

INSPECTION REPORT

Middleforth VC CofE Primary School
Penwortham

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique Reference Number: 119382

Inspection Number: 186322

Headteacher: Mrs. S. E. Clegg

Reporting inspector: Mr. C. A. Wonfor
17546

Dates of inspection: 22nd – 25th November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707526

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
Type of control:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hill Road South Penwortham Preston Lancashire PR1 9YE
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. B. Colin-Thome
Date of previous inspection:	November 1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
C. A. Wonfor, Rgl	Science	Characteristics
	Information technology	Attainment and progress
	Physical education	Teaching
		Leadership and management
T. Heavey, Lay Inspector		School improvement
		Attendance
		Support, guidance and pupils' welfare
		Partnership with parents and the community
		The efficiency of the school
A. Fiddian-Green	Mathematics	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development
	Religious education	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
	Design and technology	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
	Art	
	Music	
	Special educational needs	
	Equality of opportunity	
J Considine	Areas of learning for children under five	Curriculum and assessment
	English	
	English as a second language	
	Geography	
	History	

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The Registrar
The Office for Standards in Education
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London WC2B 6SE

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- . The quality of leadership is outstanding, especially the management of the curriculum and assessment, and the quality of development planning, monitoring and evaluation;
- . Pupils' attitudes to their work, their behaviour and capacity for personal development are excellent;
- . The quality of relationships between staff and pupils is outstanding;
- . The quality of the curriculum, including the range of extra-curricular activities available to pupils, is excellent;
- . Assessment procedures throughout the school, including those for children under five, are extremely effective, very well monitored and of outstanding quality;
- . Provision for pupils' moral and social development is excellent;
- . The provision for pupils' with special educational needs is exemplary;
- . The quality of teaching throughout the school is very good overall and often outstanding;
- . The implementation of the school's aims, values and policies are excellent, as is the school's ethos;
- . The support and guidance offered to pupils and the school's concern for their welfare, is of an extremely high standard;
- . The quality of information provided by the school for its parents is excellent;
- . The quality of financial planning including the monitoring of expenditure, day-to-day administration, and the deployment of staff and learning resources are outstanding.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. This is a very good school with many outstanding features and no major weaknesses.

There are no major weaknesses for the school to address, however there are a few minor points for improvement and these will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has consolidated the strengths identified during its first inspection and in addition has made many significant improvements. It is now in an excellent position to make further improvements to meet the challenging but attainable targets it has set itself. The school has greatly improved the quality of relationships and teamwork. Pupils' standards of attainment have remained high and there is now an excellent approach, throughout the school, to the assessment and recording of pupils' progress including the setting of educational targets for each year group. Finances are impeccably managed and the use of learning resources and the school's accommodation is extremely efficient. The school development plan is now excellent with very well focused and carefully planned short, medium and long-term targets including subject action plans. Finally, job descriptions are very well written with specific targets for personal and subject developments.

• **Standards in subjects**

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key <i>well above average</i> A <i>above average</i>
English	A	A	
Mathematics	B	B	
Science	C	C	

It is worth noting that in science 11 pupils were only one or two marks away from attaining levels above the national average. This cohort of pupils also contained over 30 percent of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, including two pupils with a Statement of special educational need. In addition, this class also had a change of teacher during the year.

• **Quality of teaching**

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English	Very good	Good	Very good
Mathematics	Very good	Very good	Very good
Science		Good	Very good
Information technology		Good	Good
Religious education		Good	Very good
Other subjects	Very good	Good	Very good

Teaching was satisfactory or better in 100% of lessons; in 90%, teaching was good or better, of which 48% was very good or outstanding. Very good and excellent teaching was observed at both key stages and with children under five.

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

· **Other aspects of the school**

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	The standard of pupils' behaviour in classrooms, around the school and on visits out of school, is excellent. There have been no exclusions.
Attendance	Pupils' attendance is very good and well above the national average. Punctuality at the start of and during the day is also very good.
Ethos*	The school has an outstanding ethos. Pupils' attitudes to their work are exemplary; they are extremely enthusiastic to learn and take every opportunity to listen very carefully to their teachers.
Leadership and management	The headteacher is a very caring, influential and effective leader, who is extremely well assisted by the deputy headteacher, all staff and a very competent governing body.
Curriculum	The quality of the curriculum and assessment is outstanding. It has been very carefully planned to make the most efficient use of the time available for literacy, numeracy and science. In addition, the quality of planning, assessing and moderating other subjects in a cross-curricular way is also of an exceptional standard.
Pupils with special educational needs	Are making good progress in line with the very clear targets written and monitored in their individual education plans.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Very good overall. Opportunities for pupils' moral and social development are excellent, spiritual development is very good and cultural development is good.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	The number, match, qualifications and experience of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum are very good. Learning resources and the school's accommodation are extremely well used, although the hall has very limited storage space.
Value for money	Very good.

* *Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
<p>II. Parents are very happy with their children's standards of attainment and the progress they make throughout the school, one parent thought the progress their child had made was <i>remarkable</i>;</p> <p>III. The school council helps children's positive attitudes and their sense of responsibility;</p> <p>IV. Weekly newsletters for parents are very informative, parents are regularly invited into school and are also consulted on the school's action plan;</p> <p>V. Home visits and work boxes for new Reception children are <i>very impressive</i>;</p> <p>VI. Teachers are really interested in their pupils, and are very approachable;</p> <p>VII. Children's attendance is <i>excellent</i>, they love coming to school.</p>	<p>VIII. Not all parents are aware of the children receive homework;</p> <p>IX. The information available to parents, on e;</p> <p>X. A small minority of parents believe the standing of what is taught, or keeps them</p>

Inspectors' judgements support parents' very positive views of the school. The school is welcoming and works very closely with its parents. There is currently a working party that includes parents, revising the school's homework policy. The quality of information sent home to parents on what is taught and the progress their children make is excellent.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

There are no key issues for the school to address but, in the context of its many strengths, the following minor points for improvement should be considered as the basis for an action plan:
Paragraphs: 26, 41, 53, 60, 88

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. Middleforth is situated on the outskirts of Preston in the suburb of Penwortham, within the Local Education Authority of Lancashire. The school is set within a densely populated area in which most pupils live but also has easy access to surrounding countryside. Many of the pupils who attend Middleforth come from families, where both parents work and have professional backgrounds, there is also a number of pupils from single parent families.

2. The school is about the same size as other primary schools, currently having 208 pupils on roll, compared to the average size nationally of 242. At present there is only one pupil whose first language is not English, which accounts for 0.5 percent which is slightly higher than in most schools. There are currently 104 boys and 104 girls on roll, who are taught in seven classes from Reception to Year 6. The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs is 22 percent and is above the national average. Nearly three percent of

pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need, which is above the national average. Those pupils who are on the school's register of special educational needs receive additional support as identified in their individual education plans where appropriate. Although this is often classroom based, some pupils are withdrawn for more intensive support. Five per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average for this type of school. The spread of pupils' attainment on entry to the school is mostly in line with the national average.

3.The headteacher and governing body see the following as the most significant of their many aims:

- to promote, expect and encourage high standards in all aspects of work;
- to provide a caring, stable and well disciplined environment in which the school functions as a community, with respect for others, high standards of behaviour and manners being fostered and encouraged;
- to provide a secure, safe, welcoming and attractive environment in which teaching and learning can flourish;
- to provide a stimulating and interesting environment which is conducive to good work, and;
- to provide an environment in which every individual is valued regardless of ability, race or gender.

1.The school is striving for high pupil attainment and progress and the following are some of the targets they have set:

- By 2000, 91 percent of pupils in Year 6 will have attained at least Level 4 in English, 88 percent in mathematics and 95 percent in science;
- By 2001, based upon current data, 80 percent of pupils in Year 6 will have attained at least Level 4 in English, 80 percent in mathematics and 85 percent in science.

1.Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	14	18	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	12	12	14
	Girls	16	17	18
	Total	28	29	32
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	88	91	100
	National	82	83	87

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	12	14	14
	Girls	16	18	18
	Total	28	32	32
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	88	100	100
	National	82	86	87

Attainment at Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	22	15	37

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	18	16	19
	Girls	13	12	12
	Total	31	28	31
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	84	76	84
	National	70	69	78

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	16	19	19
	Girls	11	11	12
	Total	27	30	31
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	73	81	84
	National	68	69	75

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions)

missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year

			%
Authorised Absence	School		3.4
	National comparative data		5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School		0.0
	National comparative data		0.5

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	48
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

5. PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

5. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

5. Attainment and progress

5. *Children under five*

2. Provision for children under five is very good. Children enter the Reception class at the beginning of the autumn term and their attainment on entry is broadly in line with national averages. By the time they reach the age of five they have achieved the desirable outcomes of their pre-statutory schooling in all areas of learning. Indeed, some children achieve this before they reach their fifth birthday and are confidently working towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum. There is an extremely good induction programme, which includes a home visit and activities for parents to carry out with their children, prior to their starting school. Children quickly establish very positive attitudes to their work, are very well behaved and very self-assured, particularly in view of their age. Strong emphasis is placed on the development of literacy skills and children are given many good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills across all teaching activities. They listen very carefully to instructions and stories, become familiar with books and play co-operatively. In mathematics, children make good progress in the development of their numeracy skills. They can identify odd and even numbers and accurately select a number between ten and 14.

3. Children make very good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live and all successfully achieve the desirable outcomes of learning in this area. Children work confidently in artistic and musical activities and make very good progress, achieving this desirable outcome by the age of five. Children make very good progress in their physical development, and are able to demonstrate a variety of body shapes and sequences when working on the floor and on large apparatus. The ethos of the classroom for under five's is excellent which makes children feel safe and secure. This is an improvement on the previous inspection.

7. *Key Stages 1 and 2*

4. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum Assessments at Key Stage 1, show a continued improvement in pupils' reading, writing and mathematics skills. Teacher assessment for science also shows an improvement over the 1998 results. Pupils at Key Stage 1 are attaining above national averages when compared to all and to similar schools in English, mathematics and science. At Key Stage 2, pupils are also attaining above national averages in English and mathematics, when compared to all and similar schools. In science, pupils' attainment is broadly in line with the national average when compared to all schools and to those of their peers in similar schools. The results for 1999 are slightly down for mathematics and science but much better for English. However, the findings from the inspection indicate that the school has already made great improvements in mathematics, with many pupils at Key Stage 2 already attaining above the national average and science is also improving. The school was disappointed with its science results at Key Stage 2, however it is worth noting that no less than 11 pupils failed to attain above average levels of attainment by only one or two marks. The school's levels of attainment at both key stages have remained above the national average during the past four years. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls at either key stage. The targets the school has set itself, which are based on their own data, are challenging but certainly attainable.

5. At Key Stage 1, the 1999 National Curriculum Assessments in English show that, in reading and writing, the percentage of pupils reaching at least Level 2, which is average for their age, is above the national average. When compared to similar schools, pupils' also attain above their peers for reading and writing. These results indicate that the majority of pupils at Key

Stage 1 are being successfully challenged in their work. At Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 and above, which is average for their age, was well above the national average when compared to all schools and to similar schools. Overall, the trend in English results for the last four years has remained above the national average, with a particularly good improvement last year. Since the last inspection, there has been an improvement in pupils' reading and writing skills throughout the school. Inspection judgements show that pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress in English and are benefiting from the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy. By the time they are in Year 6, the majority of pupils show good standards of literacy, speaking and reading with confidence, fluency and a good level of understanding for their age. They use their literacy skills particularly well across the whole curriculum, for example when following instructions in science, writing instructions for the computer in information technology and reading for information from CD-ROMS in history.

