

INSPECTION REPORT

MOORSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Moorside, Consett

LEA area: Durham

Unique reference number: 114050

Headteacher: Elizabeth Hume

Reporting inspector: Natalie Moss
22685

Dates of inspection: 13th – 16th March 2000

Inspection number: 188728

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

© Crown copyright 2000

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Foundation

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Chester Road
Moorside
Consett
Co. Durham

Postcode: DH8 8EQ

Telephone number: 01207 509724

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. R. Nixon

Date of previous inspection: 8th July 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Natalie Moss	Registered inspector	English	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school
		History	The school's results and pupils' achievements
		Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage	Teaching and learning
		Equality of opportunity	Leadership and management
			Key Issues for action
Tom Heavey	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			Pupils' welfare, health and safety
			Partnership with parents and carers
David Grimwood	Team inspector	Science	
		Art	
		Design and technology	
		Physical education	
		Religious education	
		Special educational needs	
Andrew Hicks	Team inspector	Mathematics	Quality and range of opportunities for learning
		Geography	
		Information technology	
		Music	

The inspection contractor was:

Penta International

“Bradley”
15 Upper Avenue
Eastbourne
East Sussex
BN21 3XR

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

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	15
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	20
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	22
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	23
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	26
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	27
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	31

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Moorside Primary School is a smaller than average size primary school, with 141 pupils from ages 3 to 11 on roll (national average 388). The school serves the immediate area, in which unemployment is high and the school catchment area has recently been listed as situated in one of the neediest wards of the county. There are almost equal numbers of boys and girls and 22.7 pupils for each teacher. The school has a dedicated Nursery with the equivalent of 23 full-time pupils and there are nine children under the age of five in the Reception class. There are five classes, four of which are mixed age classes. There are no pupils of a non-white ethnic background and all speak English as their first language. Forty-three and a half per cent of pupils have special educational needs, well above the national average of 24.2, and 8.0 per cent have statements of special education need, also well above the national average of 2.5 per cent. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is 53.0 per cent, well above the national average. The decline of industry and the subsequent unemployment in the area has been accompanied by a significant decline in the average ability of pupils joining the school, when it was close to expectation, and it is now below expectations for the age group when compared with other primary schools. There has also, since 1996, been a significant rise in the rate of mobility of pupils, over 18 percent each year, which affects their learning and progress. The school is larger than at the time of the last inspection and the forecast is for further growth. The headteacher is at present on long-term sick leave and the school is currently being led by the headteacher of a neighbouring school. (All subsequent references to the headteacher relate to the headteacher in school at the time of the inspection).

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Moorside Primary School is a warm, friendly school, in which caring, commitment, teaching and learning are all given equal importance. The overall effectiveness of the school is good, by the time pupils reach the age of eleven. All pupils make satisfactory progress and most are eager to learn and behave well. By the time they leave, pupils' attainment in English is in line with the average, well below it in mathematics and very low in science, compared with similar schools. Teaching is always at least satisfactory and many good and some very good lessons were observed. The headteacher and staff work well together to achieve their aims. The headteacher is a good leader. School income is high when compared with the national average and value for money achieved is satisfactory. There has also been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

What the school does well

- Teaching is good for children under the age of five and in Key Stage 1, so that pupils make good progress.
- The school's ethos encourages pupils' personal development, good attitudes to learning and school life and gives pupils a sense of positive values.
- Relationships between pupils and between pupils and teachers are good.
- The school provides well for pupils who have special educational needs.
- The school has good relationships with the local and other secondary schools.
- The school provides good personal support to pupils in both their welfare and their learning.
- The professional leadership of the headteacher is a strength in the school.
- The school has good procedures for the monitoring of pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school's financial management is good.

What could be improved

- Pupils' attainment in English and mathematics.
- Pupils' attainment in science, particularly in Key Stage 2, where lessons lack pace and learning is slow.
- The curriculum in information technology, which does not meet National Curriculum requirements, and its implementation.
- The quantity of long pieces of work in English, at which pupils' skills are insufficiently developed and they have too little opportunity to practise.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in 1996 its characteristics have changed, with pupils now joining the school with significantly lower levels of attainment, and increased special educational needs. The initial drop in standards after the last inspection has now largely been reversed. The school is achieving a higher standard of attainment at both key stages than in 1996, except in science at Key Stage 2. Pupils are making satisfactory progress from entry to the school. Progress in Key Stage 2 is less pronounced, but is satisfactory in English and mathematics. The school has produced thorough schemes of work for most subjects, which were missing at the time of the last inspection, and has used these schemes in order to plan the school curriculum coherently, with the exception of information technology, which is only partially implemented at present. An audit of resources has been conducted. As a result, resources and equipment have been improved in many subjects, especially English, and new hardware and software have been purchased for information technology, although these are not in full use. Staff training in information technology has not been implemented, but is planned for the next academic year, 2000 – 2001. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy, which are helping to raise standards of attainment. Subject co-ordinators have been given some non-teaching time in which to produce new curriculum documentation. Analysis of pupils' work during the inspection showed an improvement in the presentation of written work. The school building has been made secure in all areas, a key issue at the last inspection and there is an ongoing programme to protect the school further from vandalism and theft. The school has done enough to satisfy the key issues of the last inspection and has demonstrated its ability to identify and deal with weaknesses. The quality of teaching has improved, as has the quality of planning and the school has put in place good procedures for assessment and recording. The school has ensured that there is a clear focus for future development.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	D	E	E	C
mathematics	E	D	E	D
science	D	E	E	E*

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The level of attainment of pupils joining the school has fallen since the last report. Standards achieved have also been significantly adversely affected by the rising high degree of mobility of pupils. Good teaching and satisfactory progress have reversed the negative trend and the evidence from this inspection suggests that in all subjects, except English, mathematics, science and information technology, attainment is now in line with national averages and expectations. The school's target in English in the year 2000 is 33 per cent at the expected Level 4 or above, low for the key stage, but rising to 40 per cent in 2001. The corresponding figures for mathematics are 22 per cent at Level 4 or above, also low, rising to 50 per cent in 2001. The school is unlikely to reach these higher levels in the year 2000 because of the low numbers (9 pupils) and the number of special needs in the current Year 6 cohort. However, the inspection team judged that the school is well on course to achieve its targets in the year 2001. At the age of seven, standards in English and mathematics have been rising faster than the national trend, but not in science. Literacy and numeracy skills are reaching a satisfactory standard. Standards need to improve further, particularly in writing, science and information technology.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to the school are good. They enjoy coming to school and participating in school life and activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The behaviour of pupils is satisfactory and often good when they are fully occupied. There is some restless behaviour by small groups of boys of all ages in lessons, reflecting the degree of teachers' ability to manage them well.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good. They are friendly, welcoming and thoughtful towards others. Relationships between all members of the school community are good.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory.

The strong ethos of pastoral care and mutual respect in the school and the good quality of teaching contribute significantly to the formation of positive attitudes and strong moral values of pupils.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

In both English and mathematics the quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. The teaching of both literacy and numeracy is well integrated into the curriculum. Literacy is taught effectively, especially in Key Stage 1, and the satisfactory teaching of numeracy has begun to improve the quality of learning. Teachers plan well and manage their classes well. Teaching methods are usually effective and the use of support staff and resources is satisfactory. The school takes particular care to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, and it achieves this aim well. Pupils given additional support with literacy are making good progress as a result. Pupils are satisfactorily challenged through skilled differentiation of the work demanded of them, and the progress of pupils is promoted through the skilled use of teaching techniques. However, not all teachers ensure that the amount of work done by pupils in a lesson is as great as it might be to make progress more rapid.

Overall, 53 per cent of lessons observed were good or better and 47 per cent were satisfactory or better. Teachers make good provision for different age groups with the mixed age classes.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The breadth and relevance of the curriculum is good overall, except for information technology, which does not meet National Curriculum requirements because pupils have too few opportunities to use computers. The proportion of time spent on different subjects is satisfactory, as are the extra-curricular opportunities offered by the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are well supported by staff and are given work matching their ability. Pupils are well integrated in classes.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes good provision for the pupils' personal development. Good provision is made for moral and social development and satisfactory provision for their spiritual and cultural development. Many opportunities are taken to ensure development and pupils are becoming caring and thoughtful citizens.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The good level of care and support offered to pupils makes this a strength in the school. Teachers know their pupils well.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school has been led since January by the headteacher of a neighbouring school, because of the absence of the headteacher. The leadership and management by the headteacher is very good and that of other key staff is good. The management team are strong, committed and hardworking and they have kept a clear focus on their aims of pupils' attainment and care, despite recent problems of illness of staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The Chairman and governors fulfil their statutory duties satisfactorily, they know the strengths and weaknesses of the school, but only a few are sufficiently involved in understanding and shaping the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has well developed procedures for measuring its own performance and uses them well.
The strategic use of resources	All resources, staff, money, accommodation and teaching resources are used in a satisfactory manner.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That their children like coming to school • That their children make good progress • That behaviour in the school is good • That teaching is good • That they are kept well informed about how their children are getting on • That they feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions of problems • That the school expects their children to work hard and to achieve their best • That the school works closely with parents • That the school is well managed and led • That the school is helping their children become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of work their children receive to do at home, views varying from too much to too little • The range of activities offered outside lessons

The inspection team agreed with the positive response towards the school given by parents. They examined the amount of homework set and found it to be appropriate for pupils of that age. They also examined the range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school and found it to be satisfactory, matching that found in most similar schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Standards of attainment for children on entry to the school at the age of four are well below expectation for their age group. The majority have very low levels of language skills, mainly as a result of the lack of pre-school experiences to develop their language and literacy skills to an expected level. A significant number of children enter the school only able to speak in short sentences. They have limited understanding of spoken language. By the time they are five, standards are higher than at the last inspection. Staff work hard to develop children's personal and social education so that they have a firm foundation on which to build as they move through the school. Most children achieve the Desirable Outcome for Learning in this area. Teachers plan activities to place suitable demands on the children and they are making good progress in relation to their earlier experience. Children's attainment in all the Desirable Learning Outcomes, in language and literacy, personal and social development, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development, by the time they are five is now generally in line with that of expectation, though restricted language skills and vocabulary remain a problem for many pupils throughout the school.

2. When measuring the school's standards by results in National Curriculum tests, it is important to keep in mind that the size and respective ability, as well as the proportion of pupils with special educational needs, of cohorts varies considerably because of the mobility in the school and from year to year. This means that statistics show significant variations and that the results of only one or two pupils can result in figures, which are disproportionately influenced by these factors.

3. In English, in 1999, by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils reached standards that were well below the national average, but in line with those achieved by pupils at similar schools. Pupils' standards in reading were well below the national average, though above it for those attaining Level 3, while those achieved in writing were also well below average. The proportion of those pupils who reached the expected Level 2 by the end of the key stage was much lower than the national average, as was the proportion that reached Level 3, especially in writing. Overall, this analysis showed that there were weaknesses in writing, that the average result for pupils at age 7 was well below the expected average result and that there was a lower proportion of more able pupils at age 7 in English than in the average of schools nationally. Boys' results were worse than those achieved by girls.

4. By the end of Key Stage 2, in 1999, pupils reached standards in English that were below the national average, but in line with those achieved by pupils at similar schools. While the proportion of pupils who reached the expected Level 4 by the end of the key stage was well below the national average, the proportion of pupils who reached Level 5 was below the average. Overall, results showed that there were weaknesses in writing, that the average result for pupils at age 11 was well below the expected average result and that a higher proportion reached the higher level at Key Stage 2 than at Key Stage 1 in 1999. Inspection observations indicate that standards are continuing to rise and that the current Year 2, at the end of Key Stage 1, is firmly in line with expectations for similar schools and likely to achieve higher standards than that in 1999. The current Year 6, however, at the end of Key Stage 2, is unlikely to reach national averages or those for similar schools, since the cohort is very small and contains a high proportion of pupils with special

educational needs. In the current Year 5, 10-year-old pupils were assessed by the inspectors to be producing work in line with expectations for their age.

