

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Chillingham Road Primary School**

Ninth Avenue, Newcastle upon Tyne

LEA area: Newcastle upon Tyne

Unique reference number: 108463

Head teacher: Mr M R Parkin

Reporting inspector: Mr A Smith  
18037

Dates of inspection: 21<sup>st</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> May 2001

Inspection number: 192028

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 -11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Ninth Avenue Newcastle upon Tyne
Postcode:	NE6 5XL
Telephone number:	0191 2655940
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms Heather Holmes
Date of previous inspection:	February 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

OIN	Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18037	Mr A Smith	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology	What sort of school is it?
			Physical education	The schools results and achievements.
			English as an additional language	How well are pupils taught?
				How well is the school led and managed?
				What should the school do to improve further?
1234	Mrs T Bradley	Lay inspector		Pupils attitudes, values and personal development.
				How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
12631	Mrs M McLean	Team inspector	Science	
			Music	
			Religious education	
			The foundation stage	
25507	Mr L Garner	Team inspector	English	
			Art and design	
			Design and technology	
			Equal opportunities	
23694	Mrs J Gardner	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Geography	
			History	
			Special educational needs	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Chillingham Road is an average sized primary school situated close to the centre of the City of Newcastle upon Tyne. The backgrounds of the pupils are varied and cover a wide social spectrum, however, a significant majority of pupils come from less advantaged backgrounds. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals, 28 per cent, is above the national average. Most pupils start in the nursery and move on to the reception class. At the time of the inspection there were 230 pupils taught in nine classes in the main school. A further 20 children were attending the nursery either mornings or afternoons. There are 91 pupils on the school's special needs register. This is 40 per cent of the school's pupils and is well above average when compared to all schools. Their needs are wide ranging but are mostly moderate learning difficulties in language and numeracy and a small number of pupils have emotional and behavioural difficulties. There are three pupils with statements of special educational need. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational need is broadly average. The school also educates a very small number of refugee children. Thirty eight pupils are from ethnic minority groups and the majority of these pupils speak English as an additional language or are at an early stage of language acquisition. The level of attainment of children when they enter the school represents the full ability range but is, on average, below that normally found for children of this age.

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

This is a good school with many very good features. The head teacher is leading and managing the school well and receives good support from the deputy head teacher, staff and governors. The quality of teaching is good and this enables the pupils to make good progress. Many pupils enter school with attainment that is below and often well below what is normally expected. By the age of 11, they are attaining average standards in English, mathematics and science. The school provides good value for money.

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

- The quality of teaching is good and this enables pupils to make good progress.
- The school has very good partnerships with parents and the community; parents feel welcomed and supported by the school.
- The head teacher is a good leader. He gives clear direction to the work of the school and is supported well by the deputy head teacher, staff and governors.
- It provides a very good range of extra curricular activities, including sport, music and drama.
- Relationships within school are very good.

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

- Standards are low in religious education in Key Stage 2.
- Work for higher achieving pupils is sometimes too easy.

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

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

The school has made sound improvement since the last inspection in February 1997. There are good systems in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, particularly in the core subjects of English and mathematics. Teachers' planning is satisfactory and there are clear links between long, medium and short-term planning. School development planning is good and is well used by the school to review the progress the school is making. In addition it enables the school to evaluate the impact of spending priorities on the progress of pupils. Since the last inspection the school has worked hard to review its schemes of work. The school has successfully implemented the numeracy

and literacy strategies and National Curriculum guidelines have also been introduced in other subjects and are being tried out this year. The school has a homework policy, which has been effectively implemented by teachers. The school now meets the statutory requirements for collective acts of worship. The school has a sound capacity to maintain this improvement.

## 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
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	D	D	D	C
Mathematics	C	B	D	C
Science	B	C	E	D

Key	
Well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

The school's performance last year in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 was below average in English and mathematics and well below average in science. The results look better when compared to schools with a similar level of free school meals when they were only below average in science. However, in the present Year 6 class, standards are at the level they should be in all three subjects. This is the result of good teaching and the effective implementation of national strategies to develop literacy and numeracy.

In the national tests last year, the schools' results at the end of Key Stage 1 were disappointing. While reading tests continued to improve, standards in writing and mathematics fell. However, the school had identified this particular year group as one which found writing difficult and has put procedures in place to further support this area. The findings of the inspection broadly reflect these results. By the end of Year 2 standards are average in reading and below average in writing and mathematics. However, it is very important to note that pupils enter the school with an uneven spread of attainment with a higher than average percentage of less able children. Despite the low overall standards the majority of these children are making steady and often good progress.

Standards are lower than they should be in religious education by the end of Year 6. In music, art and design, and design and technology standards are generally higher than those expected. In information and communication technology, physical education, history and geography standards are at the levels they should be for pupils' ages.

The head teacher carries out careful analysis of the results of regular tests and uses this information to identify and target pupils needing extra support with their learning. The school's targets are based on an effective analysis and evaluation of pupils' previous attainment and are therefore realistic but challenging enough to secure improvements in standards.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Most pupils have good attitudes to learning. They enjoy coming to school, are ready to work, keen to respond to challenges and willing to celebrate the achievement of others.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good; Pupils generally behave well in the classroom. However, in most classes there is a minority of pupils who act immaturely and could disrupt lessons if not handled well by the class teacher. Outside the classroom, behaviour is usually good.
Personal development and relationships	Good; The pupils' personal development is good. Relationships between pupils and adults are very good and this helps to create a very effective learning environment. Pupils respond well to opportunities they are given to take on responsibilities. The school council provides the pupils with the opportunity to discuss issues relating to the life of the school.
Attendance	Good; Attendance levels are above the national average for primary schools and most families resist long holidays in term time. However, some pupils are frequently late for school and do disrupt lessons.

The school has sound strategies to manage pupils' behaviour and these are very effective in developing their self-control. The pupils know that any incidences of bullying will be quickly dealt with.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Seventy two lessons were seen. Teaching was very good in 21 per cent of these lessons, good in 51 per cent and satisfactory in a further 25 per cent. Teaching was unsatisfactory in the remaining 3 per cent of lessons.

The quality of teaching for the foundation stage is good. Teachers are clear about what they want children to learn in each session. Objectives for activities are explained well to the children and this impacts well on their learning. The recently appointed deputy head teacher is the foundation stage leader. Her management is good.

In the infants and juniors teaching is good and often very good. The improvement in teaching quality since the last inspection has helped to raise standards throughout the school. This is due to improved practice in the teaching of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology resulting from national initiatives and in-service training. Teachers' have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach, particularly in English, mathematics and science with the exception of aspects of religious education. Their planning is generally sound because it clearly identifies what pupils need to learn and this is very well shared with them so that they know what is

expected of them. However, in a significant number of lessons teacher expectations are not high enough to clearly meet the needs of the most able children. As a result, these pupils are sometimes doing work, which is too easy for them. Marking is variable across the staff. At its best teachers mark alongside the pupils using it to encourage pupils to develop their skills, understanding and knowledge as well as to praise and to motivate. In a small number of classes, teachers are too willing to accept untidy and poorly presented work without comment. This can often detract from work that is otherwise of good quality.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory; The curriculum is broad but there are gaps in religious education that affect standards in the subject. The richness and diversity of the overall curriculum includes a very good range of extra-curricular activities and a focus on the creative and performing arts.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school ensures that all pupils with special educational needs receive their full entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum and this has a positive effect on learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported well from nursery onwards. Pupils are quickly taught the routines of the school and how to follow instructions.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A particular strength, within this area, is the very good provision made for the cultural development of pupils. The very good range of after-school clubs supports pupils' personal development particularly well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory; There are sound procedures in place for child protection and promoting pupils well being, health and safety. The school cares well for its pupils and has recently started to monitor their academic and personal progress more effectively than in the past. The legal requirement of a fire drill each school term is not met.

The school has very good relationships with parents. Most parents have a very positive view of the school and many provide valuable help in class. The very active parents and friends association works extremely hard to raise funds and contributes to additional resources. The quality of information that parents receive about the school and its curriculum is very good. Parents give good support for their children at home by listening to them read and supervising the homework set for them.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	The school is well led and managed by the head teacher, with the good support of the deputy head teacher, staff and governors. Subject leaders carry out their roles very effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good; The governing body are very supportive and very involved in the life of the school. Governors have specific curriculum support responsibilities, for example, in literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology and the quality of teaching.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Monitoring and evaluation of performance is good. There is a rigorous analysis of standards, frequent checking of the progress towards targets in the school development plan and regular observations of teaching. The school identifies areas of concern in its performance and works hard to bring about improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good; There is a clear link between development planning and finance. Best value principles are clearly understood and are at the heart of the financial planning process. The school provides good value for money.

The school has a good level of staffing. Non-teaching staff make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. The school's accommodation is satisfactory but is housed in two nineteenth century buildings which are kept clean by the school's site manager and his staff. The lack of a playing field and outdoor space does effect the ease with which the school can teach athletic skills and other outdoor sporting activities. The quality of learning resources is satisfactory.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children enjoy coming to school.</li> <li>• The teaching is good and their children make good progress.</li> <li>• They feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems.</li> <li>• The school expects their children to work hard and do their best.</li> <li>• The school is helping their child to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• They are kept well informed about how their child is getting on.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> </ul>	

Parents overwhelmingly support the school and are very appreciative of what it achieves for their children. The inspection team agrees with the very positive views expressed by the parents, and judges the school's partnership with parents to be a strength.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1 Standards have risen steadily since the last inspection. Pupils make good progress as a result of good teaching and a school ethos that encourages personal development. When pupils start school, in nursery or the reception class, they show a wide range of experience and ability.