6. Pupils' attainment in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1, when judged against the 1999 National Curriculum Assessments is very high when compared with all schools nationally and with similar schools. All pupils' reached the expected levels for seven-year-olds and many above. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in 1999 is above the national average when compared to all schools and to pupils in similar schools. The trend of pupils' attainment over the past four years at both key stages is above national averages, particularly at Key Stage 2. Pupils are benefiting from the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and their progress at both key stages is very good, including those with special educational needs. In the mental mathematics sessions at the beginning of lessons, pupils are able to find answers with increasing competence. Pupils throughout the school are applying their knowledge of mathematics in other subjects such as science and design and technology. The quality of mathematics has improved significantly since the last inspection at both key stages.

7. In science at Key Stage 1, the results of the National Curriculum teacher assessments in 1999, indicate that attainment is very high when compared to the national average and to similar schools. All pupils attained the levels expected of pupils of this age. At Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is broadly in line with the national average when compared to all and to similar schools. This was despite a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs, and many pupils only just failing to attain Level 5, which is above the national average for 11 year olds. Findings from the inspection indicate that pupils at both key stages are now attaining above the national average in their lessons. The trend of pupils' attainment over the past four years is above the national average. Pupils' progress, including those with special educational needs is good throughout the school, and there is evidence of many pupils beginning to make very good progress at both key stages. The school has worked hard to maintain the strengths identified during its last inspection.

8. Pupils' attainment in information technology is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Despite the very limited resources the school currently has, pupils' progress is good throughout the school, including those with special educational needs. However, in some aspects such as communicating information, pupils' standards at Key Stage 2, are good and above national expectations. This is a similar finding to the previous inspection. Pupils at Key Stage 1, enter text, and understand that work can be saved and retrieved later. At Key Stage 2, pupils use information technology confidently in mathematics, science and art. Year 6 pupils have used the Internet for research and have sent messages using electronic mail. A few pupils have incorporated sound and pictures to produce a presentation for their friends and peers. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' written work utilises different sized fonts, styles and colours, and incorporates pictures and graphics from other programs.

9. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment in religious education, is in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils know some stories from the Bible, such as

the parables, and talk with enthusiasm about the angel visiting Mary. They have considered what makes a person special and have thought about things for which they are thankful. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is above average. They have studied other world religions in greater detail. They are aware of the Ten Commandments, Sikhism and Divali and all Year 6 pupils have written their own prayers for peace. Pupils throughout the school make good progress, including those with special educational needs. They extend their knowledge and understanding as they grow older and are learning about different faiths and their practices. The good standards reported in the previous inspection have been maintained and the high quality of the school's assemblies supports and enhances religious education.

10. In physical education, pupils' skills are above those expected for their age at both key stages. Pupils make good progress, which is an improvement on the previous inspection. In art, design and technology, history and music, pupils are attaining standards above those expected for their ages by the end of both key stages. Pupils are also making good progress and the school has worked hard to maintain the same high standards as in the previous report. In geography pupils at both key stages are attaining levels in line with those expected for their ages, but progress is good. This is also a similar finding to the previous report. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to those of their peers in all subjects. There are no significant differences in the attainment or progress of boys and girls.

14. Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

11. Although the findings of the previous inspection were very positive, the school has continued to promote pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development so well, that overall this aspect of the school is now outstanding which has a significant impact on pupils' attainment and progress.

12. Pupils' attitudes to their learning are excellent. They show very high levels of interest during lessons, settle quickly and work very enthusiastically. Very good levels of concentration are seen throughout the school, including assemblies, where pupils enter the hall in a very responsible and orderly manner and sit quietly listening to teachers, visitors and their peers. From a young age pupils show high levels of concentration, such as, during circle time. Pupils are confident when speaking to their class and when joining in discussions or answering questions from teachers or each other. Often, pupils find it difficult to stop work, even to go out to play, as they have become so engrossed in their work. Pupils of all ages enjoy coming to school. Lessons often have an excited air about them, which is promoted by very good and excellent teaching and by very high expectations.

13. Pupils are highly motivated by their teachers, both by the challenge set for them and the pace of lessons. They are very keen to work and persevere very well with whatever they are asked to do. They frequently share their views and discuss their findings with other pupils before recording them. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is also excellent. Pupils are helpful, polite and cheerful. Their behaviour during visits out of school, for example, when going swimming is also excellent. There have been no exclusions from the school for some years. There is a comprehensive and very good anti-bullying policy, which is well understood by teachers, pupils and parents. Pupils of all ages feel secure and happy at school. There is a very effective system for rewarding good work and behaviour. Pupils are highly motivated to attain *honours* and these are regularly awarded to pupils who add them to their *house's* total. These are celebrated in the weekly *good work assembly*, together with examples of pupils' individual work and that of the class.

14. Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults are excellent. Teachers and pupils respect one another in a relaxed, friendly yet purposeful atmosphere. Humour is frequently used to very good effect and this too raises pupils' self-esteem and confidence and encourages them to try even harder. There is a strong sense of teamwork throughout the

school pupils readily talk to teachers asking questions and seeking help if necessary. Pupils of all ages are thoughtful and considerate.

15. Pupils' personal development is excellent. They are involved in many aspects of school life and in its day-to-day organisation. There is a very effective School Council, which all pupils have the chance to attend, as a representative for their class. These meetings are concerned with the relevant and important issue of school life, and the agenda and the minutes are published for all to see. All pupils have the chance to help in classrooms, such as looking after coats, cleaning the boards or taking the register to the office. Older pupils help to set out the hall for assembly, and some help younger pupils move to their next activity. Two pupils in turn undertake telephone duty during break times, and each week the house captains add up the house points for the week. Pupils also help to look after the library and overall have a full part to play in the school's life and responsibilities.

19. **Attendance**

16. Pupils' attendance is very good which at 96.6 percent for the most recent reporting year, is well above the national average. This is an improvement on both the previous inspection and the previous year. There have been no unauthorised absences during this period, and over 90 percent of parents reported in the questionnaire that their children like coming to school. This view is reflected in the very good levels of punctuality throughout the school. Registration is conducted very briskly and efficiently at both morning and afternoon sessions, with registers being returned quickly to the office, enabling lessons to start very promptly. No time is lost between activities during the school day. These very good levels of attendance make a significant contribution to an effective working atmosphere and to pupils' good levels of attainment and progress.

20. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

Teaching

17. The quality of teaching is very good overall with many examples of outstanding teaching particularly with the older Key Stage 2 pupils. There are high levels of very good and excellent teaching, which makes a significant contribution to pupils' attainment and progress. All lessons observed were satisfactory or better, and in 90 percent, teaching was good or better. In 48 percent of lessons overall, teaching was very good or outstanding. Very good teaching was observed at both key stages and with children under five. Outstanding teaching was observed with children under five and in Years 5 and 6. The school has built upon the strengths identified in teaching during the first inspection and improved the quality even further.

18. The quality of teaching children under five is very good. The teacher is very enthusiastic, has high expectations of children's learning outcomes, for example, very carefully recording what they have learnt. Pupils are very well managed and classroom organisation is also very good. Teachers and support staff work together closely and plan integrated sessions which promotes a very productive atmosphere which aids children's learning significantly.

19. There are many strengths in teaching. Teachers are confident in their ability to teach the full range of subjects. Very good and outstanding teaching was regularly observed throughout the school, and in all subjects, except information technology. At their best, lessons have very clear learning objectives, which are clearly communicated to pupils at the start of lessons. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and excellent expectations of pupils to listen, work hard, and produce high quality work. For example, the *top* Year 5 and 6 class for mathematics had improved so much during the week of the inspection, the teacher modified her lesson plan to include a piece of work that was considerably above the national average for ten and eleven year olds. Pupils were told this and were highly motivated to succeed, which many did. There are also high expectations of pupils' behaviour, which increases their ability to concentrate and make good progress. Teachers plan very effectively together to ensure pupils have work that is sufficiently challenging to their needs. For example, in many

lessons teachers provide three, four and sometimes even five different levels of work, plus extension activities for all groups, including those with special educational needs. This is exemplary practice.

20. Relationships between teachers, support staff and pupils are excellent. Teachers show the greatest respect for the pupils in their classes, they are enthusiastic, enjoy teaching and take particular delight in seeing their pupils improve and be successful. As a result of the excellent assessment systems and procedures, teachers are very aware of their pupils' needs and capabilities. This enables them to check, through careful monitoring and skilful questioning, that pupils have understood new concepts and are learning. Teachers throughout the school are excellent role models and pupils respond very positively. For example, lessons proceed at a brisk pace, and teachers move around the classroom offering support, praise and encouragement often with a sense of humour. Teachers ask searching, relevant questions that are suitably different to match pupils' levels of attainment, and do not require a simple one word answer. Teachers throughout the school carefully incorporate the use of very appropriate learning resources to enhance their teaching. These are often imaginatively used to stimulate pupils' learning. For example, in a science lesson, the teacher set up an infrared camera to enable pupils to see for themselves the colour range generated by different temperatures.

21. Pupils' work is consistently and frequently assessed, often while the teacher is moving around the room. Teachers provide their pupils with very helpful and encouraging comments to support progress and the production of good work. However, this is not yet as secure in the foundation subjects as it is in English, mathematics and science. In practical lessons teachers offer pupils plenty of opportunities to consider their work and through careful questioning evaluate and modify it. Homework is regularly set to extend pupils' class work and is often related to future work, such as in Years 5 and 6, collating a tally sheet for mathematics or science. At their meeting with the registered inspector before the inspection, not all parents were aware of the school's homework policy or how often their children receive homework. The findings from the inspection would agree with this concern, although the school is currently working with parents to review the homework policy and closely match it to pupils' individual half-termly targets.

22. The quality of teaching was so good that very few weaknesses were observed. A few minor concerns include noise levels in some classrooms, although this is related to pupils' enthusiasm and is always easily controlled by teachers. Occasionally teachers lack effective strategies to gain pupils' attention and resort to talking over them or telling pupils to *shush* which has very little impact. Occasionally, classroom organisation could be more effective with the youngest pupils. For example, in some lessons, pupils spend too long on the carpet listening to the teacher, which leads to them becoming fidgety and losing concentration.

23. The quality of teaching pupils with special educational needs is equally very good. Pupils receive very good support from teachers and support staff who know them very well. They constantly monitor pupils' attainment and progress through the very detailed and regularly reviewed targets set in their individual education plans.

27. The curriculum and assessment

24. The quality of the curriculum is excellent. It is appropriately broad and balanced and fully meets the needs of all pupils including those with special educational needs. It fully complies with the requirements of the National Curriculum and all subjects receive good coverage through excellent cross curricular planning. The quality of the curriculum for children under five is also excellent and while due regard is given to the desirable learning outcomes, the curriculum also encompasses the needs of those children who are ready to study from the Key Stage 1 programmes of study. Religious education is also very well provided for as are spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, which run through all aspects of curriculum

planning.