5. There was a slight fall in Key Stage 1 results in English between 1996 and 1997, following which there has been a significant steady improvement in standards, though those for reading remain higher than those for writing. In Key Stage 2, results rose sharply between 1996 and 1997, fell a little in 1998 and rose again in 1999. The targets set for pupils' attainment in the years 2000 and 2001 have been based on detailed analysis of the data collected on each pupil in the current Years 5 and 6. The targets set are realistic for 2001, but results for 2000 are unlikely to be higher than the low predicted target, because of the small size and particular nature of the cohort in that year group.

6. The standards of work observed during the inspection, at both key stages, particularly in literacy, were nearing those of national expectations in reading, though not in writing. In reading, all pupils have a good knowledge of a range of skills and many read with fluency and understanding, though few with expression. However, pupils' writing skills are less well developed and are below average. Pupils find it particularly difficult to write long pieces of work, such as stories, and they are given too little opportunity to practice these skills. This puts them at a disadvantage when sitting National Curriculum tests.

7. Despite results in English being below the average, there is still satisfactory achievement by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1. As at the time of the last inspection, but to an increasing extent, pupils join the school with very low literacy skills. It is a consequence of the satisfactory progress they make that they achieve and are maintaining present standards by the end of Key Stage 1 and that standards are improving in Key Stage 2. Detailed analysis carried out by the school shows that there is significantly better than expected progress in reading and, to a lesser extent, in writing.

8. In mathematics in 1999, by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils reached standards that were close to the national average for those attaining Level 2 or above and above national averages for those attaining Level 3 or above. Standards were well above those achieved by pupils at similar schools. Analysis of these results shows that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 was above the national average, but the proportion reaching Level 3 was below it. Boys' results were better than those achieved by girls. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils reached standards that were well below the national average and below those for similar schools. The proportion reaching Level 4 was well below the national average and that at Level 5 was very low. At this key stage, girls performed better than boys.

9. Inspection observations indicate that pupils are now making satisfactory progress. Since the last inspection there has, in Key Stage 1, been a sharp rise between 1996 and 1998, while in 1999 there was a slight fall in results. At Key Stage 2, there was a sharp rise between 1996 and 1997, but in the last two years there has been a continuing decline in results. The targets set for pupils' attainment in the years 2000 and 2001, based on analysis of the data collected on each pupil in the current Year 5 and 6, are realistic, though it is unlikely that the present Year 6, at the end of Key Stage 2, will achieve in line with the national average results, because of the nature of the cohort, but the present Year 5 are in line to reach their targets of 50.0 per cent in 2001.

10. The standards of work observed overall in the school during the inspection, particularly in numeracy, were rising to be in line with national expectations. Pupils have a sound grasp of number and apply their knowledge of it to work with money. They work effectively with measurements. Some pupils in Key Stage 1 can use decimals to express

totals and know the names of two and three dimensional shapes. In Key Stage 2, standards are not as high, since the skills now being emphasised by the National Numeracy Strategy have not yet been firmly grasped by all pupils. Pupils can, however, classify objects according to their properties, recognise right angles and record measurements with accuracy.

11. Despite current ability levels in mathematics being below average at Key Stage 2, pupils are progressing satisfactorily at both key stages. They join the school with very low numeracy skills and they make good progress to reach average standards by the end of Key Stage 1 and satisfactory progress by the end of Key Stage 2. This progress is unlikely to be demonstrated in the current Year 6, but Year 5 is achieving higher standards than previous cohorts as a result of the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy.

12. In science in 1999 at Key Stage 1, teachers' assessment of the number of pupils reaching Level 2 or above was below the national average, as it was for those reaching Level 3. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils reached standards that were well below the national average for those achieving Level 4 and also for those achieving Level 5. Girls performed better than boys.

13. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils' attainment is broadly in line with those expected nationally by the end of Key Stage 1 and below it at the end of Key Stage 2. The school's standards in science at age 11 rose between 1996 and 1997, but have since steadily fallen because teaching is not as good in this key stage as it is in Key Stage 1.

14. Pupils in Key Stage 1 cover a good amount and range of scientific work and standards are in line with expectations for the ages of the pupils. They have an understanding of basic electric circuits, they can test the various properties of different materials and confidently investigate and predict the outcome of experiments. They are able to record their observations with care. They have a good understanding of plant growth. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know which materials act as conductors of electricity and which can be used as insulators. They are able to carry out simple experiments and can graph the results. They understand the functions of some organs of the human body, but find difficulty in considering the variables that affect the outcome of their experimentation.

15. In art, design and technology, history, and geography at Key Stage 1, standards are in line with those expected at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. In physical education standards were in line with those expected in Key Stage 1 and above them in Key Stage 2. It was not possible to judge standards in geography, art and music, since it was not possible to observe enough lessons. In the core subject, religious education, standards are satisfactory at Key Stage 1. Standards in information technology are below expectations at both key stages. Progress in all foundation subjects is satisfactory.

16. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are set targets in line with their needs and they achieve them in relation to their ability. Most pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory, and a significant number make good progress. Almost half the pupils who, on entry to the school are more than 15 months behind the expected levels of attainment, reach the level of national expectation in mathematics and English by the time they leave the school. The school positively promotes equal opportunities for all pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

17. The judgement of the Inspectors that the overall standards in this area of school life are good is supported by the very positive comments of parents responding to the Questionnaire. Ninety-eight per cent declare that their children like coming to school, 95 per cent think that they are well - behaved and 98 per cent believe that the school helps them to become mature and responsible. From the time they first enter the nursery, pupils develop good attitudes to school. Their high level of enthusiasm is reflected in the comment of one group of children that they “love” rather than “like” coming to school. In lessons they show good levels of interest and concentration, though in longer lessons, especially whole class activities, some find it difficult to sustain concentration. They work particularly well in groups where their involvement in practical tasks helps to maintain their interest.

18. Pupils’ enthusiasm for school is accompanied by satisfactory and frequently good behaviour. In this academic year there has been only one exclusion – and this despite the school’s best efforts. Behaviour throughout the school would match the very good behaviour in the nursery and in many other lessons in Key Stage 1, were it not sometimes prone to distraction and a tendency displayed by some pupils to call out before being addressed by the teacher, especially in Key Stage 2. Good behaviour is usually seen as a result of good management by teachers, combined with the natural friendliness and open nature of the pupils. Poor behaviour is most often seen in pupils with special educational needs. The children show generally good tolerance and respect for the views of others and most pupils are able to sit and listen while others are speaking.

19. Relationships throughout the school are good, and inspectors saw no evidence of bullying or aggressive behaviour. Indeed, one child told of how he had been regularly bullied at a previous school, but since coming to this school he had made many friends and had not once been bullied. The good relationships between staff and pupils create an atmosphere of security and warmth that provides a solid platform for learning. In discussion with an inspector a group of pupils agreed that what they liked most about the school were the teachers. Such good role models actively promote the personal development of pupils that lies at the heart of the school’s behaviour strategy. Pupils willingly accept responsibilities and discharge their duties with pride. Some older children read to younger ones or play with the children in the nursery. Some help the caretaker, collect the registers or pick up the litter, or keep the library tidy. These, and many other opportunities to accept responsibility, make a good contribution to the learning of citizenship.

20. Though still below the national average the school’s attendance levels are satisfactory in the light of some difficult social circumstances. The good punctuality identified in the previous report has continued and results in a prompt start to the school day. Little time is lost between lessons, and the registration process complies fully with legal requirements.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

21. Since the last inspection report, teaching has improved on its profile of being satisfactory overall and often being good or very good. 100 per cent of teaching is now satisfactory or better and over 50 per cent of lessons were good or very good. Unlike at the time of the last inspection, there was no unsatisfactory teaching observed.

22. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is generally better than that in Key Stage 2. In this key stage, teaching is good overall and sometimes very good, with 29 per cent being satisfactory, 64 per cent being good and 7 per cent being very good. At Key Stage 2, teaching is satisfactory overall, with 79 per cent being satisfactory and 21 per cent being good. In the nursery, 75 per cent of teaching was good and 25 per cent was very good.

23. Of the lessons observed, none were graded as unsatisfactory. There is therefore no discernible trend of weaker teaching within the school. Neither is there any perceptible difference in the teaching of particular subjects, other than information technology, in which teachers have not yet been trained, because training by the local authority is not planned for until the year 2000 – 2001.

24. Where teaching is good or better, lessons are well planned with a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Teachers encourage and support pupils to become independent learners. Teachers have a secure knowledge of subjects and good expectations of pupils in Key Stage 1, though expectations are only satisfactory at Key Stage 2. Plans cover the needs of all pupils, ensuring that the highest attainers are sufficiently challenged and the lowest attainers are well supported. Homework is used well to reinforce work done in class. Teachers assess pupils' attainment regularly, either verbally or through marking and they use the results of their assessment productively to plan future work. The management of pupils is usually good and, in some lessons in Key Stage 1, it seems effortless because of the skills of the particular teacher in keeping pupils' interest. In Key Stage 2, lessons are sometimes allowed to proceed at too slow a pace and pupils become restless and respond less well to teachers' instructions.

25. Where teaching is weakest, the pace of lessons, particularly in Key Stage 2, is allowed to drop, so that pupils lose the sense of energy and urgency. This is particularly noticeable in sections of lessons where pupils are expected to work by themselves or in groups, and when they are expected to complete pieces of written work. Pupils do not always produce the quantity and quality of work desirable in the time allocated. Occasionally, too, pupils become restless and are not involved during whole class work and distract other pupils. Most teachers are aware of this and take strenuous action to prevent it happening, but in some Key Stage 2 classes this behaviour passes unchecked. It is fair to note that much of the behaviour described is attributable to the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs and those who are new to the school, which has a high rate of mobility of pupils. Not all teachers have developed strategies to cope with these pupils successfully.

26. The teaching staff for special educational needs and the support staff show good knowledge and understanding of pupils' needs and support pupils well. Individual education plans set very appropriate targets to which pupils respond well. Pupils are given positive encouragement to participate fully in all activities. They are set relevant tasks and benefit from the support provided. Lessons are well planned, so that language support is provided during the Literacy Hour. The school is conscious of the needs of higher attaining pupils.

27. The planning throughout the school is securely based on a thorough understanding of the aims of the National Curriculum. Teachers' planning is linked to the medium and long term subject plans and this enables the curriculum to be addressed systematically. Management of behaviour is generally good and ensures that pupils are focused on their learning. Time is used efficiently in most lessons and teachers prepare and use resources thoughtfully to support learning. The skills of the support staff are satisfactorily used. Teachers do not, however, provide sufficient opportunities for the use of information technology throughout the range of curriculum subjects, many because they lack the

knowledge and skills themselves. Overall, the quality of teaching is a major factor in the quality of education provided by the school.

28. The quality of teaching in literacy is satisfactory overall, being satisfactory in all lessons and good or better in 60 per cent of literacy lessons. Teachers do a great deal to support the teaching of literacy through all the subjects of the curriculum, particularly in history and religious education. The quality of teaching in numeracy is satisfactory overall, with 75 per cent of lessons being satisfactory and 25 per cent being good. However, there is little evidence of numeracy being supported in subjects of the curriculum other than mathematics or of a deliberate policy to do so.