2 There is an uneven spread of attainment with a higher than average percentage of less able children. In addition, many of the children are identified as having special educational needs and/or English as an additional language. These children are supported very well and they make good progress. Nevertheless, by the time they are ready to start in Year 1, many children are working below the levels expected for five-year-olds in communication, language and literacy and mathematical understanding. Children achieve the expected levels in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative and physical development.

3 Standards in English have improved since the last inspection. This is because the school has identified the subject as a priority for development. In the national tests last year, the schools' results at the end of Key Stage 1 were disappointing. While reading tests continued to improve, writing standards fell. However, the school had identified this particular year group as one which found writing difficult and has put procedures in place to further support this area. By the end of Key Stage 2 the national tests show that the improvement seen in English results since 1996 continued in 2000, and, although just below the national average were in line with those achieved by similar schools.

4 Standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory overall although there are wide variations. Many pupils find it difficult to explain what they are doing in lessons but other pupils are very articulate and show speaking skills well above average. Standards of reading are good. Good teaching in the nursery and reception class mean that by the time pupils reach Key Stage 1 they have achieved the levels expected for children of their age. Pupils maintain this good progress throughout the school. Year 6 pupils are beginning to produce good quality reading journals, which comment on the books they are reading. Standards of writing are not high enough by the end of Key Stage 1 but are near the expected level by the end of Key Stage 2. Some Year 2 pupils write in a joined, well-formed style although most still print individual letters. In Key Stage 2 handwriting standards in English written work develops well and by the end of the key stage most pupils produce well presented written work. However, written work in some other subjects is less well presented.

5 Standards in mathematics have improved since the last inspection. This is because numeracy skills are being taught well. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are not achieving levels appropriate for their age. In last year's national tests, results were well below both national averages and averages for similar schools. However, the current level of pupils' attainment on entry to school is lower than it was at the time of the last inspection. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are generally attaining the standards expected for their ages in mathematics, although the numbers of pupils achieving the higher National Curriculum levels is below expectations. The national tests in 2000 showed that standards were below the average but in line with those achieved in similar schools.

6 Standards in science have been maintained since the last inspection. They have improved since last year when, in the national tests at the end of Year 6, the school's results were well below the national average, and below average when compared to similar schools. In the present Year 6, the majority of pupils achieve in line with the expectations for their age, with an increase in the

percentage of pupils achieving the higher level. This is the result of consistently good teaching and learning. Teachers place an emphasis on pupils involvement in scientific investigations.

7 The last inspection indicated that standards in information and communication technology were in line with expectations at the time. There is no doubt that the school has improved standards in information and communication technology since then, and particularly so in the last two years. This is the result of the impact of the better teaching and resources within the computer suite. However, standards are now just reaching the levels they should be for pupils' ages.

8 Standards in religious education broadly match the expectations of the agreed syllabus for religious education for pupils by the end of Year 2. However, standards have dropped since the last inspection and are below the expectations of the agreed syllabus by the end of Year 6. This is because these pupils do not build well enough on their previous learning, particularly about the faiths of Hinduism and Islam. As a result, by the end of Year 6 pupils do not have the breadth of knowledge and understanding expected of eleven year olds.

9 Pupils make good progress in art and design and standards are generally higher than those expected and better than those seen in most schools. Pupils make good progress in design and technology. Standards are high and above those generally seen. This represents an improvement in both subjects from the satisfactory standards identified by the last inspection report.

10 The school has maintained good standards in music since the last inspection. High quality performances in music is a major strength of the school. Standards in physical education, history and geography are satisfactory. The picture was much the same in the last inspection.

11 The majority of pupils on the special needs register have learning difficulties and as a result they attain below the expected levels. They make good progress towards their individual learning targets as a result of good quality additional support lessons. Many of the pupils who speak English as an additional language make consistently good progress throughout the school. This is the result of good teaching in additional support lessons.

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

12 Most pupils attend school regularly and have good attitudes to learning. They are ready to work, keen to respond to challenges and willing to celebrate the achievement of others. These good attitudes to learning start in the Nursery where the youngest children settle to new routines and develop good habits towards their work.

13 Pupils generally behave well in the classroom. Most of them settle down quickly to their lessons and do as they are told. However, in most classes there is a minority of pupils who act immaturely and could disrupt lessons if not handled well by the class teacher. Outside the classroom, behaviour is usually good. Pupils move around the school, and stairs, in an orderly fashion and are aware of the need to behave well to ensure their own safety and that of others.

14 During breaks, pupils mix and play in a friendly way even though the playground is small and there are few outdoor play resources. Bullying does not occur often in school but pupils say that disputes due to a lack of co-operation do take place. There were no exclusions in the last school year.

15 Pupils respond well to the school's informal methods for promoting their personal development. They are enthusiastic members of many clubs and groups including the school band, dance classes and sports clubs. They have elected sensible representatives to their School Council to help improve the quality of school life. Older pupils carry out monitoring duties responsibly and use their initiative well.

16 The quality of relationships in school is very good. Pupils are helpful and courteous to visitors. They communicate well with their teachers and support each other in their learning and success. No racist or sexist behaviour was observed during the inspection.

17 Pupils attend school regularly and respond well to the school's incentives for full attendance. Attendance levels are above the national average for primary schools and most families resist long holidays in term time. However, some pupils are frequently late for school and do disrupt lessons.

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

18 The quality of teaching is a strength of the school. Teaching is good overall, with a significant proportion of very good lessons in the infants and juniors. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is consistently good or better. Teaching in other subjects is rarely less than satisfactory and is mostly good or better. The improvement in teaching quality since the last inspection has helped to raise standards throughout the school. This is due to improved practice in the teaching of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology resulting from the national initiatives and in-service training.

19 Teachers' have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they are teaching, particularly in English, mathematics and science. This is used in good lessons to extend pupils' understanding by the use of effective questioning to encourage pupils to think carefully about their work. For example, in English where the Year 6 teacher gave an exciting, challenging introduction to a lesson on Japanese 'Haiku' poetry, which set the scene for a very good lesson in which pupils' learning was of a very high quality and they produced imaginative work of a high standard. Similarly, in a Year 5 history lesson on the Tudors, the teacher gave pupils a lively insight into everyday details of Tudor life which captured their imagination and ensured that pupils enjoyed their learning.

20 Teachers' planning is generally sound because it identifies clearly what pupils need to learn and this is very well shared with them so that they know what is expected of them. Most lessons have clear objectives and these are shared with pupils so that the focus is clear and effective teaching takes place. However, this is a school in which most classes have pupils with an exceptionally wide ability range. In a significant number of lessons teacher expectations are not high enough to clearly identify the needs of the most able children. As a result, these pupils are often doing work, which fails to challenge their ability. For example, a group of high attainers in a Year 2 numeracy lesson were working on place value up to 200, but when questioned some members of the group showed a knowledge of numbers up to 1000. Similarly in a Year 5 religious education lesson, higher attaining pupils were drawing pictures, which they coloured in. This provided little opportunity for them to show what they had learned.

21 Teachers explain new areas of learning clearly so that pupils' learning is improved. For example in the Year 2 class the teacher gave a very good demonstration of how a floor robot worked. As a result, pupils achieved well during the lesson and were able to carefully record their commands and discuss the accuracy of their programming. Similarly, the Year 6 teacher made very good use of a computer to present a stimulating introduction to a literacy lesson on poetry. This had the effect of increasing pupils' understanding of the task and improving the quality of their work on similes and metaphors.

22 Marking is variable across the staff. At its best teachers mark alongside the pupils, using it to encourage pupils to develop their skills, understanding and knowledge as well as to praise and to

motivate. In a small number of classes, teachers are too willing to accept untidy and poorly presented work without comment. This can often detract from work that is otherwise of good quality.

23 The management of pupils is good and enables them to concentrate on their work and make good progress. Even when the behaviour of a minority of pupils is challenging, teachers work hard to move the lesson along and ensure that the learning of other pupils is not greatly affected. Teachers know when it is appropriate to explain things to the whole class and when group work is more effective. The use of additional adults to support group work is particularly effective throughout the school, particularly when pupils work in groups in literacy and numeracy lessons. This enables all staff to ensure that pupils are on the right track in their learning and allows them to use questions to help pupils build on their prior learning and help them to understand. For example, in a Year 6 science lesson the teacher knew exactly when to ask a probing question and when to leave pupils to try things for themselves.

24 Time and resources are used well. Lessons start promptly and are generally well paced allowing for quick responses and also more extended periods for concentrated work. Pupils are effectively encouraged to develop good enquiry skills, as demonstrated by Year 1 pupils who drew up very interesting questions about old toys to pose to one pupil's grandmother who then came into the lesson to be interviewed by the class. Resources are well prepared and used effectively to promote learning. In a Year 3 history lesson on Jesmond Dene the teacher had borrowed a set of photographs taken in the Dene a hundred years ago. Pupils compared these photographs with modern day photographs and they gave pupils a greater understanding of what they were doing and how times had changed. In the infants resources are chosen carefully to meet the needs of the pupils, for example the use of big books in the literacy hour and mathematical games in numeracy lessons.

25 Teaching is greatly helped by the good relationships that exist between all adults in the school and the pupils. Praise is used effectively to encourage pupils and teachers to value pupils' contributions. Teachers provide very good role-models, demonstrating enthusiasm, interest and enjoyment for the subjects they teach and supporting pupils to achieve their best. All teachers use opportunities to circulate during group work, giving pupils one-to-one help and encouragement and maintaining their concentration and praising their efforts.

