

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST. BEDE'S RC VA PRIMARY AND NURSERY
SCHOOL**

South Shields

LEA area: South Tyneside

Unique reference number: 108715

Headteacher: Mr J Newcombe

Reporting inspector: Mrs B Walker
1530

Dates of inspection: 19th – 23rd June 2000

Inspection number: 182256

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 3 – 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Claypath Lane
South Shields
South Tyneside

Postcode: NE33 4PG

Telephone number: 0191 4560108

Fax number: -

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr M Wales

Date of previous inspection: June 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Ms B Walker	Registered Inspector	Science Information technology Geography History	What sort of school is it? How high are the standards? How well are pupils taught?
Ms C Hustwick	Lay Inspector	Equal opportunities	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?
Ms A Smithers	Team Inspector	English Special educational needs Provision for children under five	How well is the school led and managed?
Ms D Cinamon	Team Inspector	Mathematics Art Design and technology Music Physical education Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

The inspection contractor was:

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Inspection Quality Division
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Bede's Roman Catholic Primary and Nursery School is located in the centre of South Shields. Pupils attend the school from a wide area. At the time of the last inspection the pupil intake represented an above-average social range, but the current under fives and Key Stage 1 pupils represent an average social range. There are 207 pupils on roll in the classes from Reception to Year 6, which is about the same as other primary schools. Additionally, thirty-nine children attend the nursery for either a morning or an afternoon session. Most pupils are white, but the school has five pupils who speak English as an additional language, which is more than most schools. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. Almost a quarter of the pupils in the school (23 per cent) have special educational needs, which is slightly above the national average. The number of statemented pupils in the school is below the national average and currently no pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Pupils' attainment on entry to the reception class is average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St. Bede's is improving, with better than average standards in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2, mainly good teaching throughout both key stages, very good teaching for children under five and good leadership and management. Pupils have very good attitudes towards school and their behaviour is very good. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Attainment in English, mathematics and information technology is good.
- The progress made by pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is good.
- The teaching of children under five years is very good. Teaching and learning in Key Stages 1 and 2 have many good features.
- Pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are very good.
- The curriculum offers a good range of learning opportunities.
- The provision for pupils' moral development is very good, while that for spiritual and social development is good.
- The provision for pupils' welfare and guidance is good overall.
- Parents have a very positive view of the school.
- The leadership and management of the school are good overall.

What could be improved

- Pupils' attainment, progress and standards of presentation in geography and history.
- Standards and progress in design and technology.
- The provision for higher attaining pupils in science and the foundation subjects.
- The provision for pupils' cultural development.
- The procedures for registration.
- The provision for some aspects of music.

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

The school now has many strengths. Staff and governors are committed to raising standards.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1996. Despite some significant difficulties caused through staff illness, good progress has been made. Clear managerial structures have been established and the management workload has been balanced and rationalised. Design and technology planning has been improved, but the teaching of this subject still has weaknesses. The provision for information technology has been greatly improved. The curriculum for pupils under five years of age is now very good. The co-ordination of the whole school curriculum shows effective balance and breadth. Planning is better and teachers are developing a clearer view of standards, especially in English, mathematics and, to a lesser degree, in science, but this view is not yet secure across history, geography and design and technology. The assessment and monitoring of English and mathematics are successful. The school shows good improvement in many areas.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by eleven-year-olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	A	C	C
Mathematics	A	A	B	B
Science	B	C	D	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Standards for seven-year-olds are above average in reading and well above average in writing. In both subjects the standards are better than those in similar schools. The results of National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in mathematics are below average and well below those of similar schools, however the work seen during the inspection indicates standards that are broadly average. Standards in science are also broadly average. Over the past four years, the results have been varied, but most recently they have show marked improvement, especially in writing.

The overall standards in English and science for eleven-year-olds are better than the above test results suggest. In English they are above average whilst in science they are in line with the average. However, standards in science are not as high as they could be, particularly for the higher attaining pupils. The above results reflect standards in mathematics, which are above average for eleven-year-olds. The trends in results indicate consistently good standards in mathematics, below average standards in science and declining standards in English, although the inspection indicates some improvements following the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy.

Standards in other subjects vary. In information technology pupils attain higher than expected standards whilst in physical education and art they are broadly similar to what is expected of seven and eleven-year-olds. Standards in music vary, singing is good but other aspects, such as music appreciation are too low. Standards in design and technology, history and geography are also too low and below what is expected for pupils at the ends of both key stages.

Under-fives benefit from the good level of provision and by the time pupils start work on the National Curriculum the majority are reaching the standards expected of them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes towards school and their education.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good in and around school at all times.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good. Pupils' personal development is good overall. Pupils show very good respect for feelings and values, and satisfactory levels of initiative and personal responsibility.
Attendance	Good.

Pupils are very enthusiastic about school, have good involvement and interest in all activities and treat each other very well, showing no evidence of any oppressive behaviour at any time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Good	Good

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 is good overall. All teaching seen was satisfactory or better, with 50 per cent being very good or better. The teaching of children under five is very good. The teaching of English and mathematics is good, with literacy and numeracy skills being well taught. Teachers have good subject knowledge in English, mathematics and information technology. Teachers manage their pupils well and organise their lessons effectively. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is good. Teachers do not make sufficient provision for higher attaining pupils in some subjects. There are still teaching weaknesses in design and technology, geography and history.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for pupils under five years of age is very good and is a strength of the school. The curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2 has many strengths but still shows some weaknesses in provision for design and technology, geography, history and some of the skills of art.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. These pupils receive the full curriculum range, good support and guidance from staff and their records are in order and up-to-date.

Provision for pupils with English as an additional	Good. These pupils receive the full curriculum range. Their special help for learning English is regular and effective.
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language	
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' spiritual and social development is good. The provision for moral development is very good. The provision for pupils' cultural development is unsatisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has very good procedures for assessment, and shows good use of assessment to guide curriculum planning, especially in English and mathematics. Support for the welfare of pupils is very good.

The school has very effective links with parents. The work of parents in school has good impact on learning. Reports to parents about their children's progress are satisfactory. Parents make a satisfactory contribution to learning at home and at school.