29. The quality of teaching in English at both key stages is generally good, though better at Key Stage 1. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are becoming confident in their use of the National Literacy Strategy. The teaching of writing, however, is not always sufficiently focused on long pieces of writing, through which pupils can express themselves at length and practise writing skills. In all subjects, teachers do their best to teach English skills effectively, by using specialist vocabulary and practising good sentence structure. Teachers carefully explain new vocabulary in mathematics and science and encourage pupils to read new words and learn to spell them. All teachers emphasise and reinforce speaking and listening skills in subjects such as religious education and history. Teachers encourage pupils to take pride in their work by displaying examples of it around the school.

30. The quality of teaching in mathematics at both key stages is always satisfactory and a quarter of the teaching is good, especially in Key Stage 1. Teachers have a good knowledge of their subject and use the National Numeracy Strategy with interest and enthusiasm to spur pupils on to greater achievement. Teachers do much to provide stimulating tasks and activities to meet the needs of all pupils, but these activities are not often extended into the teaching of other subjects.

31. In science, the quality of teaching is generally good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. In a quarter of lessons it is good, particularly in Key Stage 1. Lessons are well planned for pupils of all abilities and objectives are clearly understood by both teachers and support staff. Pupils are encouraged to extend their thinking and to explore their own ideas, in order to raise their standards of attainment. Teachers provide good opportunities for investigative work.

32. As no lessons were observed in information technology and computers were rarely seen in use at other times, it is not possible to judge the quality of teaching or of pupils' learning as a result of teaching.

33. In religious education only lessons in Key Stage 1 classes could be observed, but here the quality of teaching was good in half the lessons seen and very good in the other half. Teachers work hard to improve pupils' speaking and listening by discussion and role play. They keep pupils' attention focused by telling stories dramatically and they often inspire a sense of wonder. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and prepare many resources to support learning.

34. No lessons were observed in art, so that it is not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. The teaching of design and technology is good in Key Stage 2. Lessons are very well planned, they proceed at a good pace and pupils cover a wide range of activities, which sustain their interest in the work. Teachers link work to themes being covered in other subjects, such as history and geography. They also use opportunities to

develop social and speaking and listening skills.

35. Too few lessons were observed in geography to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. In history, teaching was at least satisfactory and sometimes good. Teachers communicate their knowledge with enthusiasm, encouraging a high degree of interest in the subject. Lessons are very well planned and teachers clearly explain objectives at the start of lessons. Question and answer methods are used very effectively to stretch pupils to their full potential. Activities are varied and time is productively used, so that pace of lessons is brisk. Teachers work hard to promote pupils to use their imaginations.

36. Only one lesson could be observed in music, so that it is not possible to judge the quality of teaching in this subject. In physical education, the quality of teaching throughout the school is at least satisfactory and in two thirds of lessons it is good, particularly in Key Stage 1. Teachers have a good grasp of the physical skills and safety aspects of the subject. In the good lessons in Key Stage 1, teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. They encourage high standards from pupils by the use of demonstration and clear and precise instructions.

37. Good teaching contributes productively to the achievement of pupils. Because of the good and satisfactory teaching, the school has been able to cope with the changes in the locality and the diminishing levels of attainment of pupils on entry to the school. The needs of pupils are met through careful assessment and analysis of data and teachers individual knowledge of pupils.

38. Pupils learn from the example set them by their teachers their teachers and make satisfactory progress. In almost every lesson observed pupils were acquiring new knowledge or skills, developing their ideas and increasing their understanding. This was possible through teachers' motivation of pupils, capturing their interest and assessing the knowledge gained with care in order to aid their future progress. In only a few lessons was a degree of inattention observed; usually pupils are too busy and involved in their work to be bored and restless. Many sustain concentration well and develop a sense of independent learning. Most pupils know what they are doing in lessons and, more importantly, why.

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

39. The school's curriculum is broad and provides a satisfactory range of opportunities which promote pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development. Statutory requirements to teach all subjects in the National Curriculum and religious education are met, except for the opportunities to use computers and other equipment for information technology. In the light of the recent the introduction of national strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy, the school has modified lesson timetables to allocate a high priority to English and mathematics. This is very relevant to the needs of the pupils. Satisfactory attention is given to pupils' personal development, including attention to sex education and drug awareness, which is taught carefully in subjects such as science and physical education.

40. Policies are in place and clear schemes of work have been set up for all curricular subjects. Weaknesses identified in the last report have been satisfactorily resolved. However, information technology teaching does not yet fully meet all the National Curriculum requirements for the subject, although detailed curriculum plans show what is intended in the near future.

41. The curriculum for children under five is good. Detailed planning covers all the six required areas of learning and integrates seamlessly into early work in Key Stage 1, so that children are given a good start to their social, as well as their academic, life in the school when they join the reception class at the age of five. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, both the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy have been smoothly implemented. Extra teachers have, since January, 2000, been employed to enable the school to teach all years, except the current small group of Year 6 pupils, in separate year groups for literacy and numeracy. This makes groups in the mixed age classes smaller, and helps teachers to plan appropriately for individual age groups, although it is too early to evaluate the impact of the extra teaching provision on pupils' standards. Good medium-term plans and weekly teaching plans in both literacy and numeracy are developed from the relevant national guidance and show clearly how pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding should build progressively on what they have done before. In other subjects, medium-term and weekly teaching plans are developed from high quality commercially published schemes or from national guidance, and are linked to a wide-ranging two yearly programme of topics. This is a satisfactory system, enabling teachers to plan effectively for the two year period over which pupils remain in the same class.

42. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans identify clear learning targets and effective classroom support enables all pupils to take a full part in lessons. Plans are regularly reviewed and updated. All pupils have full access to the curriculum, regardless of age, attainment or gender, and have opportunities to make good progress. Care is taken to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are offered the full curriculum. Teachers are careful to ensure that pupils are taught in special groups for individual tuition at different times each week, so that they do not always miss lessons in the same subject. In most numeracy lessons, pupils are withdrawn only for the group work stage of the lesson, so that they receive the same whole class tuition as other pupils.

43. The curriculum is supported by a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. Many pupils, both boys and girls, take part in sporting activities such as football, as well as representing the school in local tournaments. All pupils take part in annual Christmas productions such as 'The Grumpy Sheep' performed in 1999, and a small number are learning to play the violin. Older pupils take part in an annual residential trip to study aspects of geography and science, and to take part in outdoor activities as part of their programme of personal and social education.

44. The local business and service community contribute in many ways to pupils' learning. The Education and Business Partnerships Policy established for Consett schools gives detailed guidance and suggestions to teachers for activities in all years, such as visits to garden centres or to the local magistrates' court. During the inspection, the chef from a local restaurant worked with Year 5 and Year 6 pupils on a food technology activity in which they devised a recipe for and made vegetable soup. Other visitors include the local nurse, who assists with pupils' sex education, the police and fire services, and specialists such as potters and storytellers.

45. The school has good relationships with the local secondary school, which most

pupils attend when they leave Moorside Primary School. There is good liaison and transfer of information to help ensure a smooth transition for Year 6 pupils when they leave. Additionally, pupils visit the secondary school for 'sample lessons', to make use of specialist facilities in subjects such as design and technology and to join with older pupils in their school musical productions. Teachers from the secondary school visit Moorside to teach aspects of science such as the solar system, bringing with them a mobile planetarium. During the inspection, the headteacher of the local secondary school visited and joined in the whole school assembly as part of the regular programme of link activities.

46. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Religious education provides many opportunities for insight into values and beliefs. For example, in a Key Stage 1 lesson seen during the inspection, pupils began to learn about miracles when listening to the story of Jesus calming the storm on the Sea of Galilee. The school provides daily opportunities for pupils to participate in acts of corporate worship, which include suitable prayers and opportunities for personal reflection and are regularly led by visiting clergy.

47. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good. It begins well in the nursery, where pupils learn, for example, to take turns and to be responsible for simple tasks such as hanging up their coats. Behaviour management and personal and social education provision make clear to pupils what is right and wrong, and what is socially acceptable. Class rules are discussed and agreed with pupils, and are prominently displayed around the school. They are referred to in lessons when necessary and are used constructively to help pupils develop a clear understanding of their responsibilities towards others. Regular awards' assemblies encourage pupils' good social development, through presentation of rewards and certificates for good work and positive attitudes and so celebrate a wide range of pupils' efforts. Pupils in all years help in many ways with daily routines such as bell ringing and returning registers. In the wider community, pupils demonstrate good care for others through activities such as raising funds for local charities and distributing Harvest Festival produce.

48. The school provides satisfactory provision for pupils to learn about their own culture. They visit places such as Durham Cathedral and in subjects such as history, they learn how their grandparents lived during the Second World War. Aspects of sex, health and drug awareness education allow pupils to reflect on their own culture and the pressures they face as they grow up. Pupils' understanding of the beliefs and customs of other cultures around the world is satisfactorily addressed through the study of faiths such as Buddhism and Hinduism in religious education, and through activities such as African fabric printing, which is presently on display in the school hall.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

49. The good level of care and support for pupils reported at the previous inspection has been sustained, as observed in this inspection, and is one of the school's strengths, creating a climate of security and wellbeing that improves the effectiveness of the curriculum. Parents and children report that they feel well supported by the school, and nearly all those who responded to the questionnaire declared that they would find it easy to approach the school with any problems or concerns about their children.

50. There are satisfactory procedures for monitoring attendance. Patterns of absence are identified and recorded. The weekly visits of the Education Social Worker ensure an effective partnership with the school in promoting improved attendance.

51. The sound procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are consistently applied by most adults in the school, ensuring a good climate for learning. The introduction of team points and the weekly Awards' Assembly provide pupils with additional incentives. The caring ethos that permeates all areas of school life includes early intervention to prevent inappropriate or oppressive behaviour. Staff were seen confronting pupils with their misdemeanours, and discussing how their behaviour impacted on others.

52. The personal safety of pupils is promoted by the conscientious application of the school's Health and Safety policy, including regular risk assessment of the premises, termly fire drills and procedures for reporting and recording hazards. Some minor health and safety matters identified by the inspectors were immediately rectified by the school. General security of the school premises has been improved since the previous Inspection, not least through the erection of a sturdy perimeter fence.

53. The designated person for child protection has received full training and ensures that all adults in the school are kept informed of any changes in law and practice. The school policy on this matter follows the clear guidelines set out by the local education authority.

54. The nominated person for first aid holds a current certificate and co-ordinates arrangements for treating and recording accidents. These arrangements are good. Children interviewed by an inspector demonstrated familiarity with the procedures.

55. The good provision for monitoring academic performance and personal development reflects the high expectations of the school's management team. Teachers maintain accurate information about pupils' attainment. They track their progress and set individual targets. Pupils' annual reports describe what they can do and where they can improve, while the positive marking policy used by the teachers supports their learning. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from individual education plans supported by regular termly reviews.

56. The school monitors personal development through the consistent application of its Behaviour Code that includes an Awards and Sanctions Policy on display around the school. Pupils demonstrated familiarity with the procedures and pursued them with some enthusiasm. Through the use of quiet classroom sessions which give time for thought and reflection, personal, health and social education sessions and assembly themes, the school coaches its pupils in the values and responsibilities of good citizenship, including instruction about drugs and sexual matters. Shared values and team responsibility are also promoted via the team points system. In spite of their own sometimes difficult social circumstances, pupils respond enthusiastically to the plight of the disadvantaged in society by raising considerable sums of money for charity.

57. The school has established good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. Initial assessments of ability are made in the nursery and reception classes. The results of these are used to plan work for the pupils. Assessment in English and mathematics is linked to the literacy and numeracy strategies. Classroom teachers keep assessment records for each pupil, which help them to plan future lessons and there is particular emphasis on the use of pupils' reading records in English. Schemes of work have clear curricular objectives linked to effective tracking and targets for each pupil.