25. There is good coverage of all subjects and individual topics. There are very appropriate schemes of work and guidelines to support staff in their planning. In addition to the school's own policies and schemes of work, very effective use is also made of commercially published schemes and the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. Lessons are very well planned and follow an agreed format. Clear descriptions of learning objectives, assessment opportunities, activities and key vocabulary offer helpful guidance to all staff. The school is committed to improving pupils' standards of attainment and all staff universally support the curriculum priorities identified in the school development plan. There is an agreed policy for sex education, and health related issues including drugs awareness. This is an area identified by the school as requiring further development.

26. The governing body's curriculum committee is kept fully up to date with new initiatives and keeps in touch with school developments through liaison with subject co-ordinators. Co-ordinators frequently attend governing body meetings to present any changes to schemes of work and policies. Although they have yet to formally observe in classrooms, this issue was addressed at the most recent meeting of the curriculum committee.

27. During the inspection, excellent examples of links with other subjects were observed, for example, in English, music and art. The use of specific and technical vocabulary such as, *archaeologist* was carefully planned into history lessons and consistently reinforced by teachers. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been effectively implemented and form the foundation of work in English and mathematics. Additional peripatetic teaching, such as music, also supports the curriculum very well. Assemblies take place daily and are of very high quality, including the celebration of pupils' good work, to which parents are also invited. There is an effective assessment policy and marking policy, both of which are fully and consistently implemented.

28. All staff have a curricular responsibility and are given support and encouragement to develop their role as subject co-ordinators. The headteacher and co-ordinators regularly monitor teachers' plans. In addition, samples of pupils' work are also assessed and the headteacher has established an extremely effective system for monitoring teaching and learning. These procedures ensure that all co-ordinators are effective in their role.

29. The school takes pride in its links with the wider community, for example, St Leonard's Church. There is an excellent range of extra curricular activities including football, netball, gymnastics, chess, choir and recorders. Pupils compete in inter schools competitions and several fund raising activities take place regularly to support local charities such as St. Catherine's Hospice for children.

30. Pupils' intellectual development is very well addressed through appropriate learning experiences. These are very well taught through extremely effective and planned schemes of work, which progressively build upon each other to ensure continuous development in all subjects. Physical development is ensured by activities such as dance, drama, and physical education, including swimming at Years 5 and 6. Personal development is encouraged through very effective teaching strategies, which successfully enable all pupils to feel valued members of the school community. Older pupils are given opportunities to develop greater responsibility and there is a very good school council, which meets regularly. Personal and social skills are also developed through planned cross curricular links and collective worship.

31. There is a strong emphasis on raising pupils' attainment and target setting has been successfully introduced as an additional strategy to raise standards. In Reception, children are given baseline tests at the beginning and end of the year. Progress is regularly assessed and pupils are set clear targets. All activities in Reception including information technology are assessed as an ongoing part of teaching. At both key stages assessment procedures are outstanding. In addition to ongoing assessment, co-ordinators regularly sample pupils' work.

The level of work is agreed and further targets set for improvement. The results of pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages are very carefully analysed to identify trends, make comparisons and to set future targets. National assessment test papers are carefully analysed to identify weaknesses and to support future planning. Teachers also make very effective use of previous papers to illustrate and extend learning. For example, in a mathematics lesson, the Year 6 teacher used a paper to illustrate Level 6 work, which is well above the national average for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils who are on the special educational needs register are given excellent support by their teachers and support staff, who plan learning activities based on the targets set in their individual education plans. The quality of these plans is very good and helps pupils make good progress.

32. The school has worked very hard to develop effective systems of assessment and all staff are skilled at analysing both pupils' work and test results to set appropriate targets and inform future planning. The previous inspection reported that the school needed to develop a more consistent approach to assessment. This has clearly been achieved. All staff fully understand what needs to be assessed, how assessment is to be carried out and what purposes it serves. Portfolios of pupils' work have been established and are regularly monitored and discussed by individual subject co-ordinators. All staff are fully committed to the school's assessment procedures and regard them as a very positive aid to their teaching.

36. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

33. The quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Since the previous inspection, opportunities for pupils' moral and social development have improved significantly. The school has a caring, family ethos, which permeates every aspect of its work. Teachers show and encourage kindness and respect, and pupils display these same characteristics to excellent effect.

34. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. They are given opportunities for quiet reflection during assemblies, and in religious education lessons and circle time. Spiritual development is fostered by giving pupils the chance to appreciate the natural world of plants and animals, and of the earth itself. They note the changing of the seasons, and the youngest children have studied autumn. Pupils in Year 4, have studied worship in other faiths, such as Divali, while pupils in Year 6 have written prayers for peace. All pupils know the stories upon which the Christian faith is founded, such as Christmas, Holy Week, and Easter. Older pupils are developing an understanding of how other faiths and peoples view spirituality, through their study of Hindu gods, or seeing life as a journey. Year 4 pupils have examined the stories of the Sikh gurus and know the basis of the Sikh faith.

35. Opportunities for pupils' moral development are excellent. Teachers constantly seek to reinforce high standards of respect and behaviour towards each other. Pupils have discussed the school's rules and established their own class rules with the agreement of all. These are displayed in classrooms and pupils have a clear understanding and appreciate the need for them. Some pupils have studied the Ten Commandments and interpreted them into modern life. Older pupils know and understand the Golden Rule, and have studied Jesus' two great commandments. There are clear expectations of high standards of behaviour and acceptable conduct, and all pupils respect these. There is a highly effective system of rewards, and pupils are eager to gain *honours* for their *house*. These are celebrated in the weekly *good work assembly* and the winning *house* is applauded by all. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong, including the need to respect each other and their property. Teachers and support staff are excellent role models for pupils of all ages.

36. The provision for pupils' social development is outstanding. There are many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own actions and their own learning. Some pupils have jobs in their own classes, while older pupils take responsibility for taking messages, greeting

visitors to the school, adding up house points, or helping with assemblies. For example, Year 6 pupils set out the hall ready for assembly, and some help younger children as they go back to the classroom or out to the playground. All pupils have the chance to be on the School Council as a representative of their class. After school and lunchtime clubs are very well attended and include an excellent range of activities such as choir, chess, sports, recorders and small orchestra.

37. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils have the chance to play musical instruments, sing in the choir and experience poetry and literature from a number of different countries. They visit museums, and occasionally a theatre group visits the school. Pupils' experience and work in the styles of famous artists such as *Van Gogh* or *Matisse*, and work on projects from history such as the Aztecs or the Vikings. In their multi-cultural experiences, pupils have looked at Hindu and Buddhist cultures, and in geography have considered life in Kenya. Although overall this aspect is good, there are few opportunities for the leaders of different faiths to come and talk to the pupils, or for the pupils themselves to experience the dress, food and music of other countries.

41. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

38. The school's outstanding provision for the support, guidance and welfare of its pupils produces an atmosphere of security, harmony and wellbeing. This greatly improves pupils' access to the curriculum, and provides a solid platform for improving standards. The vast majority of parents reported that the school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on their children, and that it is easy to approach the school with any concerns or questions they have.

39. There are excellent procedures for monitoring pupils' progress, including those with special educational needs. The school is working towards the introduction of a combined assessment strategy covering pupils' class-work and homework, to provide half-termly targets for each pupil. It is hoped this will further improve the already high standards of pupils' annual reports to parents. Teachers have very detailed knowledge of each pupil, which begins even before a child enters the school, by way of a very thorough and detailed home visit. This is to determine a child's needs and any help they may require before they enter school. It is then followed up by a thorough and detailed baseline assessment, which is well used as a starting point to monitor individual children's development.

40. The procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' personal development are of a very high quality. The behaviour policy and reward system emphasise pupils' personal responsibility and the consequences of their actions. The quality of teachers' assessments and reports clearly identify pupils' attainment and areas for improvement as well as praise for their efforts. These very effective procedures can be seen by the number of pupils who undertake additional duties throughout the school. For example, children in Reception are entrusted with taking the register back to the office while older Key Stage 2 pupils act as telephone monitors. In addition, all pupils have the opportunity to represent their peers on the school Council.

41. The excellence of the school's procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour are very well demonstrated by the extremely high standards of pupils' behaviour throughout the school. Teachers are also excellent role models for pupils of all ages. They show great respect for pupils who reciprocate this. The behaviour policy emphasises pupils' positive actions by *catching the children being good*. It also sets very high standards for behaviour, that are consistently reinforced by all staff. Timetabled circle time helps to enhance the school's very effective *no blame* approach to inappropriate behaviour and bullying. During the inspection there were no incidents of any bullying, name calling or intimidating behaviour.

42. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are highly effective, rigidly enforced and fully supported by parents. For example, any unexplained absence is immediately followed up by the school secretary, who contacts parents within one hour of an absence being reported, to express the school's concerns as to the child's safety and wellbeing. This also helps to reinforce the school's high expectations of regular attendance. Parents are requested to apply in writing to withdraw children from school during term time. Parents report that their children work hard for their 100 percent attendance certificates. Visits from the Education Welfare Service, twice a term, ensure full compliance with legal requirements. Many parents are also taking advantage of being able to take their children to school early for the Breakfast Club.

43. Procedures for child protection and for the promoting of pupils' wellbeing, health and safety are exceedingly good. There is a clear and detailed health and safety policy that includes regular risk assessments and involves members of the governing body. There are effective procedures for reporting and recording hazards and accidents. The school has a good system for first aid with clear responsibilities for the member of staff concerned. These include maintaining the first aid boxes and keeping appropriate training up to date. All staff are aware of the Local Education Authority's procedures for child protection and the designated member of staff has received appropriate training. Any concerns about the welfare of pupils are communicated to all staff through a confidential newsletter, while the school's Welfare Committee deals with general welfare matters. Fire drills frequently take place at different times during the school day and focus on a variety of escape routes. Fire-fighting equipment is also regularly maintained.

47. **Partnership with parents and the community**

44. The school has significantly enhanced the very high quality of partnerships identified in the previous inspection and is now outstanding. The quality of information provided for parents is excellent. This begins with a home visit to parents of new children and the provision of a *starter pack* to ensure their smooth entry into school life. The detailed prospectus and the Governors' Annual Report to Parents comply fully with legal requirements, and are supported by a stimulating and very informative weekly newsletter. One of the three formal parents' evenings includes provision for parents to discuss their child's annual report. Information for parents whose children have special educational needs is excellent. They are invited to discuss their child's individual education plans and attend reviews to offer their opinions on their child's progress and provision. Parents are also encouraged to discuss any concerns they might have about their children, either during these formal meetings or informally by contacting the school. The school consults parents about intended changes in the curriculum such as the introduction of Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Parents of Year 6 pupils benefit from detailed arrangements to support their children transferring to secondary school.

45. Parents are very involved in the daily life of the school, beginning with parents' representation on a committee for the home/school agreement and on the health and safety committee. In any given week up to 15 parents regularly support in classrooms and extra-curricular clubs. Parents also attend the weekly *good work assemblies*, and give generous support to school events and trips. Parents also formally support the Friends of Middleforth School, whose successful and popular fundraising events provide up to an additional £4000 each year.

