

INSPECTION REPORT

ST BEDE'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Newcastle upon Tyne

LEA area: Newcastle upon Tyne

Unique reference number: 108505

Headteacher: Mr Michael Scurr

Reporting inspector: Mr Derek Sleightholme
2759

Dates of inspection: 7th February – 11th February 2000

Inspection number: 193933

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Howlett Hall Road
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NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

Postcode: NE15 7HS

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr David McShane

Date of previous inspection: 8th July 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Derek Sleightholme	Registered inspector	Mathematics	What sort of school is it?
		Information Technology	How high are the standards?
		Geography	How well are the pupils taught?
		Music	
		Equal Opportunities	
Katherine Anderson	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils and students?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Pauline Smith	Team inspector	English	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
		Art	
		History	
		Physical Education	
		Under Fives	
		English as an additional language.	
Ken Self	Team inspector	Design Technology	
Graham Carter	Team Inspector	Science	How well is the school led and managed?
		Special Educational Needs	

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is located about two miles west of Newcastle city centre. It is an average sized primary school for girls and boys aged 4 - 11. There are currently 212 pupils on roll. Pupils' attainment on entry is below average. At the time of the inspection only nine out of twenty-nine reception pupils were aged 5. Although there are two pupils from ethnic minorities neither has English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average. Three pupils have a statement of special educational needs. This year pupils in Year 3 are taught by two teachers through a job share arrangement.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective and improving school. Standards have improved since the last inspection and they are now broadly in line with national averages in English and mathematics at the end of both key stages and in science at the end of Key Stage 2. There is a high percentage of very good teaching, mostly at Key Stage 2. Most aspects of the leadership and management are good and the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Most of the teaching is good with very good teaching of mathematics at Key Stage 2.
- There is good leadership and management based on a clear understanding of school improvement.
- The behaviour of the pupils is mostly good; their attitudes to school, personal development and attendance are very good.
- Pupils' attainment in information technology is above average by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- The school makes very good links with parents.

What could be improved

- Attainment of the under-fives and science at Key Stage 1.
- The teaching and curriculum of the pupils in the reception class.
- Subject leadership for music and art and the co-ordination of the work of the reception year.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress in addressing the weaknesses pointed out in its last inspection in July 1996. Although the national test results at age 11 have improved in all core subjects from 1998 to 1999 the greatest improvement has been in English and mathematics. Attainment has risen in both information technology and design technology at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The percentage of lessons where teaching is very good is much higher. Most teachers are now more confident in their subject knowledge, they plan work more effectively and have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve. The school has tackled previous weaknesses in schemes of work by adopting national guidance in most subjects. This has provided time to concentrate on successfully implementing the literacy and numeracy strategies. The governors have improved their monitoring of the school's performance. Staff share their expertise in most subjects and the monitoring role of co-ordinators is much more closely linked to judging standards in order to raise attainment. The school is well placed to make further improvements.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

In the national test programme at age 11 results in English were well below average for one year and average for two years. Pupils achieved average results in mathematics in 1999, a considerable improvement on the previous two years. In science, although test results remained below the national average in 1999 they were an improvement on the previous two years. In 1999 pupils are achieving at least as well in science as in most similar schools. In English and mathematics the standards achieved were above those of similar schools. This inspection has confirmed an improving trend in the school's average National Curriculum points score that reflects the national trend.

The inspection has shown that there are differences between the achievement of pupils under-five and those at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. By the age of 5 most pupils, with the exception of their physical development where standards are average, do not achieve what would be expected across a range of their work. However the inspection has shown that by the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils achieve average standards in English and mathematics. Standards in science are however below average at age 7. The attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 is typical of that found nationally in English and mathematics. The inspection has shown that standards in science at age 11 are better than the 1999 test results. Most pupils read accurately and fluently and have increased their skills as independent writers. They use numbers confidently to calculate and to solve problems. The school has set appropriate targets for English and mathematics based on a 5% improvement each year in the national tests for 11 year-olds. Results in 1999 were 9% above the English target and 3% below the mathematics target for that year. Standards in information technology are above average at the end of both key stages. Pupils' competence in all other subjects is about average at both key stages. This inspection did not cover religious education.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Most pupils display very good attitudes to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour ranges from excellent to unsatisfactory; mostly it is good. There have been no pupils excluded during the last year.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development and relationships are very good.
Attendance	Attendance is well above average.

Most pupils concentrate and want to do well at school. Their behaviour is at times excellent. However, there are occasions, particularly in the reception class, when behaviour becomes unsatisfactory because the pupils are not managed appropriately. Most pupils form very good relationships with adults and each other. As pupils become older, they take on increased responsibilities and carry these out with pride. The well above average attendance makes a direct contribution to the improving standards.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	unsatisfactory	good	very 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.

The quality of teaching of language, literacy and mathematics in the reception year is generally satisfactory. The quality of teaching of English at Key Stage 1 ranges from very good to unsatisfactory; mostly it is good. At Key Stage 2 the teaching of English is mostly very good. The quality of teaching of mathematics at Key Stage 1 ranges from very good to satisfactory in equal proportions. The teaching of mathematics at Key Stage 2 is consistently very good.

Although the quality of teaching in the reception year is variable and ranges from good to poor, it is mostly unsatisfactory. This has a marked impact and hinders pupils' learning. The teaching of basic skills to these pupils and the provision of their reading homework is however satisfactory and it does help them to make some progress. Nevertheless, reception pupils' learning is significantly restricted because the planning of their work is ineffective, expectations are low, assessments of pupils' needs are weak and too much time is spent on managing pupils who easily lose interest. These matters are addressed satisfactorily at Key Stage 1 and built on very successfully at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1 most of the teaching is good and by the age of 7 standards have improved considerably. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well because both infant and junior teachers are confident in delivering the national strategies. Most of the teaching at Key Stage 2 is very good. Teachers are very secure in their knowledge and understanding of the subjects, their planning and methodology is very good and they have very high expectations of what all pupils might achieve. The management of pupils is excellent and it very effectively promotes good learning. As a result standards are improving particularly in English,

mathematics and science.

Overall teaching is satisfactory or better in 93% lessons and very good or better in 38% lessons. It is unsatisfactory or worse in 7% lessons. There was no unsatisfactory teaching at Key Stage 2 and almost two thirds of it of it was very good. At Key Stage 1 a small proportion of teaching was judged to be very good and only one unsatisfactory lesson was observed. There were shortcomings in the teaching of the reception year in one third of lessons. Whereas the pace of learning and concentration shown by Key Stage 2 pupils is a particular strength, reception pupils' learning is too often restricted by their lack of interest and effort.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The reception year curriculum is unsatisfactory. The curriculum for pupils aged 5 to 11 is good with a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Statutory requirements fully met. Unsatisfactory range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good for pupils aged 5 to 11 but unsatisfactory for the under-fives.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision overall. Very good moral and social development; good cultural development and satisfactory spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good procedures for child protection. Weak assessment of the under-fives. Satisfactory assessment and monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development for pupils aged 5 to 11. Very good educational and personal support and good procedures for monitoring attendance.