58. Lesson plans identify opportunities for assessment and teachers use questions well to gain understanding of what they pupils know and can do. The regular use of assessment to inform planning is satisfactory, so that pupils' knowledge and skills are built on systematically. There is much evidence of teachers using what they know about pupils to set them individual targets for improving their work.

59. All the above procedures and practices reflect the high priority afforded by the school to the care and welfare of its pupils as a means of raising standards.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

60. The school has consolidated the satisfactory partnership with parents established at the time of the previous Inspection, though the school is still largely responsible for most of the initiative.

61. Parents responding to the questionnaire and those interviewed at the school gates agree that the school cares effectively for their children, that they are kept well informed about their progress, and that they feel comfortable about approaching the school about any concerns over their children. Opinion was more divided about the amount of work that their children should be expected to do at home.

62. Parents receive good quality information about their children's progress and about school events. Governors' Annual Reports to parents are supplemented by a detailed and easily readable Prospectus that includes useful information for parents about to send their children to the school, those of children with special educational needs and those with mobility difficulties. Parents of pupils with special educational needs receive regular invitations to discuss their children's progress, reminders about meetings and parents' evenings. Parents are invited to attend annual reviews and, when new individual educational plans are written, they are fully discussed with parents. Regular Newsletters and occasional letters remind parents about the school calendar and special events. Pupils' Annual Reports cover each subject, some relatively briefly, and provide a facility for parents to sign and add comments, though few parents are said to take up this offer.

63. The school's efforts have secured a satisfactory partnership with parents, and its effectiveness should be further enhanced through the potential offered by the Home \School Agreement, to which most parents have now committed themselves. For example, though some parents are already helping their children with their reading at home, there is less evidence of involvement in other homework. Those four or five parents who help directly in school on a daily basis have a positive impact on standards by supporting teachers and children in their work. The school has experienced some difficulty in attracting more parents to become actively involved in the school, though the parents offer consistent support in ensuring that their children come to school, and in promoting the school's Behaviour Code. They also support school events and fundraising activities well. One parent, for example, makes cakes for special events. The continued absence of a Parents' Association makes it more difficult to harness parental support to best effect.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

64. The leadership and management of the school are good. The leadership of the headteacher, seconded from a neighbouring school, is very good and has done a great deal to minimise the effects of the school's recent staffing problems and to move the school forward. She is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and this senior management team of two provides good leadership in the present difficult circumstances. They constantly strive for improvement in the school, in raising attainment and in meeting the needs of the pupils. The headteacher and her deputy work very well together and bring to their partnership strong complementary skills.

65. The headteacher recognises and utilises the strengths of the staff. She is committed to the welfare of the school and provides it with clear and purposeful direction. She has earned the trust and support of pupils, staff and governors. She is helping staff in their professional development and encouraging them to take on greater responsibilities.

66. This effective leadership ensures that the school has a clear educational direction and priorities for its development. These are clearly and purposefully stated in the school development plan, which is used well as a management tool. The school has explicit aims, founded on the themes of care of and commitment to pupils and their achievement. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher monitor teaching on a regular basis and this helps to inform and develop and teaching. Staff appraisal is up to date.

67. The school spends a great deal of time in ensuring that it gleans the maximum amount of useful information from analysis of all data available and uses the findings to influence its planning and its priorities. The school is also anxious to ensure that every pupil benefits from the opportunities presented by the school. As a result, it carries out detailed analysis of 'value added' by tracking the extent of progress of pupils in English, mathematics and science. In this way, the school has already identified the need for more emphasis on writing skills.

68. The governing body, led by its chairman, supported by several dedicated colleagues, has a strategic view of the school's development. The governors' support for the headteacher and management team of the school is based on a good knowledge of the school's needs and the role of the staff. They competently fulfil their responsibilities for strategic planning and meet the statutory requirements expected of them. There are regular meetings of the governing body as a whole and its key committees and a few governors also throw themselves willingly into additional responsibilities such as helping in the school or providing opportunities for extra sporting activities. These governors have earned the high esteem in which they are held. However, some governors do not fulfil the role of 'critical' friend to the school, because they have not familiarised themselves with curriculum needs and new developments and do not see enough of the activities of the school to be useful in the analysis of, for instance, National Curriculum results or the effects of new strategies such as the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, because they are insufficiently linked to subject areas.

69. The school's educational priorities are very well supported through meticulous financial planning. The chair of the finance committee has a very good understanding of the school's finances and brings his business acumen to bear well on the financial planning of the school. Although the school has lately incurred much extra expense on staffing, through no fault of its own, he has still kept the budget within limits and enabled the school to engage some part-time staff to ease the current situation, as well as preserving an appropriate surplus for contingencies. Discussions of these areas are shared with the

headteacher and the staff, who make constructive contributions to the financial implications of school development. The process is effective and ensures that the staff of the school are involved in plans for the future. The school makes sound use of information technology in financial planning and management and in its general administration.

70. The school development plan covers a realistic period of time and contains criteria by which to judge the success of spending decisions. All budget decisions are analysed to ensure that they are designed to improve pupils' attainment and the budget is driven by the plan. All funds received for specific purposes, such as funds to support pupils with special educational needs, are efficiently and appropriately managed and used.

71. Finance staff are competent, conscientious and efficient and there are good systems for the safety of funds and the checking and balancing of day to day transactions. Ongoing expenditure is carefully monitored and spending patterns are suitably explored. The school also zealously seeks to obtain best value when making purchases of supplies and equipment or employing services.

72. The school is well staffed and the ratio of pupils to teachers is below average. The headteacher and another member of staff are on long-term sick leave, but the school has succeeded in covering these absences well. The headteacher's absence is covered by a headteacher from a neighbouring school who works at the school for three days each week. She has formed a strong senior management team with the deputy headteacher. The class made up of Year 3 and Year 4 pupils is larger than average, as a result of pupil mobility. The school is dealing well with this problem and that of mixed age classes by employing two part-time teachers, so that literacy and numeracy is taught to pupils in discrete year groups for each year from Year 1 to Year 4. This is having a positive effect on the learning of pupils in these years. A teacher of pupils with special educational needs works at the school for three days each week and is supported by good quality support staff, which has a beneficial effect on the learning of pupils with special educational needs. Curriculum responsibilities have generally been allocated to match teachers' expertise and interests, but the small number of staff does mean that some teachers have a heavy commitment as subject co-ordinators of more than one subject or as key stage co-ordinators.

73. The special educational needs co-ordinator has very good relationships with the support team, meeting them regularly on a formal and informal basis to review pupils' needs and to hold ongoing discussions about particular pupils. The governor with responsibility for special needs helps regularly in school and is fully familiar with the special needs procedures. As a result, she is able to speak with authority on special needs issues when the governing body meets. There is much consultation and shared planning between class teachers and the specialist support staff to ensure that pupils are consistently and effectively helped to succeed and make progress in their learning. The effectiveness of the existing provision is well monitored and evaluated to ensure that pupils are making as much progress as possible.

74. The school has a significant number of well-experienced support staff who assist teachers in meeting the needs of individuals or groups of pupils. The assistants know exactly what is expected of them. The contribution made by the support staff contributes to the progress pupils make. The impact of the support given for literacy and for pupils with special educational needs is contributing to the satisfactory standards pupils achieve. All the non-teaching staff are very positive about their contribution to pupils' personal development

and self-esteem. The efficient school secretary, too, adds significantly to the ethos of warmth and care promoted by the school.

75. Arrangements for staff professional development are good. The provision for the induction of newly qualified teachers is satisfactory. Appraisal follows the local agreed scheme and is now in its second cycle. Annual professional development interviews with the headteacher are used to identify school and staff needs, which are then included in the school development plan. A wide range of in-service training opportunities is available to all staff, including support staff. Staff training has had a positive effect in raising standards and effectiveness in many areas of the school, except in information technology, where training is planned for the year 2000 – 2001.

76. The accommodation is adequate for the delivery of the curriculum and all classrooms are of a suitable size for the numbers and ages of the pupils. The classrooms are arranged in pairs with a useful area between them for group work and resources. However, noise from one class can sometimes affect the work of the other. Pupils can only gain access to some classrooms by going through others and this sometimes causes inconvenience. The nursery is a large, attractive, well-resourced room and the learning of nursery pupils is further aided by the large, securely fenced and well equipped play area. The school has a useful library and extensive playing fields with a wildlife area, which it uses to promote the learning of the pupils. The caretaker and her staff maintain the school to a high standard. Overall, the quality of the school's accommodation is satisfactory. The security of the building has been improved considerably since the previous inspection and the governors have allocated funds for further security fencing. The school is kept attractive and in pristine condition by the dedicated caretaker and her staff, so that it is an environment, which encourages pupils to be happy and to enjoy all aspects of school life.

77. Resources for learning are variable, but are generally adequate to support the delivery of the curriculum. Resources to support the literacy strategy are good and have a positive effect on the learning of the pupils. The resources to support the numeracy strategy are now adequate and the school has shrewdly designated funds to improve and extend them to their present level to support the implementation of the strategy. Resources for science, physical education and design and technology are adequate. There are not yet sufficient artefacts to support the study of religions other than Christianity. The resources for information technology are of good quality but of insufficient quantity. Resources for music, in terms of instruments and equipment, and for geography and history, in the form of artefacts, need supplementing.

78. Throughout all aspects of the school's management and in its use of staffing, accommodation, learning resources and money, the school very competently applies the principles of comparison, challenge, consultation and competition. The school is justifiably secure in its knowledge that at all times it strives to provide the highest possible quality of education in as warm and friendly an environment as possible.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

79. In order to further improve the quality of education, build on the strengths of the school and rectify the weaknesses identified in the inspection, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- (1) Take specific measures to raise pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science to a higher level, particularly at Key Stage 2, by:
 - In writing, placing a greater emphasis on the practice of longer pieces of writing across the curriculum.
(Paragraphs: 3, 5, 6, 91, 93, 94, 97)
 - In information technology, increasing pupils' opportunities to use computers across the school curriculum and by implementing the full requirements of the National Curriculum.
(Paragraphs: 15, 40, 77, 138, 139, 141)
 - ensuring that pupils sustain concentration throughout lessons, by devising methods and activities to involve all pupils
(Paragraphs: 17, 25, 94, 96, 106, 129).
 - increasing the amount of work produced by pupils in lessons
(Paragraphs: 25, 29, 91, 93, 94, 97, 102, 103, 115)

- (2) Increase pupils' rates of progress in Key Stage 2 so that they can more rapidly reach levels of attainment which match national averages.
(Paragraphs: 3, 9, 12, 13, 25)

Other weaknesses identified in this report which should be considered by the school are as follows:

- Insufficient numbers of the governing body have enough familiarity with the school and its curriculum to enable them to act as an informed 'critical friend' and influence its direction. (Paragraph 68)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

32

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6	47	47	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	23	118
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		62

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	19	48

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	30
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	33

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.9
National comparative data	5.3

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.1

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	6	10	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	2	2	5
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	11	11	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	69 (95)	69 (80)	88 (90)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	2	5	5
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	11	14	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	69 (95)	88 (95)	88 (75)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	6	7	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	2	0	0
	Girls	5	5	4
	Total	7	5	4
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	54 (52)	39 (52)	31 (48)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	87 (72)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	0	0	0
	Girls	6	6	6
	Total	6	6	6
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	46 (38)	46 (31)	46 (33)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	100
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	1	
Other minority ethnic groups		

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: N– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.7
Average class size	25.3

Education support staff: N – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	145

Financial information

Financial year	1998/1999
	£
Total income	247 520
Total expenditure	246 814
Expenditure per pupil	1 776
Balance brought forward from previous year	10 381
Balance carried forward to next year	11 087

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	136
Number of questionnaires returned	58

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	35	0	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	55	41	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	50	5	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	41	18	4	0
The teaching is good.	67	31	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	59	36	2	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	28	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	37	4	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	53	41	0	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	54	36	2	2	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	35	2	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	44	7	0	13

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Context

80. Children enter the nursery the year before they are due to start school and attend either morning or afternoon sessions. Entry to the school is once a year in the September following children's third birthday. They come with a wide range of abilities, but their attainment at entry is well below the average at the age of three. There are weaknesses in their speaking and listening and social development. Children spend most of their fourth year in the nursery.

