policy for pupils with special educational needs, and individual education plans have targets that are suitably updated, practical and easily understood. Pupils' statements are reviewed regularly, and the school makes every effort to put the provision outlined into effect. The co-ordinators have developed strong systems that work consistently well with staff, parents and

outside agencies.

41. Provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory, and is broadly equivalent to that found in similar schools. A range of activities is provided which includes football, netball, art club, maths club, harmony club and choir. All activities are well supported and are used effectively to raise pupils' self esteem and to further their personal and social development. The school makes good use of visiting specialists to assist with extra-curricular activities. Sporting activities with other local schools provide good opportunities for social interaction. Pupils with special needs have good access to all the extra-curricular activities.
42. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education through the science curriculum, and through sex education and drugs awareness lessons for older pupils. These provide the knowledge and understanding to make informed choices later in life. Pupils undertake a range of responsibilities that effectively support their personal and social education, such as helping to clear away and tidy up at lunchtimes. The oldest pupils take part in a residential week away and this further enhances their personal and social development.
43. Provision for the spiritual and moral development of pupils is satisfactory, and social and cultural development is good. Spiritual development is supported through assemblies and, to a lesser extent, through the everyday workings of the curriculum. Daily acts of corporate worship provide a range of ideas and themes to help pupils explore life beyond their own immediate experiences. Some time is set aside for reflective thought, but this could usefully be extended through the greater use of quiet prayer or by the more effective use of music on entry and while leaving the hall. Leading and taking part in assemblies is a spiritual experience itself for many of the pupils. Year 6 pupils, for example, led a very effective assembly spelling out that the school is a very special place, while younger children were enthralled by the ensuing message. The planned provision for spiritual development in the wider curriculum is a relatively weak area and could usefully be extended. Some helpful moments occur in art and science when pupils are encouraged to marvel at the wonders of the created world.
44. The provision made for pupils' moral development is rooted in the shared values of school and home. The aims of the school encourage pupils to show respect, integrity and a growing sense of right and wrong. Discussions occur during assemblies and class quiet times when pupils are encouraged to think of the consequence of their actions on the lives and safety of others. This helps to build a sense of citizenship as well as an appreciation of the rights of others. Themes such as honesty and truthfulness are also built into class rules, and support sound moral development on a daily basis.
45. Pupils' social development is well provided for. The importance of effective relationships is stressed in all classrooms, and teachers encourage pupils to work happily together in groups. Many of the classroom rules encourage good social training and stress the importance of working for the good of the whole community. Teachers choose monitors to perform regular tasks and older pupils are encouraged to assist with milk or act as librarians. The school council helps to increase pupils' sense of social responsibility. When older pupils attend the residential week at High Borran, they are faced with unusual challenges, including the need for independent thinking whilst away from home.
46. The provision made for pupils' cultural development is a strength of the school. The school ensures that all pupils are aware of the multicultural nature of our society. The beliefs and cultures of a variety of world religions are studied in religious education, and pupils visit different places of worship. Visitors from overseas are encouraged and the school welcomes theatre groups and ensembles who depict life overseas. During the recent Arts Week, pupils' experiences were broadened by the introduction of drama, storytellers and artists in residence. The school plays a significant part in celebrating its local heritage including participation in the Fish Quay Festival, work undertaken by the harmony group, and singing in the annual Christingle service.
47. The school has useful links with a number of firms in the local community, including Proctor and Gamble, Northern Electric and Formica. Local service providers such as the police and the school nurse come into school, and this helps pupils to gain a better understanding of the outside world. The school cultivates constructive relationships with its partner institutions. There are sound links with the local nursery and the secondary school and this aids the smooth transition of pupils between the various phases of education. The school is a successful partner in the national School

Centred Initial Teacher Training consortium and students on study placements make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

48. Class teachers develop good relationships with their pupils. They praise them, urge them to do well, and encourage them to think of others and to act safely around the school. When questioned, pupils were confident that they could go to a teacher at any time for help with a problem.
49. The school consistently promotes good behaviour through its behaviour policy and the rules identified in it. These are related to the reward system, which is well understood by pupils, in which certificates and spots are awarded according to pupils' success in following each of the five rules. Over the years, this can build up to the award of a badge. Teachers promote good behaviour in the classroom through good class management, and pupils are reminded of what is expected of them in assemblies. Some teachers give extra rewards, such as gold stars for good work, and special assemblies are held each term to celebrate pupils' successes both inside and out of school. The school helps pupils to deal with any incidents of bullying and harassment through teaching during personal and social education and during discussions in class 'circle times'.
50. The school has reviewed its procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress since the last inspection. Formal tests are now used effectively to track pupils' progress and to assist setting in mathematics and English. The composition of the sets is not fixed, however, and pupils can move between them according to their achievements and progress. A baseline assessment of pupils' skills when they enter the reception classes is used effectively to determine pupils' individual learning needs. Pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy is monitored well, but staff do not track the progress of children in all the other areas of learning. At Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, assessment of pupils' achievements in the core subjects is good. Teachers use day-to-day assessments to plan appropriate activities for pupils of different ability within classes, but a consistent format for this has not yet been established. Teachers try hard to ensure consistency when evaluating pupils' National Curriculum levels in mathematics, science and English, and when evaluating the effect of the National Literacy Strategy on pupils' writing.
51. Personal support and guidance for pupils are satisfactory. The school has good procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs and gifted pupils, and where required, support teachers withdraw pupils from classes to give extra help with English and mathematics. Children's individual targets are discussed with them and shared with parents, and their progress is monitored carefully, with a record sheet distributed to all staff before each half term holiday. This enables both new referrals and the movement of pupils up and down the register to be considered on a regular basis.
52. The governors have recently adopted the local education authority's policy on health and safety, but this has yet to be fully implemented. The school, nevertheless, takes appropriate measures to ensure the health and safety of pupils, and as the new policy is applied to the particular circumstances of the school, a more formal and consistent approach should emerge. The school follows the local Area Child Protection Committee procedures, but there is no school child protection policy and no in-service training has recently been provided for staff. Procedures for monitoring attendance and punctuality are sound.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

53. The school's links with parents have improved since the last inspection and, overall, parents and carers' views of the school are good. The school operates an 'open door' policy, and encourages parents to approach staff with queries or concerns at any mutually convenient time. Nearly all parents feel that this policy is effective. Class teachers regularly invite parents to help in school, and a significant number do so, especially at Key Stage 1. Teachers value the help they receive, and make good use of parents' contributions. The parent-teacher association has good parental support, and has made an important contribution by funding resources for learning over the years. In response, the school has provided parents with the exclusive use of a room where they can meet and work.

54. Information provided to parents about the school is sound. A newsletter has been introduced since the previous inspection, and keeps parents up to date on school issues, news and events. This is supplemented by a half-termly timetable which includes the subjects pupils will cover in their topic work, and a homework timetable. The school invites parents to special meetings to inform them about the curriculum. Meetings were held to inform parents about the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, for example, and a well attended meeting during the inspection week launched new book bags and explained to parents and carers how they can use them to encourage children to enjoy books. The school provides useful information for parents of children starting in reception through a welcome pack and a meeting in the previous summer term. This is followed by an introductory session to welcome parents and children on the day they begin school. Staff use all these opportunities well to give parents advice on how to help their children at home.
55. In the parental questionnaire and at the parents' meeting, some parents expressed dissatisfaction with the information they receive on their children's progress. In all year groups, however, meetings are held regularly each term for parents to meet staff and to discuss their children's progress, and an alternative time is offered for those unable to attend. The quality of the annual reports on pupils' progress is not entirely consistent across the school, but, overall, the information given to parents is satisfactory. Parents are always encouraged to ask teachers for further information if they have any concerns about their children's progress.
56. Overall, parents' contributions to children's learning at home and at school are sound. Most parents take a keen interest in their children's progress, listen regularly to their children read, and monitor and support pupils' work at home. Links with parents of pupils with special educational needs are good. Parents' evenings are used well with an opportunity each term for parents to review progress with teachers. Parents of pupils in the Deaf Support Unit develop very close links with the teaching staff, and the help they give their children at home has a considerable impact on their progress. Parents are fully involved in setting and monitoring the targets in pupils' individual education plans, and regular reviews of pupils' plans are incorporated into the termly progress meetings.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

57. The headteacher and key staff provide good leadership of the school. They have clear aims and appropriate plans for the future. As a result, the school is moving forward with clear educational direction. During her five years in post, the headteacher has established good relationships with staff, and has gained the respect of her pupils. She is strongly committed to raising standards in the school and has established a good ethos to support the effective learning of all pupils. The headteacher has an inclusive style of management and consults widely with staff and governors. She works closely with the deputy head who plays a crucial role in supporting pupils and staff, supervises newly qualified teachers and ably assists the headteacher in checking and managing pupils' behaviour.
58. The headteacher monitors teaching and pupils' work effectively. She looks at teachers' medium-term planning each term and gives a written summary of points requiring action to each teacher. She systematically visits classrooms to observe teachers at work and feeds back her observations on teaching both orally and in writing before setting targets for future development. All teachers take part in an annual review to identify professional development needs. Plans are in place to introduce performance management. The headteacher regularly scrutinizes pupils' work to ensure that it follows teachers' planning and discusses strengths and weaknesses of the work at staff meetings. Together with the assessment co-ordinator, she analyses National Curriculum assessments, optional tests and teacher assessments, and has identified and taken action to address weaker areas such as the standard of pupils' writing skills.