The curriculum has strengths in the planning and provision for English, mathematics and science. The curriculum for information technology is improving rapidly. The broad curriculum offers a good range of activities, but progression in learning is still a weakness in design and technology, geography and history.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. The headteacher, senior management team and governors are fully committed to the school, understand its strengths and weaknesses well and have clear and appropriate priorities in the planned development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Growing understanding of the school's work by fairly new governors is leading to effective fulfilment of responsibilities. Governors support the school very well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Assessment and monitoring of the core subjects is very effective, especially in English and mathematics. The school is making good progress in its evaluation of its overall performance.
The strategic use of resources	Funds are used with care. Special grants are obtained where possible and used for their specific purpose. The school is adequately resourced.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory overall. The school seeks to obtain best value in all its expenditure. There is very good shared commitment to improvement and capacity for further success. The school makes very good use of new technology in both its administrative work and across the curriculum.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
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<p>The vast majority of parents are satisfied with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school's standards and the help their children receive. • the values promoted in the school. • the behaviour and attendance. • the way the parents are listened to. • the recent improvements to information technology and nursery provision. • the teaching, which they feel is good. • the help their child receive towards growth of maturity. • the knowledge that their children enjoy school. 	<p>A few parents would like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work to be a better match to their children's ability. • to have better information about their children's progress. • the school to work more closely with parents. <p>In addition,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A quarter of parents who responded to the questionnaire would like their children to receive a more interesting range of activities outside school hours.
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Inspectors agree with all of the positive comments. With regard to the areas of concern, inspectors found that higher attaining pupils would benefit from more challenge in some areas of the curriculum. Inspectors found that the examples seen of the school's annual reports contained limited evidence of children's weaker areas, and almost no advice for parents about how to help their children to overcome any weaknesses. It was clear throughout the inspection that home-school relationships are effective. Many parents telephone the school or call in if they need to discuss any matters. There was no evidence that the school is unwilling to work with parents. Extra-curricular provision was evident during the inspection; all activities seen were for games and sports. Within this range, the provision was good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. In the 1999 national reading tests for seven-year-olds, results were above average. In the writing tests, results were well above average. In the mathematics tests, results for seven-year-olds were below average. In teachers' assessments for science at the end of Key Stage 1, outcomes for the school were above average. Comparison of the school's results with those of similar schools shows reading to be above average, writing to be well above average and mathematics to be well below average. Inspection evidence shows that attainment in reading and writing is above average, in mathematics it is average, and rapidly improving, while in science it is average.
2. Over a four year period since 1997, the boys in Key Stage 1 achieved better than girls in the national tests for reading, writing and mathematics, but analysis of results from those years shows that boys did particularly well in one year, and this has unduly affected the whole four-year profile. Otherwise, there is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls in Key Stage 1.
3. In the 1999 national tests for eleven-year-olds, results for English were average. Attainment in the national tests for English has moved from well above the national average in 1997 and 1998 to average in 1999. Over the last four years there has been no difference between the attainment of boys and girls. In the mathematics tests for 1999, the results for the school were above average. Boys tend to do a little better than girls in mathematics at Key Stage 2. Over four years since 1996, the school's test results for mathematics have been well above the national average. In the science tests, results were below average.
4. Science test results are low because the staff at St. Bede's do not yet plan and teach for attainment in science at the higher levels, so pupils do not reach these levels in either tests or school work. Inspection findings show overall standards to be better than the test results suggest, especially for English and science. In the inspection, English and mathematics attainment is above average, while science attainment is average. English and mathematics standards are getting better as a result of the school's recent, well co-ordinated work in literacy and numeracy.
5. The performance in the English test at the end of Key Stage 2 was close to the average for similar schools, in mathematics it was above average and in science it was well below average.
6. As children enter the school, their social development, use of language and understanding of number are at the levels expected for this age group. Most children grow in confidence during their time in the nursery and the reception class and have a very secure basis for learning as they move into Key Stage 1 at the age of five.
7. Pupils' work in information technology is above expectations. This area of provision has been improved recently, and this is having good impact on standards. The rate of progress is good and is accelerating in all parts of the school.
8. Standards of work in art and physical education are at the levels expected for the age group. Standards of singing are very good but other elements of the music curriculum are offered in only a limited way. This diminishes overall music standards.

9. Standards in design and technology, geography and history are below expectations, and progress in these subjects is unsatisfactory.
10. Most pupils make good progress in their learning in English and mathematics, including pupils with English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs. Achievements are recorded, individual targets and class objectives are adjusted and new realistic challenges are set. Marking is careful and often gives valuable feedback to pupils. Insufficient use is made of literacy across the curriculum. Numeracy across the curriculum is satisfactory. Progress in the foundation subjects is more variable.

Attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils are enthusiastic about learning. They display positive attitudes towards all activities and lessons and enjoy good relationships with staff and each other. They take an interest in pupils from other age groups, and in some assemblies they explain what they know about each other and what aspects of friendship they appreciate. The secure pastoral system ensures that pupils are valued and supports their personal development well.
12. Pupils are aware of the expectations placed upon them to behave well and to be responsible, and their behaviour in and around the school is very good. They are thoughtful and helpful, working well together and being considerate of each other. They play well in the schoolyard, offer help to staff in school, care for the environment and treat resources well. In all lessons they show good concentration and follow instructions carefully. In some lessons they apply creative and artistic effort well, responding effectively to high expectations. Although the school building is partly open plan, which allows noise to flow from one room to another, pupils maintain their attention and continue to apply themselves to their work.
13. Teachers are able to intervene to help pupils of all levels of attainment to make progress because of the very good relationships which everyone in the school enjoys. In class, pupils work well together in pairs or small groups. When asked to carry out more complex tasks they show good levels of responsibility, as when Year 4 pupils collected wood lice in the school grounds and conducted a litter survey across parts of the school. On these occasions they followed instructions well and used their time for the work in hand, even when they were not directly supervised. Pupils' use of personal initiative and responsibility is satisfactory; for some it would be more extensive if more opportunities were given across the curriculum, such as devising their own tests in science or deciding how to present information to others. In the computer room, pupils of all ages share the machines, take turns, help each other, show patience and work collaboratively. Teachers' questioning in class always results in a good range of responses, with some pupils willingly giving detailed responses at times.
14. Boys and girls join in team work together in class and on the sports field and take an interest in the accomplishments of individuals. Individual pupils who have difficulty in behaving receive appropriate guidance and their response is monitored to ensure that guidance continues to be available as long as needed.
15. Attendance is good. The number of authorised absences is below the national average, and there are no un-authorised absences. Pupils are punctual at the start of the day and they settle quickly to the work in class.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The good judgements made in relation to teaching refer to the lessons seen. Work in pupils' books indicates that, in some subjects, there are still some teaching weaknesses.
17. Teaching is good overall, with 11 per cent being excellent, 39 per cent being very good, 27 per cent good and 23 per cent satisfactory. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. Examples of excellent and very good teaching were seen in all parts of the school. The teaching for pupils under five years of age in the nursery and the reception class was very good overall, with some of it being excellent. This teaching offers very good experiences for children, but does not yet extend academic learning as well as it might. Teaching has a positive impact on learning for all age groups in Key Stages 1 and 2 for pupils of all levels of attainment, with the exception of some higher attainers, who do not always receive enough challenge. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs and of those with English as an additional language is good.
18. The skills of literacy and numeracy are well taught in both key stages, and the teaching of English and mathematics is of a consistently high standard. These lessons are well planned, interesting and move forward at a good pace. Teachers are clear about the subject content to be taught, have high expectations and employ effective methods and organisation to support the learning they intend. In an excellent mathematics lesson in Year 6, the teaching strategies and use of resources inspired and challenged pupils to work at new skills, using prior knowledge well. In a very good English lesson during the Year 1 literacy hour, the teacher used every opportunity possible to improve pupils' reading of poetry and understanding of letter sounds and rhyming words. Group work is successfully provided at different levels of challenge in English and mathematics to match pupils' stages of learning.
19. There is a good range of texts in use to support the development of reading and comprehension and teachers are skilled in exploring these with their pupils. Mental mathematics work is a strong feature in the numeracy hour, so pupils show growing confidence in their use of numbers in many situations.
20. Planning for teaching is good, but not always implemented effectively. For example, plans for science, design and technology, geography and history lessons are written well, but the planned high expectations are not evident in the lessons. This results in average level provision and average outcomes, whereas many pupils are capable of achieving more. In literacy, numeracy and information technology, all teachers have undertaken training and as a result, subject knowledge is strengthening rapidly and confidence in teaching these subjects to appropriate levels is clearly evident.
21. Teachers use assessment, target setting and marking to support learning. These processes are most effective in English and mathematics. For example, in English, marking guides the pupils well, and leads to individual target cards to deal with individual weaknesses. Teachers support pupils with special educational needs well, offering well-matched work with valuable ongoing guidance.
22. Pupils learn well. They respond well to questions and give opinions when asked. A few ask questions to deepen their own learning. In the best lessons, pupils' efforts are fully creative and expressive in response to sensitive and challenging demands, such as in a Year 5 lesson on spreadsheets, when pupils were concentrating hard, but were able to change their data about restaurant sales at very short notice, maintaining accuracy

and speed of working. In the very good and excellent lessons there were some good examples of pupils using previous knowledge in a new context.

23. At the time of the last inspection, teaching was variable, with some being unsatisfactory. There has been considerable improvement, and now teaching is good overall, with much that is very good or excellent. The strengthening of subject knowledge continues to receive attention. Improvement in teaching has been good and it reflects the commitment of the teachers to school improvement.

HOW GOOD ARE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES?

24. The curriculum is broad and includes all subjects of the National Curriculum. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement in the provision for English, mathematics and information technology and satisfactory improvement in provision for art. There are still weaknesses in the provision for design and technology, geography and history, where lessons do not reflect the quality of the planning. Music provision is not effectively balanced between the very good singing provision and other parts of the music curriculum, which are under-represented. The co-ordination of the curriculum is better, particularly at the planning level. Learning opportunities for children under five include all the recommended areas and are now particularly good, giving children a very good start to their education.
25. Since the previous inspection, the school has effectively implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, which are having a good impact on pupils' achievement. In particular this has helped to raise standards in mathematics in Key Stage 1. All staff have received additional training for information technology, which is having good impact on curriculum provision and pupils' standards of work.
26. The school provides good equality of opportunity and access to the curriculum for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and those from homes where English is not the first language are well supported, so that they have full access to the curriculum. This is organised through class work and some withdrawal arrangements for small groups. Pupils access the curriculum at the levels specified in their individual education plans and the requirements of the school curriculum. The balance is effective and ensures full entitlement. There is sound provision for pupils' personal and health education. Sex and drugs education is suitably placed within the school curriculum.
27. The school promotes very high standards of moral behaviour and development at all times. Opportunities for spiritual development are demonstrated in the collective worship, which is seen as an occasion for each day to be dedicated to God. The provision for spiritual development through curriculum provision is good. Pupils are actively involved in school worship, demonstrating their knowledge and beliefs with regard to the religious foundation of the school. Social development is promoted in many ways and the provision for this aspect is good. Pupils develop social links with all age groups through the effective house system. The school's mission statement clearly underpins the beliefs, values and relationships which are fostered in the school. The provision for cultural development is good in the nursery and the reception class, where pupils are introduced to other cultures through cross-curricular activities. For example, they enjoyed discussion about similarities and differences with Iranian parents. Provision for cultural development is unsatisfactory in both key stages, where the work of some artists is used to enrich art, but where there is little use of music and little other multi-cultural input.

28. Pupils benefit from a number of after-school clubs that include sporting activities and music. Through visits, such as that to Eden Camp, pupils have access to useful learning opportunities. There is particularly good encouragement of visitors into the school in the early years, for example farm workers came to the school following a visit to a farm. Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 are involved in providing information for the parish about life in the school and also have links with the community such as performing in concerts at a rest home for the elderly. The school enjoys good links with a local college and provides placements for the training of nursery nurses.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

29. The school provides a good standard of care for its pupils. A safe and secure environment is created which promotes self-esteem and high levels of confidence.
30. Very good assessment procedures and records are maintained to keep track of pupils' progress and check that they are achieving appropriately. These include individual, group, class and key stage targets, especially in English and mathematics. Monitoring procedures ensure that a constant eye is being kept on standards of writing achieved, and individual feedback is helping pupils to reach full potential in this area. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by their teachers and other staff, who are fully aware of the range of needs and respond to them well. All pupils make progress towards their identified targets. The good procedures for assessment enable the school to intervene to help pupils at an early stage.
31. The school caters very well for its pupils in the context of a caring Christian community. Teachers know their pupils well and keep a close eye on their academic and personal development. Achievement in the school community is celebrated, which promotes positive attitudes and respect. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. The arrangements for monitoring attendance are satisfactory, but the school registration system has unsatisfactory elements. There are no concerns about health and safety in the school.
32. There are valuable and useful links to other establishments in the area. Pupils in Year 6 are prepared well, through visits and other information, for transition to secondary education.
33. Very good provision is made with regard to child protection. There is an acute awareness of roles and responsibilities. An effective working policy is supported by staff, who are confident in their understanding of these issues.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

34. Views expressed to inspectors by parents were very positive. The main concern expressed was related to the range of activities outside lessons, which about a quarter of parents would like to see improved.
35. Parents are kept well informed through very comprehensive and informative letters. Parents' participation in classroom activities enhances the relationship between school and home. Parents support the school in many ways and value what it provides for their children. There is some involvement in children's learning through homework projects and reading. Written reports provide clear information about pupils' achievements but give too little guidance about helping them to overcome any weaknesses.