46. The school has established very good links with the community. The local vicar is a regular visitor to school, through his involvement in assemblies and through the pupils' frequent visits to the church. Members of the church congregation help out in school, and local groups such as the Scouts share the school's facilities. The school also supports students from local colleges and those on work experience from local secondary schools. Contact with local businesses and commerce has resulted in sponsorship of a football kit for the school team

and a trophy for Sports Day. Local businesses regularly supply prizes for the Friends of Middleforth School's fundraising initiatives. A grant from the Foundation for Sport has enabled the school to install a drainage system in the sports field, while the school's senior managers are trying to raise additional support and sponsorship for the Breakfast Club.

47. Pupils regularly raise funds for different charities and the many certificates and letters of appreciation in the school's reception area bear witness to their efforts. More recently these efforts have focussed on a named charity each year. Pupils' efforts regularly raise around £1500 for different charities such as, the local hospice and the NSPCC. Representatives of these charities attend school assemblies to describe their work. These extensive community links make a considerable contribution to pupils' personal and social development.

51. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

51. Leadership and management

48. The quality of leadership and management shown by the headteacher, deputy and governing body is outstanding. The headteacher is a very caring, influential and effective leader, who is extremely well assisted by the deputy headteacher, all staff and the governing body. There is an excellent and clearly communicated educational direction for the school, which is built upon improving pupils' standards of attainment within a very supportive and caring environment. Senior managers, staff and the governing body are all dedicated to raising pupils' standards of attainment and this is being successfully achieved through the excellent management of the curriculum and equally outstanding assessment procedures. This is already having a very positive impact on the standards pupils are attaining particularly at Key Stage 2.

49. The governing body is extremely efficient and supportive of the headteacher and school. Governors act as *critical friends* and are very much involved in setting and monitoring the challenging targets the school has set for itself. This includes recently established half-termly targets for individual pupils, which incorporates homework objectives. Some governors have been appointed as link governors to curriculum subjects to oversee and develop new initiatives alongside co-ordinators, such as literacy and numeracy. These governors have received appropriate training and take their responsibilities very seriously. Other posts are being considered for science and information technology. Governors visit the school as often as they can to see at first hand the main priorities and initiatives within the school development plan. Currently, this does not include visiting classrooms, although at the last curriculum committee this issue was addressed. There is, as yet, no formal mechanism for governors to report back to the full governing body on their visits to the school although the monitoring of targets in the school development plan are very closely scrutinised by the full governing body and its committees. The governing body fully meets its statutory requirements.

50. The school has built upon the acknowledged strengths of the previous inspection and has continued to make significant improvements in all areas of leadership and management especially since the appointment of the current headteacher. The school has greatly improved the quality of relationships and teamwork, which has had a significant impact on the quality of planning, assessment and development of the curriculum. Pupils' standards of attainment have remained high and there is now an excellent approach, throughout the school, to the assessment and recording of pupils' progress. Finances are impeccably managed and the school development plan is now excellent, with very well focused and carefully planned short, medium and long-term targets including subject action plans.

51. Management of the curriculum is excellent. There is very detailed and clearly structured support by the headteacher and senior managers and the role of subject co-ordinators is clearly understood. The quality of curriculum planning and teaching other subjects through

cross-curricular links is also outstanding. This also makes a considerable contribution to the improving levels of pupils' attainment and progress. The headteacher regularly visits classrooms to observe teaching. Teachers then receive a verbal feedback before a detailed written report clearly outlines their strengths and areas for improvement. These points are then followed up, if necessary, to ensure the quality of teaching improves and continues to positively influence pupils' standards.

52. Leadership of the school's special educational needs provision is excellent. The special educational needs' co-ordinator ensures that teachers and parents are fully informed, and that all pupils receive the help and support they need. Statutory requirements are fully met and there is appropriate attention to the Code of Practice, including the provision of a special educational needs register. Those who require additional support receive this with as few interruptions to their classroom routine as possible, ensuring their needs are being fully met and they do not miss their curricular entitlement. This high quality support makes a significant contribution to the good progress pupils with special educational needs make. All reviews are very well organised, detailed reports are written and the views of parents and staff are recorded enabling new targets to be set. Meetings are fully attended by parents and where appropriate, outside agencies such as, the educational psychologist.

53. The quality of the school's development planning is exemplary. It is an extremely detailed working document which clearly outlines agreed priorities and targets and the necessary tasks that need to be undertaken in order to achieve its success. It is fully understood by all staff and the governing body. Parents are also consulted and once the plan is approved by the governing body, they are provided with a copy of the short-term action plan and an invitation to view the full school development plan in school. Teachers produce detailed subject action plans that mirror the school development plan and are complete with appropriate priorities, time scales and costings for learning resources and training needs. The governing body influences the construction of the plan through its well organised and highly efficient committees, who also evaluate and monitor its progress.

54. The effectiveness of school's strategy for literacy is good and is very good for numeracy. It is better for numeracy as the school is modifying the strategy to meet its needs, especially for its higher attaining pupils. The promotion of equal opportunities is a very strong feature of the school's excellent ethos and working practices are outstanding. The school's implementation of its stated aims, values and policies is also excellent.

58. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

55. The qualifications, number and experience of teachers and support staff to the needs of the curriculum are very good. In-service training for all staff has received a high priority during the last year, especially the teaching of literacy and numeracy. This has been very effective and has given staff the confidence to introduce these strategies with such enthusiasm. Appropriate in-service training for special educational needs has also taken place, which has also provided teachers with the necessary skills and confidence. The headteacher and senior managers meet with individual members of staff annually to appraise them and to identify appropriate training needs to meet the priorities of the school development plan. In the last report, the school was criticised for having job descriptions that were insufficiently focused. Considerable work has been done to rectify this, and all job descriptions are now very good, with agreed targets for those staff concerned. The expertise of other staff, including the office, catering, caretaking and cleaning is very good, which enables the school to function very effectively. The arrangements for the induction of new staff are good. Teachers and support staff feel very well supported and welcomed. One of the many great strengths of the staff, is the sense of co-operation and teamwork that exists throughout the school. This has a major influence on the high quality of education it provides.

56.The quality of the school's accommodation is good. The school buildings are very clean, and there are numerous high quality displays of pupils' work which are attractive, informative and very stimulating. These help to give the school a very warm and friendly atmosphere. There is good access for pupils who have special educational needs, and there are attractive grounds, including a nature area and a wildlife pond. There are three playgrounds, which are very well used for different age groups of pupils and are well marked out for games. Extensions to the school's accommodation have been sympathetically undertaken, although storage space in the hall is very limited. Nevertheless, the hall is well used for lunches, assemblies, physical education and music. In general, the hall is small and some of the larger classes find it cramped for physical education. Nevertheless, the school is able to meet together for assemblies. Lunchtime staff work hard to ensure tables are set up for lunch and cleared away promptly without disrupting pupils' education.

57.Most classrooms are of a good size and there are extra areas, which are well used for computers or quiet reading. There are also two extra rooms which are fully used for activities such as food technology, art and science experiments. Each classroom has a full range of very attractive displays, which include pupils' work. The information in these displays is often used as an integral part of the teaching and learning process. For example, in Year 6 there is a display of mathematical terms and their definitions, and pupils refer to these in their work.

58.Learning resources are good, including those for special educational needs and staff reference books. Overall there are a good number of books, and new computers are in the process of being delivered and installed. However, some library books are old and in a poor condition and a few mats for physical education are frayed. The school has purchased a good range of big books for the literacy hour. The school has worked hard to maintain the high standards reported during the last inspection.

62. The efficiency of the school

59.The quality of financial planning and control, day-to-day administration, use of learning resources and accommodation, and the deployment of teaching and support staff are outstanding. These standards have been achieved by developing a very close partnership between the governing body and the school's staff. This has enabled the school's senior managers not only to rectify the minor deficiencies identified in the previous inspection, but to develop a whole school strategy that effectively links the school development plan to curriculum priorities within an extremely efficient financial framework.

60.The quality of financial planning is extremely good. The headteacher and governing body, through the committee structure, set clear priorities and allocate funds in accordance with the school development plan. Outline budgets are planned up to three years ahead and specific criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of spending decisions on raising pupils' standards of attainment have been established. The budget is driven by the needs of the curriculum, and subject co-ordinators receive an appropriate budget linked to the school development plan. Although the school has accumulated an underspend, this has been appropriately allocated to support the Local Education Authority's changes to funding arrangements, to ensure the high quality of teaching staff is maintained. Additional funding, such as grants for staff training and special educational needs, are clearly allocated to targets in the school development plan and used very efficiently. This has a very positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress.

61.The deployment of teaching and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum is excellent. Support staff are used extremely well to support literacy and numeracy lessons, reinforce learning targets for pupils with special educational needs, and also support higher attaining pupils. This approach is already having a significant impact on pupils' attainment and progress, particularly in mathematics. The school makes excellent use of its accommodation, not only during formal lessons, but also for extra curricular activities. Full use is made of the

kiln to support pupils' artwork and the library areas are always busy, reflecting the school's success in promoting independent study.

62. Financial control and school administration are exceptionally good. There are very clear systems for ordering and processing learning resources and other equipment, which were praised by the most recent auditors' report. The governing body's buildings and finance committee regularly monitors expenditure through detailed reports, which are also presented to meetings of the full governing body. The school secretary is extremely efficient and provides excellent support to the headteacher, governing body and all staff.

63. Taking into account pupils' improving levels of attainment and the good progress they make, pupils excellent attitudes to their work, their behaviour and personal development, the very good standards of teaching and excellent leadership, the school is providing very good value for money.

67. PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

67. AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

64. Provision for children under five is very good. Their classroom is very attractive and they are made to feel safe, secure and valued. Children enter the Reception class at the beginning of the autumn term on a phased basis according to age. By the end of the first half term, all children attend school on a full time basis. There is an extremely good induction programme, which includes a home visit and activities for parents to carry out with their children, prior to their starting school. Pupils are confident and have very positive attitudes to learning. They are very well behaved and are very self-assured, particularly in view of their age. This is an improvement on the previous inspection.

68. **Language and literacy**

65. Strong emphasis is placed on the development of literacy skills and children make good progress. They are given good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills throughout all teaching activities. Children speak confidently and listen well to their teacher and each other. They listen to instructions and stories, answer questions and make appropriate responses. Children have class reading books and take books home regularly to share with their parents. All children know that print conveys meaning and they are able to browse through books for pleasure. Most children have made the connection between letters and sounds and some have already started to write simple sentences. Most children are beginning to record their thoughts and ideas by drawing simple pictures.

66. The quality of teaching is very good. Lessons are well planned with objectives appropriately taken from the literacy strategy. The text children read was based on their own experiences of a *Muddy Walk*. They were required to read the text and then order the sentences that described their activities. Assessment is built into each activity and is used to inform future stages of learning. The use of literacy in the classroom is very good with every opportunity taken to reinforce language through displays of labels, words and vocabulary to support children's developing skills.

70. **Mathematics and numeracy**

67. Children are making good progress in their development of numeracy skills. Most are able to count to twenty, order numbers, identify odd and even and accurately select a number which is more than 10 and less than 14. Most children correctly identify solid shapes by name and recognise properties such as, curved and straight edges. Many confidently identify the correct number on a cube. Many children are already working at Level 1 of the National Curriculum in mathematics, which is above average for their age.