59. The aims and values of the school are reflected in its work. The school provides a caring environment where children develop a sense of responsibility for themselves and towards others. The school has high expectations of children's learning and behaviour, and encourages all pupils to achieve their full potential. It has a clear commitment to improving standards and to providing equal opportunities for all pupils regardless of race, gender, religion or other personal circumstances. Realistic targets have been set to improve standards in English and mathematics in the National Curriculum tests in 2001. To meet these targets, the school has focussed on raising standards of pupils' writing, effective support for pupils with special needs, additional literacy support and booster classes for pupils in Year 6.
60. Responsibility for subject areas is delegated to subject co-ordinators whose role has been developed since the previous inspection. Co-ordinators manage spending on resources, monitor pupils' work, and feed back information to other staff after attending training courses. The literacy and numeracy co-ordinators have recently spent time observing their colleagues at work and helping them develop their teaching. All subject co-ordinators are to be given opportunities to observe and assist their colleagues during the current year. All staff have job descriptions which specify their roles clearly. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides good leadership in the identification of pupils with special needs and in the compilation of appropriate individual targets. She evaluates the provision for pupils' special needs effectively, and ensures their progress is reviewed regularly. School records are well maintained and up to date, and parents are kept informed and involved appropriately.
61. The governors provide sound support for the headteacher, and are more involved in the management of the school than at the previous inspection. They fulfil all their statutory responsibilities, with the exception of a few omissions in the governors' annual report and the school prospectus. Since the previous inspection, the governors have become more actively involved in the life of the school. Each governor monitors a curriculum area, meeting with the subject co-ordinator in the autumn term and discussing development plans for the year. A governors' open day is held each year to encourage governors to observe the school in action. A 'governor of the month' is invited to observe lessons and to join in school activities. The full governing body holds meetings twice a term, and committees meet regularly to deal with appointments, salaries and premises. Governors are kept well informed by presentations from the headteacher and other staff. Several governors visit the school regularly, and the Chair accompanies pupils in Years 5 and 6 on their residential visits to High Borran. All governors recently attended training on health and safety issues, and training on performance management is planned. Governors play an important role in discussing management and budget issues, and have a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The governing body has a satisfactory view of the long-term development of the school, and the committees suggest priorities which are included in the school development plan.
62. The school is effective in supporting educational priorities through its financial planning. The school development plan identifies clear targets that are linked to specific success criteria. Where possible, the cost implications of each initiative are identified. Day-to-day administration is efficient and the school uses information and communications technology effectively for raising invoices and paying accounts.
63. The school makes good use of funding that is allocated to specific areas such as professional development, the Additional Literacy Strategy and special educational needs. The school has budgeted carefully to introduce an additional class this year. This has effectively reduced class sizes and has removed the need for any mixed-age classes. Most of the large carry-over projected for this year will be used to fund the additional teacher and to provide additional facilities in the Deaf Support Centre. The principles of best value are applied to all major spending decisions to ensure that the school receives good value for money.
64. Teachers are appropriately qualified, sufficient in number, and have a wide range of experience and service in the school. There are sound procedures to support newly qualified teachers. Extra support for pupils with special educational needs is provided by teachers who do not have a class of their own and withdraw children for focussed teaching in small groups.
65. Support staff for the foundation stage are trained and experienced nursery nurses who work effectively alongside teachers. Qualified and experienced support staff work with deaf children in their classrooms enabling them, through signing, to participate effectively in mainstream education.

66. Classrooms are spacious, clean, in good decorative order and provide a cheerful learning environment. Specialist provision for the Deaf Support Unit has been extended by providing a speech and language therapy room, together with improvements in the school environment such as carpeting and lowered ceilings to reduce noise. Overall, the school buildings provide satisfactory accommodation, including two large halls. Good use is made of every available space such as the literacy area for Key Stage 1 pupils, which provides additional teaching space and enlivens the link between the lower and upper schools. The pupils' toilets are in need of refurbishment, but funds have recently been made available for this to be carried out. The computer suite is a valuable new resource, but needs an extractor fan to improve ventilation. Displays are used well throughout the school to celebrate pupils' work and school events, to enhance the learning environment, and to inform parents and visitors of the work of the school.
67. The spacious grounds are an attractive feature of the school, but the paved areas are uneven and the lower school playground is unfenced and open to areas with vehicular access and parking spaces. The school has already begun plans for the improvement of the outdoor environment, and the provision of perimeter fencing for the lower school play area is included in the school development plan.
68. The range and quality of learning resources are generally sufficient to meet the needs of the curriculum. They are used well and are easily accessible to staff and pupils. Resources for music and physical education are good. There are sufficient computers for information and communications technology installed in a new computer suite with the help of a major contribution from the parent-teacher association, but provision of software is inadequate. The library is housed in an appropriately large room. Books are well organised and accessible to pupils, and cover all subject areas, although the number of books is low for the size of school, and many are well used and worn. Resources for learning at the foundation stage are satisfactory overall, but there are few large items for outdoor play.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

69. In order to raise standards and improve the quality of education provided, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:
- a) raise standards of pupils' writing at Key Stage 2 by
    - (i) increasing the opportunities for pupils to write in different styles and for different purposes across all subjects of the curriculum; (see paragraphs 100,103,109)
    - (ii) expanding pupils' use of interesting vocabulary; (see paragraphs 100,103,109)
    - (iii) improving handwriting and presentation of pupils' work. (see paragraphs 102,103,109)
    - (iv) improving marking procedures and assessment of pupils' attainment, and using this information to target pupils' weaknesses; (see paragraphs 35,104)
  - b) continue to raise standards in information and communications technology (ICT) at both key stages by
    - (i) ensuring planning is consistent in all classes and makes appropriate provision for all pupils; (see paragraphs 154,158)
    - (ii) improving resources for the use of ICT across the curriculum; (see paragraphs 159)
    - (iii) using ICT skills to assist pupils' learning in other subjects of the curriculum; (see paragraphs 109,125,135,146,152,154,158,167,181)
    - (iv) developing teachers' expertise further in ICT. (see paragraphs 157)
  - c) improve the provision for pupils in the foundation stage by
    - (i) improving short-term planning to include precise learning objectives in all areas of learning; (see paragraph 90)
    - (ii) assessing children's attainment in all of the early learning goals and using this information to develop skills appropriate to each child's needs; (see paragraph 92)
    - (iii) providing a variety of large toys to further the development of children's gross motor skills; (see paragraph 96)
    - (iv) providing secure fencing around the children's play area and refurbishing the children's toilets; (see paragraph 95)
    - (v) improving the management and co-ordination of the provision for the under-fives by

appointing a co-ordinator for the foundation stage. (see paragraph 94)

70. In addition to the key issues above, the school should consider including the following minor issues in its action plan:
- a) The governing body should ensure that the school prospectus includes details of pupils' authorised and unauthorised absences and that the annual report to parents includes more details of the school's implementation of its special needs policy and more details of school security. (see paragraph 61)
  - b) There should be further training to update staff awareness of child protection procedures. (see paragraph 52)

## **DEAF SUPPORT CENTRE**

71. There are twenty pupils with statements of special educational needs currently under the care and supervision of the Deaf Support Centre. Pupils come from a wide area and are representative of the school's age range, with the youngest pupils in reception and the oldest in Year 6. Eighty per cent of pupils attending have a profound hearing loss with the remaining 20 per cent having a severe hearing loss. The centre is committed to total communication. Its use of a variety of modes of communication is well matched to individual needs so that, for example, teaching approaches can be adapted to different needs including those pupils with and those without a signing background. The provision made for the pupils is excellent, and this standard has been maintained since the previous inspection. The core team of staff comprising teachers, therapists and support staff have appropriate specialist qualifications and experience. The principal features of the excellent provision are the standard of specialist teaching, the degree of integration between specialist teaching and other specialist services, and the degree of integration of pupils in terms of their access to the whole of the school's curriculum. The very high degree of integration of pupils into all aspects of school life has been achieved and sustained by a whole school commitment to integration. Deaf pupils are in every sense full members of their classes.
72. Pupils make very good progress in their learning both in lessons and over time. Working in the centre, one younger pupil, for example, responded to a story about the weather by signing her account of being woken up by a storm. She made very good progress in recognising and using the key words that were the focus of the lesson. She watched and listened to the teacher and responded with speech, finger spelling and signs. Another younger pupil with no signing background matched coloured objects with the same colours in a story and correctly signed colours during the activity. Older pupils recalled details of characters and events from a story read in a previous lesson. They made very good progress in distinguishing between strong and weak words (such as cross, angry and furious), they finger spelt and then said these words in context to describe characters in the story read previously. Pupils are fully involved in lessons outside the centre. In mathematics, for example, they participated fully in lesson introductions to count on from given numbers, and in history they took a full part in activities involving selecting information from a variety of sources.
73. The standard of teaching in the Deaf Support Centre is very good. Teachers' knowledge is secure. Lessons are planned well, and are linked clearly to pupils' individual targets and to curriculum requirements outside the centre. In one example, a pupil was given individual tuition in counting sums of money after encountering difficulties in a previous lesson with her class. She then returned to the second half of her mathematics lesson and successfully completed activities previously causing her difficulties. Relationships with pupils are very good. Teaching is characterised by positive encouragement. Pupils are encouraged to sustain high standards in watching, listening, thinking and speaking. High standards are also set with regard to pupils' responses, and accurate responses are constantly encouraged and praised. Teaching methods are very effective when involving pupils in activities to enable learning to be consolidated with, for example, pupils speaking and then sorting and grouping words on cards into one, two, and three syllable categories. Information and communications technology is used well as an integral part of lessons with, for example, pupils sorting pictures and text into the correct sequence in a story. Homework is used very well, with pupils given individual tasks linked to lesson activities to practice at home with family members. The work of both class teachers and specialist support staff contributes significantly to pupils' learning and to their very good progress. Class teachers and specialist support staff work

closely together to involve pupils in all aspects of lessons. Signing between pupils and support staff is a key feature of the excellent provision made. Support staff are kept well informed about lesson planning.