81. Children make satisfactory progress in the nursery. By the time they are five in the Reception/Year 1 class, children's attainment meets the average for their age in language and literacy, personal and social development, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development.

82. The quality of provision for under-fives is good overall, whereas at the time of the last inspection it was judged to be satisfactory. There were no key issues to be rectified, but attainment at the age of five is now up to that of national expectation, though it was below it at the last inspection. Children are offered a high quality of learning experiences and a very good ethos. There are effective personal and social links between nursery and reception class, which help children's smooth transition into school. There has been good and effective liaison between the nursery and the reception class over the literacy and numeracy initiatives and the reception teacher builds satisfactorily on the good provision made in the nursery in these areas. Teachers and support staff in the nursery plan successfully for areas of learning for children under five. They use assessment and observation well to inform future planning and ensure steady progress in learning. In reception classes the link between the areas of learning and the subjects of the National Curriculum are also clear. There are good examples of assessment informing daily planning in the reception class. There is good partnership with parents in their children's learning. Nursery support staff are experienced, well briefed and make a valuable contribution to children's attainment and progress.

83. The quality of teaching is good. Over 75 per cent of lessons in the nursery were good, while in reception it was over a half. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. Lessons are well planned, with clear targets for children's learning, both in the nursery and in reception.

Personal and social development

84. Children make good progress in developing their personal and social skills and by the age of five most children achieve standards expected for this age. In the nursery, most children show some confidence and respond positively to classroom rules and routines. Almost all mix and play well together, showing they are able to take turns and share without dispute. Children demonstrate a clear understanding of what is acceptable and unacceptable and behave well. They show good attitudes to their work and are eager to undertake tasks, sustaining concentration for long enough to complete them. They show developing levels of maturity, for example, in the way they organise their belongings, settle to work and dress and undress themselves for physical education lessons. They attend some assemblies, entering and leaving the hall sensibly and sitting still throughout. Teachers and classroom assistants show a high level of teamwork in their consistent approach to encouraging children to work and play together. Teachers' planning for

children's personal and social development is good. There is a good emphasis on promoting development in all planned activities, such as the social tuck time when children learn to speak politely to each other and share their news. The organisation in the nursery where children make choices about activities gives good support to their growing confidence and independence. Adults are warm and supportive and have positive relationships with the children. Teaching of the high number of special educational needs children is good.

Language and literacy

85. In language and literacy, children's speaking and listening develop from a low base and they progress well, so that standards are generally in line with those expected for this age at five. Children work with increasing confidence and make good progress in the area of language and literacy. In the nursery, a strong focus is put on children's speaking and listening. Children's knowledge of books develops well and they make a good start with their early literacy skills. They recognise their names and listen to the teacher's reading of a story, joining in the repeated phrases with enthusiasm and pleasure. They enjoy stories and listen well to classroom discussions. Their ability to respond sensibly to questions and to follow instructions develops well. They begin to develop the use of vocabulary to describe the size, shape and features of objects such as Spring plants. Children are building their knowledge of letter sounds and a sight vocabulary. They are able to copy words and recall words that start with the same letter. Most are able to write their names correctly. Many opportunities to expand and develop children's vocabulary are incorporated into daily routines and their contributions are encouraged. Staff have a secure knowledge of this area of learning and plan activities well to support the objectives of the lessons.

Mathematics and numeracy

86. Children under five make good progress in mathematics and by the time children are five standards are in line with those expected for their age. Lessons provide a range of experiences and ensure that children learn to use mathematical language to support their understanding. In the nursery, children count members of their class and recognise that there are the same number of boys and girls. Those who have better developed numeracy skills begin to work within the first level of the National Curriculum. They are able to count confidently to ten, and by the time they are five most can write numbers accurately. Children can identify shapes such as cones and cubes and can place these in order by size. They begin to understand simple mathematical problems of, for example, 'more' and 'less'. The teaching of mathematics is good. Targets for learning are made clear to the children and support staff are well briefed. Teachers plan thoroughly for a wide range of activities to extend children's understanding of mathematical language and make good use of resources to help the children's understanding.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

87. Children attain the expectations of the Desirable Learning Outcomes for children of this age. They are given a good range of opportunities to explore the world around them. Teachers link these experiences well to activities in the classroom and children make good progress. Most know the days of the week and months of the year and are aware of seasons. They enjoy construction toys and play with sand and water purposefully and work well together. When making models, they are able to use a range of basic tools with safety and confidence under close adult supervision. Carefully prepared activities and resources successfully stimulate children's interest, imagination and learning. They develop a sense of the past through looking at pictures. Teachers make good provision for children to learn about themselves and their environment.

Physical development

88. Children make good progress in their physical development. By the time they are five their skills are in line with those expected for their age. Most make satisfactory progress in pencil control and using scissors and small tools well, for example, when cutting out and sticking. They move and run around with balance and an awareness of space and each other. They understand fast and slow movements and big and little steps. They have opportunities to develop the skills of manipulation and co-ordination, using a range of construction equipment and materials. Children are encouraged to use space imaginatively to build their confidence and agility. There is a good balance between formal skills of teaching and allowing children to experiment and carry out their own ideas. Staff provide a safe indoor and outdoor environment which challenges and encourages children to respond confidently with increasing skill. The variety of outdoor equipment and the well planned physical education lessons for reception children give a good range of challenge.

Creative development

89. Children make good progress with their creative development and by the time they are five they achieve standards appropriate for their age. They enjoy their creative activities and work with sustained concentration in practical activities. They successfully use paint, crayons, modelling clay, paper and cutting and gluing materials. In assembly and in lessons they increasingly learn to sing a range of songs from memory. They develop an ability to use their imagination and express ideas in a range of situations, for example in the classroom improvisation area. Careful planning ensures that children are presented with a range of relevant opportunities, enabling them to represent their ideas in a variety of ways. Children are given suitable opportunities to respond and represent their ideas through drawing, painting, retelling stories, music and singing.

90. The nursery teacher gives positive leadership to the teaching of under fives, which enables children to progress rapidly and to gain confidence. Children are well prepared for the transition to the National Curriculum programme of study. The quality of teaching is good in relation to each of the areas of learning. Staff work well together. Relationships are very good and children are well supported in a caring environment by adults who have high expectations of behaviour. Provision overall is good, particularly in the very important areas of social development and preparation of children for school routines. There are good quality, well organised resources which are easily accessible to the children. The accommodation for the nursery is good and enhanced by good displays. Children in the nursery benefit from a safe outdoor play area.

ENGLISH

91. The last inspection report judged that standards in English were below the national average at both key stages, with standards a little higher in Key Stage 1. Progress was judged to be less rapid than it might be and varied from satisfactory to poor in both key stages to good at times in Key Stage 2. Standards of attainment are still judged to be below average in both key stages, as is progress in learning for writing, though progress is more rapid in Key Stage 1. Writing is still unsatisfactory in both key stages, because pupils have too little practice in writing longer pieces of work, and, consequently, lack the skills to work with good pace. Teaching was then judged to be satisfactory; it now varies between satisfactory in Key Stage 2 and good in Key Stage 1, but it is satisfactory overall. The school has seen many changes of staff since the last inspection. Pupils' standards in English start at a very low base on entry to the school, but improvement is judged to be satisfactory, and over the last two years standards of attainment have improved.

92. Key Stage 1 test results and tests administered by the school shortly after entry show that the standard in English at this stage is generally well below that of the national

average, particularly in writing. Taking into account the results of the most recent national tests in 1999, overall standards are well below the national average, but broadly in line with those of pupils at similar schools, reflecting the good progress in reading, where they were well above the average. Pupils' standards in English are well below the national average by the end of Key Stage 2, though close to the average for schools of a similar context. 1999 test results show that the school's results in English at Key Stage 1 and at Key Stage 2 were well below the national average for pupils achieving the higher grades. Over the last two years there has been a steady rise, after a sharp fall in 1996, at Key Stage 1, and in Key Stage 2 they rose slightly last year. Girl's attainment is higher than that of boys in both key stages and a higher degree of inattention in lessons was observed by inspectors in boys.

93. The school recognises the need for emphasis on the skills of speaking and listening and teachers encourage pupils to attain in this area. Pupils often speak for a specific purpose and relevantly; though few have the ability to structure their speech or to speak at any length. Few can illustrate their ideas effectively, as seen in a Year 3 lesson, in which, though pupils learned a great deal about the conventions of giving instructions, few were able to phrase their own instructions with coherence. Many listen well and respond to teachers and to each other readily, though they do not always converse in a sustained manner. A small number of pupils, however, lose concentration in lessons and fail to listen to teachers. Very few acquire a range of styles to cover formal and informal modes of question and answer. By the end of Key Stage 2 there is some perceptible development in the skills of clarity of communication. Few pupils read with interest and a few with motivation. They begin Key Stage 2 with phonic skills, but not always enough to enable them to correct their own mistakes and to approach unfamiliar words with ease. They do not all develop strategies to help them acquire the more advanced skills in reading. Because of the initiative which has been introduced through the implementation in 1999 of the National Literacy Strategy, pupils are acquiring phonic skills at a more rapid rate. As a result, reading is showing signs of greater maturity and is sometimes good. The use of additional literacy lessons in Years 3 and 4 is also helping to reinforce phonic and other reading techniques. When pupils read aloud it is rarely with expression, though some pupils read with a good degree of understanding and are able to reason sensibly from evidence, for example, a Year 6 pupil who was reading with enthusiasm and was able to discuss the text critically and constructively. Library and study skills are encouraged and systematically taught by most teachers. Pupils write freely, but not at length, some with an evident desire to communicate their ideas and with sensible content. Writing is often without accuracy in punctuation, grammar and spelling and sentence structure is often unsatisfactory. A few pupils communicate coherently in writing, as seen in a Year 6 class, but generally they are given too little opportunity to develop as independent writers. By the end of Key Stage 2, writing skills cover a wide range of styles, but seldom at any length or with sustained account or description. Pupils write in a suitable variety of genres, including letters, diaries and playscripts, often using well chosen literary stimuli from poetry and prose, but they produce little creative writing, which is not directed by teachers.

94. Pupils are usually co-operative in their attitudes to their work, their teachers and each other. Most behave well and respond readily, with interest, enthusiasm and some energy, but a few, usually boys and especially in Key Stage 2, become restless when not being actively entertained by the teacher and can be distracting to the rest of the class. Some pupils show sustained concentration and self-motivation. There are lapses in concentration in those classes where pupils are not fully stimulated or firmly managed and pace is allowed to drop in group or individual work. A desire to extend them by using initiative in their written work is occasionally evident, but not widespread and in most classes pupils rely too much on direction by their teachers.

95. Progress is satisfactory for pupils with special educational needs, through the good work of the support staff and the graded work provided by classroom teachers. The new subject policy and schemes of work for the National Literacy Strategy are ensuring that progress is becoming more rapid for all pupils and that pupils have the opportunity to aspire to higher levels of attainment in some of the necessary skills in English by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Higher attaining pupils are provided with work, which suits their abilities and challenges them to their full potential.