68. The teaching of mathematics is very good. Lessons are well structured, are taught at a good pace and children are challenged through very effective questioning. The teacher had incorporated the topic *Muddy Walk* and planned learning experiences appropriate to children's needs. The teacher identified clear learning objectives and established high expectations of the children to work and behave. Time and resources are very well managed. Occasionally the teacher uses a puppet to focus children's attention for example, on a number line. Support staff are used very effectively to support children working individually or in groups.

72. **Personal and social development**

69. Children make good progress with their personal and social skills. They are confident, responsible and get on well together. Relationships with adults are very good and children are keen to talk about their work. They ask sensible questions, make comments and observations and answer questions. Children behave exceptionally well, co-operate and take turns, particularly during conversations.

70. The teaching of personal and social development is good. All adults are excellent role models and children are encouraged to think for themselves, form opinions and work as effective members of the class, either in small groups or individually. Staff frequently praise and encourage children and good behaviour and positive attitudes are constantly reinforced. All children feel valued and their self-esteem is high. There are clear rules promoting good behaviour, which are reinforced at every opportunity. The development of these skills is a significant factor in the achievement of high standards of work, which can be seen in the classroom.

74. Knowledge and understanding about the world

71. Children make very good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world and all successfully achieve the desirable outcomes of learning in this area. Children are introduced to the world around them by the provision of topics such as *Spiders*, *Apples* and *Muddy Walk*. These directly relate to the experiences children bring with them to school. They are naturally curious and are keen to talk, for example, about their own muddy walk. Children are encouraged to investigate, observe and form their own opinions based on the evidence available. They give reasons why wellington boots need to be worn for the walk, identifying words such as *waterproof*. Children are also encouraged by their teacher to identify the importance of *tread* to prevent slipping. During their walk children were encouraged to stand and listen to the sounds around them, developing an awareness of their world. Evidence from classroom displays clearly shows the scientific activities children have explored, for example, floating and sinking and the movement of spiders.

72. The teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world is very good. Activities are very well planned and fully take into account children's ages and abilities. Assessment is very well linked to teachers' planning and its outcome appropriately informs future planning. The development of specific skills such as scientific enquiry and questioning to develop children's understanding are strong and successful features of very good teaching.

76. Creative development

73. Children work confidently in artistic and musical activities and are encouraged to develop their own skills and interests. They experiment with colour and texture using both two and three dimensional materials. A very good display of model spiders clearly illustrated children's ability to cut, fold and stick different materials together to make their own spiders. Children develop fine motor skills through carefully observing the pattern made from the sole of a shoe and then try to copy it using pasta shapes. Children handle materials effectively and work with concentration. Although music was not observed, teachers' planning suggests this is appropriately planned within the curriculum.

74. The teaching of creative development is very good. The teacher has set clear learning objectives, which focus on the development of skills such as cutting, folding and making. Children have a clear understanding about what it is they have to do and some show a high level of development. Classroom displays are of high quality.

78. Physical development

75. Children have made very good progress in this area of learning. They change quickly into appropriate kit and prepare themselves for going into the hall. They are beginning to understand the importance of a warm up, including stretching and curling, and many children demonstrate a variety of body shapes and positions during floor work and on large apparatus. Children are also beginning to handle physical education equipment safely. Some children are developing sequences using three different movements involving the floor, benches and mats. Most children demonstrate good hand-eye co-ordination and gross motor skills.

76.The teaching of physical development is very good. The teacher's own knowledge is very good and she sets clear learning objectives which stretch and challenge children. Children make good progress and are fully encouraged and supported by the teacher, especially those who still need a little help. Children interact well during physical development and co-operate very well in group activities.

80. **Factors influencing achievement**

77.The quality of teaching is very good. The teacher has a very good knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children. Activities are very well planned and all children have plenty of opportunities to discuss their work. Additional adults are very effectively deployed and work in close partnership with the teacher. Ongoing assessment is very effective and this makes a major contribution to the standards children achieve.

81. **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

81. **English**

78.Throughout the school there is a strong emphasis on the development of literacy across the whole curriculum and the school has implemented the literacy strategy very well. Since the last inspection standards in reading and writing have improved and the school has set challenging, but realistic, targets for end of both key stages for the year 2000. Pupils' attainment in the 1999 National Curriculum assessments for writing at Key Stage 1 was above the national average and when compared to similar schools. Handwriting, spelling and punctuation are also above national averages overall when compared to all and to similar schools. Standards in reading also exceeded national expectations at Key Stage 1, reflecting the national trend. At the end of Key Stage 2, in 1999, pupils' attainment was above the national average in English, but fewer pupils achieved Level 5, which is above the national average. The school has identified this as an area for development and has set ambitious targets for next year.

79.Throughout literacy lessons, pupils experience a wide range of reading material and show considerable interest in developing their reading skills. Pupils read at their own level with confidence and enjoyment and books are regularly taken home for pupils to consolidate their reading with their parents. At Key Stage 1, pupils read a variety of texts confidently and express their opinion about what they have read. Most have developed a range of decoding skills enabling them to make sense of unfamiliar words. Big books are used very effectively during literacy lessons and pupils learn well during these sessions. At Key Stage 2, pupils are reading a wide range of material and can refer back to the text to support their answers concerning plot or characters. They are becoming more experienced at finding information from a range of sources. They are learning how to scan a piece of text, and are able to use indexes and glossaries.

80.Standards of writing have improved since the last inspection and by the end of Key Stage 1 pupils understand, and confidently use, capital letters and full stops. They use their knowledge of phonics to spell simple words and write fluently, coherently and for a range of purposes. For example, stories based on *The Hidden Door* offered pupils the opportunity to produce an extended piece of writing that showed their good use of spelling, punctuation, and understanding of the plot and characters. Pupils' vocabulary and sentence structure are appropriate for their age.

81.Pupils at both key stages make good progress overall. At Key Stage 1, this can be seen by the increase in their spoken language across the curriculum and of their understanding of the conventions of reading and writing. Through literacy lessons, pupils are working independently for sustained periods of time, and are systematically building up skills, knowledge and understanding. They are beginning to use their writing for different purposes such as, writing

stories, news or instructions. Towards the end of Key Stage 1, they use their writing skills more accurately to record their work in other subjects, such as science experiments, including careful illustrations. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop their writing skills to include more interesting vocabulary, and a range of punctuation such as, speech marks, question and exclamation marks in their work. Their writing is well structured, appropriately punctuated and their handwriting is neat and legible. They use dictionaries and thesauri regularly and with confidence. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are able to express their thoughts in writing and most produce stories and poetry, which show creativity and imagination. They organise their work into paragraphs, and some use chronological order well, recognising and using a variety of tenses. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment and are well supported in their learning through the use of carefully constructed targets in their individual education plans.

82. Pupils' response to English, at both key stages, is good. The majority of pupils take an active role in discussion, are keen to contribute, offer their opinions and engage enthusiastically with teachers and their peers. Pupils' enjoy speaking and listening and at both key stages they are keen to describe, discuss and debate. At Key Stage 2, pupils deduce meanings from inferences in the text, enjoy listening to each other and share ideas confidently. Pupils of all ages have many opportunities to work together in groups, pairs or as individuals. They utilise their writing skills very well to take notes, to develop their thinking and to write clear, accurate accounts. Pupils' behaviour throughout the school is extremely good. In lessons they show high levels of concentration and perseverance. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils show initiative by making relevant comments and asking questions to clarify their thinking. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils are encouraged to develop independence by researching topics through the use of the library or using the CD-ROMS available.

83. The quality of teaching is very good overall, and occasionally excellent in Years 5 and 6. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and very clear learning objectives for their lessons. Expectations of pupils to concentrate and work hard are very high and teachers constantly challenge pupils' understanding with skilfully phrased questions. Planning is detailed and appropriately matched to pupils' needs. However, additional opportunities for pupils to produce extended pieces of writing are more limited, although some good examples were seen in Year 2. Opportunities for pupils to use information technology, to draft and edit their work are also planned for, despite difficulties with limited resources. The pace of lessons is often very good and work is effectively marked and assessed with useful comments as to how pupils can improve their work. Pupils are constantly given praise and encouragement. The teaching of English makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, when pupils at Key Stage 2, were considering the good and bad characters in *James and the Giant Peach*.

84. The English co-ordinator has attended appropriate in-service courses and is in a very good position to take the subject forward. There is a clear understanding of how English can be developed throughout the school. For example, the very good assessment procedures certainly inform teachers about pupils' attainment and aid future planning, but strict adherence to the Literacy Strategy restricts opportunities for extending the higher attaining pupils. Other priorities include further development of writing and most classes have now set aside time specifically for this purpose. Examples of pupils' work are collated and moderated each half term and the co-ordinator shares her judgements with colleagues in an effort to identify the weaknesses and improve pupils' standards. Teaching and learning are also monitored by classroom observations. Learning resources in classrooms are generally good and of high quality. Good use is made of overhead projectors and whiteboards. Books in the library are appropriate, looked after and used well, although some are out of date and require replacing as a matter of priority.

88. Mathematics

85. In the 1999 national tests, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1, was very high when compared with the national average and with similar schools. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment was above the national average when compared to all schools and to those schools with similar pupils. The trend of pupils' attainment over the past four years at Key Stage 1 has been broadly in line with national averages and above average at Key Stage 2. The subject has improved considerably since the last inspection, and the ethos of the school, especially for the teaching of mathematics is outstanding.

86. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a clear knowledge of number and can add and subtract two and three digit numbers. They apply this knowledge to everyday tasks such as shopping and solving simple problems. Most pupils understand place values in hundreds, tens and units and successfully add, subtract and count in tens. They understand the terms *more than* and *less than*. In Year 1, pupils were observed estimating, sorting and measuring, while others were handling data to make up a *passport* about themselves. In Year 2, pupils are working with the principles of multiplication, and understand that it is repeated addition. They follow number patterns and sequences and can give change from a variety of different coins such as five, 10 or 20 pence. Pupils successfully sort two dimensional shapes, and can recognise and name shapes such as a triangular prism, pyramid, and sphere. Most pupils understand measurement using non-standard units, and are beginning to grasp the use of standard units of measure such as centimetres. They successfully sort various items and use simple diagrams to record their findings.

87. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' attain very well. They are able to use mathematical vocabulary with confidence and understanding. For example, pupils in Year 5 handle data for line graphs using horizontal and vertical axes. By Year 6, pupils understand the equivalent of decimals and fractions. Pupils successfully apply their knowledge and skills in mathematics to solving problems based upon everyday things such as sweets or the colour of cars. They calculate the percentages of certain colours of cars and record them, occasionally using information technology. Pupils produce graphs and charts in mathematics as a result of survey work in geography. Pupils confidently work in all four operations, addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They are able to calculate the area and the perimeter of various shapes, and extract information from graphs and charts with complete confidence. Many pupils work at levels much higher than the national average. For example, pupils were observed in Years 5 and 6 working out the equivalents of imperial measure from metric data using a conversion graph, explaining how they reached their results.

88. Pupils at both key stages make very good progress in mathematics, including those with special educational needs. In the mental mathematics sessions at the beginning of lessons, pupils are able to find answers with increasing competence. They apply their knowledge of mathematics in other subjects such as calculations in science or measuring and estimating in design and technology and food technology. They use the months of the year in history and religious education for time lines, and complete survey work in geography, recording their findings on computers. The reason for this good progress is the high quality of teaching, and especially the expectations of the teachers towards their pupils.