36. The school has effective links with parents whose children have special educational needs. Communication is good. Parents are kept fully informed and are invited into school regularly to discuss their children's progress.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

37. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. The school now has clear management structures. It is well managed and the headteacher gives good leadership, promoting a caring pastoral ethos. Together with the senior staff he sets high expectations of standards. The senior management team makes a very effective contribution to the leadership and management. All of the teaching staff work hard to ensure that these standards are achieved. The school has a firm sense of direction and all staff have a consistent focus on school improvement. There are clear aims and values which describe the school's intentions well. Staff, pupils and parents clearly understand the school's purpose and support it fully.
38. The governing body has undergone a period of considerable change in the last four years, but is now settling to its role and is rapidly increasing in its effectiveness. Governors have undertaken extensive training. They have adopted specific roles and are beginning to ask relevant and helpful questions. This is leading to increasing understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities and is very supportive; it is increasingly becoming a full partner in helping to direct the school.
39. The role of curriculum co-ordinators enables effective monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning. Currently this is having a positive impact on the standards in literacy, numeracy and information technology. It is not fully developed across all curriculum areas yet, but the development plan makes arrangements for this to happen over suitable a period of time. Where this role has been developed, it has enabled the school to identify strengths and weaknesses and take effective action. This is particularly the case in information technology.
40. The school development plan is an extensive and effective tool within which suitable priorities are managed, costed and evaluated. The headteacher and senior managers prepare regular reports about progress and measure the success of initiatives with governors. There is commitment to improve the learning environment as well as the standards of teaching and learning, all of which add to the positive ethos of the school.
41. Governors are fully informed of the provision for pupils with special educational needs and the governors' annual report to parents fulfils all requirements related to these pupils. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is effective in maintaining the register. Support staff are included in planning and assessment meetings, and they work well with class teachers.
42. The headteacher plans finances well and makes good use of funds and any specific grants. Administration is efficient. The budget is used well with available finance being tied very closely to the development targets. In all matters of spending the school seeks good value for money. The day-to-day running of the school is good.
43. The school is staffed effectively. Professional development is well supported and is having good impact on learning. Resources are adequate in quality and quantity in the main school and good for children under five years of age. The accommodation is well presented and maintained, although shortcomings include the library area, which is too small and the need to use some classrooms as thoroughfares to others.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

44. In order to further develop the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
- Improve standards and progress in design and technology, geography and history by ensuring that all work builds on prior attainment and ensuring that pupils effectively present and organise their work and worksheets. (*Paragraphs: 9, 20, 24, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 82, 83*).
 - Make appropriate provision for higher attaining pupils, especially in science and the foundation subjects. (*Paragraphs: 4, 13, 17, 20, 55, 68, 69, 71*).
 - Improve provision for pupils' cultural development by making more effective use of art, music and literature across the curriculum, extending the range to include some examples from other cultures. (*Paragraph: 27*).
 - Improve registration procedures. (*Paragraph: 31*).

Minor Issues

- Ensure provision for the full breadth of music in the curriculum. (*Paragraphs: 24, 88, 90, 91*).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	56
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	19

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
11	39	27	23	0	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)	20	207
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	-	24

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	43

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	1.2
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
	1999	11	19	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	10	11
	Girls	18	17	14
	Total	29	27	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97	90	83
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	11
	Girls	17	15	18
	Total	28	26	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93	87	97
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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
	1999	15	14	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	10	12
	Girls	12	12	11
	Total	23	22	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79	76	79
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (86)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	11	11
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	23	23	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79	79	79
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	3
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	222
Any other minority ethnic group	2

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)	9.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.6
Average class size	29.5

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	48

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	30

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	378,132
Total expenditure	378,768
Expenditure per pupil	1,669
Balance brought forward from previous year	2,421
Balance carried forward to next year	6,679

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	247
Number of questionnaires returned	156

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	35	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	40	2	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	41	2	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	51	12	2	7
The teaching is good.	52	46	1	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	42	11	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	33	2	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	38	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	46	44	8	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	53	41	2	3	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	47	2	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	39	19	7	16

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

45. When children enter the nursery at the beginning of the year in which they are four-years-old, their personal and social skills, linguistic and mathematical development are what would be expected for their age. Baseline assessment procedures at the beginning of the reception year show that by five years, children attain the standards expected for their age group.
46. Since the last inspection, improvement in the provision for children under five has been very good. All teaching is now good or better, with 75 per cent being very good or excellent. Teaching is very good overall and the provision is very rich. The organisation of the learning environment enables children to select and access resources. Adult intervention supports children and encourages them to become independent learners. Staff provide a wide range of tools and materials for mark-making. Role play areas, visits, visitors and planned experiences are stimulating and inviting. Reception class children extend these experiences further, looking at maps to see the locations of the places they have seen and talked about. All adults interact with children and help them to develop a rich vocabulary, asking them questions and allowing thinking time. In the reception class a good balance of child-initiated and teacher-directed activities is maintained so that children become more accustomed to formal classroom arrangements. There is very good provision for children's creative and physical ideas. Planning is structured well and is based on relevant practical experiences and problems. Assessment procedures are in place. Although the teaching for the pupils under five is particularly successful in supporting social education, encouraging spoken language and supporting physical development, this quality of provision has not been in place long enough to have yet had full impact on the whole range of attainment and progress. Its emphasis on rich learning experiences has not been developed to include clear programmes to extend children's academic learning or to include personal targets for specific attainment.

Personal and social development

47. Children's personal and social skills are at expected levels by the age of five. Children are confident, show self-respect and are able to establish effective relationships with other children and adults. They work as part of a group and independently. They are able to concentrate and persevere in their learning and seek help where needed. They are eager to explore new learning, showing they can initiate ideas and solve problems. They demonstrate independence in selecting an activity or resources, and in dressing themselves or dealing with personal hygiene. Children are sensitive to the needs and feelings of others and show respect for people, including those of other cultures and beliefs. For example, reception children were completely absorbed throughout a session in which parents of a child from Iran talked of similarities and differences. Children take turns and share fairly while playing mathematical games and using equipment. They express their feelings and behave in appropriate ways, developing an understanding of right or wrong. They treat living things properly and care for their environment. They respond to cultural and religious events and show a range of feelings such as joy and sorrow in response to their experiences of the world.