96. All teaching is satisfactory or better. In two-thirds of lessons observed it was good and in one-third it was satisfactory. At its best, it is characterised by a grasp and understanding of the subject, interest, enthusiasm and sound lesson planning which employs a good variety of activities in the classroom. Too often, however, especially at Key Stage 2, teaching is rendered less effective than it should be by a lack of expectation of full effort from pupils, especially when working on their own. A strength of the teaching, particularly in Key Stage 1, is the consistent, skilful and challenging use of question and answer, which assesses the degree of understanding of pupils and allows the teacher to reinforce previous teaching. Literature is frequently used in lessons, particularly poetry, and teachers stress the power of words to convey emotion and pleasure. There is a high degree of emphasis on the technical structures of language through the use of the National Literacy Strategy. This is being productively used by teachers to aid work on reading, the use of grammar and punctuation and the study of the structure of a story. The planning of lessons is uniformly good, but the style of classroom method and teaching strategy is inconsistent throughout the school, sometimes resulting in an over-slow pace and a little inattentive behaviour. Work graded in difficulty is used to suit the needs of pupils of different levels of attainment. Satisfactory support and attention is given to pupils with special educational needs by staff. Teachers in Key Stage 1 possess good subject knowledge and focus on the four major language modes of speaking and listening, reading and writing. In Key Stage 2, teachers' skills in these areas are satisfactory. Teachers present a good example to the pupils and reinforce the ethos of the school. Homework is not sufficiently used in Key Stage 2 to reinforce work done in class. Pupils with special educational needs are able to participate fully in lessons.

97. Progress is more unsatisfactory in writing than in speaking and listening and in reading, where teachers lay emphasis on these particular aspects. By the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, pupils show some familiarity with all language modes and begin to develop a sense of appropriate speech patterns, following the good role models set for them by their teachers. Reading progresses in fluency, though few pupils at home, despite the encouragement of staff and the provision of good quality class libraries. Reading is now more focused through the use of the National Literacy Strategy, which teachers use well to promote reading for comprehension and inference, as well as the more technical aspects of style. Language skills become more secure, though the presentation of work varies from class to class. The pace and quantity of longer pieces of writing is inadequate, and teachers do not always plan tasks to ensure that pupils write coherently and at length by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. They are given some opportunities by their teachers for redrafting their work, but not for using computers to do so. They learn to write in a variety of genres, as seen in a Year 6 lesson in which pupils were learning how writing can be adapted for different audiences, by comparing 'Beauty and the Beast' and 'Billy Beast'. However, opportunities are missed in most lessons to engage pupils in full and detailed writing of a focused nature and teachers do not expect older pupils to finish their written work as homework. This means that they are not prepared well for the written component of the standard Key Stage 2 tests, as they have acquired neither pace nor the ability to write at length, expressing their ideas in full.

98. The National Curriculum is fully delivered in both planning and delivery of lessons. The subject policy is full and clear. There are yearly, half-termly and weekly plans, and full schemes of work based on the National Literacy Strategy, which are planned to ensure the continuous progress of pupils between year groups. Plans are written by teachers specifically for the mixed year groups, thus ensuring the same coverage of the subject for all pupils. Teachers' day-to-day plans set out clear aims and objectives. Lessons are often full of energy and proceed at a productive rate, though others lack this pace and impetus. Classroom teachers keep assessment records for each pupil, and there is an emphasis on the use of pupils' reading records. Monitoring of pupils' progress is used satisfactorily by teachers to enable them to plan future lessons and to use appropriate methods to ensure a measure of progress for each pupil. Marking is sometimes minimal in comment on pupils' work, so that it does not always clearly identify areas of development for pupils. Homework is set in through regular reading at home and the learning of spellings. It does not, however, allow for longer pieces of written work in the upper school. The subject contributes satisfactorily to the moral, social and cultural development of pupils, through the study of literature.

99. Leadership of the department by the subject co-ordinator is good. Strenuous efforts to implement the new schemes of work have been made since 1999 and to integrate them positively into the National Literacy Strategy, to the benefit of teachers and pupils. Class teachers are given advice and help. Pupils' work and teaching are now being constructively monitored. The attitude and ethos of the department is satisfactory, with many teachers promoting social skills in speech and behaviour and acting as good role models for moral and sensitive conduct. There is satisfactory liaison between the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, ensured by the co-ordinator. There are regular key stage meetings to aid planning. The priorities given to the development and improvement of the subject are good, and the actions being taken to meet the targets set for this academic year are satisfactory, except in writing. A portfolio matching pupils' graded work with National Curriculum levels to help teachers with assessment is being reviewed. Resources are good within the classrooms, which are well supplied with inviting fiction books. The library has a good supply reference books and is well stocked to meet the needs of the curriculum and to encourage pupils to research for themselves. Information technology is not being well integrated into the teaching of the subject, though it is planned to develop its use in the near future.

MATHEMATICS

100. Pupils' standards in mathematics are below the levels expected nationally at the end of both key stages. However, pupils enter school with poor mathematical skills and they make satisfactory progress throughout the school. The small number of current Year 6 pupils includes several with special educational needs. At the end of Key Stage 2, no pupils are expected to reach Level 5, the level above that expected for eleven-year-olds, in the national tests to be taken at the end of the school year. The school's target of one third of pupils to reach Level 4, the level expected nationally, is realistic. It is supported by the inspection evidence, although with such a small group, the difference of attainment by one pupil from that expected could have a marked influence on the overall statistics. The quality of presentation of pupils' written mathematics work is satisfactory, and has improved since the last inspection, where it was identified as a weakness.

101. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils mentally add and subtract numbers up to 100, although none do so reliably with two two-digit numbers. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs work mainly with numbers up to 20. They count sets of objects, and are beginning to learn to add and subtract small numbers by counting onwards

and backwards. Pupils are beginning to use their understanding of numbers to help them add and subtract and to put numbers into order. For example, they make patterns involving adding and subtracting 10, and in a lesson seen, they placed the multiples of 10 up to 100 in correct order on a wall display of 'Cathy Caterpillar'. Pupils are beginning to learn the multiplication tables, and they demonstrate, for example, that 4 sets of 3 objects make 12 objects. In Year 2 they apply their knowledge of number to work with money. In a lesson seen, pupils used their developing knowledge of multiplication and addition to combine coins of different values to make a range of totals. Higher attaining pupils were confident in working with totals in excess of 32 and could also use decimals to express totals. In work on shape and measure, pupils measure small objects in centimetres and weigh objects such as bean bags using 'bricks' as the unit of measurement, and they know the names of common two and three dimensional shapes such as squares, cylinders and spheres.

102. By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils calculate with numbers up to 1000 and beyond. Pupils use standard written methods to record their work, although mistakes in subtraction, multiplication and division are common. In Years 4 and 5 the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy is helping pupils to develop efficient mental calculation strategies. In a lesson seen, pupils readily described a range of methods for mentally subtracting two numbers, and developed increasing confidence with progressively larger numbers as the lesson continued. However, despite satisfactory understanding of the principles, they were still not totally secure in their work by the end of the lesson, because they were unable to recall basic number facts with sufficient accuracy to ensure that they actually achieved the correct answer. Lower attaining pupils with special educational needs have not developed sufficient understanding to calculate with larger numbers, and work mainly with numbers up to 20 or so, although when they are supported in lessons by special needs support staff they can successfully write larger numbers.

103. Pupils measure lengths in centimetres and millimetres, and they use decimals to record measurements in different forms, such as 12.5 centimetres and 125 millimetres. They calculate the perimeter and area of simple shapes based on rectangles. Pupils know the names of common two and three-dimensional shapes, and classify different objects according to their number of corners, edges and faces. They recognise right angles in diagrams, and have begun to classify triangles using vocabulary such as 'scalene' and 'equilateral'. However, pupils are unable to extend their knowledge further because they have not learned to measure and draw angles with protractors.

104. In history pupils use simple lines of timescale to help them develop an understanding of the chronological ordering of important events, and they draw bar graphs to illustrate the range of Victorian occupations from data provided. In design and technology pupils weigh ingredients when making soup for example, but no further evidence was available to show how pupils use their numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum.

105. The quality of mathematics teaching is satisfactory overall, and it is good in Key Stage 1. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen during the inspection, and one quarter of lessons seen in Key Stage 1 were good. Lessons are well planned, and weekly plans are detailed. They show clearly what is to be taught and how successive lessons build on earlier knowledge. However, in Key Stage 2, work for higher attaining pupils is not always sufficiently demanding, and as a result they make less progress than they could. Teachers teach mathematical skills, such as multiplication and division, well, especially through effective questioning in whole class work. For example, at the beginning of a Key Stage 2 lesson, a good discussion involving question and answer helped pupils develop an understanding of division by 'reversing' the process of multiplication. In a Key Stage 1

lesson seen, similar techniques enabled pupils to demonstrate well what they knew about adding and subtracting. Classes are well managed, and nearly all pupils behave well as a result. In several lessons seen, teachers dealt effectively with minor interruptions, reminding pupils firmly but sensitively what is expected of them.

106. Nearly all pupils have good attitudes to mathematics, and their positive response combines well with supportive class management to create the good working atmosphere commonly seen. Teachers and support staff work well together, especially in promoting the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Support staff are well informed, and often have their own copy of the lesson plans. They provide quiet unobtrusive support in lessons, which helps pupils to answer questions and so take a full part in the lesson, and when working on written tasks. Teachers closely follow the lesson structure set out in the National Numeracy Strategy closely. However, in some lessons, especially in Key Stage 2, the time allocated to whole class oral and mental work at the beginning of the lesson is too long, and lesson pace is sometimes too slow. As a result, pupils lose concentration, contributing in some cases to minor behaviour difficulties. In contrast, pupils generally sustain good concentration when working on written tasks. Pupils of all ages often work well for substantial periods of time, often with just occasional help from the teacher to check work and to iron out difficulties.

107. The National Numeracy Strategy has been carefully implemented. Synced January, additional staffing allows the school to teach all year groups individually, except for the small group of Year 6 pupils, but it is too early to evaluate the effectiveness of this provision in raising standards. There are good procedures for assessing and recording pupils' levels of attainment at the end of key stages. Nationally validated tests and local indicators provide accurate information for teachers to evaluate pupils' performance and good records are maintained to show how pupils progress through each strand of the mathematics National Curriculum. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator inspects teaching plans, but does not monitor other aspects of teaching such as classroom practice. The school has sufficient resources to support all aspects of the subject, but teachers make insufficient use of information technology in lessons.

SCIENCE

108. The standards of attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with those expected nationally. By the end of Key Stage 2, the numbers of pupils working at the level of national expectation is below the national average. There are no pupils working at higher levels. Progress is satisfactory in Key Stage 1, but unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.

109. Pupils in Key Stage 1 cover a good amount and range of work. They have an understanding of a basic electric circuit and safety requirements when dealing with electricity. They test the various properties of different materials. They investigate what happens when different materials are mixed with water and what changes occur to everyday substances with changes in temperature. They are able to record their observations with some accuracy. They can construct hypotheses about the conditions necessary for plant growth. In some cases, they make use of their skills in information technology to support their learning. They improve their scientific language, learning terms like dissolve and absorb. Pupils in reception and Year 1 study similarities and differences in living plants.

110. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are able to construct an electrical circuit and complete a circuit diagram. They know which materials act as conductors of electricity and

which can be used as insulators. They are able to carry out simple experiments on the permeability of different soils and the solubility of different substances and can graph the results of these experiments. They understand the functions of some organs of the human body. Many pupils are still confused about ideas such as gravity and the movement of stars and planets. They find difficulty distinguishing between the pitch and volume of sound.

111. The findings of the inspection are largely supported by the results of pupils in assessments and national tests in 1999, which show that the percentage of pupils in Key Stage 1 reaching the level of national expectation is broadly in line with the national average, while at Key Stage 2, the percentage was well below when compared to the national average.