The school has established very effective links with parents. Their help in school activities is making a positive contribution to raising standards. The good early years' policy is not followed sufficiently well to support an appropriate curriculum for most pupils under five. Although there is a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy there is sufficient time for other subjects. Considerable attention is given to the welfare, health and safety of pupils. Staff understand their pupils and are sensitive to their differing backgrounds and needs.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The high profile and strong leadership of the headteacher is having a direct impact on the raising of standards. There is a strong sense of teamwork and a clear understanding of how the school should improve.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors' have a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have set realistic targets for English and mathematics. With the exception of some aspects of appraisal, all statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Regular discussion of standards and a good start made to monitoring procedures. Satisfactory monitoring of teaching. Good progress in the application of best value principles and in understanding the effect of spending decisions.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Appropriately allocated to support initiatives such as improving facilities for information technology. Good use of specific funding to support the teaching of pupils with special educational needs.

There is satisfactory provision of staffing, accommodation and resources for learning. The governors discharge their responsibilities as a whole governing body and through their committees very well. Subject leadership is variable and ranges from good in English, mathematics and information technology to unsatisfactory in music, art and the co-ordination of the work of the reception year. The monitoring and evaluating of the school is continually improving with better analysis of data, external evaluation and overview of progress. The principles of best value are being adopted successfully.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The good teaching. • Their children make good progress. • The good leadership and management. • The pupils' good behaviour and their mature and responsible attitudes. • The way they can approach staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of extra-curricular activities.

Inspectors' judgements support the parents' views regarding the strengths of the school and agree that at present there is an unsatisfactory range of extra-curricular activities.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The attainment of children when they start school is generally below average. By the time they are five most pupils, including those with special educational needs, have made unsatisfactory progress and have not achieved what would be expected for their age. Most reception pupils, however, make good progress in reading. They develop an interest in books and an enjoyment of literature. Although many pupils can write their own name some do not form their letters correctly. Most pupils can count numbers to 10 and some have learned how to move a computer mouse to make pictures using art software.

2. Over the last three years attainment in reading has improved from below average to above average. For the same period pupils' attainment in writing has improved from below the national average to the national average. In mathematics pupils' performance has been typical of that found nationally across all three years. In the 1999 tests for reading and mathematics the percentage of pupils attaining both level 2 and the higher level (level 3) was in line with the national average. In the 1999 writing test, although the percentage of pupils attaining level 2 was above the national average, no pupils achieved level 3. In science in 1999 the percentage of pupils through teacher assessments was below the national average at level 2 and well below the national average at level 3. No pupils were judged through teacher assessments to attain the higher level.

3. Across the four-year period from 1996 to 1999 the performance of girls and boys was similar in reading. Girls' performance in writing and mathematics exceeded that of boys.

4. Most pupils are making satisfactory progress and achieving well in most subjects at Key Stage 1. The 1999 test results in reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1 were well above the average for similar schools. Mathematics results were above those of similar schools.

5. The results of the national tests for pupils age 11 taken over the last three years show pupils' performance in English to be average in 1997, well below average in 1998 and average in 1999. In mathematics and science results were well below average in both 1997 and 1998. However by 1999 test results in mathematics had improved to the national average. Although 1999 science test results improved they remained below the national average. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher level (level 5) was above the national average in English and average in mathematics and science.

6. Across the four-year period from 1996 to 1999 the performance of boys exceeded that of girls in English. There were no significant differences in the attainment of girls and boys in mathematics and science for the same period.

7. The school has set appropriate targets based on a 5% improvement each year in the national tests for 11 year-olds in English and mathematics. Results in 1999 were 9% above the English target and 3% below the mathematics target for that year.

8. Most pupils are making good progress and 1999 test results in English and mathematics show they are achieving standards above those of similar schools. Most are achieving at least as well in science as in similar schools.

9. Inspection evidence drawn from lessons, the scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with current pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 shows that most pupils make good progress in English throughout the school. By the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 their attainment is average in all aspects of English. When compared to their attainment at the age of 5 most pupils have made good progress in mathematics and by the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 they are achieving average standards. In science, by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is below the national average. However, by the end of Key Stage 2, it is in line with the national average. The inspection has shown that standards in science at age 11 are better than the 1999 test results. This good progress at Key Stage 2 can be directly traced to the good teaching identified in this key stage. Standards in information technology are above average at the end of both key stages. Pupils' competence in all other subjects is about average at both key stages.

10. In English, by the age of 7, most pupils speak clearly and confidently, they respond positively when answering questions and they ask pertinent questions. They correctly use appropriate terminology in class discussions. Most have developed good listening skills and can listen to instructions carefully. By the age of 11 pupils can debate social issues conveying their ideas with sound reasoning. They confidently use standard English and answer questions with clarity and detail. By the age of 7 most pupils read accurately and fluently with expression and understanding. They use a range of strategies to read unfamiliar words, they know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books and how to retrieve information. By the age of 11, most pupils continue to read accurately, fluently and with good expression. They make reference to the text when recalling detail, discussing characters and making predictions. Some pupils are beginning to make deductions. The most skilled readers have become very critical when reading and express opinions about characters and authors. By the age of 7, most pupils confidently write stories, descriptions, letters and captions. Most use capital letters and full stops correctly. Their spelling is fairly accurate and some have begun to use cursive writing. By the age of 11 pupils are mainly independent writers using a variety of styles. They plan their writing carefully and redraft appropriately. Some begin to use more adventurous vocabulary when constructing sentences that are more complex and use the conventions of grammar. Pupils' spelling is usually accurate and they use dictionaries and thesauri appropriately. Their handwriting is legible, well formed and joined. Presentation is mainly good. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2 throughout the English curriculum.

11. By the age of 7 most pupils can calculate accurately using numbers up to 100. They know the difference between odd and even numbers and they can make doubles. Some are beginning to set down numbers as tens and units. Most pupils can select coins, they work out prices and calculate the correct change. Most know the elementary tables well. By the age of 11 most pupils use up to four digit numbers when solving number problems. Most understand fractions, decimals and negative numbers. In geometry they draw accurately acute, obtuse and right angles. Pupils collate data accurately to produce a range of graphs.

12. In science, by the age of 7, most pupils can make simple predictions and observations and they know how to conduct a fair test. Many pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the sources of light and how it can be reflected. By the age of 11, most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of forces. They can design an investigation to compare the rates of evaporation of different liquids.

13. In information technology, by the age of 7, most pupils have acquired the

terminology associated with a computer. They can use the keyboard controls to amend text. Most pupils can control the mouse skilfully to produce detailed work in art. By the age of 11 many know how to produce an e-mail. Higher attaining pupils can use floppy disks confidently and some have acquired advanced information technology skills.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Most pupils display very positive attitudes to school. They arrive promptly and enjoy their work both in the class and during out of school visits. They talk enthusiastically about what they are doing. During the inspection two Year 6 pupils took pleasure and pride in showing visitors round their classroom and explaining some of the work which was displayed on the walls.