Language and literacy

48. Standards in language and literacy are at the expected levels in both the nursery and the reception class and progress is satisfactory. Children listen attentively and sustain simple conversation with an adult as discussion is encouraged about what happened at the weekend. They talk about their experiences and things that have happened in the family. They use a growing vocabulary with increasing fluency to express thoughts and convey meaning. In the reception class they explain what they have done or written. They make up their own stories and take part in role play. Children in the nursery pretend to be farmers or to be taking the baby on a picnic. They respond to stories, rhymes and poems. Nursery children enjoy books and handle them with care, showing understanding of how information in books is organised and that words and pictures carry meaning. Reception children know that in English, print is read from left to right and top to bottom of the page. They begin to associate sounds with patterns in rhymes, syllables, words and letters. Nursery children recognise their own written names and some other words. By the age of five years, children recognise many letters of the alphabet by shape and sound and most have a small sight vocabulary. In their writing they use pictures, symbols, familiar words and letters to communicate meaning, showing awareness of some of the different purposes for writing by preparing shopping lists, letters and diaries. They write their names with appropriate use of upper and lower case letters.

Mathematics

49. Attainment in mathematics is in line with expectations. Children make satisfactory progress. They use mathematical language such as 'circle' 'in front of' and 'more' to describe shape, position, size and quantity. They recognise and create patterns. They are familiar with counting games. They compare, sort, match, order, sequence and count in many situations. Nursery children count the chicks as they hatch, or the number of straws needed for the milk bottles. They recognise and use numbers to ten and are familiar with larger numbers from their everyday lives. For example, they can order numerals into a number line. They begin to use their developing mathematical understanding to solve problems. Through practical activities they begin to understand and record numbers. Reception children record the number of bean bags they successfully throw into the bucket and the numbers which fall on the floor. They begin to show awareness of number operations, such as addition and subtraction by counting the total number of beanbags or working out how many are left. They begin to use appropriate language for this work.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

50. Children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Nursery children explore similarities and differences by looking at the size and shape of the eggs of ducks, turkeys, chickens and quails. They ask questions about why things happen or how things work while, for example, watching hens' eggs in an incubator or seeing a butterfly emerge from a cocoon. They investigate using all their senses, such as listening to tapes of sounds made by farm animals after a visit to a farm. Reception children discuss the pod and peas from the sweet pea plants and decide that they are like the seeds which were originally planted. By the age of five they know where they live, talk about their environment, their families and past and present events in their lives. They build and construct with a wide range of materials, selecting appropriate resources and making suitable adaptations. They select tools and techniques to shape tunnels in the wet sand. They use the computer with confidence.

They talk about similarities and differences between England and Iran with people who have first hand knowledge of each.

Creative development

51. Children make good progress in their creative development. They explore sound, colour texture, shape, form and space in two and three dimensions. Nursery children model with clay and play dough, expressing their farm experiences. They look at features with care as they model animals and animal food. They experiment and mix colour using dry paint. They respond to what they see, hear, smell, touch and feel. Through art, music, dance, stories and imaginative play they show an increasing ability to use their imagination, to listen and observe. By the age of five years, children select untuned percussion instruments, dance to and keep to the beat of taped music. They use an increasing range of materials, suitable tools, instruments and other resources to express ideas and communicate their feelings.

Physical development

52. Children move confidently and imaginatively with increasing control and co-ordination, making good progress in their physical development. Nursery children use two and three-wheeled toys. They push prams and climb on suitable apparatus. They show an awareness of space and of other people while moving around. They use a range of small and large equipment with increasing skill. They handle tools, objects, construction equipment and malleable materials with increasing control. By the age of five years, children can skip on their toes, hop while moving around the hall and roll a ball with directional accuracy. They enjoy playing on the games which are marked out on the playground. Nursery children use a secure outdoor area that contains a garden section, a hard surface and a grassy area. There is a good range of indoor and outdoor resources available for children to select independently.

ENGLISH

53. Standards in Key Stage 1 are good in class work and national tests. The school is achieving better standards than the average test results indicate for Key Stage 2. Inspection findings for this key stage are average for speaking and listening and above average for reading and writing. Speaking and listening standards are lower than reading and writing standards because teachers do not make as many specific plans for higher attainment in this strand of English.
54. Since the last inspection there has been good progress in the provision made for English and the co-ordination of the subject. English work has been re-structured in line with the national recommendations for literacy. Each class receives a full hour of balanced work each day. All teachers have undertaken training to help them implement the school's literacy strategy. New resources have been purchased to support these developments and assessment procedures have been implemented and are being further developed. Pupils receive valuable feedback in marking and in the form of personal English targets.
55. Attainment in speaking and listening is average. Pupils make good progress in the reception class and Year 1 and sound progress through the rest of the school. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils listen attentively to stories and poems and talk about them. They respond to a range of instructions given by the teacher. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils can give a detailed account of an event or something that has been learned in

the classroom. They ask and respond to questions. They take part as speakers and listeners in group discussion, and are beginning to debate. For example, Year 6 pupils discussed whether Prince William should accept the throne if offered it by the Queen. They are less confident when participating in the presentation of their ideas when they address the whole class, and do not develop their ideas in a knowledgeable and persuasive way. They do not find it easy to speak in standard English when asked to do so.