112. Since the previous report, the school has introduced a good quality scheme of work and the programme of science work is based around it. All classes are following the scheme, organised in a two year cycle, and this means that work is presented in a logical sequence without unnecessary repetition. All teachers have received some in-service training in the teaching of science since the last inspection and have satisfactory knowledge of the subject.

113. The teaching of science is always satisfactory and in a quarter of lessons is good. The good lessons occur in Key Stage 1 classes. All lessons in Key Stage 1 are thoroughly planned and planning is satisfactory in Key Stage 2. In good lessons, work is planned for groups of pupils of different abilities. The learning of pupils in these groups is further helped by the high level of good quality classroom support staff and helpers. The helpers include a member of the governing body who is a trained teacher. All support staff are fully acquainted with the learning objectives of the lesson. The high level of support staff assists the learning of all pupils and is particularly helpful to those with special educational needs. There is an emphasis on questioning of the pupils, challenging them to extend their thinking about the subject matter and encouraging them to widen their vocabulary. Good class management and levels of resources allow pupils to work practically and provide opportunities for investigative work.

114. In classes in both key stages parent helpers, who are well briefed with written details of learning objectives, activities and possible lines of questioning, work with groups of pupils and particularly with those with special educational needs, ensuring that their limited literacy skills do not overly hamper their learning.

115. There is an emphasis on practical activity in many lessons but in some, particularly those in Key Stage 2 classes, the pace of lessons drops because of class management problems associated with large class numbers and pupils with behavioural difficulties. Sometimes when the lessons are long there is a drop in the pace of the lesson and limiting of the learning of the pupils.

116. Assessment procedures are well developed, and records regularly updated, and allow the progress of individuals to be monitored throughout the school. Evidence of progress is supported by examples of pupils' work compared with expected National Curriculum levels. The quality of the marking of pupils' work varies. At Key Stage 1, work is well marked with encouraging comments and questions designed to make pupils think further about their work. The work of pupils with special educational needs is often thoroughly marked. Some work, however, in Key Stage 2, receives only perfunctory attention and recorded assignments with obvious omissions or inaccuracies go without comment.

117. Science is well managed by the co-ordinator. She carefully monitors teachers' planning and problems that arise are discussed in staff meetings. The planned programme of formal teaching evaluation does not include science until the Summer Term but the co-ordinator is able to work with teachers during science lessons, assisting both the quality of the teaching and the learning of the pupils. Resources for science are adequate and are of good quality. The wildlife area, developed as part of the school grounds, is a particularly good resource and is used most notably in Autumn and Spring for studies of plant life and mini-beasts. Visits away from the school site to places like power stations and water treatment plants enhance the science programme. Information technology is insufficiently used, especially in Key Stage 2.

ART

118. Because of the timing of the inspection and the organisation of the curriculum, no art lessons were seen. From the quality of work on display and in pupils' individual portfolios, standards seem broadly in line with those expected of pupils aged 7 and 11. Progress is satisfactory at both key stages.

119. Pupils in Key Stage 1 print and paint pictures and make models using recycled materials. They take Van Gogh's 'Sunflowers' as a starting point and produce colourful drawings and reproductions using crêpe paper of various colours. They continue the theme using their computer skills to reproduce images of flowers.

120. Pupils in Key Stage 2 use pencils to produce patterns illustrating variations in line and tone. They produce designs based on geometric patterns, involving careful measuring and quite intricate shading. They execute exercises in perspective, which show understanding and some skill. They create individual collage pictures using material cut from magazines. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 produce a series of pictures, using various materials, including charcoal, chalk, pastel and different colours and types of paper, exploring the effects of light on objects such as trees and the interior of rooms. Many of these pictures are sensitively executed and of good quality. There is little evidence of three dimensional work produced by pupils or of pupils being introduced to the work of established artists. Pupils in Key Stage 2 were not able to discuss the work of any famous artist.

121. The programme for art is enhanced by visits from artists. One fairly spectacular example is a large wall hanging in the hall, showing the screen printings of several pupils. This was stimulated by the separate visits of a storyteller and a printer.

122. There have been few changes in the curriculum in art since the previous inspection; artwork by the pupils is attractively displayed around the school but little opportunity is taken to develop their cultural awareness by displaying the work of different artists. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The school uses the scheme of work produced by the Local Education Authority but art is mainly used to support work in other areas of the curriculum, rather than as a discrete subject. Visits outside the school, such as to historical sites, often provide the stimulus for work. The main organisational feature is that teachers are charged with covering the six strands of: painting, sculpture, drawing, textiles, printing making and collage throughout the year. No records of the development of skills in art are kept, but each pupil has a portfolio of examples of work and this provides a useful record of progress over time. Resources are adequate for the successful delivery of the curriculum.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

123. The levels of attainment in design and technology are broadly in line with those expected for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Pupils in Key Stage 1 classes can make and record the stages of construction of a range of models using recycled material and various construction kits. The use tools like bradawls when making sewing cards. They are able to make good quality, simple textile products. They use pictures to communicate their designs, create templates and consider size and style of lettering and choice of appropriate materials, when designing a school banner. They are able to make judgements about the outcomes of their work. Year 1 and 2 pupils design bridge structures and test the strength of the different structures, recording their results using graphs. Older pupils in the key stage design and construct systems of levers and use these skills in producing a simple card with moving parts. In a series of food technology lessons, pupils gather information, using their information technology skills, make step by step plans and cook a three course meal with ingredients that were available at the time of the Second World War.

124. Since the previous inspection, there have been some improvements in resources, particularly with regard to construction material used in Key Stage 1. Although there is a scheme of work indicating topics to be covered and materials to be used, there is still no systematic planning for the development of pupils' skills throughout the school or methods for recording the development. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

125. The teaching of design and technology is good. The quality of teaching throughout the school is at least satisfactory and in two thirds of lessons is good. Lessons are very well planned and this ensures that they proceed at a good pace and pupils cover a wide range of activities. The good range of activities means that pupils' sustain interest and enthusiasm for their work. Lessons are well resourced, both in terms of materials and support staff. The good levels of staffing allow high levels of individual help and aid the satisfactory progress of all pupils, but particularly those with special educational needs. Teachers make good use of the school's business links with Durham Business Enterprise, who provide expert assistance and meet the cost of transport and materials, an example being the chef who instructed pupils in the upper stages of Key Stage 2 over a series of lessons on the preparation and cooking of food. The pupils were to visit his restaurant at a later stage. Design and technology lessons provide opportunities for teachers to support their work in other subjects. Teachers link work to themes being covered in history and geography as well as developing information technology, numeracy and literacy skills. They also use opportunities to develop social and speaking and listening skills, as when pupils, seated in small groups with an adult, ate a simple meal of soup and bread that they had prepared, and discussed wartime conditions.

126. The management of design and technology is weak. The co-ordinator is able to monitor teachers' planning but apart from observing work on display, is does not monitor or evaluate the quality of teaching or pupils' work. Procedures for assessment and the use of assessment to aid future planning are not in place. Resources for design and technology vary in quantity. There is a good quantity and range of construction material for pupils in Key Stage 1 classes and resources for food technology are good but the supply of tools for use by Key Stage 2 pupils is barely adequate.

GEOGRAPHY

127. In those aspects of geography seen during the inspection, pupils achieve the standards expected for their ages in Key Stage 1, and in Years 3 and 4. Insufficient evidence was available from pupils in upper Key Stage 2 and so it is not possible to

evaluate standards overall. Standards in the work seen show some improvement on those reported at the last inspection, where they were below national expectations. Progress at both key stages and for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory.

128. At Key Stage 1, pupils base their work on the local area. They know the names of places such as Consett and Newcastle, and they are beginning to understand the differences between villages, towns and cities. They draw pictures to illustrate, for example, what they find in a street, showing features such as streetlights and road works. They are beginning to use maps to describe journeys, for instance plotting their route to school on a large-scale map of the area. They make simple comparisons between Consett and places in a hot climate, identifying for instance that cars and hotels are common to both areas, but that palm trees and camels are only found in hot countries. In Key Stage 2, develop further their knowledge of their own area. In a lesson seen, pupils in lower Key Stage 2 designed a poster to 'advertise' Moorside. They identified different types of houses found in the area and local amenities such as doctors' surgeries. Some pupils made good use of a wall display of photographs from around the area, and a large-scale map, to help them decide which features to include in their work. Lower Key Stage 2 pupils draw simple maps of the British Isles to show major items of relief such as mountains and other high ground, and they are beginning to describe differences between areas such as towns and the countryside, and inland and coastal areas. In Years 5 and 6, earlier this year pupils studied India. However, work was based on a series of video recordings and discussions, and no written work was produced. It is not possible therefore to evaluate the overall quality or standard of this work.

129. One geography lesson in Key Stage 2 was observed, and none in Key Stage 1. From this limited evidence it is not possible to make overall judgements on the quality of teaching. The lesson seen was satisfactory. It was well planned, and enabled pupils to make good use of their knowledge of the area around the school. Good questioning and class discussion early on in the lesson ensured that pupils understood what they had to do. Class management was satisfactory overall, although a small number of pupils frequently interrupted the lesson. This was further aggravated by the lesson introduction, which was too long for many pupils to retain sufficient concentration, and led to fidgeting. Resources were well prepared, including additional prompts on worksheets to help lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs to set out their work correctly. Insufficient assessment was made of pupils' understanding and knowledge.

130. Due to recent staff changes, there is no coordinator for geography. However, satisfactory development of a scheme of work has taken place since the last inspection, and teachers prepare good medium-term plans for the subject, based on a two year cycle of topics for each year group. The geography curriculum is enhanced through field trips to a residential study centre later in the year for upper Key Stage 2 pupils. The school has a sufficient range of texts to support the subject but new globes and atlases have been ordered to supplement inadequate resources in this area. There is insufficient use of information technology in the teaching of the subject. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

HISTORY

131. Standards of achievement in the subject are higher than at the time of the last inspection, where they were judged to be below national expectations. Teaching is still satisfactory, with some good features. The planning of the subject around a coherent scheme of work in a two year topic cycle ensures a variety of methods and strategies, which encourage the acquisition of the skills of thought and deduction from source material.

Assessment, too, is now satisfactory.

132. During the inspection week little teaching of history was observed. However, evidence from lessons observed, teachers' planning, an analysis of pupils' work and discussions with teachers and pupils indicates that, by the time pupils reach the end of Key Stage 2, they achieve standards in line with those of national expectation. Pupils in Key Stage 1 can successfully distinguish between past and present and develop a sense of chronology. Year 5 and 6 pupils identify and date features in the past, evaluate evidence and begin to examine source material effectively. Pupils at both key stages are able to express an empathetic response both to the period under study and people associated with it, as well as assimilating facts. This was underlined in a Year 6 lesson on the reasons and effects of rationing on a normal family during World War 2. There is evidence in topic work of independent research skills being promoted, using a range of sources.

133. At the time of the last inspection, progress at both key stages was judged to be satisfactory, as it is now. New schemes of work, drawn up by the co-ordinator, ensure a good and wide coverage of topics and provide a stimulating variety of activities to support the teaching. Emphasis is firmly laid on helping pupils to think for themselves and on the use of primary and secondary source material to aid this process. Work is deliberately planned according to National Curriculum levels to ensure that high attainers can expand their work and that pupils with special educational needs are always involved and progress at a satisfactory rate.

134. Pupils generally behave well in lessons, busying themselves with enthusiasm and some with real effort. Most enjoy the subject and all find some aspect of it absorbing. Higher attainers work strong focus on the work in hand. Most pupils work with pleasure and co-operation with the teacher and other pupils. Pupils with special educational needs also enjoy the subject and find it accessible.