26 There is early identification of special educational need and this ensures that the school addresses learning difficulties as soon as possible. The individual education plans are at least satisfactory in all cases and some are very good. In classes where the plans are very good, targets are very specific and this allows the teacher to measure progress accurately and plan further targets to develop learning. There are however a number of targets that are a little too general and although they are reviewed regularly some pupils would benefit from earlier review and more specific targets. The evaluation of success is good due to the special needs co-ordinators and the class teacher's knowledge of the child. Individual education plans are linked to the English and mathematics elements of the National Curriculum but also include behavioural targets for some pupils. When planning lessons teachers do not always make explicit reference to pupils with special educational needs although in all lessons the pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and support assistants. In many lessons the support assistants were able to concentrate on helping the pupils by constantly reinforcing learning and ensuring pupils knew what they were doing and intervening when necessary.

27 The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is good. Teachers have a good understanding of the strategies, which are now well established in the school. They are careful to help pupils to use appropriate vocabulary in these and other subjects. They have a clear understanding of the progression of literacy and numeracy skills. Throughout the school, teachers give homework that has a positive impact upon pupils' reading, spelling and learning of number facts. Homework is

sufficient in quantity, taking into account the amount of work achieved by each pupil during the school day.

28 The good teaching, combined with the good attitudes displayed by pupils, enables them to make good progress in their learning. They are confident, enthusiastic learners because they are provided with a secure environment where their efforts are valued. They have a clear understanding of what they are learning, where they have made mistakes and what to do next, because teachers share this with them.

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

29 The curriculum for both key stages meets statutory requirements and provides pupils with a good range of learning opportunities. The school has successfully implemented the numeracy and literacy strategies and effective teaching is leading to improved standards, particularly in English at Key Stage 2. The richness and breadth of the overall curriculum, including a very good range of extra-curricular activities and a focus on the creative and performing arts makes very good provision for pupils' development. Religious education is taught according to locally recommended guidelines, but pupils' attainment is below expected levels for their age.

30 Since the last inspection the school has worked hard to review its schemes of work. Government curriculum guidelines have also been introduced and are being trailed this year. Many of these curriculum outlines have not been in place long enough to have sufficient impact on pupils' learning, for example, in geography and history, but they are successfully providing effective support for teaching. These are to be reviewed and evaluated at the end of the trial period. The school is awaiting the results of these reviews before updating subject policies, many of which no longer reflect what is actually being taught. The school is in the process of creating a curriculum plan setting out the content of what is being covered by each year group. Whilst this is at an early stage of development and does not contain sufficient detail in some aspects, it represents the beginning of a very useful process to track pupil progress through the school.

31 The lack of the inclusion of activities for pupils of different abilities, mentioned in the last inspection report, still remains an issue. Brighter pupils do not often study topics in greater depth or tackle more complex activities in a manner appropriate to their capabilities. Exceptions include physical education lessons where some of the most able pupils attend master classes and in music where talented pupils are given high quality instrumental tuition. Curriculum plans for literacy and numeracy have made steps towards providing appropriately differentiated activities, as has planning for some lessons in other subjects, but more work has yet to be done to raise expectations and match activities to the higher National Curriculum attainment levels. The poor presentation of pupils' work across the curriculum is also having a negative effect on attainment levels.

32 The school places strong emphasis on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.

33 Test results are analysed in order to identify weaknesses in attainment. This information is used to create useful targets which are fed back into the curriculum, although some of the individual targets for pupils are not challenging enough, as in mathematics. The richness of the language development in school promotes good progress for pupils with English as an additional language and these pupils also receive effective support from a specialist teacher in withdrawal groups. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs generally meets the specific needs identified in the well-written individual education plans. Appropriate support is provided by class teachers and in very focused withdrawal groups with the special needs support teacher.

34 The school provides suitable arrangements for health education. Personal and social education lessons are provided throughout the school. Staff are consistent in their teaching of the essential skills of this programme and are currently implementing a healthy school development plan which will develop priorities identified in the school's recent audit.

35 At present an assembly is held every morning in the middle of the first teaching session. Pupils then return to their classes for a short period before break. The time spent travelling to and from assembly is too great, particularly given the distances involved, and its timing is inappropriate.

36 Many extra-curricular activities are successfully provided. Those being offered this term for Key Stage 2 pupils include choir, library club, clog dancing, master classes for football and swimming, computer club and playing in the steel pan band. Activities are usually run in sessions of ten weeks so that a range of courses can be offered over the academic year. Key Stage 1 pupils have access to an art club and a table games lunchtime club at which they play games with Year 6 pupils with a view to raising mathematics attainment. The school provides a breakfast club and an after-school club, which are greatly appreciated by working parents. A particularly strong feature of the extra-curricular curriculum is the manner in which pupils regularly prepare for special performances. At present a range of pupils attend a carnival club run by teachers, a local artist and a music specialist to prepare costumes and music for a carnival to be held in the local streets this summer. Resources from within and outside school are used effectively to enrich the curriculum, as in geography and history, and the local area is particularly well used as a learning resource. In some subjects there are not enough resources to adequately support the curriculum, for example, in religious education.

37 The school has very constructive links with the community and local businesses. These links contribute to pupils' learning and to their personal development. Pupils make visits out into the area and members of the community visit the school.

38 There are useful links with external agencies such as the education welfare services and the Community Police Officer who support the school in caring and supporting its pupils. A long established playgroup, housed within the school, is currently working with the school and its governors to develop suitable curricular activities for pre-nursery children.

39 The school maintains very good links with the secondary school to which most pupils transfer. Pupils meet their new teachers, take part in athletics and physical education by sharing its facilities and transfer from one stage of education to another smoothly. Parents, school and the local community contribute jointly to pupils' very good learning in the performing Arts, with pupils taking an active part in the local annual carnival.

40 The school's Friends' Association plays a successful fund-raising role in the life of the school. Social events are organised for adults and pupils which develop pupils' confidence and social skills. The Arts Steering Group members are parents, teachers and friends of the school. It supports pupils' involvement in the Arts by organising performances from visiting artists, musicians and dancers and providing opportunities for the school's musicians and dancers to play with local community adult bands or go into the community to entertain others.

### **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

41 Overall, the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. A particular strength within this area is the very good provision made for the cultural development of pupils.

42 The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual development through religious education and the school assemblies. Other lessons also contribute. At the end of a Year 2 lesson a

candle was lit and a spice box passed round. Pupils are asked to think about something special they will remember from their time in school today. Most pupils share their thoughts.

43 Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good. They are given clear guidance on the difference between right and wrong. In their caring approach to pupils, staff provide good examples for pupils to follow. The school makes it clear to pupils how they expect them to behave. A small number of pupils sometimes behave in an immature, inappropriate manner. The majority of the pupils generally recognise that the minority have problems. Pupils social development is very well supported by the very good relationships seen in school. The majority of pupils take advantage of the opportunities to work independently. This is seen in the group work sessions in the literacy and numeracy lessons when groups are expected to work without close supervision of a teacher or teaching assistant. A particular strength in the provision for social development is music and drama. Pupils are encouraged throughout school to perform musical and dramatic items. In the school production for parents and the community, all pupils take part.

44 The school makes very good provision for pupils' cultural development. Much of the work done in history and geography looks at the local area. Local artists are regular visitors to school working with classes or groups of pupils. The work of a local author is on prominent display. Good displays in art and design contribute to pupils' appreciation of the visual arts. The music groups and particularly the steel band contribute to pupils' musical awareness. The steel band also links to the provision the school makes for the understanding and development of other cultures. This is a strength of the school. Pupils from other cultures are encouraged to share their skills. This has included the recent arrivals from Eastern Europe who have shown class mates how to make a traditional paper hat.

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

45 The quality of care and support pupils receive in school has been maintained since the last inspection. Parents believe that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible people.

46 Child protection arrangements reflect the local education authority guidelines and are supported by trained members of staff. Pupils are well cared for when they are ill or injured in school. There are very good procedures in place to record and inform parents of injuries sustained in school. The school's security arrangements are good. The governing body carries out health and safety checks regularly and the school is aware of the outstanding health and safety issues. Although pupils interviewed were confident about emergency routines in school, the legal requirement of a fire drill each school term is not met.

47 The school promotes attendance well through its awards to the highest attending year group. Irregular attendance is checked with the help of the local education welfare officer, but there is no formal requirement of parents to notify school on the first day of absence.

48 The head teacher keeps a check on the level of behaviour in school but there are no formal records of sexist or racist behaviour. Class teachers use the school's reward systems well, which include weekly Effort Sheets to promote positive behaviour and attitudes but the strategies to reduce minor disruptive behaviour in the classroom are not consistently used by all teachers to good effect.

49 Teachers know the pupils in their classes well. As a result, they report on pupils' personal development effectively in end of year reports to parents. Pupils' personal development is discussed in meetings with parents, and pupils, when targets are set. However, there is no formal monitoring of pupils' personal development. The school has identified this as an area to be included in the development of personal, social and health education.

50 There is consistent monitoring of pupils' attendance, through the weekly attendance award to the class with the highest percentage of attendance. This is charted and displayed in the school hall. However, monitoring of pupils' punctuality is less effective, and could be improved, as this was an aspect commented on in the last inspection. Teachers are expected to note pupils' lateness in their class registers, but this is not consistent.

51 There is no formal monitoring of how pupils are progressing at a personal level but pupils are invited to join their parents and class teacher to review their annual school report including their personal progress and their hopes of achievement for the future.

52 Achievement Assemblies are held each week, where pupils are recognised and rewarded for their efforts and talents. Pupils do respond to the school's provision for their personal and social development and are enthusiastic members of the many clubs and groups that take place outside lessons.