56. Reception class and Year 1 pupils make good progress due to the opportunities provided by their class teachers. Reception pupils engage in stimulating and imaginative role-play. Year 1 pupils are given the opportunity to think and respond when talking to the teacher, being also encouraged to ask and answer questions. Pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 take part as speakers and listeners in assemblies and have an increasing span of concentration while listening. They are all able to follow instructions and comment on what has been said.
57. Attainment in reading is above average at the end of both key stages. Pupils make good progress through the school. At the end of Year 2, pupils read aloud, with good fluency and expression, from familiar stories and poems. In talking about stories, higher attaining pupils begin to use inference and deduction. All pupils are able to identify with the author, illustrator and publisher and write a book review. By the end of Key Stage 2, higher attaining pupils can explain their preferences and show that they are developing their own views, which they support by reference to the text. All pupils select reference books and other information materials and use them to find answers to pre-set questions, showing understanding of how such books are organised. They read in a variety of ways according to the purpose. For example, they can skim for overall impression and scan for detail. Pupils use a range of reading materials well to support their learning at all stages.
58. Pupils make good progress in writing and attainment is above expectations. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils produce writing with a clear purpose and they structure stories effectively for the reader. They punctuate sentences correctly and link them with connectives. They spell many simple words correctly and produce plausibly correct attempts at longer words. Handwriting is legible. Higher attaining pupils extend their ideas logically through sequences of sentences and use phrases and adverbs to create variety and interest. At the end of Key Stage 2, writing is coherent and well paced, characters are created and carry the plot forward. Paragraphs are used to mark the main divisions of the narrative. When undertaking a homework project, pupils organise their work well, choosing a variety of forms to suit the purpose with good use of computerised text.
59. The quality of teaching is good overall, ranging from satisfactory to very good. In the best lessons there are high expectations, work is well-matched to the different learning needs, and challenge is appropriate. Questioning is used effectively and teachers are clear about pupils' strengths and weaknesses. All teachers identify clear learning objectives. Subject knowledge is good and stimulating activities lead to the objectives being achieved well. In the majority of lessons, classroom organisation and management fully ensure that higher attaining pupils try hard and do their best work throughout the whole session. At times there is insufficiently high expectation of pupils' correct use of speech. In a small number of lessons the work is dominated heavily by the teacher. Homework, particularly reading, makes an effective contribution to learning. Attitudes to work are positive. Pupils are interested in their work and apply themselves well. Relationships are very good. Co-operation and behaviour are very good. Pupils take pride in their work and their English books are well presented.

60. The school's strategies for teaching literacy are appropriate and effective. They are closely linked to the national guidance. At this stage, insufficient use is made of literacy across the curriculum, so there is limited evidence of sustained writing in subjects such as science or geography.
61. The subject is monitored rigorously and outcomes are being acted upon. There is a corporate intention to continue to improve the standards of writing. Strategies to support this are in place. Assessment is regular and thorough. Ongoing recording is less secure, with new systems in place but not fully implemented at this stage. The accommodation for the library is cramped, and cannot be used by a whole class at the same time.

MATHEMATICS

62. Recent test results and inspection evidence indicate that the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has resulted in improvement in mathematics at Key Stage 1 where pupils are now making good progress and achieving average standards by age seven. When pupils leave the school at age eleven, standards have been further improved and are above national averages.
63. Since the last inspection, there has been good progress in the provision, co-ordination and monitoring of the subject. The collection and analysis of data about pupils' progress is a further clear improvement. Assessment procedures are thorough and have been used well to improve the overall planning of provision for mathematics. Marking is consistent, pupils' work is generally well presented and they take pride in their achievements. The subject is effectively monitored and implementation of the numeracy hour has been well managed.
64. Teachers have worked hard to implement the National Numeracy Strategy and teaching is almost all uniformly good or better. Key Stage 1 teachers plan well and use effective techniques when the whole class is being taught, which encourage pupils to record and explain their answers. From the start in the reception class, pupils' practical understanding is effectively encouraged so that they can count forwards and backwards and find good ways to remember odds and evens. In an exceptionally good lesson, Year 1 pupils used physical actions to help them count in fives and tens to one hundred and back. A brisk pace ensured that they worked quickly to complete group work, which was very well planned for the needs of different pupils and effectively supported by well briefed helpers so that all pupils learned as much as they could. As a result of good teaching, Year 1 pupils reach a standard which is above average and many are already working at the same level as pupils in the following year who are also learning to manipulate numbers by adding and subtracting one, ten or a hundred. They learn that the quick way to add nine is to add ten and take one away and most then use this knowledge to add nineteen. Higher attaining pupils can add 29, 39 and so on after some discussion.
65. The current Key Stage 2 pupils started from a less promising base for numeracy but make good progress, especially in Year 5. They have good recall of multiplication and division facts and, as a result of a very well-constructed lesson and effective probing questions by the teacher, understand how to test a hypothesis by constructing and interpreting data using graphs. High expectations and teaching which inspires and challenges pupils in the Year 6 class ensures that pupils reach above average standards by the time they leave school. Higher attaining pupils all work at above average levels. For instance they can work mentally with decimals to two places,

convert between fractions, decimals and percentages with ease and use calculators to find percentages, estimating answers to check outcomes. The majority of pupils do most of the above and lower attaining pupils make good progress with the teacher's support. Pupils' use of numeracy across the curriculum is satisfactory.

SCIENCE

66. Results of teachers' assessments in science for seven-year-olds were above average in 1999. Results of the national science tests for eleven-year-olds in 1999 were below average, and well below average when compared with those of similar schools. There was no difference between the performances of boys and girls from 1996 to 1999.
67. At the time of the last inspection, standards were judged to be at the national expectations in both key stages. Test results have broadly mirrored the national averages, being just slightly below them, over the four years since 1996.
68. Inspection evidence shows that standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are not as good as teacher assessment indicates, and standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are better than the test results indicate. Attainment in science is average at both key stages, with some good attainment in individual lessons. Progress in science is satisfactory for all pupils at both key stages. There is evidence of higher attainment in some lessons, but work in books shows that the general outcome is average overall, because knowledge and understanding is not extended to take pupils to deeper levels of understanding. This is particularly the case in Key Stage 2, where work in Years 3 and 4 is variable, with some weak and unclear written work which sometimes omits conclusions. Year 5 work is challenging and well recorded and Year 6 work does not offer suitable extensions.
69. Lessons seen offered a good range of science activities, and teaching varied between satisfactory and very good, being good overall in both key stages. Planning was clear and had appropriate objectives, but was too narrow in its science focus in some lessons, and concentrated mainly on average attainment, making little provision for any pupils to achieve higher levels. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, the objective was for pupils to design a fair test, but the planning failed to note the learning possibilities related to studying absorbency. At times the limitations of the resources create difficulties. In an otherwise very good Year 4 lesson, pupils were restricted in their extended learning by the lack of suitable magnifiers to help them study specimens they had collected. About half the lessons had confident introductions, clear teaching input and useful questioning techniques. Some lessons were well organised. A Year 1 lesson about light and dark was so clearly organised that it led to extended learning, offering good reinforcement to the pupils as they explored and discussed each of a range of situations.
70. The response to science lessons is positive and enthusiastic. Pupils show high levels of interest and good concentration. When collecting specimens or developing a test they are co-operative and they share the work well. The recording of work in their books is satisfactory in most classes. Evidence suggests that pupils have more opportunities to develop investigative ideas in Year 5 than in any other class. In this year group pupils set their own learning objectives, devise their own investigations and undertake effective review of their own learning. Pupils generally use mathematics well in their science work, and in some classes, literacy skills are applied in some of the recording. There is only very limited evidence of the use of information technology in science work.