74. A major element in the effectiveness of the teaching is good planning and the use of assessment to inform planning. There are four weekly planning meetings. Deaf Centre teachers and support staff meet once each week to discuss the progress of individuals across the curriculum during the previous week. Deaf Centre teachers and speech and language therapists have three meetings per week. In addition there are numerous informal contacts during the week including those with other teaching staff. Specialist speech and language therapists administer a wide range of tests to inform annual reviews and long term planning.
75. Links with specialist services are very strong. In particular, the presence of specialist speech and language therapists on site is a major feature of the excellent provision. The centre maintains very close links with providers of specialist medical services, who visit the school on a regular basis, and with the heads of hearing impaired services in neighbouring local authorities. There are also very strong links with the local nursery and secondary school.
76. Links with parents are also very strong. As well as involvement in annual reviews, parents are regularly involved with homework activities. There is effective daily communication through home-school notebooks, and the school makes every effort to maintain an 'open door' policy for parents.
77. The accommodation has some very good features, and has been extended since the previous inspection. The provision of carpets and the lowering of some ceilings has also made a significant improvement to the acoustics of classrooms since the previous report. The centre includes very good provision for individual speech and language therapy, and within the school there is a specialist speech and language therapy training suite.
78. The centre is constantly striving to develop and improve the overall provision for pupils. A parent support group is planned, and acoustics are being further enhanced through the installation of a sound field system throughout the school. The school is further refining its assessment procedures, and is developing a programme of targets for the seven years of primary education linked to literacy and numeracy requirements.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

|                                                                      |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Number of lessons observed                                           | 91 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 30 |

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 1         | 18        | 43   | 37           | 1              | 0    | 0         |

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

### Information about the school's pupils

| Pupils on the school's roll                                      | Nursery | YR– Y6 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|--------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | -       | 376    |
| Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals        | -       | 44     |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs                                           | Nursery | YR– Y6 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|--------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs       | -       | 21     |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | -       | 74     |

| English as an additional language                       | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 0            |

| Pupil mobility in the last school year                                       | No of pupils |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 14           |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving           | 6            |

### Attendance

| Authorised absence        | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 3.6 |
| National comparative data | 5.4 |

| Unauthorised absence      | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 0.0 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

|                                                                                        |      |      |       |       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|                                                                                        | 2000 | 26   | 26    | 52    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---------------------------------------------|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | 23      | 23      | 25          |
|                                             | Girls    | 24      | 23      | 24          |
|                                             | Total    | 47      | 46      | 49          |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 90 (91) | 89 (95) | 94 (98)     |
|                                             | National | 88 (82) | 84 (83) | 90 (87)     |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---------------------------------------------|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | 23      | 25          | 24      |
|                                             | Girls    | 23      | 24          | 24      |
|                                             | Total    | 46      | 49          | 48      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 89 (95) | 94 (98)     | 92 (96) |
|                                             | National | 84 (82) | 88 (86)     | 88 (87) |

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

|                                                                                        |      |      |       |       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|                                                                                        | 2000 | 28   | 28    | 56    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---------------------------------------------|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above   | Boys     | 17      | 23          | 27      |
|                                             | Girls    | 18      | 20          | 27      |
|                                             | Total    | 35      | 43          | 54      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School   | 63 (75) | 76 (75)     | 97 (89) |
|                                             | National | 75 (70) | 72 (69)     | 85 (78) |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---------------------------------------------|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above   | Boys     | 18      | 23          | 26      |
|                                             | Girls    | 20      | 19          | 26      |
|                                             | Total    | 38      | 42          | 52      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School   | 68 (73) | 75 (75)     | 93 (81) |
|                                             | National | 70 (68) | 72 (69)     | 79 (75) |

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

|                                 | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage      | 1            |
| Black – African heritage        | 0            |
| Black – other                   | 0            |
| Indian                          | 1            |
| Pakistani                       | 0            |
| Bangladeshi                     | 0            |
| Chinese                         | 1            |
| White                           | 372          |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 1            |

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

|                              | Fixed period | Permanent |
|------------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage   | 0            | 0         |
| Black – African heritage     | 0            | 0         |
| Black – other                | 0            | 0         |
| Indian                       | 0            | 0         |
| Pakistani                    | 0            | 0         |
| Bangladeshi                  | 0            | 0         |
| Chinese                      | 0            | 0         |
| White                        | 0            | 0         |
| Other minority ethnic groups | 0            | 0         |

*This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

|                                          |      |
|------------------------------------------|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 18   |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 20.8 |
| Average class size                       | 26.8 |

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

|                                         |     |
|-----------------------------------------|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 11  |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week   | 299 |

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

|                                          |   |
|------------------------------------------|---|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | - |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | - |

|                                         |   |
|-----------------------------------------|---|
| Total number of education support staff | - |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week   | - |

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Number of pupils per FTE adult | - |
|--------------------------------|---|

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

|                |           |
|----------------|-----------|
| Financial year | 1999/2000 |
|----------------|-----------|

|                                            | £       |
|--------------------------------------------|---------|
| Total income                               | 567,770 |
| Total expenditure                          | 571,470 |
| Expenditure per pupil                      | 1,537   |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 24,200  |
| Balance carried forward to next year       | 20,500  |

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 32%

Number of questionnaires sent out

376

Number of questionnaires returned

120

### Percentage of responses in each category

|                                                                                    | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school.                                                             | 55             | 41            | 3                | 1                 | 0          |
| My child is making good progress in school.                                        | 40             | 50            | 7                | 1                 | 2          |
| Behaviour in the school is good.                                                   | 38             | 53            | 6                | 1                 | 2          |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.                              | 23             | 50            | 21               | 4                 | 2          |
| The teaching is good.                                                              | 47             | 45            | 2                | 0                 | 6          |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.                          | 36             | 39            | 21               | 4                 | 0          |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 55             | 38            | 6                | 1                 | 0          |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.              | 48             | 43            | 4                | 0                 | 5          |
| The school works closely with parents.                                             | 35             | 43            | 16               | 2                 | 4          |
| The school is well led and managed.                                                | 45             | 40            | 7                | 1                 | 7          |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.                      | 43             | 48            | 6                | 0                 | 3          |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.            | 26             | 43            | 13               | 12                | 6          |

### Other issues raised by parents

A few parents commented on the state of the school toilets. These are in a poor condition but have recently been scheduled for refurbishment.

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

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

79. During the inspection the school's admission programme was in operation. This meant that the number of children attending full-time and part-time changed during the week. The number on roll consisted of 26 children attending full-time and 12 children attending part-time. These figures are due to increase as additional children are admitted. A full-time teacher is in charge of each class, with a nursery nurse providing additional learning support. In addition, special needs support staff work with children who are deaf or have a profound hearing impairment.
80. Children are admitted to the two reception classes at or near the beginning of the school year during which they reach five years of age. The majority of children have had some pre-school experience through attendance at a nursery or playgroup before coming to school. The school uses the local authority's baseline assessment during the first half of the autumn term. This provides teachers with a preliminary view of attainment in reading and mathematics for each child. During the inspection, teachers were in the process of assessing the children being admitted for the current year. Assessment results for the two previous years indicate that, on entry to the school, attainment for the majority of children is close to the average for children of this age. Some children have well-developed skills and others have yet to develop the skills typical of children at this age.
81. During the inspection, attainment was judged as being in line with national expectations in all of the six areas of learning recommended for children in the foundation stage. This judgement broadly reflects that made at the time of the previous inspection. In lessons, the majority of children make sound progress in their learning. Very good levels of additional support are provided for children with special educational needs and as a result they make good progress.

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

82. Children settle quickly into the established routines of school. They already show confidence and independence, for example, when asked to take the register to the school office. Most are happy to come into school and join the class group for registration. During activity time they make their own choice of activity, remaining occupied without the need for direct supervision for an appropriate length of time. They concentrate during set activities and follow instructions well. They are aware of each other's safety and are sensible when using scissors, moving about the classroom or playing outside on the large toys. In class lessons, when talking about what is happening in a story, they are beginning to understand the need to listen to others. When playing games such as picture dominoes, they are learning to wait until it is their turn. In all of the lessons observed, the children were well behaved.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

83. The large majority of children are in line to attain many or all of the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Many are already developing the confidence to speak to adults they know. They listen carefully to their teachers and follow simple instructions. During story time, they talk about the writing and pictures in the book, and respond appropriately to the teachers' questions. When involved in role-play activities, for example when in an 'emergency situation', they 'telephone' the fire brigade, ambulance and police and talk with each other about the nature of the problem. Many children express themselves using whole phrases or simple sentences and are developing the vocabulary to explain what they know and understand. The majority recognise their first names.
84. When looking at books, many behave as readers, turning the pages and telling the story by using the pictures as clues. Higher-attaining children recognise letters of the alphabet, the sounds the letters make, and are able to read simple, familiar words. In their writing, the majority of children make marks or write letters of the alphabet to represent meaning and are learning to copy their names. Pencil control is developing satisfactorily and the majority of children can hold a pencil or crayon correctly.

#### **Mathematical development**

85. The majority of children are in line to attain the early learning goals for mathematics. In class sessions, they join in with number songs such as 'Five Little Ducks'. When working in a group or individually, they are learning how to count carefully by pointing to or touching each object as they count. The majority are able to count to six with some children counting beyond this. Many recognise numbers to five when accompanied by matching sets of objects. A few are able to recognise and work with numbers higher than five.

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

86. Children are interested in the world around them. They ask questions, for example, about the goldfish kept in one of the classrooms. When playing with construction kits, the models made are broadly representative of what they say they are making. As part of the current term's topic, the majority of children are able to identify the major parts of the body; many know their eye colour and a few are able to remember the terms 'pupil' and 'iris' following the lesson. When working on the computer, they are able to make satisfactory use of the mouse to control events on the monitor.

### **Physical development**

87. Physical development is broadly in line with expectations for children of this age. During outside play, they ride confidently on tricycles and wheeled toys and show satisfactory skills in controlling speed and direction. They handle pencils and crayons with appropriate levels of skill. When producing handprints, they carefully make repeated images showing good control of the paint. When they are moving about the school, for example, going to assembly or to the dining room, they stand in line sensibly. During the inspection, it was not possible to observe a physical education lesson.

### **Creative development**

88. The majority of children recognise the primary colours - red, blue and yellow - with some able to recognise a broader range. They colour in shapes and paint pictures with appropriate levels of control. When working with play-dough many know how to make it into a ball before rolling it out to make shapes and models. They have learned the words to a range of rhymes and songs and sing with satisfactory levels of tunefulness.