89. Pupils are excited about their mathematics and often do not want to stop work. They show very high levels of interest, perseverance and concentration. Above all, it is very evident that pupils thoroughly enjoy mathematics. Many confidently take responsibility for their own work, frequently discussing it with other pupils before recording their findings. They answer questions willingly and pay close attention to their teachers. Older Key Stage 2 pupils are particularly enthusiastic and demonstrate an involvement and interest which impacts very well on their progress. Pupils are clearly *young mathematicians* and often revel in their work and excellent relationships with their teachers. Behaviour is often excellent, and during the

inspection, no instances of inappropriate behaviour were seen. Pupils show respect for others and share ideas and equipment very well. They respect the classroom routines and always help clear up after lessons.

90. The quality of teaching is very good overall, with over a third being excellent. Teachers have very secure knowledge and understanding of the numeracy strategy, but the outstanding aspect of teaching is the excellent expectations that teachers have of their pupils. Mathematics is taught in an exciting and interesting way and teachers set a very high level of challenge, especially with older pupils. Teachers pay careful attention to the use of mathematical vocabulary. All teachers have effective management skills and excellent relationships with their pupils. Lessons are taught at a brisk pace and appropriate activities are organised to match the needs of the curriculum. Teachers set work that is very carefully matched to pupils' needs, and often provide extra work to be completed if pupils finish early. This extra provision is extended to all pupils including those who have special educational needs. Lessons are meticulously planned and follow all the requirements of the National Curriculum. Assessment is very good, and teachers are very well aware of pupils' progress and needs. Time is used fully as are imaginative resources to help pupils' progress. For example, Year 4 pupils struggled with the idea of complicated fractions until the teacher produced bars of chocolate made in squares. The effect was instantaneous, and pupils very quickly grasped some quite complex activities involving fractions.

91. The school has implemented the Numeracy Strategy very well and the organisation of the lessons and the contents of the curriculum are very good. Procedures for assessment are securely in place and of an excellent standard. Assessment informs future planning very well, and there is very good liaison between teachers concerning the outcomes of the lessons and their planning. Of particular note is the co-operation between the co-ordinators for mathematics and for special educational needs. This has resulted in special arrangements for Years 5 and 6 pupils, which is of tremendous benefit to all pupils in those classes. Targets are set and the subject is efficiently monitored. The National Curriculum tests are thoroughly analysed so that planning may be relevant and address any areas of concern. The quality of management and leadership is excellent, with a very clear vision for the future. High quality training has been undertaken for numeracy, which has been successfully cascaded to all teachers.

95. **Science**

92. The results of teacher assessments for Key Stage 1 pupils in 1999 indicate that attainment was very high when compared to the national average and to similar schools. At Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment was broadly in line with the national average when compared to all and to similar schools. Findings from the inspection indicate that pupils at both key stages are attaining above the national average. At Key Stage 1, the difference can be accounted for by the change of cohort and in Year 1 pupils have already had a change of teacher due to long term illness. Nevertheless, pupils' standards are steadily improving throughout Key Stage 1. It is also worth noting that the 1999 assessment results for Key Stage 2, included 11 pupils who failed to attain Level 5, which is above the national average, by only one or two marks. In addition, this cohort of pupils had a very high level of pupils with special educational needs, over 30 percent, and also had a change of teacher during the year. The trend of pupils' attainment during the past four years has been above the national average at both key stages, and the school is very well placed to extend this even higher.

93. Pupils in Year 1 know that light comes from many different sources and can identify objects around the classroom and in their homes which produce light. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to recognise the differences between natural light and artificial light. Many pupils recognise that shining a light from a torch onto an object creates a shadow and the shadow moves according to the direction of the light. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to use

transparent and *opaque*, to describe how light shines through different materials. In Year 2, pupils have a developing understanding of how to conduct a fair test. For example, when testing the strength of different materials with a stone, they carefully counted how many times they rubbed the material before it tore. Their results are carefully recorded on their worksheets alongside their planning and predictions. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have developed a good understanding of the importance of accuracy when conducting experiments and how to plot their data onto a graph. Pupils can also name major external parts of the human body, understand that we require food and water to live and what would happen to the body without the skeleton to support it. Many pupils use appropriate questions and observations to describe what they find.

94. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a clear understanding of how to conduct a fair test and many can hypothesise including the use of variables in their experiments. Although most pupils fully understand the meaning of these concepts, not all pupils actually use this vocabulary when describing their work. In Year 3, pupils predict what may happen when two different substances are mixed together, such as an effervescent tablet and water. They understand that some changes are permanent and others are reversible. Year 4 pupils have conducted experiments using batteries, switches and control devices to complete different circuits such as series and parallel. They have a developing knowledge of conductors and insulators and through their experiments and investigations can predict and test which materials will complete or break a circuit. By Year 5, pupils clearly understand the concept of separating properties, for example, when two or more substances are mixed, it is possible to design an experiment to separate these, such as sieving, filtering or evaporating. In Year 6, pupils know which are the most energy efficient properties for use in a house. They have conducted their own insulation experiments, using very accurate measurements to ensure their investigation is fair. Pupils are also aware of how an infrared camera works and its use in the design of a new building. All pupils use increasingly complex equipment with confidence and care, and from an early age, ask sensible and probing questions that dictate accuracy.

95. Children enter full time education with average skills in scientific awareness. Pupils' progress is good throughout the school and there is evidence of many pupils beginning to make very good progress at both key stages. Pupils make good progress throughout Key Stage 1, where they learn about light, sound and materials and how humans and plants grow. Their experiments show increasing complexity and accuracy. Pupils with special educational needs make equally good progress throughout the school, especially when supported by additional staff. Pupils continue to make good progress during Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 3 experiment with changing materials, and by Year 5, they are able to separate these properties using different techniques such as evaporation and condensation. In Year 4, pupils are aware of different electrical circuits and what materials conduct or insulate. By Year 6, pupils understand the difference between electrical and thermal insulators and know what materials provide the best insulation. Pupils throughout the school use increasingly more complex systems to record their work, involving different types of graphs and, increasingly, information technology, although the use of probes has yet to take place. Pupils with special educational needs make equally good progress.

96. Pupils' attitude to science is very good. They enjoy their lessons especially as so many of them have a practical and experimental approach. They work extremely well together showing great concern for each other's suggestions and opinions. Pupils of all ages listen carefully to their teachers, support staff and other adults and treat equipment and resources with care and respect. Pupils of all ages take a great pride in the neatness and quality of their work and their behaviour is often exceptional.

97. The quality of teaching overall is very good. Teachers throughout the school have good subject knowledge although this is often very good at Key Stage 2. This enables teachers to effectively plan work at an appropriate level to give pupils a greater challenge to their thinking,

for example, in many lessons work is provided for pupils at three and sometimes four different levels. Teachers have high expectations of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, which enables them to make good and occasionally very good progress. Lower attaining pupils are supported very well and the emphasis on challenging high attaining pupils is beginning to prove successful. Teachers manage pupils very well, particularly during practical lessons, which are busy but full of enthusiasm, excitement and humour. Learning resources are always well planned in advance and used very effectively, as is the use of the school's additional rooms for investigations. The quality of marking pupils' work is very good, with helpful and supportive comments on how pupils can improve. Teachers set appropriate homework to extend learning and this is often planned in advance so that data collated at home can be incorporated into lessons.

98. The school's policy and scheme of work are very effective and fully meet the requirements of the National Curriculum programmes of study. There is a strong and appropriate emphasis on experimental science and all pupils from a young age learn the importance of asking accurate questions, forming an opinion and then testing to see if they are correct. Information technology is beginning to be used more effectively as the quality of equipment in the school improves, although sensors are not yet available. Links with other subjects are extremely good, with a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy, but also design and technology and physical education are represented. The assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding is very good and all staff are committed to driving up standards. Careful consideration is now being given to extending the scheme of work to include those aspects of the Key Stage 3 programmes of study which can be appropriately used at Key Stage 2, without the use of more specialised equipment and resources.

99. The assessment of pupils throughout the school is very good. Teachers have a very clear understanding of what pupils know, understand and can do. In addition, the school has carefully analysed the results of the 1999 National Curriculum assessment tests at Key Stage 2, and distributed these findings to all age groups in order to improve the identified weakness as quickly as possible. The co-ordinator has worked hard with her colleagues to monitor pupils' work and set clear objectives in her subject action plan for further developments. The headteacher monitors the quality of teaching and learning and this is soon to be extended to the co-ordinator, to ensure standards will continue to rise. The quality of learning resources is adequate although there is a recognised need to extend resources for information technology and more specialised equipment such as microscopes. Very good use is made of educational trips to places of scientific interest such as local exhibitions and environmental centres. The school has worked very hard to maintain and improve the strengths identified during the last inspection.

103. OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

103. Information technology

100. Pupils' attainment in information technology is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Despite the very limited resources the school currently has, pupils' progress is good throughout the school, including those with special educational needs. However, in some aspects such as communicating information, pupils' standards at Key Stage 2, are good and above national expectations. This is a similar finding to the previous inspection.

101. Information technology is mostly taught in a cross-curricular way and during the inspection, very few lessons were observed. Therefore, it is not possible to judge the quality of teaching overall, but it is possible through the scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with them and staff to make a judgment on their progress, which is good. From reception onwards pupils are able to use the computer's keyboard with growing confidence and familiarity. At Key

Stage 1 pupils enter text, and understand that work can be saved and retrieved later. Pupils identify features of equipment and what it does, for example the monitor, keyboard, mouse and CD-ROM. Many are able to select objects on a screen and move them around using the mouse. Others respond to prompts using a cause and effect program such as developing their reading skills using initial sounds. Pupils also use simple programs to sort and classify the data they have collated, for example, in mathematics. Some pupils are developing a good understanding of controlling and modelling through programming a robotic toy to move to the directions they enter.

102. At Key Stage 2, information technology is well used to support other curriculum areas. For example, Year 4 pupils use a paint program for their interpretations of *Matisse's* work *Jazz*. Year 6 pupils have used design programs to show how a bathroom can be planned, and their desktop publishing skills are employed to write and produce newspaper articles. Year 5 pupils have also written clear instructions for each other on how to load a computer program for use. Older pupils use more sophisticated data handling programs that produce a variety of different types of graph such as block or line graphs or a pie chart. For example, Year 5 pupils in mathematics, use a three dimensional block graph to compare American dollars and British sterling. Pupils use CD-ROMS to research topics such as the Aztecs for history, or the human body for science. Pupils in Year 6 have used the Internet for research and have sent messages using electronic mail. A few pupils have incorporated sound and pictures to produce a presentation for their friends and peers. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' written work incorporates different sized fonts, styles and colours, plus the use of pictures and graphics taken from other programs. Pupils in Year 6, also use these skills to produce information for their class, including displays, classroom rules and general day-to-day information.

103. Pupils respond very well to using computers, they are enthusiastic to start work and show respect for the equipment. They are very well behaved and do not get frustrated, despite how little time they actually have to use the equipment. All pupils take turns to use the keyboard or mouse for example, writing or entering the correct data to produce a graph. Some pupils find entering text or data to be time consuming but will often persevere to complete the task and take great pride in their completed work.