71. The curriculum for science has recently been changed, and the new approach is not yet secure in the school. Work in books shows some un-necessary repetition at present. All year groups cover a good range of work and all have opportunity for some experimentation and investigation. The subject co-ordinator checks planning, but is not yet assertive in giving teachers critical feedback. Some suitable assessment activities have been developed. The current emphasis on science in the school development plan is leading to increased rigour in the monitoring and co-ordination, but not enough attention is being given to provision for higher attaining pupils at present. This subject provision has been maintained at a similar standard to that previously reported in the 1996 inspection, although progress in Key Stage 2 is not as secure as it was.

ART

72. Only one lesson was seen, so no overall judgement of the quality of teaching is possible. Evidence from displays indicates there is improvement since the previous inspection in Key Stage 1 and that pupils in both key stages reach average achievement for their age. Over a period of time, pupils experience a range of techniques and some appreciation of the work of artists but the work range is rather limited and pupils have insufficient opportunity to improve and refine their skills. There is good progress in computer-generated art throughout the school.
73. Key Stage 1 pupils have made effective observations, using pastel crayons, of flowers on black paper. One pupil used white pastel really well to represent a glass vase. Pupils learn to improve their pencil control when exploring lines. They made detailed drawings to illustrate the Fire of London and their computer-generated pictures inspired by the work of Jackson Pollock show plenty of variation in line and colour. The younger pupils in Key Stage 2 make clay pots but lack previous experience and have difficulty with the technique of making a coil pot. Other pupils in the key stage make some interesting repeated patterns using the computer and older pupils represent Aztec art with pastels, but while these are pleasing they do not really give the feel of the colours and brilliance usually associated with this culture. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils paint waves, stimulated by the work of Katsushika Hokusai, in which they reproduce the shape of the wave. However, the quality of the painting is very uniform, as pupils were asked to copy the picture. The work does not capture the techniques of the original, indicating that pupils are not given sufficient opportunity to experiment with line and colour or to find their own way of representing the idea.
74. Since the last inspection, the standards in art have improved by becoming more consistent. The provision for art has been developed and is more secure in Key Stage 1 than it was, but the scheme of work currently in use does not make full provision for progression of skills and understanding from year to year. The school intends to use the new national guidance for art next year.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

75. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils reach broadly average standards in design and technology. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and sometimes good in individual lessons in Key Stage 2 but, despite this, progress is not maintained. It is clear that the subject has not been taught on a regular basis over a long enough period of time to enable pupils to sustain progress in designing and making and by Year 6, standards are below expectations.
76. Year 2 pupils have learned how to make vehicles with moving parts and have a good grasp of how an axle works. They use this knowledge effectively when designing a toy

with a winding mechanism. A few pupils distinguish between a drawing and a design, drawing and labelling the constituent parts that will be needed to make their toy. However, the majority of pupils lack guidance in understanding what a design involves and in interpreting the instructions on the work sheet they are given. Sometimes they work at a pace which is too slow, which prevents them from achieving effectively.

77. Expectations of what pupils should achieve are often too low at Key Stage 2 so that by the age of eleven they have made unsatisfactory progress. Pupils have learned some practical skills but their experience and understanding of design is more limited. Pupils do their best and apply themselves diligently to the tasks they are set, but the majority of lessons lack challenge, particularly for higher attaining pupils. In individual lessons teachers are clear about their purpose and direction, but there is a lack of oversight to achieve smooth progress through the key stage. For example there is insufficient difference in the sewing skills of Year 4 and Year 6 pupils and by the end of the key stage, while pupils can effectively dis-assemble objects to use as a basis for design, their own plans lack essential design elements. When teaching is more effective, pupils are well able to understand more complex ideas and mechanisms. This was clear in a Year 5 class when pupils learned about the relationship between rotary and linear motion. In general, teachers lack expertise in teaching the subject which results in overly-directed lessons with insufficient opportunity for pupils to generate their own ideas and to evaluate and modify what they design and make.
78. There has been improvement in planning since the previous inspection and the subject is now more widely taught. Lessons are based on national guidelines but in some instances interpretation of the guidelines results in a superficial approach with a consequent lowering of expectations of what pupils can and should be able to achieve.

GEOGRAPHY

79. Attainment in geography is below expectations at the end of each key stage. Progress is unsatisfactory. Pupils in Year 2 collect seaside pictures from around the world, but this does not build successfully on the work done in the reception class and Year 1, which involves pupils in learning about their local area, looking at local features on maps and attempting their own maps and plans. Pupils in Year 6 find mountain ranges from around the world and study rivers and the water cycle, using work sheets, but this does not build successfully on the extensive Year 5 work which already covers some of this provision, involves pupils in exploring ordnance survey maps of the local area in detail to find water features and requires them to compare rainfall patterns in different parts of the world. Work in Years 3 and 4 is fragmented and unchallenging.
80. It was only possible to observe one lesson. This lesson involved Year 4 pupils in a litter survey. While both the teaching and learning on this occasion were very good, other evidence suggests that teachers' subject knowledge is weak in some important areas. Presentation of pupils' work is weak in the majority of classes, there is very limited use of writing or other literacy skills in this subject and there is insufficient depth or progression in learning. Geography is to be high priority in the school's development in the next year, so these weaknesses should be addressed in the near future.
81. The curriculum for geography has recently been adapted to incorporate new national recommendations but this is not yet successfully applied, except in Years 1 and 5. The co-ordinator has attended specific training for the subject leadership, but has not yet had the opportunity to lead training or be involved in monitoring standards in the school. At the time of the last inspection, attainment and progress in this subject were variable at both key stages. Current evidence indicates that this is still the case.