53 There are good systems in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, particularly in the core subjects of English and mathematics. Teachers assess pupils termly and use their assessments to guide and amend plans for the next term. A particular strength is the way teachers, at the end of the school year, use their assessments to plan the work pupils will do in the first two or three weeks of the new school year. Results of the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are carefully analysed to identify areas which might have been taught less well than others. Teachers, parents and pupils meet to set targets for pupils to achieve by the end of the school year. Progress is monitored against these individual targets and checked at the end of the school year. Most assessment is made in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Little formal assessment is done in the other subjects of the curriculum such as history or art and design. However, informal assessment means that plans can be adapted to fit areas which need development.

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

54 Parents' perceptions of the school remain very good. Most parents are happy with the efforts made on behalf of their children and are full of praise for teachers and the head teacher. Parents are welcome in school and many make a very good contribution to their children's' learning both in the nursery and main school. Teachers and parents make very good efforts to work together to encourage and support the children. Some parents support reading or assist in lessons such as information and communication technology whilst others accompany children to swimming lessons and musical events.

55 The quality of information provided for parents is very good. Monthly newsletters to parents are concise and friendly and keep parents informed of forthcoming events on the school calendar. Pupils' annual reports are informative and the school's practice to meet with parents and pupils to set individual learning and achievement targets is a strength in its relationship with parents. These reports also incorporate the school's home-school agreement, which is a working document involving pupils, school and parents.

56 The school provides parents of pupils with special educational needs with good information about issues concerning their children's progress. Teachers share the objectives of statements and individual education plans with parents but do not always obtain their written authority for the school's records.

57 Parents and pupils, new to the country, who speak English as a second language, receive good support from the school. The teacher responsible for this group of pupils makes home visits to support and assist in pastoral and domestic problems.

58 Parents also make a good contribution to their children's learning at home. The youngest children are well supported in their reading and pupils in Year 6 are able to demonstrate the extent and quality of the work they are expected to do at home. Many pupils now attend the school's homework club to re-enforce their learning within the classroom.

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

59 The school is well led and managed by the head teacher, with the good support of the deputy head teacher, staff and governors. The head teacher cares strongly about the school, the staff and the pupils. He has been effective in creating and maintaining a harmonious staff team and school environment, which reflects most strongly the school aims. The high quality of teamwork is a key to the effectiveness of the school. All staff share a commitment to improving pupils' standards of work and behaviour. The recently appointed deputy head teacher is starting to establish herself within the school and her role in the planning of the Foundation Stage curriculum, assessment and teaching and learning is both effective and impressive. The head teacher has a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and works well with staff and governors to identify priorities for school development.

60 The school has a clear set of aims and values that are shared by pupils, staff, parents and governors. The head teacher adopts a management style which ensures that the views of all staff are heard and valued and, as a result, all staff work together well as a team and the day-to-day management of the school is effective. They are well supported by an efficient school secretary who makes a good contribution to the life of the school. The head teacher manages and monitors the school's finances well. Good use is made of the local education authorities financial services and the head teacher and governors work hard to rigorously apply the principles of best value. Grants given to the school, for example to support pupils with special educational needs are used well. The school has effectively implemented the recommendations of the most recent audit inspection by the local education authority.

61 Governors are very interested in, and supportive of, the school. An effective committee structure is in place and some governors have specific curriculum support responsibilities, for example in literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology and the quality of teaching. This is a significant development since the last inspection. The governors are fully involved in the construction of the school development plan and have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. In addition, governors play an active part in the daily life of the school, for example when the chair of governors visits to hear pupils read.

62 The school development plan provides a useful framework for managing improvements and is based on an accurate analysis of what the school does well and where it needs to improve. The priorities are clearly identified and are monitored regularly to ensure that targets are met. This has improved significantly since the last inspection. The school has developed good procedures for monitoring teaching and learning by the head teacher and subject leaders. This has mainly taken place in English, mathematics and science but opportunities are to be provided in all other subjects. The head teacher also monitors the work of teachers on a regular basis and therefore has a clear picture of what is working and where additional support is needed to secure improvements. This, together with the analysis of the results of school based and national tests, is enabling the school to effectively track the progress of individuals and groups of pupils and to set realistic but challenging targets in English and mathematics. As a result standards are improving but the school is able to pinpoint areas for further development, for example in pupils' writing, particularly in Key Stage 1.

63 The head teacher gives a high degree of responsibility to the subject leaders and this ensures that they make an effective contribution to school management. They have a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in their subject area. They give effective support to colleagues in planning the work for pupils and many have benefited from opportunities to monitor teaching and learning. As a result, there have been improvements to teaching and learning and the development of a shared commitment to raising standards.

64 Financial planning is good and is closely linked to the educational priorities identified in the school development plan. Financial control and day-to-day administration of the school are good and the school makes effective use of new technology. The head teacher and governors are keen to get the best value for pupils in all resources and services and gather information before financial decisions are taken. All resources devolved to the school are used well to support teaching and learning. The school benefits from and spends wisely external sources of funding such as the Education Action Zone. Given the low attainment of many children on intake, the good teaching and the high quality learning opportunities, the good progress made by pupils and the improving standards, the school provides good value for money.

65 The overall number, qualifications and experience of teachers and classroom assistants provide a good match to the demands of the curriculum, including the needs of children in the foundation stage and pupils with special educational needs. All staff have good access to in-service training linked to their professional needs and the priorities identified in the school development plan. The school has good procedures for the induction and support of new staff. It has made a good start to implementing national guidance for managing the performance of teachers.

66 Class teachers are able to teach the national curriculum satisfactorily within the school's current accommodation, but the lack of a playing field and outdoor spaces does effect the ease with which the school can teach athletic skills and other outdoor sporting activities.

67 The school's accommodation is housed in two nineteenth century buildings which are kept clean by the school's site manager and his staff. One building houses the head teacher's office, the administrative officer, the Reception class and classrooms for pupils in Years 4, 5, and 6 as well as a new information and communication technology suite.

68 The second building houses the community playgroup, the nursery and classrooms for pupils in Years 1, 2, and 3. Although most corridors show attractive displays of pupils' work and include an attractive mural, there are a few areas where displays are uninspiring and of a poor quality. Because of the upper and lower levels of the classrooms the school is not yet able to offer easy access to pupils with physical disabilities. There are external ramps for wheelchair access to the reception areas of both buildings and the school's architectural plans take account of the needs of future pupils with physical disabilities.

69 Resources are satisfactory overall. They are good for design and technology, music, art and design and information and communication technology. Resources for religious education are unsatisfactory. There are insufficient books and other resources to effectively teach the requirements of the agreed syllabus. However, the school has recently paid to be able to make loans of resources from a regional centre. There are a considerable number of out-of-date text books stored around the school.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

70 In order to raise standards and improve the quality of education the head teacher, staff and governors should:

1. Raise standards by the age of 11 in religious education by:
  - Reviewing timetabling arrangements to ensure the minimum time, as stated in the agreed syllabus, is allocated to all lessons.
  - Improving teachers subject knowledge and understanding, particularly about teaching the faiths of Hinduism and Islam.
  - Planning activities for lessons that match the learning objectives and provide appropriate challenge, particularly for higher attaining pupils.
  - Using the assessment criteria for the end of Years 2, 4, and 6 as described in the agreed syllabus.
  - Using this information to plan lessons that build progressively on pupils' previous learning.  
(Paragraphs 8, 29, 69, 136, 138 and 140)
2. Provide a more appropriate level of challenge for higher attaining pupils by:
  - setting them work which is harder and more challenging.  
(Paragraphs 20, 91, 99 and 139)

The following issue, whilst not a key issue for action, should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Ensure that all staff have high expectations of pupils' presentation of their work and implement a consistent strategy to deal with untidy work and handwriting.  
(Paragraphs 4, 22, 86, 99 and 113)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	72
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	84

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	21	51	25	3	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*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	10	230
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		69

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	91

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	38

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	23
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	27

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	5.0
National comparative data	5.2

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

### *Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1*

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	24	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	17	21
	Girls	9	9	10
	Total	27	26	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75% (55%)	72% (69%)	86% (72%)
	National	83% (82%)	84% (83%)	90% (87%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	20	19
	Girls	10	11	9
	Total	27	31	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75% (59%)	86% (86%)	78% (72%)
	National	84% (82%)	88% (86%)	88% (87%)

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

### *Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2*

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	20	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	14	15
	Girls	12	11	12
	Total	23	25	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64% (62%)	69% (76%)	75% (76%)
	National	75% (70%)	72% (69%)	85% (78%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	16	12
	Girls	11	12	12
	Total	21	28	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	58% (65%)	78% (70%)	67% (70%)
	National	70% (68%)	72% (69%)	79% (75%)

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

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	11
Bangladeshi	19
Chinese	0
White	163
Any other minority ethnic group	18

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

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

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

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	25.6

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

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	86

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	7.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	7.5
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999 - 2000
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	£
Total income	494,894
Total expenditure	491,588
Expenditure per pupil	1,756
Balance brought forward from previous year	19,847
Balance carried forward to next year	23,153

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	220
Number of questionnaires returned	46

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	29	0	2	2
My child is making good progress in school.	59	39	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	43	7	2	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	50	4	0	0
The teaching is good.	70	30	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	61	35	4	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	87	13	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	78	22	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	67	30	2	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	57	39	4	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	76	24	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	40	49	5	0	7

## **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**

71 Children in the foundation stage are given a good start to their education. The staff work very well together. Curricular planning for children in the reception class has very recently been reviewed to ensure that it more closely follows the national guidance for all the children in the foundation stage. The children enter the school with an uneven spread of attainment with a higher than average percentage of less able children. Also, many of the children are identified as having special educational needs and/or English as an additional language. These children are supported very well, and they make good progress. Nevertheless, by the time they are ready to start in Year 1, many children are working below the levels expected for five year olds in communication, language and literacy and mathematical understanding. Children achieve the expected levels in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative and physical development. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.