15. Pupils' behaviour is variable and ranges from excellent to unsatisfactory; mostly it is good. In a Year 3 mathematics lesson pupils undertook activities based on cubes. They listened attentively, responded well when questioned and displayed an obvious respect for their teacher. However, there are occasions, mainly in the reception class, when pupils are unsuccessfully managed, their concentration suffers and standards of behaviour become unsatisfactory. Pupils take pride in the awards they receive when their behaviour is good. They understand the school rules and have a clear sense of right and wrong.

16. Pupils work well both individually and in groups. Year 3 pupils worked co-operatively during an out of school visit. They undertook a survey of traffic and worked in pairs to complete tally charts. Most pupils are fully involved in lessons. They ask and answer questions with enthusiasm and are willing to listen to each other. Year 6 pupils enjoyed listening to a visitor who described her experiences as an evacuee during the Second World War. Pupils questioned her politely and listened attentively to her answers.

17. As pupils become older they willingly take on an increasingly wide range of responsibilities which they carry out with diligence and pride. All classes have their own named helpers for each day. Year 6 pupils take on a range of school responsibilities; for example distributing registers at the start of the day, setting up the hall for assembly and counting vouchers at lunchtime. They also work with younger pupils in the paired reading scheme. These tasks help to develop pupils' initiative and personal responsibility.

18. Relationships throughout the school are very good. The pupils form very good relationships with each other and the adults with whom they have contact.

19. Attendance is well above average. Pupils take pride in receiving attendance awards and work well together to gain the class award.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. At the time of the last inspection teaching was satisfactory or better in 94% lessons. It was very good or better in 8% lessons. Whereas teachers were confident and secure in the teaching of English and mathematics, this was not the case in science and design technology where in both subjects, the need for training was identified.

21. Teaching is now satisfactory or better in 93% lessons and very good or better in 38% lessons. It is unsatisfactory in 7% lessons. There was no unsatisfactory teaching at Key Stage 2 and almost two thirds of it of it was very good. At Key Stage 1 only one unsatisfactory lesson was observed and a small proportion of teaching was judged to be very good. There are weaknesses in the teaching of the reception year with shortcomings

in one third of lessons. This inspection has confirmed that, although the percentage of teaching that is satisfactory or better is similar to the last inspection, the proportion of lessons where teaching is very good or better has increased considerably.

22. The quality of teaching of language, literacy and mathematics in the reception year is generally satisfactory. The quality of teaching in English at Key Stage 1 ranges from very good to unsatisfactory; mostly it is good. At Key Stage 2 the teaching of English is mostly very good. The quality of teaching in mathematics at Key Stage 1 ranges from very good to satisfactory in equal proportions. The teaching of mathematics at Key Stage 2 is consistently very good. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well because both infant and junior teachers are implementing both national strategies with confidence.

23. The weaknesses identified in the teaching of reception pupils restrict gains in learning. The teaching of basic skills to these pupils and the provision of their reading homework is however satisfactory and it does help them to make some progress. In most lessons, however, reception pupils' learning is significantly limited because the planning of the work is unsatisfactory, expectations are low, assessments of pupils' needs are weak and too much time is spent on managing pupils who easily lose interest.

24. These matters are addressed satisfactorily at Key Stage 1 where most of the teaching is good and by the age of 7 standards have improved considerably. The management of pupils and use of lesson time are satisfactory at this key stage. All other aspects of teaching at Key Stage 1 are good and have a direct impact on helping to raise standards. For example in a Year 1 humanities lesson pupils' understanding of chronology improved because the teacher was confident in teaching history, the lesson was delivered clearly and skilful use of questions and answers involved pupils of different levels of attainment. The teacher used assessment effectively to check on pupils' understanding. The provision of old lanterns enhanced the historical experiences. In a skill based physical education lesson for Year 2, the teacher made good use of demonstration, circulated well to provide individual coaching to improve hand and eye co-ordination and insisted that pupils paid due regard to safety.

25. Teaching improves further at Key Stage 2 and mostly it is very good. Teachers are very confident in their knowledge of the subjects, their planning and methodology are very secure and they have very high expectations of what all pupils might achieve. The management of pupils is excellent and it promotes good learning very effectively. As a result standards are improving particularly in the core subjects. In a Year 4 science lesson judged to be excellent the teacher conveyed charismatic enthusiasm for the subject, there were very clear objectives covering the separation of substances within a mixture and as the lesson proceeded pupils extended their use of scientific vocabulary. Excellent intervention by the teacher led pupils to very good learning through a very well organised practical activity.

26. At both key stages most pupils make sufficient gains in their learning to have made good progress in English and mathematics and information technology at Key Stage 1. Pupils make very good progress in information technology at Key Stage 2. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2 in science, history and physical education. In geography and design technology most pupils make satisfactory gains in learning at both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs make similar rates of progress to others in relation to their prior attainment.

27. Improvements in standards and gains in pupils' learning are securely based on a number of related factors. Teachers have worked hard to successfully implement the

literacy and numeracy initiatives. With the exception of the reception year, the planning of lessons is much more rigorous and objectives state clearly what knowledge and skills pupils are expected to acquire. Significant gains have been made at Key Stage 2 where much of the most successful teaching occurs. This has a direct impact on pupils' making good progress such as in science at Key Stage 2. The school has successfully adopted the curriculum guidance received from the Qualifications and Assessment Authority. This has created time for teachers to concentrate on successfully promoting basic skills in English and mathematics and ensuring satisfactory and often good gains in learning in other subjects. Gains in learning are much better in information technology and design technology than when the school was last inspected and former weaknesses in these subjects have been tackled successfully. Key Stage 2 pupils are particularly committed to working at a good pace, they concentrate well and want to achieve. However, in many reception class lessons the pupils easily lose interest in what they are doing and this hinders their progress.

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

28. The curriculum for pupils under five is unsatisfactory. The programme of work for all reception pupils follows the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. Consequently, learning activities are not always planned to match the developmental needs of all the children, the majority of whom are not yet five. Although a good draft Early Years Policy is in place it is not adhered to sufficiently well to support all reception class pupils. Some activities are too sophisticated, such as in music, or too directed such as in physical education. There is insufficient balance between direct teaching and opportunities for investigation and exploration. The headteacher and governors have already identified the weakness of the under-fives curriculum and it is featured as a priority for improvement in the school development plan.

29. The curriculum at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is good. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are provided with a broad, relevant and balanced programme covering all subjects. Statutory requirements are met. There is an appropriately strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy, but sufficient time remains for other subjects. The music curriculum follows a commercial scheme satisfactorily. Since the last inspection the school has ensured schemes of work are in place for all subjects. This has ensured a considerably improved curriculum for design and technology and information technology.

30. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been successfully implemented and are helping to raise standards. Planning for literacy and numeracy is consistent, clear, detailed and well structured. Activities are well matched to the learning needs of all pupils. This ensures that systematic learning gains are made as pupils move through the school. Good opportunities have been created for literacy and numeracy to permeate the wider curriculum. Year 2 pupils effectively used a literacy text to support geographical learning and Year 6 pupils wrote poignant letters home as wartime evacuees. The curriculum in Key Stage 1 is effectively planned through topics. In Key Stage 2, although subjects are planned separately, there are strong links between subjects such as geography and history. In Year 4 pupils studied the Ancient Greeks in history and modern Greece in geography.