HISTORY

82. Standards have been judged from scrutiny of books, two lesson observations and discussion with staff and pupils. Attainment in history is below expectations at the end of each key stage. Progress is unsatisfactory. Pupils in Year 2 consider the Great Fire of London, putting sentences in sequence, or putting missing words in sentences. This does not build successfully on the work completed in Year 1, where pupils have built up understanding of time passing, studied artefacts from different time periods and considered social changes through looking at evidence. Pupils in Year 6 can describe what happened to evacuees during World War II and have made useful visits to Eden Camp to help their understanding. They undertake only a small amount of written work, which is of limited challenge and shows little application of literacy skills or use of investigative skills to work in this subject. Pupils use information technology to do some of their writing and they draw associated pictures in art, but these activities do not build on the skills of historical study developed in Year 5, where pupils have researched ways of life, written creatively about the Tudors and interpreted maps. Work in Year 3 is over-dependent on worksheets, while work in Year 4 is fragmented and lacking in rigour or progression.
83. Two lessons were seen, one in Year 1 and one in Year 3. The teaching was very good, with high expectations, clear objectives and well-resourced activities. Teachers had good subject knowledge and had devised appropriate work for pupils. Both used questioning techniques well. Other evidence suggests strongly that teachers' subject knowledge is often weak in both the content of the subject itself and the design of tasks for pupils. Pupils are unsure of how to investigate or use research. They have little opportunity to use initiative or devise their own responses to historical questions. There is little use of day-to-day assessment to ensure that pupils receive well matched work to help understanding and progress in this subject, while tasks set do little to improve skills. Pupils show enthusiasm for this subject and are very responsive when tasks are well designed, such as when the Year 1 pupils explored pictures of holidays from the past, comparing them with those of today.
84. The co-ordination of the subject has been focused recently upon inclusion of new national recommendations into the history curriculum. Resources have been improved and artefacts and visits are commonly used to support work in history. There has not yet been time for this subject to have high priority in school development work. Standards in this subject were satisfactory at the time of the last inspection. As other demands have been made in relation to literacy, numeracy, information technology and the development of management within whole school development, staff members have not been effective in maintaining history standards.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

85. Attainment is above expectations at both key stages. Progress is good: the recent availability and use of the computer room has led to rapid acceleration of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. This is very good improvement since the last inspection, when attainment and progress were variable. Pupils respond very well to the provision made, working at a good pace and co-operating well in group-work when whole classes use the computers. They show high interest levels and lots of enthusiasm, follow instructions efficiently and respond well to guidance. Pupils in all year groups use word processing skills and in the Key Stage 2 classes there are good applications across the curriculum, with very effective combination of data, text and

graphics. Older pupils cut and paste with confidence, searching for graphics as required.

86. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. All teachers have undertaken training to improve their skills, which has led to confident and secure instructions for pupils and good understanding of applications. Year 2 pupils learned to use a drawing and painting program quickly when the teacher included three additional adult helpers to support the class and offered clear and effective guidance to all concerned. Lessons are of good pace, have a good element of challenge for pupils, and are well organised. Year 5 pupils were successfully taught to use spreadsheets creatively, working out and applying formulae to achieve cumulative totals. Very good links to other subjects are evident in some instances, as in Year 4, when pupils used the results of a geographical survey as a basis for creating persuasive posters for an agreed audience. Year 6 pupils were challenged by exploring the internet, using search engines and web-sites to seek information and using two criteria simultaneously so that the information base was made more manageable. All teachers ensure that pupils use skills and understanding gained previously in any new work, having high expectations that pupils will recall and use such prior knowledge. The current standards of teaching and learning are further clear improvements since the last inspection.
87. Both the curriculum and the resources for this subject have been improved since the time of the previous report. There are now enough resources to ensure that all pupils continue to make progress. The curriculum structure has been further developed and effective provision is now made for all areas except some aspects of control, which are not yet fully resourced. The subject is still at a high priority status within the school development plan, so the co-ordinator expects to make impact on this aspect in the near future. The co-ordination for this subject is very good, with recent attention given to policy, training, curriculum structure, assessment, hardware and software provision, leading to grants being well utilised and much being achieved in a short period of time.

MUSIC

88. The standards in music are mixed. Singing is well above what is expected of pupils of this age group, but singing tends to dominate the curriculum so other aspects of music, such as composing, are under-represented in Key Stages 1 and 2.
89. Singing is very good due to some exceptional teaching. A lesson seen in which Year 5 and 6 pupils practised for a concert was taught at a very high level and the pupils were treated like a professional choir. They were shown how use of the mouth improves diction, the importance of posture for breathing and they were taken through difficult phrases to practise and improve their performance. As a result, pupils have very good diction and pitch, good phrasing and in a song which requires them to express a rather romantic mood, they sing with feeling.
90. In other lessons, although teaching is satisfactory, there is less good understanding of the subject, lower expectations and a lack of creative challenge. For example, pupils in one lesson learned about changes in tempo but the activity did not stretch them. Opportunities are missed for other pupils to work together in groups to explore the sounds of percussion instruments so they can make choices based on what they have learned.
91. There is guidance for teachers about what they should be teaching but in practice there is limited music appreciation or opportunities for composition. There are plans to use the new national guidance for music and because there is a good tradition of singing,

the school it is well placed to take advantage of this to develop a broader curriculum. The school currently makes good use of its expertise in singing to participate in music festivals and in the community.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

92. Pupils at the end of each key stage achieve broadly average standards. The quality of teaching is mostly satisfactory but in lessons when the quality of teaching is very good, pupils reach a higher standard. Progress is variable.
93. At the end of the reception year, as a result of very good teaching, five-year-olds have already attained levels expected in the next stage of their education. For instance, they hop on alternate feet, changing direction to left and right as instructed. They are encouraged to make simple judgements about what they are doing when they roll a ball to improve their performance and directional accuracy. Year 2 pupils perform simple skills with some control, linking some of the actions but, although teaching enables some to improve their skills, there is little real extension and not all are fully attentive.
94. Pupils in Year 4 enjoyed their dance lesson, responded well to the music, remembered previous work and followed routines. They improved their ability to follow a sequence and to cooperate with partners to put together a simple routine but needed more guidance to help them develop the quality of the movements. Year 6 pupils are not fully committed to this area of work and despite the teacher's efforts and a choice of music that would be expected to appeal to them, they moved with only limited expression and few achieved at a level expected from pupils of this age. Teachers have more expertise when teaching games and on the whole this results in a better attitude by pupils. In the most successful lesson, very good subject knowledge and effective demonstration of skills by the co-ordinator enabled Year 5 pupils to improve their control of racquet and ball. A quick pace and well timed intervention helped them consider their performance and ensured that all had maximum opportunity to practise and improve their forehand and backhand strokes. Pupils co-operate very well with their teacher and each other including plenty of boy/girl pairs. However, this good progress is not maintained by the older pupils who find it more difficult to co-operate, which shows in their team work and in their overall achievement. They are better at working in smaller groups and a few manage some quite skilful doubles play, including volleying.
95. The subject is enriched by after-school clubs, which include netball, football and cricket. Girls have recently become more involved in the football, improving the balance of gender in extra-curricular activities. The school takes advantage of some of the specialist teaching available such as Newcastle United Football Club coaching and coaching in hockey and rugby. School teams compete with other schools with some success. There are good playing areas for field sports.