72 The children enter the nursery class with broadly average skills in personal and social development. They make good progress in the nursery and the reception classes, and by the time they leave the reception class they are achieving the expected standard for their age. All adults working with the children expect high standards of behaviour and courtesy. As a result, children are polite. In the nursery, when all the children were outside, one child came in to see an inspector waiting in the classroom. He politely asked, "Are you alright? We're all outside, but someone will be with you shortly". Children work well together in small groups, and they take turns sharing resources. Children in the nursery behave very well. They sat in silence listening attentively to a taped story. When they join the whole school assembly, they behave equally well – and are often a good example to a few older children! Children are taught to be responsible. They collect their own name card, with their parents, at the start of sessions in the nursery. In the reception class, children place their name card in the correct place to indicate whether they are staying for dinner, or not. Children know why they have rules, and explain, "You don't run because you might fall over and hurt yourself or hurt someone else". They behave well and respond immediately to instructions, but occasionally, in the reception class, their enthusiasm overcomes their ability to wait for their turn to speak!

73 Children make good progress overall in communication, language and literacy but, nevertheless many achieve below the expectations for their age by the time they leave the reception class. In both classes the children enjoy listening to stories and sharing books with each other and with adults. All the adults listen well to what the children have to say and they encourage the children to communicate their feelings and ideas. At snack time in the nursery, children are encouraged to 'socialise' following the good role modelling of the adults. Role-play opportunities promote children's talking well. In the nursery, two children playing in the 'supermarket' had a lively conversation because the 'cashier' took money out of the till, and handed it to the 'customer' then tried to explain that it had to be given back to pay for the shopping! In the reception class, children start to follow a slightly more structured programme of language, literacy and mathematical work. They are brought together as a class, while the teacher works on aspects of teaching reading and writing, which gives them a good opportunity to listen. However there are a number of children reluctant to answer questions, while others find it difficult not to shout out. The majority of children recognise a few familiar short words, and know that print carries meaning. Only a few children are reading simple books of repeating phrases. A few children tell the story from pictures, and two children do not yet handle books correctly by turning the pages from left to right. One child was very excited, and kept repeating "I'm the author" when the teacher explained to a small group of children that their own writing books had their names on them, which meant they were the author. A few children copy from their own name card to write their name, and some children are only writing a few recognisable letters.

74 Many children are still working below the expectations for their age in the mathematical area of learning in the reception class. The majority of children make good progress, but in some activities in the reception class, higher attaining children are not always given sufficiently challenging activities. In both classes children are given many opportunities to practice counting and to learn mathematical vocabulary. At snack time, in the nursery, children count the number of milk bottles they need at a table, and how many straws they need. In the reception class, children enjoy the teacher's good strategy of using a puppet to practice recognising numbers. The majority of children count to 10 but many do not recognise higher numbers. A few children copy the numerals 1 – 9, but most of them have difficulty writing 5 and a few children reverse 4 and 7. Children start to develop a sound mathematical vocabulary, and reinforce this by matching jig-saw pieces to words such as 'even' and 'bigger'. Good teaching promotes mathematical vocabulary. In one lesson, children were encouraged to use the term 'estimate' when they were guessing how many objects were in a tub before counting them.

75 Children build well on their general knowledge. They make good progress, and the majority achieve the expectations for their age by the time they are ready to move into Year 1. In the nursery children recognise the names of many foods sold in a supermarket. They observe buildings on a walk outside school, and have painted pictures of the trains they saw on a visit to Newcastle station. In the reception class, children continue to build well on their general knowledge. They have made a map of a journey across the farmyard, from their class story "Rosie's Walk". They hear stories from other cultures, such as Barbados and India. They are learning to recognise the days of the week. Children are beginning to develop scientific awareness by sorting different materials into groups, such as whether they are smooth or rough. In both year groups children select resources and use tools safely to construct and build. Although there are no working computers in either classroom, children regularly use computers in the school's computer suite. In the nursery, children's print outs of a painting program are displayed. In reception children enjoyed practising controlling the mouse to complete "Winnie the Pooh" paintings and to match coloured shapes, using the "Pingu" program.

76 The outdoor play area for the nursery is a major factor in helping children to make good progress in the development of their physical skills. By the time they move into Year 1, the majority of children are achieving the expectations for their age. In the nursery, children move around the marked track on wheeled vehicles, developing control by responding to traffic lights. This also teaches them elements of road safety, and they learn that green means 'go', and red means 'stop'. Children are encouraged to 'park their cars' in the car park before they move to another activity. In reception, children continue to make good progress. They use the space in the school hall confidently. Pupils with English as an additional language are supported well by the classroom assistant. The children respond well to instructions, and are aware of the effect of exercise on their bodies. They know the names of different parts of the body, and they co-operate well in pairs to 'mirror' each other's actions. They are confident and demonstrate their performance to classmates. Children use the hard outdoor area to practice throwing and catching balls. Children are given good opportunities to practice skills such as cutting. In the nursery, children have cut out pictures of food for their Supermarket, and in the reception class children cut out pictures carefully, to sequence the story "Handa's Surprise".

77 In both classes, children use a wide range of materials to create interesting pictures and collages. As a result, many achieve the expectations for their age by the time they are ready to move into Year 1. In the nursery, children make printed patterns using square and circle shapes, and they mix paints to paint their own portraits. Children use pencils to make observational drawings of tractors and trucks. In the reception class, children use colours well to paint characters from the nursery rhyme "Jack and Jill", adding details such as eyes, nose and mouth on the faces. There are very good opportunities for children to practice singing. Nursery and reception children join pupils

in Years 1 and 2, and are taught singing by a music specialist. The reception children confidently performed an action song they had just learnt in front of the whole school during one assembly.

78 The quality of teaching and learning in the foundation stage is good. Staff are clear about what they want children to learn in each session. Very good teaching was seen in the nursery. Objectives for activities are explained well to the children, and this impacts well on their learning. For example, the nursery teacher asked the children to listen very carefully to a taped story and told them that at the end she expected them to know what was bought at the supermarket. As a result, children listened in absolute silence, and the majority knew what had been bought, and why. Relationships in both classes are very good. All the staff work well together, and the teamwork between the nursery teacher and the nursery nurse, is very good. They set a very good example for the relationships they wish the children to develop. In the reception class, the teacher has worked hard to put in place a revised curriculum this term. Planning identifies effective support for lower attaining children, and the support for children with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is good. This ensures these children make good progress. However, in the reception class, activities for children working without adult supervision do not always provide sufficient challenge, particularly for higher attaining children. This has an impact on achievement at the end of the foundation stage.

79 The recently appointed deputy head teacher is the foundation stage leader. Her management is good. Effective liaison is in place with the private playgroup, and other pre-school groups in the community. A Nursery Open Day was held, and these initiatives are aimed at raising the number of children entering the nursery. Planning is regularly monitored, and teachers have been observed teaching. Links with parents are very good, and they are encouraged to come into classrooms and to choose books to share with their child. The learning resources are mainly satisfactory, but, at present, computers in both classrooms are out of order. Because of the nature of the buildings, children in the reception class do not have an opportunity to use the good outdoor facilities in the nursery. Classrooms are well organised, and good displays reflect well the work the children have done.

## **ENGLISH**

80 Standards of English have improved since the last inspection. This is because the school has identified the subject as a priority for development. By the end of Key Stage 2, Year 6 standards are generally in line with those seen in similar schools. Pupils enter school with levels of achievement below those seen by most children, so this improvement as they leave school means they make good progress in their learning.

81 When pupils start school, in nursery or the reception class, they show a wide range of experience and ability. Some children have skills in reading, writing, and speaking and listening that are above the average, however, the majority are below, and often well below, the expected standards. Consistently good teaching and a school ethos that encourages personal development means that they make good progress. In the national tests last year, the schools' results at the end of Key Stage 1 were disappointing. While reading results continued to improve, writing standards fell. However the school had identified this particular year group as one which found writing difficult and has put procedures in place to further support this area. By the end of Key Stage 2 the national test results show that the improvement seen in English results since 1996 continued in 2000, and, although just below the national average were in line with those achieved by similar schools.

82 Standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory overall although there are wide variations. Many pupils find it difficult to explain what they are doing in lessons, but other pupils are very articulate and show speaking skills well above average. A good example of this was seen in the "Celebration Assembly" observed during the inspection. Two pupils introduced the "acts" very well,

presenting each contribution in an interesting way and commenting on the standard of what had been seen; “What a brilliant clog dance!”. Throughout the school most pupils listen well and are keen to contribute by answering questions and joining in discussions. For example, Year 5 pupils discuss plans for a village by-pass and recognise that it might be dangerous for children to cross and that “an historic site will be destroyed”. A Year 2 pupil suggests that a mountain scene might be “creviced” and explains that this means there are gaps in the rock. Others can only describe the general appearance of a mountain. Year 6 pupils use language effectively as they think about the seasons when they study Japanese “Haiku” poetry. For example, describing autumn “Trees are like clumps of golden brown butterflies”.

83 Standards of reading are good. Good teaching in the nursery and reception class mean that by the time pupils reach Key Stage 1 they have achieved the levels expected for children of their age. Pupils maintain this good progress throughout the school. Most pupils are reading at the expected standard and the higher achieving pupils are reading at levels above what might be expected. Pupils are using a range of techniques to read unknown words. They often look at the sentence before and after the one with the word in to understand what it might mean. Older pupils sound out the syllables to build up the sound of the word. Higher achieving readers use good expression as they tackle passages in their books. A higher attaining pupil in Year 2 describes how the power in a “magic drum” is transformed so that when it is beaten it makes the sun come out rather than calling up a storm! Another pupil from Year 4 uses a dictionary very well knowing how to look at the second letter in a word to quickly find the meaning of a word such as “brick”. Year 6 pupils are beginning to produce good quality reading journals which comment on the books they are reading. One of them reads “The Secret Garden” well, she understands the story and the fact that the text might contain old fashioned language. However, she thinks the story is sometimes boring, and prefers the “Harry Potter” stories she reads at home!