31. Homework is appropriate and effectively extends the curriculum for all pupils. The 'Booster Class' for Year 6 pupils held during the summer term of 1999 has had a positive impact on standards. Key Stage 2 pupils can learn to play musical instruments including

the clarinet, flute, guitar and penny whistle. There are sufficient opportunities for Key Stage 2 pupils to participate in sporting activities including netball, football, swimming, athletics and cricket. They participate in inter schools competitions and are frequently successful. However, the range of extra-curricular activities is unsatisfactory and parents concerns on this matter are justified.

32. The school has a comprehensive equal opportunities policy and successfully implements it. All pupils have equal access and opportunity to the school curriculum. Teachers frequently check to ensure that all pupils in the class have answered questions and all pupils have opportunities to undertake responsibilities.

33. An appropriate programme of personal, social and health education, including drugs education is provided. Formal sex education is not taught, but pupils gain knowledge and understanding of human growth and development through the science curriculum. Health education is provided through science and physical education. Personal and social experiences are discussed regularly when pupils discuss their feelings, views and opinions.

34. Links with the community are good, and have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Good use is made of the opportunities provided through the Newcastle United Football Development Centre which offers popular courses twice each year. Extensive use is made of the local area to support learning through visits to places of historical and geographical interest. Year 3 pupils visited Newcastle quayside to look at the architecture, bridges and transport of the area. Year 5 pupils spent a day investigating Tudor Durham and visiting a museum. The local church community attend events within school and bring their experience and expertise to the pupils. Local sponsorship has been provided by a nearby pizza shop, and good use is made of promotion schemes to help provide additional resources. The school supports a wide range of charities each year, both locally, nationally and internationally.

35. Moral and social development are very good, cultural development is good and spiritual development is satisfactory.

36. Spiritual development is satisfactorily promoted. All pupils pray at the beginning and end of each day, and before meals. Older pupils think of special people who need to be included in prayers. Christian symbols are displayed in classrooms and around the school to promote reflection. The celebration of festivals helps to promote a multi-cultural understanding. Year 5 pupils appreciated the intricacy and beauty of illuminated manuscripts. Pupils have the opportunity to reflect on the life and work of St Bede through the effective collages on display in the school entrance.

37. Moral development is very good. The behaviour policy is consistently applied. Most pupils know the difference between right and wrong. They are encouraged to reflect and discuss moral issues and write their own class rules.

38. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their social skills. Activities are planned for pupils to work together in pairs or groups. Improvements in information technology extend this very effectively. Sports activities effectively support teamwork and promote fair play.

39. Opportunities for cultural provision are good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The implementation of the literacy strategy has nurtured an interest and more in-depth understanding of literature. Theatre groups visit school regularly. Pupils develop a good understanding of their own culture and that of historical periods. They have

opportunities to appreciate art, architecture and museum artefacts. Year 4 pupils closely observed Greek art, Tudor portrait painting and the work of Van Gogh.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. This school gives high priority to the welfare, health and safety of its pupils. Regular fire and safety checks are carried out and security has been reviewed. The emergency contact scheme works well. There are good procedures for child protection. Break times and the lunch period are well supervised. Staff are constantly vigilant, looking for any signs of unsatisfactory behaviour or bullying. Incidents are quickly reported and effectively dealt with by the headteacher. Movement around the school is well organised.

41. Baseline assessments are satisfactorily made and end of key stage assessments meet statutory requirements. Several tests are used in addition to the national test programme. The information gathered is analysed and effectively informs the planning of pupils' work. At present, however, teachers' lesson plans do not formally include opportunities for assessment. This aspect of teaching has been identified by co-ordinators to be addressed in the near future.

42. Staff understand their pupils and are sensitive to their differing backgrounds and needs. As a result, informal monitoring of each pupil's personal progress and development is continuously taking place. Staff endeavour to ensure that each pupil is given responsibilities both in class and in the wider school community. The personal, social and health education programme has a positive impact on pupil's awareness of health and safety issues.

43. Procedures to promote good behaviour and attendance are well established and very effective. Attendance rates, which are constantly monitored by the headteacher and welfare officer, are well above average.

44. The level of support and guidance the school provides has a positive effect in helping to raise standards.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. This school is held in high esteem by most parents. Analysis of the Parents' Questionnaire and discussions with parents before and during the inspection confirms their very high degree of satisfaction with the work of the school. Most feel extremely welcome in school and that they can easily approach staff with problems or concerns they may have.

46. Many parents help within school. Their expertise is used to help in the library, with reading and food technology. They provide effective support during school visits. During the inspection a parent was observed helping Year 6 pupils to make broth with ingredients which would have been available during the war. Another accompanied pupils to the local sports centre. Parents have been very active in raising funds and these have been used to purchase additional resources. Parents' contributions have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

47. Parents receive a wide range of good quality information about the school through the prospectus, newsletters and meetings. Reports to parents are well written, informative and comply with statutory requirements. Helpful information is regularly updated on the parents' notice board in the school entrance. A home/school agreement has recently been introduced and both parents and staff believe that it has had a positive impact on extending

parents' involvement. The homework reading diaries provide a valuable means of communication. All pupils take work home and the quantity increases as they become older. Most parents are content with the amount of homework their children are given and it helps them to gain an understanding of their children's learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. Since his appointment four terms prior to the inspection, the headteacher has maintained a very high profile around the school and has quickly established the confidence of governors, staff, pupils and parents. He and his senior management team have worked together closely with the governing body to achieve a clear and realistic consensus about how the school should continue to improve in the future. In order to achieve this, the views of parents about the strengths and weaknesses of the school have been sought and acted upon through a parental questionnaire survey. Governors, headteacher and staff are strongly committed to school improvement, and to build on existing strengths whilst having proper regard for the school's strong, Catholic, Christian ethos.

49. The headteacher provides strong leadership and has a clear vision about raising the attainment of the school. He has recently overseen changes in curriculum planning and provision of resources, which have already begun to have a positive impact on levels of attainment. The headteacher is well supported in this vision by his deputy head teacher, who maintains strong links with the Parish and parents, who value her support and advice. The quality of curriculum co-ordination is variable. In English, mathematics and information technology it is good. In music, art and the under fives, co-ordination is unsatisfactory. In science and all other subjects it is satisfactory.

50. The headteacher has established an effective procedure for monitoring the curriculum through the scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work and is using this to provide valuable feedback to staff and to inform future developments. He has also made a valuable start to monitoring the quality of teaching in English and mathematics, and intends to extend this to other subjects.