### **Quality of teaching**

89. The quality of teaching observed is sound overall. It was good in forty percent of the class lessons observed and never less than satisfactory. Teaching by specialist support teachers working with deaf children is very good. The best features in teaching are in the development of the children's emotional, personal and social development. This has a very positive impact on the way in which children settle into class routines and know what is expected of them. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of children of this age. They are sympathetic to the needs of individuals and at the same time encourage children to learn how to cope with these needs. Teachers value, support and encourage independent learning at all times. This is done by explaining tasks clearly so that the children know what is expected of them, and through the provision of resources and worksheets that reinforce and develop children's learning. Teachers set clear and appropriate expectations of behaviour and the children respond positively. This results in good relationships and a productive working environment. The skills of support staff, including specialist staff working with deaf children, are used well to support individual children and small groups. A particular strength observed in lessons is the inclusion of all children in the full range of provision.
90. Teachers' planning for literacy, mathematics and some aspects of the children's knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory overall. However, lesson planning does not currently provide sufficiently detailed learning targets in all of the six learning areas or set specific learning objectives for children of differing attainment.

## **Curriculum, assessment, recording and reporting to parents**

91. The curriculum provides a satisfactory range of activities and opportunities to help children to learn. It makes sound provision for the attainment of the standards expected for the majority of children of this age and prepares them for starting the National Curriculum at the beginning of Key Stage 1.
92. Statutory baseline assessment at the beginning of the school year is fully in place. Teachers make good use of the results to organise children into ability groups for learning. The quality of the on-going assessment of children's learning is satisfactory for literacy and numeracy. However, there is currently no formal system in place to track individual children's progress towards the attainment of the early learning goals in the four other areas of learning.
93. Satisfactory provision is made to inform parents about the school, its induction procedures and the progress their children are making during the year. A 'starter pack' for all parents provides general information about the school and the admission programme. In addition, parents are invited to three parents' evenings each year. There are additional opportunities for parents to learn about baseline assessment procedures. Written reports to parents at the end of the summer term provide satisfactory levels of information about all six aspects of learning.

## **Leadership, accommodation and resources**

94. There is no co-ordinator to lead developments in the foundation stage. In addition, the improvement of provision for children in the foundation stage has a relatively low priority in the school development plan. This has resulted in an unsatisfactory overview of the most recent developments both in the curriculum and in the assessment of children's progress.
95. Classrooms are bright and attractive and of an adequate size. The children's toilets are in a poor condition but have recently been scheduled for refurbishment. There is adequate space for outdoor play. This has been enhanced recently by hard-surface markings. However, the play area is near to the school car park and vehicle entrance and there is no perimeter fence to provide a more secure environment. In addition, there is no provision for shade from the sun and no facility in place for the storage of large equipment.
96. Resources are generally adequate to support learning in all areas of the foundation stage curriculum. However, the school currently has few outside play toys and depends on using the ones that belong to the playgroup which is based on the school premises.
97. Parents make a good contribution to their children's learning through supporting reading at home and working with teachers to provide additional resources for learning. During the inspection one parent was helping in lessons. This number is due to rise during the year as the children settle into school.

## **ENGLISH**

98. In the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 2000, more pupils than average achieved the nationally expected level in reading, but the percentage of pupils achieving higher levels was below the national average. Overall, standards in reading were just below the national average. The results in 2000 remained broadly similar to those in 1999, although the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level dropped slightly. In writing, the percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard in the tests in 2000 was close to the national average, but less than average achieved higher levels. Overall, standards in writing were close to the national average. Standards in reading and writing were below the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds.
99. Standards in literacy are broadly in line with national expectations when pupils begin the National Curriculum programme of study at the age of five. Inspection findings indicate that, in the current Year 2, standards in English are broadly in line with the national average in both reading and writing. Standards in listening and speaking are at the level expected for seven-year-olds.
100. The percentage of pupils attaining the nationally expected level in the National Curriculum tests for

eleven-year-olds in 2000 was well below the national average, and well below the national average gained higher levels. In comparison with those from similar schools, pupils' average scores were well below the national average. Inspection findings indicate that, in the current Year 6, standards in speaking and listening and in reading are broadly in line with the national average, but standards are below average in writing. Pupils do not write in enough depth or in a sufficient variety of different styles using a wide range of interesting vocabulary. In both 1999 and 2000, a significant proportion of pupils had special educational needs, including pupils with severe hearing impairment, and this undoubtedly had an impact on the overall performance of pupils in these year groups.

101. The school has tracked the progress of pupils in English over the past four years using the results from standardised tests, National Curriculum tests and the optional tests at Key Stage 2. To help raise standards in literacy, realistic targets are set for pupils according to their age and ability. The great majority of pupils make satisfactory progress in all aspects of their English work. In the recent past, several pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 have clearly benefited from the introduction of English booster classes. Apart from in Year 3, pupils in the junior classes are currently taught English in broad ability sets. This helps teachers to focus more accurately on the needs of individuals. A small number of pupils are given additional help by well-qualified support staff working with small groups. The integration of deaf pupils into mainstream English classes is a significant strength of the school's provision and these pupils make good progress.
102. Teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and is satisfactory at Key Stage 2. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan their work effectively, usually as a year group, closely following the structure suggested by the National Literacy Strategy. Staff use a wide range of attractive resources including 'big books' for younger pupils and good literature for older pupils, which is then used as a stimulus for written work. Pupils are generally enthusiastic in most of their work and behave well in class. This promotes good learning. Teachers use oral sessions to good advantage, giving clear explanations and developing pupils' oral skills through carefully structured question and answer sessions. In a particularly effective lesson in Year 2, the teacher involved her pupils at every stage of their learning. By using careful questioning and by giving her pupils the opportunity to share ideas with each other, good work on instructional writing resulted. The management of pupils is generally good, although, in a few lessons at Key Stage 2, some pupils were allowed to drift from their chosen tasks leading to a poorer standard of presentation.
103. The pace of lessons is generally good and this promotes effective learning and sound progress. A good feature of some lessons is the practice of sharing the intended outcomes with the pupils at the start. This gives a good focus to the teaching and learning, allowing pupils to gauge their own progress. At Key Stage 1, appropriate emphasis is placed on good habits of handwriting and spelling. There are effective links with pupils' reading, and grammar and vocabulary practice flow into pupils' imaginative writing. At Key Stage 2, such links are less well defined and, for a significant number of older pupils, writing lacks clarity and imagination. Pupils are taught sentence structure and grammatical components well, but many fail to apply these to their everyday writing. Pupils also need to use more complex and more exciting vocabulary to make their writing more interesting. The school is beginning to see the potential of other subjects as vehicles for developing pupils' extended and imaginative writing, and several good examples were seen in religious education and in history. Many teachers need to develop this a great deal more.
104. Assistance given to pupils is good, including the support given to those with special educational needs. Work is marked promptly but, especially at Key Stage 2, there is no agreed approach to the marking of pupils' texts and insufficient guidance is given on how pupils can review and improve their own work. Insufficient use is made of information technology to help learning, for example, to draft and re-draft pupils' work. Homework is set regularly and contributes satisfactorily to spelling ability and the development of reading skills. Assessment is widely carried out and includes a bank of statutory and other tests used to gauge the standards and progress of pupils. At Key Stage 2, there is a need for teachers to use the results of such assessments more precisely in order to check the effectiveness of their teaching and to refine learning objectives for individual pupils.

### **Speaking and Listening**

105. At both key stages, the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their speaking and listening skills and use these as an essential part of their everyday learning. Most listen well to

instructions and respond sensibly when asked direct questions by their teacher. Standards of debate are not high, even among the older pupils, but the majority show great willingness to answer questions and participate in class discussions. One Year 6 class showed no fears about leading an act of worship on their own and many spoke clearly and with confidence. Pupils were friendly and courteous when asked to explain what work they were doing, but several were unable to articulate exactly what their work involved or how a particular answer was reached. Most pupils sustain their listening skills during the literacy hour, making their learning secure and interesting.

## **Reading**

106. Pupils make a good start to their reading at Key Stage 1 and rapidly acquire a basic sight vocabulary of common words that is built on in succeeding years. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils read within the range expected for their age. Several show higher levels of reading skills, working out difficult vocabulary and reading a variety of books with expression and understanding. The school ensures there is a wide variety of reading materials to extend young readers as part of the overall approach to literacy. In lessons observed in Years 1 and 2, for example, many pupils were able to join in reading from the large text book and could select important words and explain what the vocabulary meant.
107. Pupils continue to develop their reading skills at Key Stage 2 although there is some over-reliance on graded or 'scheme' books which become increasingly less attractive to older pupils. The school is currently addressing this issue. Reading skills and levels of comprehension are broadly in line with national expectations for the majority of pupils at Key Stage 2. However, when reading aloud or discussing a text, a minority of pupils show little enthusiasm and need a lot of prompting before they talk freely about their past reading or about their tastes in fiction and non-fiction. A few older pupils talk fluently about their special books and how they enjoy the style of a favourite author. Most older pupils are familiar with the layout of the library, skim through books for information, and use an index and glossary effectively.

## **Writing**

108. At Key Stage 1, pupils acquire the basic skills of letter formation at an early age and quickly establish a legible style of their own. Most use their reading skills to develop an awareness of the sounds of letters and combinations of letters and use this to extend their personal written vocabulary. By the end of Year 1, pupils attempt examples of independent writing, although only a minority write at length or spell most words correctly. By the end of the key stage, pupils' ability to spell correctly has improved, and they produce written work that has sound sentence structure and includes a good range of vocabulary. Pupils in Year 2 produce interesting stories and make good attempts to write in different styles, for example, when describing how to make a sandwich. Progress is even and well sustained throughout all classes at Key Stage 1. Pupils build well on their previous learning and, particularly during formal literacy sessions, show satisfactory productivity and pace of working.
109. Pupils make less steady progress at Key Stage 2, and by the end of the key stage a significant number of pupils still lack clarity and conviction in their writing styles. Most are confident in recognising grammatical structures and know, for example, the role of adverbs and adjectives. Many, however, find it difficult to write in different styles or to select exciting, adventurous vocabulary that will make their creative pieces more interesting to the reader. When challenged to write imaginatively, many pupils struggle to write at length. There is little evidence of the use of information and communications technology for drafting and re-drafting to improve the text. Where pupils' imagination is fired, for example when writing about how children might feel when starting at boarding school, the results are generally mature and pleasant to read. Spelling is largely accurate, but too many pupils fail to use a dictionary as a matter of course and repeated errors do occur. The use of pencil or pen can be haphazard, and presentation is sometimes poor, particularly when using worksheets. When marking pupils' work, some teachers do not indicate sufficiently how pupils' work might be improved. Due to this lack of meaningful targets, pupils' progress is often no better than satisfactory.
110. The leadership of the subject is well established and the co-ordinator has successfully introduced the strengths of the National Literacy Strategy, especially at Key Stage 1. Recently, a more concentrated effort has been made to pinpoint weaknesses in writing at Key Stage 2 and to set

appropriate targets to raise achievement. Good attention is now paid to challenging the most able pupils as well to as supporting those with special educational needs. Overall, there has been sound progress since the previous inspection.