84 Standards of writing are not high enough by the end of Key Stage 1 but are near the expected level by the end of Key Stage 2. This is because of the progress pupils make through consistently good teaching and the successful implementation of the national literacy strategy. Some Year 2 pupils write in a joined, well formed style although most still “print” individual letters. In Key Stage 2 handwriting standards in English written work develops well and by the end of the key stage most pupils produce well presented written work. However, written work in some other subjects is less well presented. Pupils in Year 3 have looked at the written work they have produced. They realise they have to enrich their work with more interesting phrases and work well to do this. In a ghost story they suggest phrases such as “fingers of mist came through the window”, and, “darkness covered them like a blanket” to improve their work. One pupil writes that “Amanda stopped dead as if she was paralysed!”. Pupils in Year 4 accurately identify the “subject” and “object” of a sentence. Because of the high quality of teaching, pupils in Year 6 often achieve high standards. They are looking at many forms of poetry and, when they study Japanese “Haiku” poetry produce imaginative work of a high standard; “Spring by the river. Warm shoeless feet vanishing in the flowers”.

85 English is taught well. The national Literacy Strategy is being successfully implemented and the detailed planning needed for this gives teachers good support. The very good relationships that exist between teachers and pupils and the quietly effective class management seen in most lessons, encourage pupils to try hard and do their best. Pupils confidently offer answers to questions and join in discussion knowing that their contributions will be valued. Resources are carefully chosen. In a Year 4 lesson tourist leaflets on bus journeys in London are used to good effect. Most lessons are presented at a good pace so that pupils cover an appropriate amount of work. In the less satisfactory aspects of a minority of lessons teachers sometimes expect pupils to sit quietly while listening to overlong introductions. The ends of lessons, however, are usually used very well. Teachers skilfully summarise what has been covered and pupils are encouraged to consider how well they have worked and what they have achieved.

86 The recently opened Computer Suite is already having an impact on pupils' learning in English. Pupils in the Year 6 class were very well motivated when they used the computers to work on a poetry presentation and produced good quality work. Skills in English are not always used effectively in other subjects of the curriculum. This means that the presentation of work in these does not match work in English books.

87 English is managed very well. The co-ordinator, who also manages the provision for pupils with special educational needs, has clearly identified the areas for development. Her monitoring of teaching and planning is now helping pupils achieve standards closer to the national average.

## **MATHEMATICS**

88 By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are not achieving levels appropriate for their age. In last year's national tests, results were well below both national averages and averages for similar schools. Standards at Key Stage 1 are similar to those reported during the last inspection. However, the current level of pupils' attainment on entry to school is lower than it was at the time of the last inspection. Consequently, it is more difficult to raise these pupils' attainment to national expectation by the end by the age of seven. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are generally attaining the standards expected for their ages in mathematics, although the numbers of pupils achieving the higher National Curriculum levels is below expectations. At the time of the last inspection the results of the national tests for these Year 6 pupils were above national averages. The national tests in 2000 showed that standards were below the national expectations for pupils of this age, although they were broadly in line with expectations for schools with a similar intake.

89 Whilst the majority of seven year olds are successfully working within the national Year 2 numeracy programme, the exceptionally wide ability range means that many pupils are working at the lower end of this programme. There is an extremely high number of pupils with special educational needs in the present cohort and whilst these pupils are making satisfactory progress they are not achieving the standards expected for their age. This impacts upon overall results for the whole year group. Whilst the majority of the class have a secure knowledge of place value to 100, others still need support when working with numbers up to ten. Many pupils know some of the properties of two-dimensional shapes and can recognise halves and quarters. They weigh items from the classroom, reading a scale in grams, showing a sound knowledge of standard measurement. By the age of 11, pupils' work on decimals and fractions demonstrates that their number skills are broadly in line with expectations. All pupils convert fractions into decimals using a calculator and then match the equivalent pairs of decimals. Higher attaining pupils find equivalent fractions to two place decimals. In their investigational work, pupils devise their own ways of recording and organising their results.

90 The pupils' use of information and communication technology to develop their mathematical knowledge is satisfactory throughout the school. For example, pupils in Year 1 use the Play Train program to extend their number skills and are able to progress to higher levels by clicking on the 'up' arrows on their individual computers. In Year 4 bar charts are produced on the computer to display the results of a science experiment. Throughout the school there are good examples of mathematics being used to support other subjects, for example, in a geography lesson where current work on co-ordinates is applied to reading Ordnance Survey maps.

91 The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good overall, although the match of group tasks to pupils' ability often fails to stretch the most able. Some very good teaching occurs in Year 6 where expectations are high and an appropriate challenge is provided for all pupils, with some pupils working from the Year 7 national numeracy programme. In most year groups expectations are not high enough to raise the attainment of the most able. For example, a group of higher attainers in Year 2 were working on place value to 200, but when questioned some members

of the group showed a knowledge of numbers up to 1000. All teachers display a sound knowledge of the required numeracy hour structure and demonstrate useful techniques for teaching mental and oral mathematics. Teachers usually explain lesson objectives to their classes, successfully involving pupils in their own learning. However, teachers often do not ensure that lesson conclusions allow time to evaluate pupils' learning towards these objectives, thus losing the opportunity to praise progress and offer further challenge. In the one unsatisfactory lesson observed the teacher's poor use of time meant that pupils were rushed through their group work and made insufficient progress on the tasks provided. Evidence of progress through units of work, especially on topics other than numeracy, is not always evident in pupils' work books and teachers do not consistently emphasise the importance of good presentation of work. Homework is not set on a regular basis. The teaching of problem solving and investigational mathematics is good throughout the school, and an appropriate emphasis is placed on pupils explaining their methods of calculation.

92 The school has analysed test results to create targets in mathematics, although no targets have yet been set for numbers of pupils achieving higher levels. It met its targets for pupils in the national tests in 2000. However, the fact that the seven year olds achieved the school's targets and were still well below national expectations suggests the need for a further analysis to investigate the possibility of raising these targets, especially those for higher attainers.

93 Teachers' ongoing assessment in classes is satisfactory. They make good use of the mental mathematics sessions to check for understanding. During group tasks, teachers sometimes fail to notice pupils' mistakes until too late in the lesson, resulting in a waste of effective teaching time. More could be done to assess pupils' work against learning objectives within each unit of work in order to increase their rate of progress. The need for an analysis of assessment data has been appropriately highlighted in the school's Strategy For Improvement document.

94 The monitoring of mathematics teaching in all age groups as part of last year's self review highlighted strengths and made clear recommendations for improvement in teaching and learning. The mathematics co-ordinator was involved in this review and continues to monitor teaching regularly. This document also contains very useful strategies for raising the attainment of pupils with special needs, involving targeted support by special educational needs co-ordinators and auxiliary assistants.

95 A short mathematics policy statement is in place, but this contains insufficient detail of how the national Numeracy Strategy will be implemented, especially with regard to how the yearly teaching programmes will be used to provide for the full range of abilities within the school.

## **SCIENCE**

96 Standards in science have improved since last year when, in the national tests at the end of Year 6, the school's results were well below the national average, and below average when compared to similar schools. In the present Year 6, the majority of pupils achieve in line with the expectations for their age, with an increase in the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level. This is the result of consistently good teaching and learning. Teachers place an emphasis on pupils' involvement in science investigations.

97 At the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils are broadly matching expectations for their age. This is an improvement on the teacher assessments undertaken last year. Pupils make good progress learning simple scientific facts. They know that living things need food and water to grow, name the parts of a flower, and sort plants into groups. They know how a simple electrical circuit works, and are aware of the dangers of electricity. They recognise some of the changes that take place as they grow, and explain the effect of exercise on their bodies.

98 In Year 3, pupils investigate the properties of different materials. They are learning the importance of caring for their teeth. In Year 4, pupils make sensible predictions about solids that might dissolve, and they know how to conduct a fair test. In Year 5, pupils use appropriate science vocabulary to label parts of a flower and they understand terms such as ‘germination’. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils make predictions and carry out investigations. When investigating the changes that occur to some materials when they are heated, pupils suggest different ways to make it a fair test. They use their previous knowledge and understanding of some reversible and irreversible changes to predict what will happen in their investigations: they know that ice cubes are reversible. They produce charts of their predictions, observations of what happened, and they make conclusions.

99 Science is taught well throughout the school. Teachers have a secure knowledge of science and their lessons are planned well to identify what pupils are expected to learn. They share the objectives for lessons with pupils, and this impacts well on their learning because they know what they are expected to do. Support staff, and parent helpers, support pupils with special educational needs, and English as an additional language very well. This ensures that these pupils also make good progress in lessons. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, additional support was very effective in helping some pupils’ write up their investigations. In lessons in Year 2 and Year 6, teachers had prepared resources specifically aimed at challenging higher attaining pupils well. However, not all teachers use information about what pupils can, or cannot, do in lessons well enough to plan future lessons. As a result, there is sometimes a lack of challenge in activities, particularly for higher attaining pupils. Scrutiny of pupils’ previous work shows that there are too many occasions when pupils of all abilities write up the same information. The presentation of pupils’ written work is often careless, and the quality of marking is variable from class to class.