51. In the previous inspection report, governors were criticised for not having a sufficiently strategic role in curriculum development and in monitoring standards. Since then the governors have made good use of their Curriculum Committee to support the major national initiatives in numeracy and literacy, and have also agreed continuing improvements in the school's overall provision for information technology and special educational needs. Individual governors have used their 'link' governor roles to keep well informed about these aspects of provision. The governors have also improved their monitoring of the school's performance. They now regularly discuss standards with the headteacher, using both national and LEA generated comparisons, and use this information to set realistic targets in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. There is presently no formal arrangement for appraising teachers. However the governors have set appropriate targets for the headteacher and deputy headteacher in accordance with statutory requirements.

52. The school improvement plan contains relevant targets for improvement, although in science, clear targets for improvements in attainment at Key Stage 1 have not been identified. Targets are well linked to appropriate resources, realistic time scales and monitoring procedures. Governors have used performance monitoring data to identify spending targets in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. However, the previous report criticised governors for not including longer term targets in the development

plan, and this deficiency remains with the present plan.

53. The quality of financial control in the school is very good. The school's senior administrative assistant runs a well organised office and provides excellent administrative support to all staff and governors. The quality of financial monitoring is also very effective. The school's Finance Committee meets regularly to assess levels of spending and uses the LEA' budget monitoring service to ensure that spending is kept within budget. The school has made good strategic use of its specific grant for information technology to provide additional computers and software for the new information technology suite. This facility is being very well used by both pupils and members of the local community in liaison with the local further education college. Good use has also been made of specific funding within the formula budget for special educational needs, by providing extra teaching and non-teaching assistants to support both statemented and non-statemented pupils on the school's special needs register. The school's spending per pupil, in comparison with the national average, is well within the median range.

54. The governors have made good progress in applying best value principles. They have been shrewd in their use of competitive quotations for acquiring computers and work strictly within the Diocesan guidelines when selecting contractors for property maintenance work. They use performance data, LEA review procedures and consult with parents and the parish in order to determine spending priorities. In this they are beginning to establish what value the school is providing and to evaluate its effectiveness.

55. The school is appropriately staffed. The qualifications and experience of the staff generally meet the needs of the curriculum. However, the appointment of a temporary teacher in the reception class, is having an adverse effect on the standards achieved by the youngest pupils. In art and music, there is no permanent subject co-ordinator, and this is having a negative impact in these subjects. With the recent introduction of new materials for the science curriculum there is a need for further staff development in this subject. The school has a number of very effective classroom assistants to support pupils with special educational needs. Pupils with statements of special educational needs and some other non-statemented pupils also benefit from the regular input of specialist teachers from the LEA's special educational needs support service.

56. The teaching resources for English and mathematics are good in quality and quantity. The range of materials for science is limited although the quality is satisfactory. The library accommodation and range of books is satisfactory. The school's newly acquired information technology suite is an asset and is used to good effect by all pupils and parents. Resources are limited for the physical development of the under-fives. There are no resources to support climbing, balancing, and jumping. Although the school does not have a playing field there are useful markings on the yard to enhance pupils' play.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

57. In order to build on the many strengths in this school and improve the provision further the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) Improve attainment in science at Key Stage 1 by
 - using information from assessment to help decide what pupils are next to learn.
 - providing work which will challenge pupils to do better.
 - setting clear targets for improvement.(paragraphs 2, 52,91, 92, 93, 94,96,97).

- (2) Improve the attainment, teaching and the curriculum of the under-fives by
 - improving the assessment of all pupils' needs so that the planning of the under-fives curriculum incorporates the experiences of the areas of learning for those who require them.
 - better management of the pupils so that they work more productively on the tasks they are set.
 - having appropriate expectations of what pupils should achieve and using methods which enable them to learn effectively.(paragraphs 21, 23, 28,58 to 71).

- (3) Improve the subject leadership for music, art and the under-fives by
 - appointing in each case a co-ordinator who can take responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the subject and providing advice and support to colleagues.(paragraphs 49,112).

The following weaknesses should also be considered by the school as areas for development:

- Improve the range of extra-curricular activities. (paragraph 31)
- Ensure that teacher appraisal is carried out in line with requirements. (paragraph 51)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	54
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2%	36%	36%	18%	4%	4%	0%

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/a	212
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/a	52

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/a	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/a	48

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	3.4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	17	16	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	15	14
	Girls	15	16	16
	Total	29	31	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (90)	94 (87)	91 (90)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	15	14
	Girls	15	14	14
	Total	29	29	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (87)	88 (90)	85 (90)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	13	19	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	10	9	11
	Total	22	21	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69 (45)	66 (45)	72 (58)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	14	12	13
	Total	26	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (79)	75 (65)	78 (72)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	0
White	181
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	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)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.8
Average class size	29.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999
	£
Total income	322279
Total expenditure	317205
Expenditure per pupil	1525
Balance brought forward from previous year	7613
Balance carried forward to next year	12687

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	182
Number of questionnaires returned	123

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72%	26%	2%	-	-
My child is making good progress in school.	53%	42%	4%	-	-
Behaviour in the school is good.	55%	37%	5%	-	3%
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38%	44%	11%	3%	3%
The teaching is good.	67%	30%	1%	-	2%
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41%	46%	11%	2%	-
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67%	31%	1%	2%	-
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	76%	22%	2%	-	1%
The school works closely with parents.	45%	46%	6%	2%	-
The school is well led and managed.	68%	30%	-	2%	-
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62%	35%	2%	2%	-
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	18%	43%	21%	11%	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

58. The school follows the admissions policy and guidance issued by the local authority. Children enter the reception class during the year in which they are five. This year they have transferred from six nursery schools and a playgroup. At the time of the inspection, of the twenty-nine pupils in the reception class only nine had reached the age of five. The attainment of most pupils when they start school is generally below average. By the time they are five most pupils, including those with special educational needs, have made unsatisfactory progress and have not achieved what would be expected for their age. The permanent reception class teacher, who is also the co-ordinator of the provision for the under fives has been on sick leave for 10 months. The current temporary teacher has help on a part time basis from a classroom assistant. Sometimes parents provide additional classroom support.

Personal and social development

59. The attainment of most pupils is below the levels described in the Desirable Learning Outcomes by the time they are five. This area of learning does not have a high profile in the planned curriculum. Personal and social skills are not systematically developed and there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to explore, investigate, make decisions and bring their own ideas to their learning. Sometimes they take responsibility for collecting equipment or taking the register. Pupils satisfactorily develop independent skills when dressing and attending to personal hygiene. However their development as independent learners is below what might be expected, they find it difficult to undertake tasks without support or direction. This sometimes results in noisy or unsatisfactory behaviour.

60. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is variable and ranges from good to poor in equal proportions. Where teaching is good the activities are pitched at an appropriate level and generate meaningful social discussion. In lessons where teaching is poor, the management of pupils is less effective, the activities too difficult and behaviour becomes unsatisfactory.

Language and literacy

61. The attainment of most pupils is generally in line with the levels described in the Desirable Learning Outcomes by the age of five. Whereas pupils do make satisfactory progress in reading they do not make similar gains in writing and speaking and listening. Although pupils can listen attentively to a story they are less attentive when listening to instructions and to each other. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to ask questions or discuss their work. Pupils are developing early reading skills. Higher attaining pupils recognise most letter sounds. Others tell stories from picture books as they only recognise few letter sounds. Most pupils write their own name and hold a pencil correctly. They make patterns and trace and copy the teachers' writing. A small number of pupils, however, have not yet learned how to form letters correctly.