104. Although it is not possible to judge the quality of teaching overall, all staff have worked hard to familiarise themselves with the range of computers and programs available in the school. Consequently, the cross curricular use of information technology is particularly good considering the lack of resources available at the present time. However, the school does have use of two portable computers, which are very well used for older pupils and for those who require additional support. Appropriate attention is given to the National Curriculum programmes of study. The co-ordinator has worked hard to produce advice and support for teachers which includes valuable guidance for assessing pupils' achievements. The school is presently awaiting delivery of a complete range of new computers and programs. The co-ordinator has detailed plans for the immediate introduction and support of this new equipment. Considering the quality of teaching throughout the school, and the preparations all staff have already made for the new equipment, it is very likely this will have a significant impact on the quality of information technology throughout the school.

108. **Religious education**

105. The good standards reported in the previous inspection have been maintained and the high quality of the school's assemblies support and enhance religious education. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils know some stories from the Bible, such as the parables, and they talk with enthusiasm about the angel visiting Mary. They have looked at a programme *All about Me* and discovered what makes a person special and know the stories of the lost sheep and the Good

Samaritan. Some pupils have thought about things for which they are thankful, and have made lists that include home and family. During the inspection week, Year 2 pupils were thinking about gifts and giving, and moving on to think of gifts that cost nothing, such as love or happiness.

106.By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is above average. They have studied other world religions in more depth and understand more detail from the Bible stories they read. Year 6 pupils are very confident in finding references from the Bible and know the difference between the Old and New Testaments. They have studied the Ten Commandments and made reference to them in their own class rules. Pupils have studied some aspects of other religions such as Sikhism, and know about the Sikhs' temples and their 10 Gurus. Year 4 pupils have studied Diwali in detail and Year 6 pupils have written their own prayers for peace.

107.Pupils throughout the school make good progress, as do pupils with special educational needs. They extend their knowledge of Bible stories, as they grow older, and are learning about other faiths and their practices. Many pupils are beginning to understand some of the religious responses to life's journey, and pupils in Year 6 have studied some aspects of life as a journey, such as the karma in Buddhism.

108.Pupils enjoy their religious education lessons and listen intently to stories and join in well with discussions. For example, Year 1 pupils confidently talked about what families do when a new baby arrives, and thought about how uncomfortable Mary must have been on her journey to Bethlehem. Pupils throughout the school behave very well and show great respect for each other and their teachers. All pupils concentrate well, are very keen to answer questions and to make their own suggestions.

109.The quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. Teachers have a good understanding of the topics and stories they use, and have very good expectations of their pupils to listen and work hard. Planning is very effective and teachers organise their classes very well for stories or group work, ensuring all pupils have work which matches their needs and abilities. Teachers respect their pupils and expect high standards of good behaviour from them, which they frequently receive. Lessons are very busy and teachers carefully plan the use of resources to supplement and inspire pupils.

110.The curriculum for religious education is well planned, very well led and follows the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Planning is very detailed and allows pupils to make good progress throughout the school, building up skills and understanding well. The assessment of pupils' work is satisfactory, work is marked with helpful comments and reports for pupils are well written. The subject makes a very good contribution towards pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are appropriate times for reflection and expressing feelings, such as happiness and joy. Pupils are taught right from wrong and this is firmly based on the work of the commandments, both in the Old and New Testaments. Pupils understand the Golden Rule and know Jesus' two great commands. Pupils are encouraged to work together and to share their ideas and findings. They study the faiths and practices of other religions, including festivals and celebrations.

114. **Art**

111.Judgements in art are based upon three lessons observed at both key stages and a close analysis of pupils' past work and the numerous displays around the school and in classrooms. Pupils are attaining at standards above average for their age at both key stages. However, there are many pupils who are achieving standards that are well above average, especially at Key Stage 2.

112.Pupils at Key Stage 1, develop a good variety of skills using two and three dimensional media. They learn to draw distinctive outlines from real life observations, such as Year 2 pupils drawing from direct observations of the trees outside their classroom. Pupils mix colours very well and use charcoal and paints confidently to enhance their developing artistic skills. Pupils are learning simple but effective techniques to produce high quality work. For example, in

Year 1 pupils made some very good faces, using paper plates, which they painted and then used corks and buttons for eyes and wool for hair.

113. At Key Stage 2, Year 3 pupils have gradually mixed colours to produce a very effective colour chart showing primary and secondary colours. Year 4 pupils were observed working in the style of *Matisse*, producing some excellent and striking pictures which were full of colour and shape. Some pupils used their information technology skills to produce their own electronic version of *Matisse's* work. Year 6 pupils made templates in the style of *William Morris* and intend to use these to produce their own wallpaper.

114. At both key stages, pupils make good progress in art, including those who have special educational needs. Pupils clearly gain in confidence and use a range of different material as they progress through the school. They show good gains in their skills of observation and recording. There is some particularly good work on display around the school in the style of *Arcimboldo*, and some excellent work based on *Munch's Scream*.

115. During the lessons observed and in discussions, pupils showed very high levels of interest in their work and talk knowledgeably about different artists and what they particularly like in a painting, such as the *Scream*. Pupils of all ages share equipment well, enjoy art and concentrate very well. There is always a pleasant buzz of conversation as pupils work together and share ideas. Behaviour is very good and pupils help to set up resources and clear away after lessons.

116. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers have very good expectations of their pupils to produce high quality work, which includes discussions about different artists' styles and techniques. Varied and interesting tasks are planned and presented in such a way that motivates and encourages pupils. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and offer suggestions and praise. Work is very well displayed and celebrated throughout the school, which enhances the opportunities for pupils' social and cultural development very well. Pupils' art is often incorporated very well into other subjects such as Year 5's work on the Aztecs in history. Assessment includes observations, which are detailed and well recorded.

117. Art is very well planned across all year groups and pupils progress very well in their skills and techniques as they move through the school. For example, younger pupils begin by using plasticine to make models, and as they progress, successfully move on to using clay to model, which is then fired in the school's kiln. Planning shows that the curriculum is suitably broad and balanced, with a good range of media and experiences offered to all pupils. Learning resources are good to cover all aspects of art and very good use is made of the art area and additional rooms. The standards reported in the last inspection, which were good, have been maintained and improved. The quality of pupils' artwork on display throughout the school, which was reported as being of a high standard in the last report, has also been maintained. This work creates an impressive, stimulating and colourful exhibition of pupils' work from all classes.

121. **Design and technology**

118. During the course of the inspection, there were few opportunities to observe design and technology lessons. However, a close analysis of pupils' past work, models on display, as well as photographs, indicates that pupils' are achieving levels above those expected for their ages by the end of both key stages. This is a similar finding to that of the previous inspection and the school has worked hard to maintain these high standards.

119. At Key Stage 1, pupils draw and design their work, listing materials and the tools they will need to complete their task. For example, Year 2 pupils made a good range musical instruments, such as shakers and guitars using reclaimed materials. They carefully thought

what they would look like, how they would make them, and what materials would be needed. Once completed, pupils' evaluated their work to consider how they could be improved. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop their making skills and use more advanced construction techniques. For example, by Year 6, pupils have made impressive models of fairground rides, using electric motors powered by batteries. Some pupils in Year 3 have considered a local play park and designed ways for improving it, while others in Year 4 have designed and made a rain gauge.

120. Progress, including those with special educational needs, is good. Pupils undertake a variety of designing and making activities, using different materials and techniques, as they move through the school. These skills are enhanced in a series of suitable steps over time so that they improve in several ways. For example, at Key Stage 1, pupils model with plasticine, observe and copy types of hinges around the classroom, and use construction kits to make models. At Key Stage 2, they use a much more ambitious range of materials and skills for example, Year 5 pupils have modelled ocarinas in clay and fired them in the kiln. They cook food, make powered model vehicles, and use tools, such as saws, screwdrivers and hammers. During the inspection, Year 5 pupils were observed making and cooking tortillas as part of their topic on the Aztecs.

121. Pupils enjoy design and technology very much and their response is very good. They are extremely well behaved, work enthusiastically and are very well motivated. This view is supported by the numerous high quality displays of their work around the school. Pupils take a justifiable pride in completing their projects to the best of their abilities, including a considered evaluation.

122. The quality of teaching is good overall and occasionally very good at Key Stage 2. This is a similar finding to the previous report. Teachers provide practical work for pupils which involves a good range of different materials, including construction kits, wood, card, paper and material that can be moulded. Pupils are given opportunities to design and make different artefacts to enhance other projects, such as Year 4's photo frames, which used wood and other materials. They experience and use a range of techniques and resources for fixing and joining materials together for example, securing different joints using glue or tape. Teachers' management of pupils is very good and there is proper regard for safety procedures when handling and using tools. Relationships are excellent and often humour enlivens the lessons.

123. The scheme of work for design and technology is very appropriate to pupils' needs and supplements other subjects such as, science, art, history and geography very well. The co-ordinator manages the subject well and supports colleagues, although the monitoring of teaching and learning has yet to take place. There is suitable emphasis upon problem solving and thinking skills and every opportunity is taken to extend pupils' technical vocabulary and numeracy skills. There is a good range of learning resources, including tools, which are centrally stored and effectively used to extend pupils' skills and understanding.

127. **Geography**

124. Due to timetabling arrangements it was only possible to observe one geography lesson during the inspection. However, through close observations of classroom displays, a careful scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning, it is possible to make a judgement on pupils' standards and progress. Pupils are attaining at appropriate levels for their ages at both key stages and making good progress, including those with special educational needs. This is a similar finding to the previous report.

125. At Key Stage 1, pupils are learning about the area in which they live and the impact of the weather on their daily lives and that of others. For example, some pupils are studying rainfall patterns. From an early age pupils are quickly introduced to appropriate geographical

vocabulary and encouraged to develop specific skills, which are developed at Key Stage 2. For example, pupils look at similar topics through a wider perspective, such as considering the impact of climate on holiday destinations. Pupils also learn about climates in different parts of the world, such as contrasting Kenya to regions familiar to the pupils themselves. In Years 5 and 6, pupils undertake a detailed study of their own local environment and contrast it to another country. They highlight the positive and negative features based upon the evidence they have found using their developing research skills.

126. It is not possible to judge the quality of teaching overall. However, in the one lesson observed at Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching was very good. There is a detailed scheme of work and a very comprehensive resource pack, which supports teachers' planning. Teachers carefully plan work to ensure that learning experiences are suitably based on appropriate geographical skills and build on what has previously been taught. Wherever possible good links are made with other subjects, for example, in one class pupils used a literacy text to consider the impact of humans on the changing environment, and in another class pupils used their design and technology skills to make their own rainfall gauges. From the scrutiny of pupils' work, it is very clear that teachers have high expectations of pupils' abilities to learn by the work that is set for them.

127. The management of the subject is very good. Planning is very detailed and suitably based on agreed schemes of work. Learning resources to support the teaching of geography are very good and very well organised. Opportunities to assess pupils' work are clearly built into lesson plans and very well linked to the stated learning objectives. The subject is monitored by the co-ordinator, who regularly collects samples of pupils' work for an assessment portfolio. The subject is well resourced and includes videos, maps, posters, charts and reference materials in the school library. In addition, there is an excellent collection of resources to support local studies.