100 The leadership, management and co-ordination of science are good. The co-ordinator monitors teaching and planning. A review of the curriculum has taken place, since the school started using the nationally recommended scheme of work. Recommendations have been made, which are aimed at raising standards. The school has made improvements in science since the last inspection. Safety advice is now in the science documentation. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils were reminded of important safety facts when heating materials. The quality of teaching has improved: no unsatisfactory teaching was seen in this inspection. Science is now regularly assessed in all classes, and there is a standard recording system in place.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

101 Pupils make good progress in art and design and standards are generally higher than those expected and better than those seen in most schools. This is an improvement from the satisfactory standards identified during the last inspection. Work seen in lessons, the displays in school and the examples in pupils’ Sketch Books, show pupils’ skills and the wide range of work they cover.

102 Teachers enjoy teaching art and design and this enthusiasm is picked up by pupils who concentrate well and take pride in their finished work. Good quality resources also encourage pupils to work carefully. Young pupils in Year 1 look carefully at the good range of plants provided for them to draw. They produce good quality pictures using pencil, pastels and cut paper. This work in Year 1 is linked to the work on plants pupils are doing in science. This approach works well in other year groups where art and design work is linked to other subjects such as history and geography. Pupils in Year two extend their observational and drawing skills when they produced detailed drawings of sea shells showing the different patterns they see. Year 3 pupils are studying relationships and draw themselves with friends or family; “Me and my dad”. Sketch books kept by Year 4 pupils show how they practice their “shading” skills with drawings of solid shapes such as cubes and spheres and then solid objects such as a bucket and a candle. Skills develop well throughout the school and work from Year 6 pupils shows very good drawings of hands holding

objects, of roads and buildings where perspective is introduced and paintings of trees with good attention to detail.

103 Pupils have studied the work of other artists to extend their skills. Year 5 pupils produce portraits in the style of Van Gogh or Picasso. Year 3 pupils have experimented by producing prints based on patterns from the Anglo Saxons, from Africa and South America. All this improves pupils' understanding of other times and other cultures. This understanding has been further developed in recent years by visits to school by various artists who have worked with groups and classes of pupils.

104 The subject is well lead by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who monitors standards informally by talking to teachers and looking at displays. A new nationally produced scheme of work is being tried to give teachers more detailed advice. A good range of resources means that all aspects of the subject can be taught.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

105 Pupils make good progress in design and technology. Standards are high and above those generally seen. This is an improvement from the satisfactory standards identified in the last inspection report. The subject benefits from its close links to art and design. Not only are they managed by the same teacher, but the good skills pupils have developed in art and design are used to good effect in finishing off or decorating their models.

106 Teachers are confident in teaching design and technology and clearly identify the "designing", "making" and "evaluating" aspects of the subject. The Year 1 classes are working on food technology, linking their work with their scientific study of "taste". They look at the way fruit can be prepared to go into a fruit salad. They recognise that to prepare a healthy dish both they and the fruit need to be washed first! They develop their skills by learning to use knives, squeezers and graters effectively. They recognise that while an orange can be squeezed for its juice, an apple can only be cut or grated. Their oral evaluation after the tasting session at the end of the lesson, was one the pupils found very enjoyable! In a following session pupils taste a number of different fruits. They comment on the differences in the tastes of fruit such as strawberries and grapefruit and choose their favourite from the six used. They accurately record their results on a chart.

107 Pupils in Year 3 are also looking at food! Again the task is linked to another subject, geography, and has a practical purpose. Pupils design and make healthy sandwiches to eat on the visit they are making to a local site. On their design sheets, pupils draw and label their sandwiches identifying the type of bread they are using and the fillings they are to use. The school's good links with its parents is demonstrated well as six mums volunteer to help with the "making" aspect of the task. Pupils are clearly shown how to use tools safely and effectively. Some interesting combinations of ingredients are evident, including one that combines jam, peanut butter and cucumber! Year 6 pupils have produced some high quality slippers. They have taken apart actual slippers, recorded the individual pieces of material accurately and used this information to help with their own designs. They constructed their slippers well using a variety of techniques, such as sticking, stitching and stapling, to join pieces of material together.

108 Displays around school show a good range of models constructed by pupils. Vehicles made from boxes have wheels accurately fitted with axles, Year 2 pupils have also produced houses from the Fire of London with cut out sections. Year 4 pupils have produced good "pop-up" models based on nursery rhymes such as "Jack and Jill" and "Humpty Dumpty".

109 The subject is well lead by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who monitors work informally by observing displays. She is working to produce a standardised design sheet which will give teachers further support.



## **GEOGRAPHY**

110 Standards in geography are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. The last inspection report indicated that a list of suggested activities to support the teaching of geography would be useful. The school has responded to this in the introduction of a useful trial curriculum outline, and whilst there is some very good teaching and learning taking place, this has yet to impact on overall standards across the school.

111 No teaching of geography was observed at Key Stage 1. From pupils' written work, displays and teachers' planning it is evident that they have a sound knowledge of the area in which they live. Photographs are used as a focus for pupils to ask questions about features of the local area. They can name the countries of the British Isles and know the four points of a compass.

112 In Year 6 pupils use data and photographs collected on a field trip to a local river to focus on physical changes to the environment. This work stretches the most able pupils by requiring them to write explanations and draw diagrams of how meander and ox-bow lakes were formed, whilst less able pupils sequence diagrams and explanations of the creation of meander and ox bow lakes. Individuals are currently drawing together their geography learning to make a computer presentation on a river of their choice.

113 The teaching of individual units of work is variable in its depth. In lessons observed pupils made good progress, for example, in Year 4 where very good teaching of the effects of coastal erosion were observed. Well-chosen resources, including photographs, a CD-ROM and articles collected on the beach supported the teaching in this lesson and all pupils were challenged at an appropriate level. The teacher's planning showed a good progression of work through a series of lessons, culminating in a visit to a coastal village. However, a scrutiny of pupils' books from all year groups demonstrated that some units indicated on the curriculum outline are not being covered in sufficient depth to raise overall standards. For example, pupils' knowledge and understanding of overseas localities is under developed. The presentation of pupils' work is a weakness throughout the school. Appropriate adult support is used to assist the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils with English as an additional language also make satisfactory progress and teachers provide appropriate resources and peer group support to ensure that they are included in lessons.

114 Geography resources include a good range of books and CD-ROMs which, are effectively used in lessons. Further resources are now needed to support the teaching of the new curriculum units of study.

115 The geography co-ordinator has not yet had an opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching or the impact of the new guidelines on teaching and learning throughout the school. Assessment of pupil progress in geography remains under developed and has made little progress since it was raised as an issue in the last inspection.

## **HISTORY**

116 Attainment in history is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. The school has successfully addressed the issues raised in the last inspection regarding the need for pupils to generate their own questions for study and to develop analytical skills based on the use of historical resources. Whilst standards in these specific areas have improved, overall attainment is limited by the fact that the full programme of study for history is being given only minimal coverage.

117 By the age of seven, pupils use drawings and text to record their knowledge about some historical events and their causes, such as the Great Fire of London. In their study of Grace Darling, a famous local person, pupils use a coastal map to locate the Farne Islands and learn about some

aspects of a lighthouse keeper's job. They use old photographs to make comparisons between hospitals and toys in the past and present, developing a knowledge of aspects of the past beyond their living memory. Pupils also place life events in chronological order, illustrating the changes which occur in human development, for example, between a baby and a toddler. By the age of nine pupils demonstrate an appropriate use of dates and terms in their work on twentieth century history. They make good use of reference books, CD-ROMs and the BBC website to investigate the period, communicating their findings in a variety of ways. Pupils formulated a questionnaire which was filled in by parents and grandparents regarding changes in life since 1948, an excellent use of local oral history sources. At both key stages pupils are beginning to develop good enquiry skills, as demonstrated by Year 1 pupils who drew up very interesting questions about old toys to pose to one pupil's grandmother who then came into the lesson to be interviewed by the class.

118 Teachers generally have a good knowledge of the history they are teaching and make the subject come alive for the pupils. In a Year 5 lesson on the Tudors, the class teacher gave pupils a lively insight into everyday details of Tudor life, capturing their imagination with fascinating facts about Tudor medical practices such as blood-letting and the implications of the lack of proper sanitation and hygiene. Teaching of the lives of Tudor monarchs was less successful, however, as pupils only studied Henry VIII in any depth. Effective use is made of the local area as a learning resource, for example in a Year 3 cross-curricular topic which culminated in a day's visit to Jesmond Dene, a local beauty spot which is rich in history. To support this topic the class teacher had borrowed from the resource centre a set of photographs taken in the Dene a hundred years ago. Pupils compared these photographs with modern day photographs taken by their class teacher as preparation for their actual visit.

119 Pupils' progress is sound and sometimes good through individual topics, but it is still patchy overall. The presentation of pupils' written work is an area for improvement across the school, but particularly at Key Stage 2. Not enough value is placed on the presentation of a complete topic of pupils' work, for example, and written work is simply recorded in topic books amongst other subjects. Furthermore, pupils are not required to create rich, extended pieces of work which involve them organising and structuring their ideas at a higher level. This kind of work would provide a useful challenge to the most able pupils and assist all pupils in making links between different aspects of their knowledge and understanding. The use of a variety of media to represent pupils' historical knowledge is also lacking. Whilst teachers usually give satisfactory support to pupils with special educational needs or lower achieving pupils, work is often set at the same level for all and these pupils often do not finish their work as it is too difficult for them.

120 Teachers are currently using a trial curriculum outline for history and this is providing a useful structure and stimulating activities. Whilst the co-ordinator has monitored the history curriculum by analysing teachers' plans and by observing displays, she has had no opportunities to monitor teaching in order to evaluate the impact of the new curriculum guidelines. As yet there is no policy to indicate how the new curriculum guidelines should be implemented or to give an overview of the skills to be taught at each key stage. The assessment and recording of pupils' progress throughout the year is still at an early stage of development and is not consistent throughout the school.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

121 The last inspection indicated that standards in information and communication technology were in line with expectations at the time. There is no doubt that the school has improved standards in information and communication technology since then, and particularly so in the last two years, but standards are now just reaching the levels they should be for pupils' ages.