62. The quality of teaching is generally satisfactory. Lessons are guided by the literacy strategy. However not all of the tasks provided support independent learning, nor are support adults sufficiently well briefed. The classroom is not appropriately organised to encourage early independent writing skills. However most parents provide good support to pupils' reading homework and this has a positive impact on progress.

Mathematics

63. Most pupils' attainment is below the level expected by the age of five.

64. Pupils can sing number songs and make collage pictures to support early counting skills. Most can count numbers up to ten. Higher attaining pupils can count beyond ten and can add simple numbers together. Some have begun to take one number away from another.

65. The teaching of this area of learning is generally satisfactory because it is based on the principles of the National Numeracy Strategy. Although group tasks are satisfactorily organised opportunities are missed for pupils to explore and investigate the broader context of number through work in measures, shapes and patterns. Adults sometimes provide support and help pupils to make satisfactory gains in their learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

66. Most pupils' attainment is below the level expected by the age of five. Pupils can make biscuits and they enjoy mixing the ingredients. They make gingerbread figures from play dough. Some pupils use tools satisfactorily and they make houses with plastic bricks. Pupils attempt to sort objects according to specific criteria. Most find this too difficult and they make unsatisfactory progress. Pupils are introduced to the computer and with good support they satisfactorily learn how to move objects across the screen. No lessons were seen in the historical or geographical aspects of the areas of learning during the inspection.

67. The quality of teaching is variable ranging from good to poor in equal proportions. In the most successful lesson, activities were pitched at an appropriate level allowing all pupils to make some progress. However poor teaching of early science resulted from unsatisfactory planning and delivery which failed to address the learning needs of the pupils. There are insufficient stimulating activities and displays in the classroom to promote curiosity and invite exploration.

Physical development

68. Most pupils' attainment is what would be expected by the age of five. However during the inspection pupils made generally unsatisfactory progress because the pace of the lesson was too slow and undemanding. Pupils can jump in a variety of ways. They are aware of space and how to move safely. They can copy body shapes demonstrated by the teacher. Pupils can use manipulative skills to cut and glue objects together.

69. The quality of teaching is variable and ranges from satisfactory to unsatisfactory. Unsatisfactory teaching results from a lack of knowledge and understanding of what is being taught and how young children learn. Expectations are too low. Some skills such as writing and cutting are satisfactorily taught on a regular basis. Teaching resources are limited in physical education. There are no resources to support climbing, balancing, and jumping.

Creative development

70. Most pupils' attainment is below what would be expected by the age of five. Although pupils explore colour through painting activities and make simple collage faces, opportunities for them to use their imagination and explore texture and form are limited. Pupils enjoy singing. They sing familiar songs enthusiastically. However in a music session the content was too advanced for their understanding, they lost interest and began to misbehave. Pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to explore sounds and the classroom is not set up to stimulate their creative ideas.

71. The quality of teaching is variable ranging from satisfactory to poor. Teaching was poor because the lesson was disorganised, the materials were inappropriate and too much time was spent on overcoming pupils' unsatisfactory behaviour. As a result the pupils did not spend sufficient time singing and they did not make the progress that might have been expected.

ENGLISH

72. National Curriculum test results for seven-year-olds in 1999 show that pupils' attainment in reading was above the national average and well above that of similar schools. In the writing test pupils' attainment was in line with the national average and well above that of similar schools. However, no pupils reached level 3 in writing. Over the last three years attainment in reading has improved from below average to above average. Attainment in writing has improved from below average to average. Across the four-year period from 1996 to 1999 the performance of girls and boys was similar in reading. In writing, girls performed better than boys.

73. National Curriculum test results for eleven-year-olds in 1999 show pupils' attainment was average in English. This is an improvement on the previous year. Test results in 1999 are above those of schools of similar backgrounds. Although the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 or above was below the national average, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 5 was above the national average. Well below average results in 1998 has produced a below average trend for the four years from 1996 to 1999. During this period boys performance has exceeded that of girls.

74. The current inspection findings show that by the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment in speaking and listening and writing is in line with the national average. Attainment in reading is above the national average. A small number of pupils are expected to reach the higher level (level 3). By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment in English is in line with the national average. The school has worked hard to raise attainment in English and the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning and has helped to raise standards. Regular homework and Year 6 Booster classes have made a good contribution to raising standards.

75. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils speak clearly, confidently and use appropriate vocabulary. They respond positively when answering questions, sharing views and offering opinions. They use appropriate terminology when working at a computer. Pupils have developed good listening skills. They listen to the teacher, follow instructions carefully and respond politely. In a physical education lesson they followed a series of instructions precisely. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils use standard English to debate social issues, expressing their views and ideas with sound reasoning. They asked sensitive questions to a wartime evacuee when researching their history topic. They answer questions with clarity and detail. Most pupils are careful listeners, they take account of each other's opinion and discuss their ideas confidently.

76. Pupils make good gains in their learning throughout Key Stage 1. Year 1 pupils listened carefully to the teacher and asked and answered questions about historical artefacts. Gains in learning throughout Key Stage 2 are good and successfully build on previous work. Pupils in Year 3 use terminology more extensively and accurately. Most pupils increase their range of vocabulary during the Literacy hour. Year 4 pupils use dictionaries and thesauri appropriately to extend their vocabulary. They search for more appropriate descriptive words to enhance their writing. By Year 5 pupils listen intently to

the rhythm and rhyme of narrative poetry. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because all teachers ensure they involve all pupils in speaking and listening activities and pitch questions at an appropriate level.

77. By the end of the key stage most pupils read accurately and fluently across a range of texts. They read with expression and understanding and they use a range of strategies to read unfamiliar words. They know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books and most can retrieve information. Higher attaining pupils have a deeper knowledge of the story and confidently discuss characters in the book. By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils have a clear understanding of a story and make reference to the text when recalling detail. They can discuss characters and anticipate what is likely to follow. The most skilled readers can discuss a book in detail, identifying good and mediocre features.

78. Most pupils make good gains in their reading throughout Key Stage 1. Pupils learn how to locate information from books. They refer to the text to find the words they require and they are beginning to use the contents page and alphabetical order satisfactorily. Progress in reading continues to be good throughout Key Stage 2. As they become older pupils use their skills as readers to critically analyse their own work and redraft it if necessary. They demonstrate an increasing knowledge of a wide range of books, compare common themes and discuss similarities and differences. Pupils with special educational needs make similar gains in learning to pupils of other levels of attainment.

79. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils write stories, descriptions, letters and captions. Most sequence their writing satisfactorily and confidently use capital letters and full stops. They accurately identify speech marks. Their spelling is reasonably accurate and some have commenced cursive writing. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils write in an argumentative style when debating social issues. They write poignant poems, they discuss characters from literature, and write narrative stories. They plan their work effectively and learn to redraft appropriately. Pupils begin to use more adventurous vocabulary. Sentences become more complex with sufficient attention paid to grammar. Higher attaining pupils use paragraphs and speech marks. Spelling is usually accurate, handwriting is legible, well formed and joined. Presentation ranges from excellent to untidy, but mostly it is good. Pupils in Year 6 confidently use the computer to write projects, stories and send communications by e-mail.

80. Most pupils make good gains in learning across both key stages. They learn to spell simple words correctly and their writing improves. Pupils begin to introduce more complex sentences to their writing and by Year 4 their writing incorporates good descriptive quality. Progress in spelling is systematic and follows the literacy strategy. Positive learning gains are systematically made in word processing skills. Pupils with special educational needs make similar gains and receive good support from experienced classroom assistants.

81. Pupils are interested in English. They enjoy literature, eagerly participate and show good levels of sustained concentration. They work independently and productively. Most have pride in their work, and they appreciate the work of others. Behaviour in Year 6 is at times excellent.

82. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 ranges from very good to unsatisfactory; mostly it is good. At Key Stage 2 teaching ranges from very good to good but mostly it is very good. All teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations. They plan lessons clearly and employ good strategies to support pupils' knowledge and understanding. They have very good relationships with pupils and generally manage

behaviour well. Teachers' enthusiasm and love of literature is reflected in lessons. Lessons usually are delivered at a brisk pace and good use is made of resources. In the best lessons, teachers' employ very effective strategies to deepen pupils' understanding of texts and opportunities to appreciate high quality writing. Teachers assess pupils' progress well. Since the last inspection improvements have been made to planning and assessment procedures. Teachers have been well led by the co-ordinator and have implemented the literacy strategy well. Results from non-statutory assessments are analysed satisfactorily to help teachers plan future lessons. Resources for English are good. The library is well used and has a satisfactory range of books of good quality. The Dewey system is to be introduced soon.

MATHEMATICS

83. The results of the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 1999 show that pupils' attainment was average and above that of schools of similar backgrounds. About one-fifth of these pupils, now in Year 4, attained the higher level (level 3), this proportion being similar that achieved nationally. Taking the four years 1996 to 1999 together pupils' performance has been in line with the national average. However, although the performance of girls across four years has been above the national average that of boys has been below the national average for the same period.

84. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year olds pupils' attainment was average and above that of schools of similar backgrounds. This was a significant improvement on results for the previous two years. The proportion of pupils who attained the higher level (level 5) was typical of that found nationally. Well below average results in 1997 and 1998 has produced a well below average trend for the four years from 1996 to 1999. During that period there has been no significant difference in the performance of girls and boys at age 11.

85. The current inspection findings show the attainment of pupils at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is in line with the national average. Evidence of attainment from pupils' work and in lesson observation indicates that standards are improving at Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs make similar rates of progress to other pupils given their prior attainment.

86. By the age of 7 most pupils have a good knowledge of the order of number to 100. They can select odd and even numbers, they know how to calculate doubles and they have begun to understand place value and the concept of tens and units. They can tell the time using terms such as half-past and quarter past. They have completed practical tasks such as baking and this has allowed them to use numbers in temperatures in a meaningful way. Pupils can select coins to carry out shopping sums and they know how to calculate the correct change. Most pupils have learned the elementary tables. Higher attaining pupils have begun to use division through practical sharing tasks. This good start is built on successfully at Key Stage 2. By the age of 11 most pupils confidently use up to four digit numbers in a range of tasks based on the four rules of number. Most have learned their tables and they use these regularly and confidently to help to solve problems. They have a secure understanding of fractions, decimals and of negative numbers. In shape most pupils know the properties of a hexagon, pentagon and rectangle. They can spot right angles, acute angles and obtuse angles. Pupils have experience of using timetables and they have logged data they have collected in tally charts from which they have produced graphs. The work that Key Stage 2 pupils produce often reflects good attention to presentation. The quantity and quality of the pupils' work confirms that attainment is improving.

87. Pupils demonstrate at least good and at times very good attitudes in their mathematics lessons. At Key Stage 2, in almost all lessons, pupils' attitudes are excellent. This makes a considerable contribution to the good progress they make. In a Year 2 lesson pupils were eager to answer in the mental element of the work, they used their hands sensibly to confirm that they were ready to answer and they were keen to be awarded the daily trophy for quiet working. In a Year 6 lesson on decimals pupils concentrated well and when responding to questions they were very willing to listen to each other's point of view. Pupils worked steadily and without interruption during the group activities.

88. When the school was last inspected teaching was described as "at least sound and often good". Since that time it has improved considerably. This inspection has confirmed that the quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 ranges from very good to satisfactory in equal proportions. All of the teaching at Key Stage 2 was judged to be very good. Much of the high quality teaching results from the successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. All teachers follow similar approaches when planning mathematics lessons. These plans have very clear objectives and set out the activities that will be organised for pupils of different levels of attainment. For example in a lesson for Year 3 pupils on shape there were very clear objectives for work on cubes and an expectation that they would become confident in using the terms "faces" and "vertices". Lessons get off to a good start with well-organised and challenging mental sessions taken at a brisk pace. This helps pupils to practise the skills they have acquired and consolidate former learning. Lessons incorporate sufficient challenge to take pupils on to further learning. Year 5 pupils were skilfully taught how to use a protractor and then expected to measure accurately several angles. Teachers strive hard to raise standards. They do this because they insist on high quality work, attention to accuracy in calculating and accuracy in measurements. They use homework effectively. It is regularly set and complements the lessons. This helps pupils to continue their learning out of school and consolidate understanding before moving on to the next stage of learning.

89. Most pupils make good gains in learning at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2 gains in learning are at least good and at times very good. Teachers promote good learning because they teach from a very secure knowledge and understanding of mathematics, they make good use of careful explanation and demonstration and they set demanding but achievable tasks. Learning is consolidated when pupils see the application of mathematics in everyday situations. In a Year 3 lesson on shape pupils could see the application of cuboid shapes to the food packaging industry. Pupils with special educational needs make good gains in learning because they are encouraged, motivated and supported through appropriate tasks.

90. At the time of the last inspection there were some shortcomings in the planning of lessons. This weakness has been addressed successfully. Pupils now have access to a well-planned programme of work that follows the numeracy strategy and fully meets National Curriculum requirements. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and has given clear direction and advice to colleagues throughout the school. Teachers have benefited from the training available within the numeracy initiative and they have implemented the project consistently and regularly. Funding has been appropriately identified to improve the resources for learning and they are now good throughout the school. The headteacher and co-ordinator have started a programme of monitoring lessons. The knowledge gained is helping to inform the action needed to further develop the work. A full analysis of comparative data has been completed successfully and knowledge about trends in attainment over time is improving. The school development plan

target for continued development of mathematics is being implemented effectively and the school is well placed to make further improvements.