111. Resources are satisfactory and maintain the interest and concentration of pupils. The centralised school library is adequate but is in need of some refurbishment. A wider range of books would help to broaden the reading habits of older and more able pupils.

## **MATHEMATICS**

112. In the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 2000, the proportion of pupils attaining the nationally expected level was close to the national average, but the proportion attaining higher levels was below the national average. Overall, standards were just below the national average. Standards were lower than those in 1999 as a higher proportion of pupils had special educational needs and the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level and higher levels both fell. Over the last four years, however, pupils' attainment has generally been above the national average. In comparison with similar schools, standards in 2000 were below average.
113. In the National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds in 2000, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level was close to the national average, and the number reaching higher levels was also close to the national average. Overall, standards were close to the national average. In the tests in 2000, the proportion reaching the expected level rose slightly, though the percentage reaching higher levels fell. During the last four years, attainment has generally been above the national average. In comparison with similar schools, standards in 2000 were close to the average.
114. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in the current Year 2 and in the current Year 6 are above the national average. The school has begun to use information gained from pupil assessments to highlight areas for development and this, together with increased confidence in using the teaching techniques of the National Numeracy Strategy, is having a positive impact on pupils' attainment. At both key stages there is no significant variation in attainment by gender or ethnicity.
115. When analysing the results of tests and assessments it is important to note that the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in some year groups affects overall standards. In last year's Year 6, approximately a quarter of all pupils had special needs. In the current Year 6, 12 per cent have special needs and this rises to 33 per cent in the current Year 5. This largely accounts for fluctuations in standards in some years.
116. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils count sets of objects to 20 correctly. Higher-attaining pupils order numbers up to 100 correctly and have a secure understanding of the place value of tens and units. Higher-attaining pupils understand the concept of a half and a quarter, and tell the time to the half hour correctly. Most pupils continue simple number patterns and higher-attaining pupils have a working knowledge of standard units of length, such as centimetres and metres. Most pupils correctly name and recognise two-dimensional shapes, such as squares, triangles and circles, but very few name or recognise three-dimensional shapes.
117. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have a secure knowledge of how to solve problems by dividing them into several parts, for instance, by using brackets accurately. They divide four-digit numbers by one or two digits successfully, and many work to two decimal places. Most pupils have a satisfactory understanding of mixed numbers, equivalent fractions and simple percentages. Higher-attaining pupils show a greater mental agility when solving problems than do lower-attaining pupils. They are successfully developing strategies for solving problems and are beginning to be confident when explaining their thinking to others. Higher-attaining pupils have a good understanding of shape and space, and data handling.
118. Standards have improved since the last inspection. The school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy successfully and teachers have improved their planning for lessons. Assessments are used effectively to organise classes by ability at Key Stage 2. As a result, activities are more closely matched to the needs of individual pupils. In addition, the school has started to target the work of pupils who are close to achieving the nationally expected standard. The school also provides a homework club to help pupils in Year 5 to improve their levels of

achievement. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has improved the school's coverage of the National Curriculum. By analysing information from test results, teachers have identified areas of weakness in pupils' achievement, for example, in their mental agility and their ability to solve problems. The school has focused successfully on these areas to improve standards. Together with good leadership and management of the subject, these developments are having a positive impact on standards.

119. The quality of teaching is consistently good at Key Stage 1, and is good, overall, at Key Stage 2. Most teachers have a good understanding of the subject. Brisk introductory mental mathematics sessions are used effectively to motivate pupils and to re-inforce and develop new concepts. Where difficulties arise, teachers use additional approaches to help pupils' understanding. At both key stages, teachers explain new areas of learning clearly so that pupils' learning is improved. Most use questions well to help pupils build on their prior understanding and deepen their thinking. This is particularly noticeable when questioning pupils with special educational needs and higher-attaining pupils. In the best lessons, teachers have a good depth of mathematical knowledge, communicate well with pupils, maintain a brisk pace to keep pupils interested, and provide challenging activities to improve pupils' achievement. Teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy effectively as a basis for their good planning. Lessons have clear learning objectives and many teachers share the objective of the lesson with pupils at the start of the lesson. This helps pupils to focus on what they are to learn and increases their level of concentration. Support staff are well briefed on the learning objectives and how they can support pupils' learning. They work closely with groups of pupils and have a beneficial impact on pupils' progress, especially those with special educational needs or hearing impairment.
120. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. This allows pupils to try out new ideas, recognise mathematical patterns and develop alternative strategies to solving problems. Teachers generally use methods and strategies which match the purpose of the lesson. Occasionally, teachers use a limited range of teaching styles which limits learning because pupils' concentration wavers. The management of pupils' behaviour is good and teachers generally expect and gain good behaviour from their pupils. Most teachers effectively assess what pupils know, understand and can do. They use the end of lessons to assess pupils' understanding and often use probing questions throughout the lesson to gauge the extent of pupils' learning. Teachers are well aware of the needs of pupils with hearing impairment and with special needs. They use resources well and have designed and made many of the resources for their lessons. At Key Stage 1, however, overuse of commercially produced worksheets sometimes means that pupils are not given sufficient opportunity to develop their own thinking. Homework is satisfactory and has a beneficial impact on pupils' progress. Teachers set homework regularly and use it to consolidate work begun in lessons or for pupils to learn multiplication tables. Marking of pupils' work is up-to-date, but few teachers help pupils to improve their work by setting targets for pupils to achieve.
121. Most pupils have good levels of concentration. Relationships between pupils and teachers are good. The standard expected by most teachers ensures that pupils work hard and do their best. When teachers set timed targets for the completion of work it often has a beneficial impact on the pace at which pupils work. Pupils with special educational needs and those with hearing impairment are well supported by staff, and make good progress towards achieving their targets.
122. The co-ordinator has been in post for only one year, but has worked hard to establish the National Numeracy Strategy. Co-ordination of the subject is good and includes effective liaison with the nearby secondary school. Areas for improvement have been clearly identified and include the updating of the policy and curriculum guidelines. All the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. Monitoring of the subject across the school is effective. Careful analysis of test results has helped bring about improvements in planning and teaching. An effective programme for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning has begun and is starting to have a beneficial effect on raising standards. Procedures for assessment of pupils' attainment and progress are good and records are regularly updated. Information gained from assessments is used well to plan pupils' future learning and to determine the composition of sets. A good feature is the agreement of individual targets in consultation with older pupils. Numeracy is taught effectively across the school. It is promoted in different subjects such as history, where pupils study timelines to understand the concept of the past, and in science and geography where they record their findings by plotting graphs. Good use is made of information and communications technology in spreadsheet activities in Year 6. Resources are sound and they are used well to aid pupils' learning.

## SCIENCE

123. The percentage of pupils reaching the nationally expected level at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000, according to teachers' assessments, was close to the national average. The number of pupils reaching higher levels was below the national average. In comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level was close to the average, while the percentage achieving higher levels was below average. Standards in the tests in 2000 were lower than those in 1999. Inspection findings indicate that the attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 is above the national average. The proportion of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard is above the national average and a good proportion of pupils achieve higher levels. Standards at Key Stage 1 are higher than at the previous inspection.
124. At the end of Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils attaining the nationally expected level in the National Curriculum tests was well above the national average in 2000, and the percentage achieving higher levels was close to the national average. Overall, the standard was close to the national average. Standards were close to the national average when compared to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The proportion of pupils attaining the nationally expected standard in the National Curriculum tests in 2000 was higher than in 1999, but the percentage achieving higher levels fell. Inspection findings indicate that attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 is above the national average. All aspects of the subject are covered in depth and attainment is good in all areas. Standards at Key Stage 2 are higher than at the previous inspection, and are improving faster than the national trend.
125. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. This is broadly similar to the previous inspection, which found that teaching had many good features and some was excellent. Key features of the most successful lessons include very good subject knowledge, very good planning and very effective teaching strategies. These were seen to good effect in a range of lessons. In a class of Year 6 pupils, for example, pupils investigated how the air is displaced when liquid fills the space. The teacher shared her very good knowledge before the investigation, then encouraged pupils to pour water into beakers, each containing a different material, to test the displacement of air. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils were able to investigate the suitability of fabrics to dress a bear appropriately for the time of year and the weather. They were able to explain why they had chosen particular fabrics. In both these lessons, good teaching had a significant impact on pupils' learning. Teachers generally pitch the work at challenging but achievable levels, and pupils respond to this. Lessons are planned carefully and learning objectives and activities build well on pupils' previous learning. Teachers regularly refer back to work in the previous lesson to reinforce learning, and introduce the current lesson's learning objectives, which are often left on the blackboard for reference. At the end of lessons, plenary sessions are managed very effectively and pupils are regularly able to explain to the class what they have learnt. The opportunity is also used to correct any misapprehensions. Pupils are particularly challenged in investigative work which is well conducted by the teacher. Teachers use scientific vocabulary throughout lessons to good effect and encourage pupils to do the same. They make good use of a wide range of resources, for example, a 'big book' to provide links with the Literacy program, and a range of foods which have not been properly stored and have been attacked by micro-organisms. The use of information and communications technology is not currently included in on-going work, but is planned as a blocked unit of work to be covered later on. Marking is carried out regularly. More helpful comments, which show pupils how they might improve, could usefully be included.
126. Pupils make good progress in their learning at both key stages. Teachers' planning is translated well into suitable activities which extend pupils' knowledge and skills. Practical investigations are an integral part of the planning. The ensuing discussion between teacher and pupils about their findings is an enlightening experience. Pupils are offered an excellent balance between guidelines and independence at both key stages. At Key Stage 1, pupils steadily improve their ability to record information. Pupils in a Year 2 class, for example, were able to provide information on types of food that make up different diets. The information was then presented on the board as a pictogram, providing a good link with numeracy skills. Pupils gradually gain confidence in presenting their own information. At Key Stage 2, pupils develop their understanding of the need for a fair test, and understand that only one variable can be introduced if this is to be achieved. The high quality of teaching contributes significantly to pupils' good progress. Pupils sometimes have difficulties in describing what happened in different circumstances. For example, when pouring water onto a substance, are few, some, or many bubbles created? Pupils act sensibly when this

happens, and repeat the experiment so that they are more confident in their comparisons.

127. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress at both key stages. Individual progress is often very good when pupils receive additional support. In a Year 3 class, for example, higher-attaining pupils helped pupils with special educational needs to carry out research from books. Support staff for pupils from the Deaf Support Centre are particularly effective in the help they give. Few individual education plans include specific targets linked to science, but progress towards literacy and numeracy targets helps pupils to record the results of investigations more effectively. Higher-attaining pupils make very good progress at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2.
128. Pupils' attitudes to work are good at Key Stage 1. Pupils show interest and enthusiasm for science, are generally well behaved, and listen carefully to explanations and instructions. They are keen to answer questions. At Key Stage 2, behaviour is more variable and attitudes to work are sound. Many pupils continue to show a good level of interest and concentration. They think carefully about their assignments and respond sensibly when using potentially difficult equipment while carrying out investigations. There is a good degree of co-operation when working in pairs and in small groups. A small number of pupils at Key Stage 2 present challenging behaviour which affects their progress. This is being addressed, however, with increasing effectiveness.
129. The co-ordinator is an effective leader whose experience is used to very good effect. She has developed sound planning for both key stages and has produced a clear set of subject guidelines based firmly on advice from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. The scheme ensures excellent coverage and progression of skills, knowledge and understanding. All requirements of the National Curriculum are met. Regular opportunities for assessing pupils' skills and knowledge are built into the planning. The results of formal and informal assessments are used effectively to inform curriculum planning. The school currently delivers the curriculum to Key Stage 2 classes as a two-year rolling programme, but is considering introducing an annual programme throughout the school. Adequate resources are carefully stored and well maintained. Teachers make very good use of the school's resources and prepare many resources themselves. These resources, together with good 'Healthy Eating' displays throughout the school, provide an interesting and lively background to the study of science. The school is planning to make more time available for monitoring teaching and learning in science in the near future.

## **ART**

130. Pupils' attainment in art at both key stages is at the level expected for their age. During the inspection it was possible to observe only a few art lessons, but judgements are made on the basis of past work as well as by talking to staff and pupils and from observing work on display in classrooms and communal areas. Although standards remain broadly in line with those expected, there are some gaps in pupils' knowledge and experience that indicate a slight fall in standards since the previous inspection. This may be because the school has only recently begun to follow the approved programmes of study detailed in the new National Curriculum.
131. By the time they are seven, pupils learn a sound range of techniques and produce work that indicates a satisfactory knowledge of colour and texture. Pupils in Year 1 build on the sound start made in the foundation stage. They show a strong sense of colour, for example when making paper fish from templates, and are aware of the special effects that three-dimensional work can achieve through techniques such as pleating and curling. The same year group produce attractive self-portraits that indicate a growing awareness of the need to observe closely before attempting a composition. By the end of the key stage, pupils draw and paint to acceptable standards and use a range of collage materials to explore and support their work in other subjects.
132. By the time they are eleven, pupils increase their skills and output, but much of their work lacks the quality often seen when pupils are faced with a richer variety of techniques and experiences. The accurate drawing of action figures in Year 6, for example, presented some difficulties as pupils lacked the basis of previous experiences lower down the school. There are notable exceptions, however, such as when the whole school recently held an Arts Week. Pupils were supported in their work by visiting specialists and were able to use a wide range of exciting materials. Some very good work was achieved, such as the colourful masks made by pupils in Key Stage 2.

133. Where staff give pupils time to explore the potential of different materials and techniques, some attractive and successful work results, and much of this is well displayed throughout the school. In Year 4, pupils experiment with Islamic art and produce Arabesque designs. Others in the same year produce attractive card models of Roman boats to support their work in history. Standards in tie dyeing are good, and this technique is well established.
134. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In the lessons observed, teachers made sound use of their own knowledge and gave valuable support to pupils. In a Year 3 lesson, for example, the teacher gave clear instructions and was able to demonstrate how colour, tone and pattern can be altered and enhanced. Teachers in Year 1 ensure that pupils progress well when creating an 'Octopus Garden', an extravaganza of colour and collage depicting life under the waves. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils produce neat and relatively accurate drawings and paintings, but currently have not made sufficient progress in observational drawing or in the use of a wider range of more advanced techniques. This is partly due to the lack of time the school has devoted to art lessons in the recent past. Teachers' expectations of the quality of work are generally satisfactory. During lesson observations, the productivity and pace of learning was satisfactory. Pupils are interested in the subject and generally show pride in their efforts. Many pupils were keen to show the inspectors their finished work on display.
135. The current leadership and organisation of art are both satisfactory, although considerable work is needed to ensure that the profile of the subject is raised further. The co-ordinator has a good set of priorities that she intends to implement including more practical training for the staff and the greater use of art as a subject in its own right as well as a service subject for other areas of the curriculum. Resources for art are satisfactory, although the upper school is short of additional materials that would allow older pupils to explore a greater range of techniques and experiences. The use of information and communications technology as a teaching and learning resource in art could be usefully extended.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

136. Standards are similar to those of seven and eleven-year-olds in other schools. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory throughout the school, including those of pupils with special needs. Progress, however, is not consistent throughout the school. No lessons were observed in design and technology at Key Stage 1 during the inspection, but standards of work seen are in line with national expectations. Design and technology is linked to topic-based work in history and science, for example, when studying the development of clothes and toys at Key Stage 1. When making musical instruments from card, pupils design them appropriately, selecting suitable materials and tools. They join the materials efficiently and then decorate them with colour wash. Inspection findings indicate that pupils at Key Stage 1 are maintaining the sound standards identified at the previous inspection.
137. At Key Stage 2, as at the previous inspection, standards are in line with national expectations. Many pupils are beginning to generate ideas, design items and execute their designs. Pupils design lunch-boxes as part of a project which includes researching food around the world to serve as contents. They also produce effective designs for T-shirts which they cut from fabric, make up using the tie-dye process and then decorate. The design sketches are labelled appropriately and the finished product is individually cut, sewn and finished.
138. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is good. Tasks are well matched to pupils' abilities and include challenging opportunities. Teachers' subject knowledge and expectations, together with a suitable range of strategies for teaching, are instrumental in achieving current standards. Learning is generally sound at Key Stage 2 and depends on both the quality of teaching and pupils' attitudes. In the recent past, flexibility in national requirements has led to variable progress in pupils' learning. Some Year 6 pupils, for example, find incorporating seam tolerances into the design of a slipper pattern difficult to understand and to incorporate. Other work seen included Greek theatre masks in papier-mache developed by Year 3 pupils as part of a history topic, while Year 5 pupils had made Roman galleys from card. These were both made using appropriate tools and techniques, and suitably decorated. To celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of the Battle of Britain, a number of Year 5 pupils made miniature models of World War 2 aircraft, also in card. Although design and technology is incorporated into other subject work at Key Stage 2, clear co-ordination is not fully

developed.

139. Pupils' attitudes to design and technology vary from very good to unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2. Many pupils display interest, enthusiasm and a desire to design, and they achieve a good quality product within the range of their skills. They work co-operatively together. Other pupils find the relatively unstructured nature of the design and experiment process a challenge to their self-control in class. Teachers' skills are well honed to manage noisy and unco-operative behaviour when it occurs.
140. Planning is currently under way to implement the new National Curriculum, and all requirements are now being met. A draft policy document listing pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding is well under development. Planning documents are clearly laid out and contain appropriate learning objectives, teaching activities, and key vocabulary. The scheme of work is specifically linked to guidance suggested by Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Resources are adequate for the delivery of the subject, but the time allocated to teaching the subject towards the end of Key Stage 2 is barely adequate for pupils to achieve high standards.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

141. Pupils' attainment is typical for their age at the end of both key stages. This is similar to standards seen at the previous inspection. Pupils from the Deaf Support Centre are integrated well into all activities and make good progress.
142. By the age of seven, pupils have a sound knowledge of their own locality and compare some of its features with more distant places. Pupils in Year 1 examine the facilities available at the local shops and mark their route to the Toy Museum on an outline map. Pupils in Year 2 use the area around the school to develop mapping skills and draw maps of their route to school with features such as houses shown as pictorial symbols. They compare their own locality with a remote island in Western Scotland, pointing out the contrasts in features such as housing, transport, landscapes and the weather.
143. By the age of eleven, pupils identify features on aerial photographs of the local area and use Ordnance Survey map symbols effectively. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 study land uses in the local area and identify different house types and settlement patterns. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 compare the services provided in a small village in Northumberland with those found in North Shields, and compare farming on a Lake District fell farm with a large mixed farm in East Anglia. They study the water cycle and the use of rivers, and complete a project on life in another European Union country, such as Italy.
144. Only one lesson was observed at Key Stage 1 and two lessons at Key Stage 2. While an example of good teaching was seen at Key Stage 1, teaching is generally sound at Key Stage 2. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly and usually make the objectives of each lesson clear at the start. This helps pupils to understand what they are expected to learn during lessons. Teachers give interesting introductions to lessons and use a good range of resources to stimulate pupils' interest. As a result, pupils are curious and keen to learn. In a Year 2 lesson, for instance, the teacher made good use of a wall map, a large story book and a range of toy vehicles to compare the location and transport found in the Western Isles and the local area. Little use is made of information technology, however, to assist pupils' learning. Good use is made of detailed questioning to probe issues and to elicit information from pupils. In a Year 4 lesson, for example, good use of questioning enabled pupils to deduce from their litter survey of the school grounds that there are few leisure facilities on the local estate for young people. Sound teaching results from teachers' secure knowledge of the subject and generally satisfactory expectations of pupils' performance and behaviour. This enables pupils to make sound progress in lessons. In a Year 3 lesson, for example, groups of pupils were challenged to use their knowledge of different countries and climates to select a suitable tourist resort for a family with specific requirements such as sun, sand and water sports. Occasionally, teachers talk for too long and pupils begin to get restless and chatter among themselves. This reduces their productivity and pace of working. Sometimes, pupils could be given more initiative to search for the answers to questions for themselves, and pupils working on their own or in small groups could be allowed to get on undisturbed. Teachers assess pupils' work informally during lessons, and use these observations to help pupils focus their ideas more clearly.

145. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are generally sound and are sometimes good. Pupils enjoy geography lessons. Most listen attentively to their teacher and to each other. They usually concentrate well when working on their own, and co-operate well when working in small groups. Occasionally, pupils do not listen when their teacher or other pupils are talking, and some pupils do not always take the initiative to think through answers to the questions posed.
146. Leadership in geography is sound. A new policy document, currently being drafted, provides helpful information on the development of pupils' knowledge and understanding. The curriculum is planned effectively following national guidelines so pupils can develop their skills in a logical progression. The co-ordinator monitors pupils' work and checks that teachers' planning ensures continuity and progression in pupils' learning. Learning resources are only just adequate, and there is a shortage of materials on developing countries. Good use is made of the local area to study shopping, transport and coastal features, and orienteering exercises on the residential visit for pupils in Years 5 and 6 helps to develop their map reading skills. Insufficient use is made of information technology to support and extend pupils' learning.

## **HISTORY**

147. Pupils' attainment is at the level expected nationally at the end of both key stages. This is in line with standards seen at the previous inspection.
148. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1. Younger pupils develop their understanding of change through time by identifying the differences between modern toys and clothes, and those from the past. They compare and contrast Victorian and modern kitchens. By the end of the key stage they show a developing sense of chronology. They construct family trees and time lines showing events in the school year. They tell the story of the Great Fire of London in stages by placing the sequence of events in order. Pupils select information about Florence Nightingale from her letters and from pictures, and they write about aspects of her life.
149. At Key Stage 2, pupils, including those with special educational needs, also make satisfactory progress. Younger pupils compare the lives of children in Ancient Greece with those of children today. They explain the importance of the Nile to the lives of the Ancient Egyptians. Older pupils give reasons for Columbus going to America and they write letters about life on board his ship. They explain farming methods during Tudor times and select information from different sources to describe life during the Roman occupation of Britain. By the end of the key stage, pupils are selecting and combining information from various sources to draw conclusions about the lives of the rich and poor in Victorian times. They are starting to structure their ideas when giving their opinion about whether Britain should have declared war on Germany in 1939 and in reaching conclusions about the advantages of the welfare state. Skills in selecting information from different sources and in structuring ideas are a strength in Year 6.
150. It was not possible to form a judgement about the quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 as only one lesson was observed at this key stage during the inspection. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. In the most effective teaching, pupils are challenged through discussion activities to look at a range of historical sources and to draw conclusions from them. The combination of whole class discussion followed by group activities enables pupils to consolidate skills in selecting and combining information. This approach is particularly effective when group activities are varied to take account of individual learning needs. Paired activities are another effective means of pupils consolidating their skills when looking at sources. Assessment is used well in conjunction with group and paired activities, with pupils reporting back on their findings so that their understanding can be checked. Careful preparation of resources is another feature of the most effective teaching, with a variety of resources stimulating pupils' interest. Teaching is less effective when lesson introductions lack challenge, with pupils being asked to speculate about life in past times for a lengthy period before activities focus on looking at information. Teaching is also less effective when introductions are too long, resulting in pupils losing concentration, and when there is no challenging activity for groups or individuals to enable learning to be consolidated. In the best lessons, there is a good balance between the inputs of teacher and pupils, with pupils' learning enhanced by challenging activities. In less effective lessons, the teacher-led element is too dominant, with opportunities lost for pupils to consolidate their learning.

151. Pupils' attitudes are good. They are attentive during lesson introductions and work well together. Paired activities are a notable feature of good collaboration. Pupils are keen to contribute to discussion, especially when their interest is stimulated by high quality resources. They behave well in lessons.
152. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. Suitable schemes of work are in place and planning is sound. Assessment has not yet been sufficiently developed to reflect the latest National Curriculum requirements. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use information and communications technology as a learning resource. The need to develop assessment and the use of information and communications technology were both identified at the previous inspection, but still require attention.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY**

153. During the inspection it was possible to observe only two lessons in information technology and one mathematics lesson where the use of computers was essential. These lessons were all within Key Stage 2. Other sources of evidence included a few observations of individual pupils and small groups of pupils working in information technology as part of other subjects. In addition, pupils were observed taking part in a computer club session, discussions with small groups of pupils took place, and samples of previously completed work from across the school were analysed. This range of evidence leads to the judgement that at the end of both key stages, insufficient work from the programme of study is covered and standards are below national expectations, except where some Year 6 pupils are developing a satisfactory understanding of the use of spreadsheets. This represents an overall decline since the last inspection when standards were judged to be broadly average at the end of both key stages. At the time of the inspection, planning to address the full programme of study for the coming year had recently been put in place. The subject, therefore, meets statutory requirements.
154. Scrutiny of work across the curriculum during the previous year indicates that very limited use of information technology has been made to support other subjects. In addition, there is very little recorded evidence of progressive skills development within the subject. Discussion with Year 2 pupils, and work on display, indicates that pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of using the keyboard and mouse to write their names and one or two sentences, and they are learning how to change the appearance of text. Evidence from discussions indicates little knowledge of working with images and sound. During the inspection, and in discussions with pupils, there was little evidence of work normally expected of seven-year-olds.
155. From the beginning of the current school year, the school has organised resources so that most computers are now housed in the new computer suite. The suite is timetabled to provide opportunities for every class to have twenty hours of access each term. At the time of the inspection, lessons for pupils in Years 5 and a Year 6 lesson were observed.
156. Pupils in Year 5 can open a program, scroll through menus, drag images, delete, save and print. When multiplying images on screen, they demonstrate that they can use the drawing and cropping tools, in-fill with colour and operate the copy and paste facility. They work with developing levels of independence, and attainment in these aspects of the subject is satisfactory. Pupils in Year 6, during a mathematics lesson held in the computer suite, demonstrated satisfactory levels of knowledge and understanding of spreadsheet work. Overall, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have had insufficient previous experience in information and communications technology to provide them with a satisfactory level of knowledge and understanding of word processing, data handling, problem-solving, research strategies and control technology.
157. The small amount of teaching seen during the inspection was of good quality. Pupils are provided with good levels of technical information and support. Teachers give clear demonstrations and explanations of what pupils need to do to complete a task successfully. As a result, pupils are equipped well to work independently. Evidence from lessons, previously completed work and discussions, indicate that a minority of teachers have good levels of expertise within the subject. However, for the majority of teachers, there are significant weaknesses in the skills required to deliver the full programme of study at all levels. This partially explains the low levels of attainment. The school recognises this and has already begun a training schedule for all teachers. Specialist

teachers and staff in the deaf support centre make very good use of information technology to support learning.

158. A clear policy and appropriate curriculum guidelines have recently been put into place. In addition, the school now uses an agreed approach to termly planning, although at the time of the inspection, plans had not been completed by all teachers for the coming term. Last year, insufficient time was allocated to the teaching of the subject. The recently introduced timetable enabling classes to use the computer suite now offers adequate time allocation. Until the beginning of this year, there was no agreed system in place for recording individual pupils' progress. A satisfactory record sheet has only recently been introduced and it is too early to make a judgement about its impact. The scrutiny of work indicates that links between information and communications technology and other subjects of the curriculum such as literacy, science, history and geography are poorly developed. The school offers two lunchtime computer club sessions each week. These are well attended by both boys and girls and make a good contribution to raising standards.
159. The co-ordinator has held the post for just over a year. She is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and is clearly committed to improving standards. The subject is one of the priorities for whole school improvement in the school development plan. Resources for the subject are now adequate. The newly purchased computers, bought principally from money provided by the parent-teachers association are of high quality and provide good opportunities for pupils to access the internet and use e-mail in addition to other aspects of the programme of study. The school's decision to remove computers from classrooms limits the level of flexibility for pupils to work at times other than those scheduled for use of the computer suite. Software provision is unsatisfactory at present, and limits the contribution that information and communications technology makes to teaching and learning in other subjects of the curriculum.

## **MUSIC**

160. Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. At the previous inspection, standards were regarded as high across the school.
161. At Key Stage 1, pupils copy simple rhythms by clapping or by playing a variety of percussion instruments. They sing tunefully to a guitar accompaniment, and vary the speed and dynamics by following their teacher. They listen to a range of music from different countries and march in time or dance to express the feelings evoked by the music. They examine instruments that are plucked, hit or shaken and make their own versions using cardboard boxes, tubes and other waste materials.
162. At Key Stage 2, pupils develop their musical appreciation by listening to different styles of music. They describe the characteristics of contrasting pieces of music, and study the development of lyrics and scoring through 1930s, 40s and 50s music. Pupils in Year 4, for example, compared the slow, sleepy rhythm of 'Trust in me' with the fast, exciting tempo of 'The flight of the bumblebee'. They recognise the sounds made by different instruments and appreciate that contrasting dynamics are used to convey different moods. They recognise and copy rhythms correctly by clapping, and compose and perform their own rhythmic patterns. They sing simple songs tunefully and effectively vary the dynamics.