135. Teaching in all lessons observed was satisfactory or good. Teachers are secure in their knowledge of the subject and are able to communicate that knowledge with enthusiasm to their pupils, ensuring a high degree of interest in the subject. Lessons are well planned, so that pupils are always clear about the aims and purposes of lessons. Question and answer methods are used very effectively, both to stretch pupils to their full potential and to help them to empathise with people and period with ease and interest, as seen in a Year 2 lesson, where pupils were being encourage to develop a sense of time line through the study of Newcastle Football Club shirts through time. Time is productively used, so that pace of lessons is brisk and pupils learn a great deal in the time allocated. Constant assessment is made of pupils by teachers, and encouraging help and advice freely given. Teachers work hard to promote pupils to use their imaginations and thought processes, as well as acquiring knowledge. Management of pupils is good in Key Stage 1, though in Key Stage 2 there are occasional signs of restlessness from small groups of boys. Cross-curricular skills are also well developed and planned, in the areas of literacy, geography, numeracy and culture.

136. The curriculum conforms to the requirements of the National Curriculum and is well balanced in its coverage of attainment targets. Pupils' personal development is very well extended through the teaching and learning of the subject, as pupils study the ways of life of other cultures, their beliefs and values and learn to understand how the past has affected the present. Trips to sites of historical interest in the area help to enhance the curriculum. All pupils have equal access to the subject and provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.

137. The co-ordinator has drawn up the present schemes of work, which are proving to be effective. Her leadership provides clear educational direction for the subject. Assessment of pupils is regular and thorough and parents are notified annually of their children's progress. Resources, such as historical artefacts, are well used. History is now regarded by pupils as an interesting subject within the school curriculum and one which reaches across the curriculum and contributes significantly to pupils' personal development.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

138. Standards in information technology are below national expectations at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make unsatisfactory progress throughout the school. The subject does not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. Pupils have insufficient opportunities to use computers and other information technology equipment in lessons, which contributes to their unsatisfactory progress. Standards are similar to those reported at the last inspection, and there has been unsatisfactory development in the subject since then.

139. No pupils were observed using computers for individual work during the inspection, and it is therefore not possible to make judgements on the level of their operating skill. In Key Stage 1, a small amount of work on display shows that pupils use computers to 'paint' pictures, and that they use a mouse to assemble pictures such as sunflowers from pre-drawn items such as petals and leaves. They add short descriptions to their pictures. Whilst these activities are appropriate for pupils of this age, the overall quantity and range of pupils' work is below what is expected for pupils at this stage. In Key Stage 2, nearly all work seen was from word processing of the subject. Pupils use word processors to write short passages with titles such as 'The Stone' and 'The Greedy Kid'. Pupils use different letter styles and layout facilities successfully to ensure that the final printed work is well presented. In Year 3 and 4 work on display, a good link with English was seen in work which explored alternative story endings. Older pupils are beginning to use CD-ROM reference sources for example to look up information on ancient monsters, myths and legends. In a design and technology lesson observed, pupils used a CD-ROM of historical information to look up Second World War recipes when making soup. This is a good example of using information technology to support work in other subjects, and is currently being further developed through the use of a database to record pupils' personal preferences. No other significant amounts of pupils' work were available for inspection. The overall standards achieved are below what is expected, and the limited range of learning opportunities prevents pupils making satisfactory progress in all strands of the subject.

140. As no lessons were observed, and computers were rarely seen in use at other times, it is not possible to judge the quality of pupils' responses.

141. The school is aware of the limitations in pupils' standards and curriculum, and information technology is currently a major focus of the school management plan. New computer hardware and software have been purchased this term, and overall provision is sufficient for the number of pupils in the school. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. All equipment, both old and new, is of high quality and provides good support for all aspects of the subject, including its use in other subjects of the curriculum generally. A good scheme of work has been developed, based on national guidelines, although it is only partially implemented at present, and a satisfactory pupil record sheet has been devised to enable teachers to record progress.

MUSIC

142. Because of timetable arrangements during the week of the inspection, only one Key Stage 1 lesson and some assemblies were seen during the inspection. There is insufficient evidence to judge pupils' standards and progress, or the quality of teaching.

143. In assemblies, the quality of singing is satisfactory on the occasions when pupils know the words. Year 2 pupils have difficulties in remembering the words of verses, but join in the chorus of songs such as 'Colours of Day' with enthusiasm. Year 6 pupils generally sing in tune, but overall standards are marred by insufficient attention to detail such as clear diction especially where pupils are less familiar with what they are singing. A few pupils play the violin or cello, and performed to the school in assembly. They played rhythmically, with good bowing technique, and they have made good progress in the time they have been receiving lessons at the school. In the only lesson seen, pupils in reception and Year 1 practised beating time to a recording of 'Hickory Dickory Dock'. They identified the sounds of triangles and bells used in the recording to represent features such as the mouse running up the clock, and made satisfactory progress in their ability to keep in time over the lesson. All pupils take part in annual productions such as 'The Grumpy Sheep' performed at Christmas 1999, and a few are invited to take part in musical productions at the local secondary school. However, no recordings of these were available, and it is therefore not possible to judge the quality of the work. There was no other evidence of pupils' work in performing or composing, nor in listening or appraising musical performance.

144. The lesson seen was satisfactory. It was well planned, with clear learning objectives, and activities matched to the age and experience of the pupils. The teacher used a good range of activities such as clapping and other body movements to teach beating in time, which helped to maintain pupils' interest. The class was well managed, and the teacher insisted on high standards of attention and behaviour. However, some pupils found the lesson too long and lost concentration towards the end. This made it harder for the teacher to maintain the good pace set early on, and to consolidate the progress made in the earlier part of the lesson.

145. The curriculum for music is based on a commercial scheme, which provides satisfactory support for class teachers when planning lessons. Good medium term plans for each module of work identify the key learning objectives from the scheme of work, and teachers include sufficient detail of relevant activities to show how they will be taught. The small amounts of instrumental teaching and school productions make a satisfactory contribution to the school's extra curricular activities. Learning resources are satisfactory. The school has sufficient percussion instruments to teach whole classes, but the restricted range of music tapes available in the commercial scheme limits the contribution made to pupils' multi-cultural education.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

146. The levels of attainment in physical education are broadly in line with those expected of pupils aged 7, but in Key Stage 2 they are above expectations, particularly in swimming, where they are better than expected for pupils aged 11.

147. Younger pupils in Key Stage 1 can use space well. They see different ways of using it and have the ability to do it. They enjoy physical exercise and are able to sustain a high level of effort and concentration over an extended period of time. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are able to pass and receive using a variety of techniques and formats, they find space well in small sided games situations. All pupils in Key Stage 2 classes are confident in swimming and the vast majority of them have either reached or are in line to reach the expected level for pupils at the end of the key stage. Many of them achieve higher awards. They can swim strongly using a variety of strokes and correct techniques. A high proportion of pupils of both sexes have the opportunity to represent their school at such sports as football, cricket and cross country running.

148. Since the last inspection, the scheme of work produced by the Local Education Authority has been adapted satisfactorily to meet the specific needs of the school. The Top Play and Top Sport schemes have been introduced, along with staff training.

149. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and in two thirds of lessons is good. Teachers dress sensibly for lessons, emphasising to the pupils the importance of the subject. They extend the learning and abilities of the pupils by using the good quality scheme of work to plan a progressive series of activities. They have a good grasp of the basic skills and safety aspects of the subject. They use warm up activities well, stressing their importance and the reasons for them to the pupils. In Key Stage 1 lessons, teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Teachers use encouragement and praise to challenge pupils physically, both in terms of effort and quality of movement. They encourage high standards from pupils by using demonstration, giving clear and precise instructions using a wide vocabulary of specific terms and using examples of good work by the pupils to illustrate teaching points to the other pupils. Teachers make good use of support staff. They are able to offer guidance to small groups or individual pupils and aid their learning. Support staff are often able to assist the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Insecure class management in lessons, especially at Key Stage 2, sometimes leads to a drop in the pace of the lesson and means that teachers are not able to complete the full complement of the planned activities and this limits the learning of the pupils.

150. Although the scheme of work does provide a programme of activities of increasing quality, the school has no record of the skills learned by pupils or assessment procedures. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The well qualified co-ordinator is able to monitor the subject through scrutiny of lesson plans and to offer advice to staff. She is not able to monitor the quality of teaching, because she has no time released from teaching.

151. Participation in school sports' teams gives pupils the opportunity to extend their learning in a competitive situation. These sporting opportunities are open to any pupil of a certain age who wishes to compete.

152. The programme for physical education is enriched by a series of extra curricular sports clubs, which offer vigorous exercise and the opportunity to extend skills in various individual and small game situations. These clubs are well attended and open to all. The programme is further supported by coaches representing organisations like professional

football clubs and the Lawn Tennis Association, who provide expert tuition over a series of sessions.

153. Resources for the subject are adequate for the delivery of the curriculum and generally of good quality. The playing field is extensive but is wet in places and at the time of the inspection, had no markings or goal posts. The swimming pool used by the school is within easy reach and is well suited to use by primary school pupils and allows every pupil in Key Stage 2 to have swimming tuition throughout the four years.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

154. From the evidence available at the time of the inspection, it is possible to say that levels of attainment are broadly in line with those expected for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1, but as the timetable did not permit the observation of any teaching in Key Stage 2 classes, a judgement is not possible for pupils in this key stage. From the evidence in the books of pupils in Key Stage 2, displays of work on walls and teachers' planning, it is clear that religious education is taught throughout the school as a discrete subject and that teachers are following the school's good scheme of work, which is based on the locally agreed syllabus.

155. Pupils in Key Stage 1 classes are enthusiastic about religious education. They make a study of Buddhism. They learn about special people like Jesus and St. Cuthbert. They are encouraged to consider stories of Jesus and the nature of miracles, as in the feeding of the five thousand, while at the same time looking at moral issues such as sharing. They learn to think about the ideas of deity and authority through Jesus' power over nature, as on the occasion when he calmed the storm.

156. Year 3 and 4 pupils in Key Stage 2 classes look at 'Founders' and research the life and teaching of Guru Nanak as part of a study of Sikhism, as well as Jesus' role as founder of the Christian Church. Year 5 and 6 pupils make a study of Hinduism. Much of the written work of the older pupils is in the form of prescribed exercises or colouring of photocopied sheets. There is little evidence of pupils writing their own accounts or expressing opinions or ideas about matters of religion.

157. There have been few changes in the subject since the previous inspection. Although some artefacts connected with the study of religions other than Christianity have been purchased, the quantity is still inadequate to successfully support teaching in this subject.

158. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 classes is good and in half the lessons very good. Much of the work in religious education at this stage is designed to improve pupils' speaking and listening and involves discussion and role play. Teachers tell stories dramatically, keeping the children's attention with penetrating questions and they often inspire a real sense of wonder. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and prepare many resources to support learning. They set up role playing situations or discussions, in which all the pupils are involved, to further extend pupils' understanding and as a means of assessment. They take every opportunity to extend pupils' vocabularies.

159. The subject is being co-ordinated on a temporary basis and the co-ordinator has not been in position long enough to have had the opportunity to evaluate or influence the content of the religious education programme at the school. No time allocation has been built in to allow her to monitor the teaching of the subject.

160. The provision for religious education is enhanced by regular visits from clergy, usually to lead acts of collective worship. They take their themes from those listed in the school's policy for collective worship and this supports the work in religious education. Pupils are often engrossed in the assembly and there is usually a strong spiritual element. A recent visit from a member of the African clergy created great interest amongst the pupils.

161. Visits to site of religious importance such as the local church and, for Key Stage 1 pupils, to Durham Cathedral as part of their study of St. Cuthbert, help to stimulate pupils' interest in the subject. Information technology is insufficiently used in the subject.