131. **History**

128. Lessons were observed at Key Stage 2 during the week of the inspection and further evidence was gathered from analysing pupils' work, teachers' planning and from observing classroom displays. Pupils are attaining levels above those expected for their ages at both key stages and making good progress overall. This is a similar finding to the previous inspection.

129. At Key Stage 1, pupils are beginning to understand the concept of time and sequence events chronologically through the use of time lines, including themselves growing up. Many understand the concept of the past and *long ago*. Pupils also learn with enthusiasm about famous people and events, for example, the study of Guy Fawkes caused great excitement. At Key Stage 2, pupils talk enthusiastically about their history topics. For example, the differences in lifestyles between rich and poor Victorians and the comparisons they can draw with their own lives today. Pupils were also very enthusiastic about the part *Donna Marina* played in the fall of the Aztec Empire.

130. Throughout both key stages pupils are encouraged to research historical events for themselves. At Key Stage 1, this is mostly based on primary sources, but by Key Stage 2, pupils ask searching questions, and use secondary sources of evidence. They compare and contrast, draw conclusions about events and people and support their opinions using the appropriate evidence. Of particular note is their ability to engage in discussion and debate with their teachers.

131. Pupils' attitudes to history are very good and they demonstrate a genuine enjoyment of the subject. Pupils talk with empathy about what it must have been like to be a child, in different circumstances, during Victorian times. They confidently search for relevant information through reference sources including videos, CD-ROMS, charts and graphs. Pupils

are encouraged to present their work in a variety of ways. For example, in Years 5 and 6, pupils make appropriate and effective notes from broadcasts and are taught to look for bias when considering sources of evidence.

132. From the scrutiny of pupils' work at Key Stage 1 and through direct observations at Key Stage 2, it is possible to judge that the quality of teaching is good overall and occasionally very good at Key Stage 2. Teachers question pupils very effectively which develops their knowledge and understanding and challenges their thinking. Pupils readily ask questions and comment on what has been learned. Very good links are made with the moral and cultural issues surrounding historical events and with other subjects. For example, in a Key Stage 2 class, some artwork based on Greek pottery, was very well used to show pupils' the importance of archaeological evidence, by burying the pieces in sand for pupils to dig up, assemble and examine.

133. There is a very comprehensive scheme of work which all teachers adhere to, and work for each historical topic is very well planned with clearly focused learning objectives. Teachers are enthusiastic about the subject. They spend time researching and planning different learning experiences to address the nature of historical enquiry and the use of specific vocabulary was emphasised during the lessons observed. The management of history is very good. The co-ordinator offers very good support for colleagues by developing appropriate and stimulating topics, which ensure that pupils' learning builds on previous experience and all pupils are challenged regardless of ability. There is appropriate time for history on the timetable and the subject is well resourced. In addition to the school's resources, very good use is made of the local library and museum's loan service for additional artefacts to support various topics.

137.

137. **Music**

134. Due to timetable commitments it was not possible to observe many lessons during the inspection. However a close analysis was made of pupils' previous work, video and audio tapes were viewed, lesson plans scrutinised and discussions were held with staff and pupils. This showed that pupils are working at levels that are above average for their ages at both key stages. The last report was favourable in all aspects, and the good standards referred to have been maintained and in some respects, there has been improvement. For example, the standard of interpretation and imagination is now high and demonstrates work that is above expected levels for pupils' ages at both key stages.

135. At Key Stage 1, pupils display good listening skills and play untuned percussion instruments very well. They are able to write simple *scores* and read from them. Pupils improvise and create rhythm and sounds. They understand long and short notes and use them correctly when performing. Pupils sing well and keep good time, often learning their songs by heart. At Key Stage 2, pupils create, rehearse and perform their own work to their peers. For example, Year 6 pupils were observed preparing their own pieces in groups, based on ideas from their work on St. Lucia. Their work included an appropriate Caribbean flavour to it, which represented, among many sounds, the street market, cicadas, sunny weather and the sparkling sea. Pupils' performances were imaginative and of a high standard, and they interpreted the facts they had been given very well. Pupils understand dynamics, and when encouraged by the teacher, incorporated loud and soft playing into their performances.

136. Pupils make good progress and some of this is demonstrated in the music they perform for assemblies. There are three groups of musicians, and during the inspection, the mixed wind instruments group, played very confidently in assembly. Pupils are extending their knowledge of instruments, notation and types of rhythm. They have many opportunities to listen to a wide variety of music in assemblies as well as in lessons.

137. Pupils enjoy their music and respond very positively. They behave well and follow instructions carefully, working hard to incorporate their teachers' suggestions. Pupils work very well individually and in groups and share ideas, collaborating very well in their performances. They show an extremely positive attitude to music, and have very good relationships with their teachers.

138. The quality of teaching is good overall and occasionally very good. Teachers are confident, enthusiastic and manage their classes very well. They encourage pupils to perform with confidence and to listen well. The pace and challenge of the lessons is very good. Learning resources are well used and teachers often lead by example, providing a clear lead in assemblies and when singing.

139. The subject is very well led and co-ordinated by a music specialist. There is a good scheme of work, offering pupils a broad range of musical experiences and activities. They are given the chance to improvise, sing and play a range of tuned and untuned musical instruments. Teachers often record pupils' performances using audio tape so that they can hear themselves and evaluate their own work more accurately. Additional tuition is offered in recorders and other wind instruments as well as in the choir. Although there is no specialist music room, the hall is used very effectively for the more ambitious work, especially performing. Resources are good, with a range of instruments which are in good condition. Music contributes well to pupils' social and cultural development, giving them opportunities to work together as a choir or a small orchestra, and broadening their appreciation of a range of music.

143. **Physical education**

140. By the end of both key stages, pupils are attaining above levels expected for their ages. This is an improvement on the findings from the previous inspection. During the inspection only gymnastic and dance lessons were observed, however, through discussions with pupils and staff and a scrutiny of the work available, it is possible to judge that pupils are making good progress in all aspects of physical education throughout the school. The inspection of this school included a focused view of swimming, which is reported below.

141. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn that a warm up is important before exercising and use the space in the hall well. In dance they listen carefully to the instructions from their teacher and the audio tape and interpret the music moving slowly and quickly as required. In gymnastics, pupils move on the floor confidently using different parts of their bodies to balance and are beginning to link movements together to form routines involving jumps, turns and different kinds of rolls. Pupils run, skip and jump with increasing control and confidence and when playing games understand the importance of watching a ball closely and the difference in technique when catching a ball in the air to one bouncing on the ground.

142. Pupils at Key Stage 2, are aware of the importance of a warm up and cool down and its effect upon the body, although they have no opportunities to lead part of the warm up themselves. They continue to develop good co-ordination and co-operation skills and incorporate these into more complex gymnastic and dance routines. For example, in an excellent Year 5 dance lesson, pupils developed their own routines in groups of four, using sequenced movements such as symmetry, and expressing the mood of the music extremely well. To develop their skills further the teacher added two groups together and pupils firstly evaluated their own routines before incorporating the best of both sequences into a new routine. By the end of Key Stage 2, many pupils have a good awareness of the rules of different games and can describe appropriate tactics. In Year 6, pupils have the opportunity to participate in outdoor and adventurous activities during a residential activities week, where they climb, canoe, abseil and participate in team problem solving activities.

146. **Swimming**

143. By the end of Year 6 pupils will have had the opportunity to swim at the local public pool on a weekly basis for a year. Pupils make good progress during the year developing their water confidence and improving their swimming techniques and water safety skills. By the end of Key Stage 2 nearly all pupils, for example, 98 percent, are able to swim unaided, competently and safely for at least 25 metres. Many more pupils successfully swim considerably greater distances up to 2,000 metres, attaining national swimming association distance certificates and survival certificates. Pupils swim confidently using a variety of strokes on their front and back, such as breaststroke, freestyle, backstroke and the highest attainers, butterfly. Some are developing particularly good breathing techniques and diving skills which enable them to join a swimming club in their own time.

144. Pupils' attitudes to physical education are very good. They listen carefully to instructions and show very high levels of concentration and perseverance, for example, practicing a dance or completing a sequence. Their behaviour is very good and often exceptional. Pupils work very well together in pairs and small groups and use their initiative very well to develop and expand dance and gymnastic routines. All pupils help to get out apparatus and put away resources in a very responsible manner. Pupils of all ages show great support and empathy for each other, such as spontaneously applauding each other's demonstrations. All pupils change into appropriate kit for physical education lessons, work very hard and thoroughly enjoy the experiences.

145. The quality of teaching is good overall, although one exceptional lesson was observed at Key Stage 2. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. All teachers change for physical education lessons and are very good role models, often demonstrating new ideas themselves. However, some teachers do miss opportunities to extend pupils' learning, for example, planning appropriate extension activities for the highest attaining pupils or providing opportunities for pupils to lead part of the warm up. However, many teachers do provide good opportunities for pupils to evaluate their work and make constructive suggestions how a piece of work might be improved. At their best, teachers fully involve pupils throughout the lesson, encouraging, supporting and suggesting ideas. They set high but attainable challenges for them, such as developing a sequenced dance routine for eight pupils. Teachers set clear learning objectives, use very effective questions to ensure they have fully understood new skills and prepare a good range of resources for pupils to use quickly, therefore making very efficient use of the time available. Lessons are well planned to involve pupils of all abilities. There are opportunities for regular and ongoing assessments, that focus on what pupils have learnt, which also informs future planning.

146. There is a good policy and scheme of work in place to support teachers' planning, and the co-ordinator provides good advice when asked to do so. The co-ordinator moderates teachers' planning but does not yet visit lessons to monitor teaching and learning. The school runs an excellent range of extra-curricular clubs and has been very successful competing in inter-school events for football, netball and cross-country. There is a good range of resources, including outdoor facilities, to cover all aspects of physical education, but some of the gymnastic equipment such as mats are well worn.

150. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

150. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

147. The inspection was undertaken by a team of four inspectors, including the lay inspector. During the week, 52 lessons or parts of lessons were evaluated. Additional time was spent scrutinising work, documents, photographs, audio and video tapes and interviewing staff. Discussions were held with the headteacher, senior managers, other teachers, support staff, school secretary, members of the governing body and other adults in the school. Parents were also interviewed, as were a number of pupils. Documentation was analysed prior to and during the inspection, including samples of teachers' records, Statements of Special Educational Need and Annual Reviews, as well as pupils' work. The views of a meeting attended by 28 parents and 51 responses to a parents' questionnaire were considered. Inspectors observed pupils' arrival and departure, break times, assemblies, lunchtime and after-school activities. Pupils in all year groups were heard reading. Samples of pupils' mathematical skills, written work and information technology skills were monitored.

148.DATA AND INDICATORS

Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	208	2	45	10

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked each week	76.5

Average class size:	30
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Financial data

Financial year:	1998/1999
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	£
Total Income	316 442
Total Expenditure	323 238
Expenditure per pupil	1 449
Balance brought forward from previous year	27 779
Balance carried forward to next year	20 983

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:	208
Number of questionnaires returned:	51

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	39	57	2	2	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	47	45	4	2	2
The school handles complaints from parents well	18	41	18	6	2
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	24	49	12	12	4
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	20	55	10	12	2
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	37	49	8	2	2
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	39	49	8	2	2
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	29	53	6	6	4
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	39	51	4	2	4
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	33	47	12	2	2
My child(ren) like(s) school	53	39	4	0	2