122 The school has invested heavily in this subject. There is now a computer suite with state-of-the-art equipment that provides pupils with an excellent range of resources to support their learning. In addition, the school benefits from the services of a technician, provided by the local education authority who provides high quality support to all classes on a rolling programme. This support is extremely effective and one of the reasons why standards are rising so quickly. This also has the added benefit that class teachers are learning alongside their pupils and are beginning to develop their own confidence, skills and expertise.

123 Lessons are planned carefully to develop pupils' information and communication technology skills and also to provide a link into work in other areas, usually literacy and numeracy. For example, in a Year 2 lesson pupils were learning to use a program, which gave them the opportunity to work at their own level when fitting passengers into carriages on a train. This fitted neatly into the work they were doing in numeracy that week. In another Year 2 lesson, pupils successfully programmed a floor robot to travel around the solar system. They carefully recorded their commands and discussed effectively the accuracy of their programming. Teachers are developing their own knowledge and their increasing confidence in the subject means that lessons are challenging and pupils are well supported in their learning. For instance, a group of Year 5 pupils were most enthusiastic when they learned to use direct commands to effectively control lifting devices. They showed very good initiative to make the task increasingly harder, and clearly benefited from the teacher guiding and supporting their learning. The Year 6 teacher made very good use of a computer to present an exciting introduction to a literacy lesson on poetry. This had the effect of increasing pupils' understanding of the task and improving the quality of their work on similes and metaphors.

124 The school has made information and communications technology a priority over the past two years and this has been very successful. The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject very well and makes very good use of her own expertise to set the standard for other teachers to aim for in her teaching.

## **MUSIC**

125 The school has maintained good standards in music since the last inspection. The musical performance of pupils is a major strength of the school. The school values the support of the community in promoting music.

126 Pupils' attainment and progress is good, particularly in singing, and performing. In Years 1 and 2, pupils sing, without instrumental accompaniment, with good attention to pitch and rhythm. They attempt singing songs with two part rounds. In Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, pupils confidently sing songs with two and three part rounds. They pay particular attention to rhythm when singing African freedom songs. Older pupils have opportunities to receive tuition from the local education authority's team of musicians. As a result, many pupils in Year 6 confidently read notation. They also perform from memory, demonstrating an awareness of their own contribution, such as leading or providing rhythmic support. They polish and improve their work.

127 Teaching is good overall. In some lessons, taught by a music specialist, the teaching is very good. Very good subject knowledge is used well to challenge pupils. Where class teachers teach their own classes, lesson planning is sound. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher made good links with religious education, and taught pupils a Jewish song. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher used resources well to encourage pupils to compose their own music. Good teaching allows pupils to evaluate their performance, and to suggest how they might record their compositions.

128 Pupils enjoy musical activities and participate enthusiastically. They value, and respect, each other's performance when they share their talents in some whole school assemblies. However,

pupils seldom sing in daily assemblies, and taped music is not used well as an introduction to assemblies.

129 Pupils who play the steel pans are invited to perform at different venues, such as the local Church fete. The choir performs at a local Carnival. Local musicians, the school's steel pans and the community band play at an annual Family Music Night. There are regular visitors to the school who support the music curriculum well. Northern Opera worked with pupils in Year 6, and a composer in residence has worked with pupils from Year 1 to Year 6.

130 The employment of a music specialist is providing effective in-service training for some teachers. Since the previous co-ordinator left the school, there is no named co-ordinator with responsibility for music, but this is not impacting on standards. The co-ordinator for art and design manages the 'arts' curriculum very well. Music makes a positive contribution to pupils' social and cultural development. Pupils work well together as a team. For example, when they play the steel pans. They learn a variety of songs from their own, and other cultures.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

131 Standards in physical education are satisfactory. The picture was much the same in the last inspection.

132 Pupils in Year 1 work enthusiastically in dance, for example when they move to interpret the growth of seeds. They respond very well to the music and thoroughly enjoy their work. Pupils are given good opportunities to watch and evaluate the work of others in the class. In another Year 1 class pupils work well in gymnastics when they move in high and low body positions on apparatus. They are able to work independently and with a partner and have good opportunities to reflect and offer views on their own and others' performance to move the work forward. All lessons begin with a brisk warm-up and end with a cool-down and pupils were able to explain why it is so important to do this. For example, pupils in the reception class explain that they feel warmer and can feel their heart beating faster after the warm-up.

133 Steady progress is maintained at Key Stage 2. Year 3 pupils achieve well in their games lesson when they improve the skills of throwing using a shoulder pass with increasing control and accuracy. The teacher's enthusiasm and personal expertise is highly influential in pupils' learning. By skilfully using demonstration and structuring the lesson so that the pupils faced increasing challenges, the teaching ensured that the pupils were working at the full extent of their capabilities. Pupils speak confidently about what they are doing and offer each other helpful criticism, which is used to make improvements. Teachers have good organisational skills and positive relationships with pupils. As a result, pupils enjoy their physical educational lessons and respond well to instruction and praise to improve their performance. For instance, in a Year 6 cricket lesson, pupils developed their skills of bowling and batting with the help of demonstrations from the teacher and fellow pupils. The skills were then applied effectively to a competitive but friendly game. By the age of 11, almost all pupils reach the recommended standard in swimming. This owes much to the school's strategy of providing swimming lessons for pupils from Year 2 to Year 6.

134 Teachers plan lessons well and most have good subject knowledge. Planning is good with clear objectives and where these are shared with pupils at the start of lessons, pupils are more focused in their activities. Most teachers give pupils plenty of opportunities to practise and refine their skills. Where the teaching could be better, a slower pace and a lack of enthusiasm for the subject on the part of pupils is more noticeable. However, even when behaviour is more challenging, teachers work hard to move the lesson along despite some inappropriate behaviour from a few difficult pupils. In the best lessons, work in physical education develops pupils' abilities to talk about their feelings and improve performance effectively. In some lessons, however, pupils have insufficient opportunities to

discuss their performance or how they could improve. Most pupils respond positively in physical education lessons. They work well together and co-operate in pairs and in small groups, following the teacher's directions with enthusiasm and enjoyment.

135 The subject leader has a good understanding of the subject and offers sound support to other teachers. She works well with colleagues to ensure a sound range of extra-curricular activities. Teachers' planning is good and is effectively monitored by the subject leader. Assessment of pupil progress is effectively incorporated in planning. Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to acquire additional skills in outdoor educational activities during a residential visit to Kielder. The school makes good use of its hall and the hard play area. The absence of a grassed area is a problem particularly in the summer months but the school partially compensates for this by using the fields at the nearby feeder secondary school. The school has recently been successful in bidding for sports hall facilities to be built on its present site.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

136 Standards in religious education broadly match the expectations of the agreed syllabus for religious education for pupils by the end of Year 2. However, standards have dropped since the last inspection and are below the expectations of the agreed syllabus by the end of Year 6. This is because these pupils do not build well enough on their previous learning, particularly about the faiths of Hinduism and Islam. As a result, by the end of Year 6 pupils do not have the breadth or depth of knowledge and understanding expected of 11 year olds.

137 In Year 1 pupils are learning some of the parables Jesus told. They suggest that these stories "tell us to be good, because there are good people in them". In Year 2, pupils know that Shabbat is an important religious Jewish celebration. They know the sequence of events, and use the correct terms for some of the religious items used during Shabbat.

138 In Year 3 pupils know the Hindu story of Rama and Sita and about the festival of Diwali, but their knowledge and understanding of Hindu belief and worship is poor. In Year 4, pupils give their own explanations of some Christian symbols. They know the Christmas and Easter stories, and their importance to Christians. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are learning about Islamic belief and prayer ritual. A Muslim parent has spoken to pupils in Year 6, and this has had a positive impact on their learning. Pupils know that Muslims pray five times a day, and they understand the washing ritual before prayer. However, in discussion with pupils in Year 6, many pupils are unsure about forms of Christian worship, such as the Eucharist. Their knowledge and understanding about Hinduism is poor, and some pupils confuse this with Sikhism. Many pupils have little understanding of what it means to belong to a faith, or how their faith affects the lives of religious people.

139 The quality of teaching varies considerably. It is good in lessons in Years 1 and 2, where teachers have good subject knowledge. Lesson objectives are shared with pupils and this impacts on their learning because they know what they have to do. However, although only one unsatisfactory lesson was seen at Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory overall. Teachers' planning is often very brief, and only identifies learning objectives for the lesson. Teachers do not use information about what pupils can, or cannot, do in lessons well enough to plan future lessons. As a result, there is often a lack of challenge in activities, particularly for higher attaining pupils. Scrutiny of pupils' previous work shows that too often they simply draw pictures, which they colour in. This provides little opportunity for them to show what they have learnt. Marking is often superficial, and teachers do not have a reliable system for assessing pupils' learning or standards. Some teachers lack subject knowledge and confidence, when teaching about the faiths of Hinduism and Islam. However, in lessons in Years 5 and 6, teachers were good role models respecting and valuing the beliefs of Muslim pupils in their class.

140 The time allocated to religious education at Key Stage 2 is below the minimum indicated in the agreed syllabus. In Year 5, timetabling means that the religious education lesson is split and part of the lesson is taught later in the week. Some lessons are taught immediately before, or after, pupils have to move to the hall in the other building. This results in further loss of lesson time. There is insufficient monitoring of teaching, planning, or of pupils' work. There are no reliable assessment procedures in place, although the agreed syllabus states clearly what pupils at the end of Years 2, 4 and 6 should know. Resources are inadequate and visits in the locality are not used well enough to support pupils' learning. All these factors contribute to standards being lower than they should be.