163. Pupils have some opportunity to appreciate music when entering and leaving school assemblies, but music is not always played and opportunities to discuss the composer or the mood conveyed by the music are not always taken. Pupils sing a variety of modern worship songs tunefully during hymn practices, but opportunities to improve the diction or variation in dynamics are not always followed up. Hymns are sung well, but are not always included in assemblies. Teachers and support assistants sign during assemblies to ensure that deaf pupils can join in effectively. Other pupils often join in the signing, and on occasions, Year 5 and 6 pupils form a signing choir.
164. Teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and sound at Key Stage 2. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are generally sound, though individual teachers' musical expertise varies greatly and teaching is better where teachers have good expertise. Occasionally, due to lack of expertise, teachers make technical errors such as identifying instruments incorrectly. Teachers plan their work well and individual lessons have precise learning objectives. They often share these objectives at the start, so pupils are clear about what they should be learning. Teachers have high expectations and give clear explanations and instructions. They use a range of teaching methods and make good use of rhythm games and a wide variety of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. This helps pupils to maintain their interest and concentration. Pupils are usually well managed and sound use is made of informal day-to-day assessment to evaluate pupils' work and to target help where it is needed. Occasionally, where teaching could be improved further, classroom management is too strict to allow the lesson to proceed at a brisk pace, or questions posed by the teacher are too difficult for pupils to answer.
165. Most pupils enjoy their music lessons and hymn singing and have sound attitudes to music. They are generally well motivated and join in sensibly. Most pupils listen carefully to their teachers and behave well when singing or listening to music, though some pupils lose interest after a while. Occasionally, as in a Year 6 musical appreciation lesson, pupils display a keen interest and very good attitudes.
166. The music co-ordinator provides sound leadership of the subject. Good use is made of her musical expertise to accompany singing on the piano during assemblies and to lead hymn practices. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning to ensure that skills are taught systematically but has not yet been able to observe teaching in other classes. She hears pupils singing during school assemblies and concerts. A new policy document gives helpful guidance on links with other areas of the curriculum and the scheme of work, based on national guidance, helps to ensure that pupils develop musical skills in a logical progression. No formal assessment of musical skills takes place.
167. The school has a sound selection of recorded music and a wide range of percussion instruments which are easily accessible on trolleys. Good use is made of recorded radio programmes and accompanying booklets, but little use is made of information technology to assist musical composition or appreciation. As the former music room is now being used as a classroom, there are difficulties in storing music resources and instruments such as a drum kit in the school library, and there is a lack of suitable space for peripatetic music lessons. Over two dozen pupils receive violin, trumpet, clarinet or flute lessons from visiting teachers and further lessons in percussion and cello are currently being arranged. Music makes a good contribution to extra-curricular activities, with recorder groups, a harmony group and a choir each having a large number of participants. Pupils perform at a variety of school concerts and take part in Christingle and carol services at local churches. Pupils sing carols at the Christmas Tree in Tynemouth and perform for the elderly at Christmas time.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

168. It was not possible to observe all areas of the physical education programme during the inspection. Activities seen included gymnastics and games at both key stages. Inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages.
169. At Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress overall, and achieve levels of attainment which are in line with those expected of pupils by the age of seven. Pupils devise interesting and complex sequences of movements, working together well in both small and large groups. In gymnastics, they explore ways of moving along a rope, listening attentively to the teacher's instructions. They co-operate well when working with a partner, sharing ideas well and taking turns. In tennis coaching, they listen carefully to instructions and throw and catch a ball sensibly. They make

appropriate comments about each other's performance, developing the use of correct language. They use these comments to improve their performance.

170. Sound progress is maintained at Key Stage 2. Pupils build on their skills so that by Year 6 attainment is in line with expectations, with some pupils attaining levels which are above those expected for pupils of their age. Pupils move with confidence, and practise individual movements and sequences carefully to improve the quality of their performance. They work together well, making good use of space, with a good awareness of others. They speak confidently about what they are doing, and offer each other helpful criticism which is used to make improvements. They understand the need for warming up and cooling down after exercise, and the effect that this has on their bodies. In games activities, pupils co-operate well, develop strategies, and use skills and tactics effectively in defending and attacking situations. They identify what makes performances effective and suggest improvements. By the age of eleven, almost all pupils reach the recommended standard in swimming.
171. Improvements since the previous inspection have been satisfactory, including improved resources and a newly introduced framework. The policy document has been revised and there is a recently introduced framework based on advice from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. A new scheme of work is being developed using this guidance in accordance with the school development plan.
172. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with over half the lessons observed at Key Stage 2 better than this. As a result, pupils learn at a steady rate as they progress through the school. Teachers plan lessons well and generally have sound subject knowledge, with some good expertise at the upper part of Key Stage 2. Planning is good with clear objectives, and where these are shared with pupils at the start of lessons, pupils are more focused in their activities. Most lessons proceed at a good pace, with a brisk warm up ensuring that pupils are properly prepared. Most teachers ensure that pupils listen carefully to instructions and are aware of what they are learning even when they are in a large outdoor space. Most teachers give pupils plenty of opportunities to practise and refine their skills. In most lessons, good management of pupils results in a brisk pace. Where the teaching could be better, a slower pace and lack of enthusiasm for the subject on the part of the pupils is more noticeable. Even when behaviour is more challenging, teachers work hard to move the lesson along despite some inappropriate behaviour from a few difficult pupils. Most teachers ensure that pupils have an appropriate cool down activity and are aware of the reasons for this. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs and they make good progress.
173. Most pupils respond positively in physical education lessons. They appreciate the need for safety and for appropriate dress during games lessons. They work well together and co-operate in pairs and in small groups, following their teacher's directions with enthusiasm and enjoyment. At both key stages, literacy and numeracy are effectively supported. Most teachers promote the use of correct language when pupils talk about movement and dance sequences. They provide pupils with good models of how to make useful and constructive criticism when helping others to improve their performance. In the best lessons, work in physical education develops pupils' abilities to talk about their feelings and improve performance effectively. In some lessons, however, pupils are given insufficient opportunities to discuss their performance or how they could improve.
174. The curriculum for physical education is soundly planned and covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum. The co-ordinator, who has only been in place for a year, provides good leadership and her infectious enthusiasm motivates staff and pupils. She takes a good lead in extra-curricular activities. Assessment procedures and a detailed scheme of work have yet to be developed and these are identified in the school development plan. Teachers' planning is good and is effectively monitored by the co-ordinator. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have opportunities to acquire additional skills in outdoor educational activities during residential visits. These include abseiling, orienteering, archery and water activities. A sound range of extra-curricular activities is available for both boys and girls at Key Stage 2, including football, netball, gymnastics and tennis. The school makes good use of the two large halls and the spacious hard play areas and grassed areas. Resources are good overall, especially small apparatus, and are used well by teachers and pupils.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

175. As at the previous inspection, standards are in line with those expected in the local Agreed

Syllabus at the end of both key stages.

176. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn about the importance of family life and the significance of initiation rituals such as Christian baptism. They visit a Christian church and learn the meaning of symbols such as the cross. They listen to some of the parables of Jesus, and understand the kindness of the Good Samaritan. They compare a church with a Hindu temple, contrast Jewish and Hindu creation stories, and compare Christian celebrations with Jewish festivals such as Sukkot and Hannukkah.
177. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know the significance and meaning of some of the main festivals and traditions of Christianity, Judaism, Sikhism, Buddhism and Islam. Pupils in Year 4, for instance, study the rituals of prayer in Islam, while those in Year 5 hear the story of Siddhartha Gautama and learn about the rules for living followed by Buddhists. Year 3 pupils study the life of Moses, and examine the significance of the synagogue and kosher food in the life of a Jewish community. Year 6 pupils look at the meaning of the Khanda and the Kirpar, and other Sikh symbols, and contrast the Ten Commandments given to Moses with the two commandments taught by Jesus.
178. The quality of teaching is sound at both key stages. Teachers have a good knowledge of the major world religions, and plan their lessons well, making good use of the detailed guidance provided in the scheme of work. Lessons have clear objectives that are often shared with pupils at the start so they know what they are to learn. Good use is made of probing questions to elicit information from pupils and to encourage them to think through issues. Pupils are generally well managed, and teachers work hard to involve all the pupils in discussions. Good use is made of a variety of resources such as photographs, videos, holy books and text books. These provide pupils with the materials needed to learn for themselves. Pupils' work is marked regularly, but there are only occasional comments on how the work might be improved. Sound use is made of day-to-day assessment to cater for the individual needs of pupils. Where teaching could be improved further, activities could be more challenging for pupils and there could be more use of artefacts and discussion of their significance.
179. As a result of sound teaching, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make steady progress in their understanding of spiritual and moral issues. They develop an awareness of their own feelings, and an understanding of the ways in which different religions celebrate their main festivals. Pupils develop a good knowledge of the main similarities and differences between the major world religions, and learn to respect the beliefs and customs of others.
180. Pupils' response to teaching in religious education is satisfactory. Most pupils behave well in lessons, and show respect for the feelings and beliefs of others. Most listen carefully to their teacher, and empathize with the feelings and emotions of the characters in the stories they study. The majority work sensibly on their own and are keen to answer questions and to join in class discussions.
181. The co-ordinators provide sound leadership. They monitor teachers' planning and check pupils' work to ensure that their knowledge and understanding is developed systematically. The new policy document promotes helpful understanding and tolerance of the major world faiths, and provides detailed learning objectives for each year group. The scheme of work closely follows the North Tyneside Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. Detailed planning helps all teachers to cover the chosen topics with a secure knowledge and understanding of the different religious traditions. There is a satisfactory range of resources for studying the major world religions including information books, posters and photographs. The school possesses few artefacts relating to the major world faiths, however, and there is little use of information technology resources to enhance pupils' learning. There are sound links with some of the local religious communities. Pupils visit a Christian church and a Hindu mandir, and local clergy often conduct assemblies. A whole-school activity day based on the festivals of light and co-ordinated by a visiting speaker is helping to raise the profile of religious education in the school.