SCIENCE

91. In the 1999 statutory Key Stage 1 teacher assessments, pupils' attainment was below the national average. No pupils were assessed as attaining the higher level (level 3). Pupils' attainment was broadly in line with that of similar schools. At level 3 pupils' attainment was well below that of similar schools. In the Key Stage 2 tests, pupils' attainment was below the national average, but broadly in line with that of similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level (level 5) was typical of that found nationally. The attainment of boys and girls was not significantly different. Over the four-year period 1996 to 1999 attainment was well below the national average. However results for 1999 were much better than in previous years.

92. Inspection evidence indicates that by the end of Key Stage 1 the attainment of pupils is below the national average, but that by the end of Key Stage 2 it is in line with the national average. The difference between inspection evidence and statutory assessment for the older pupils can be accounted for by good teaching, which has continued to raise standards. Since the last inspection, the proportion of pupils achieving at the higher level of attainment at Key Stage 2 has improved, but at Key Stage 1 there has been insufficient change in the proportion of higher achievers. The expectation of teachers has been raised in Key Stage 2 but insufficiently in Key Stage 1. Consequently, there is now a greater proportion of high quality lessons in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1.

93. By the age of 7 pupils can make simple predictions and observations, such as how various objects move down a slope. They can describe what makes a fair test and record their work in picture and word form. However most have insufficient skills in measuring, estimating, and drawing graphs to illustrate their findings. Many pupils in Year 1 have a satisfactory knowledge of the sources of light and how it can be reflected by different surfaces. However, a significant minority of pupils have difficulty in explaining clearly what they are doing when using a black box to investigate different surfaces as reflectors. By the age of 11, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the way forces act on various objects. They can draw force diagrams to explain the directions in which forces act, and how they can 'balance' other forces. They have a sound knowledge of what constitutes a fair test and can design an investigation incorporating this principle, such as comparing the rates of evaporation of different liquids.

94. Taking account of prior attainment, most pupils make satisfactory gains in learning at Key Stage 1 and good gains in learning at Key Stage 2. Older pupils make good progress in their study of forces, electricity, and the structure of the human skeleton. They make sound progress in their investigative work, and in the quality and accuracy of their recorded work. At Key Stage 1, the progress of higher attaining pupils is restricted by insufficiently challenging work. In a Year 2 lesson, involving the movement of objects down an inclined plane, the task set was too simple for higher attaining pupils. Consequently they made insufficient progress. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1. In most lessons at Key Stage 2 progress is good. It is particularly good when either the teacher or classroom assistant works closely with these pupils, on tasks which are carefully planned to meet their learning needs.

95. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour during lessons are generally good, but range from very good to unsatisfactory. At Key Stage 1 behaviour in Year 2 is satisfactory. In Year 1, occasional petty disruption and immature responses from a small number of pupils

adversely affects their progress and that of other pupils. At Key Stage 2 the behaviour of pupils is invariably very good. They show respect for both their peers and adults. During practical work, they use equipment and resources carefully and enjoy working collaboratively.

96. At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. At Key Stage 2 most of the teaching is very good and one excellent lesson was observed. In the most successful lessons teachers use their good subject knowledge to challenge pupils, and assess their understanding with skilful questioning. In a Year 3 lesson pupils investigated the strength of various magnets. The teacher gave a very effective demonstration of the effect of a magnet on iron filings. She then used this to stimulate pupils' ideas about the nature of magnetic 'lines of force' through very effective questioning. Pupils responded well, using their imagination and prior knowledge very effectively to explain the patterns they observed. In the same lesson, pupils were eager to share with their peers how they had successfully measured the 'strength' of the magnets they were using. In the best lessons teachers make clear to pupils what is expected, and use the opportunity to develop pupils' scientific language. In a Year 6 lesson, in which pupils were studying the effect of forces on objects, the teacher emphasised new words, such as 'Newton,' using the chalkboard, and reinforced the use of the word during her plenary questioning of pupils and during her demonstration of the Newton-meter. As a result, pupils were well prepared to use the new terminology during their own group tasks with greater confidence and understanding. Successful teaching is characterised by very good planning. In an excellent Year 4 lesson about separation techniques, the teacher planned activities to match the experience and knowledge of the pupils. She showed great enthusiasm for the subject and provided a good range of resources which interested and motivated pupils, including those with special educational needs. As a result, pupils were very keenly involved in their investigations, worked enthusiastically, and maintained a productive pace. A common strength of the teaching in the best lessons is the very good management of behaviour. Where teaching is less successful, as in Key Stage 1, it is often due to insufficient challenge in pupil tasks and inadequate management of inappropriate and disruptive behaviour. In many lessons pupils are encouraged to develop their oral skills through class discussion. However, practical work doesn't provide sufficient opportunity for pupils to develop a range of measuring skills and graphical recording.

97. The co-ordinator has only recently taken up her responsibility and has carried out an audit of resources. At present the range and quantity of resources does not yet meet the needs of the newly adopted Science 2000 curriculum guidelines. There has been insufficient staff development to support the new curriculum materials fully, but the school plans to address this in the in the near future. Insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning currently takes place. Procedures for systematic assessment have recently been introduced with the new curriculum, but assessment data is not yet being used effectively to influence future planning. There are currently too few planned opportunities in the curriculum for pupils to use information technology for measuring, recording, and data logging. The school makes good use of a local community park area to raise the environmental awareness of pupils and extend their understanding of how plants grow.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

98. When the school was last inspected pupils' attainment at Key Stage 1 was judged to be at best in line with but generally below the national average. Attainment was below the national average at Key Stage 2 and many shortcomings were identified. This inspection has confirmed the great strides the school has made in improving the provision of information technology. Pupils' attainment at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key

Stage 2 is now above the national average.

99. By the age of 7 most pupils use computer terminology such as font, cursor, scroll and space bar confidently and correctly. They can use the keyboard controls such as the "delete" key accurately to amend text to correct punctuation. Their electronic written work incorporates appropriate use of capital letters and the question mark. Most pupils can highlight and select text and they can control the mouse skilfully to produce detailed work using an art software package. By the age of 11 most pupils have acquired an understanding of an e-mail and they can prepare a letter to a pen pal in electronic format ready for transmission. Higher attaining pupils can access a file from a floppy disk, they know how to create a header and footer in a document and they move text and pictures using electronic "handles". Some have learned how to integrate text and images using a "wrapping" technique. Most pupils can produce newspaper reports in column format and most pupils have learned the basic principles of using a software package to produce a presentation. Year 5 pupils have produced presentations based on a health education project. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in information technology at both key stages.

100. When the school was last inspected pupils enjoyed working with computers. This continues to be true and most demonstrate satisfactory attitudes at Key Stage 1 and good attitudes at Key Stage 2. Pupils have made sufficient gains in their acquisition of information technology skills to be able to work both co-operatively in pairs and independently. They listen well to their teacher's instructions and they maintain good concentration. They share resources well and respect each other's point of view. They are willing to work together to overcome the challenges they face when responding to on-screen commands.

101. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Teachers have responded well to the new opportunities available in the school and they have made a commitment to training. As a result the quality of teaching is now at least good and at times very good. For example in a lesson for pupils in Year 2 the teacher had high expectations of what pupils might achieve in writing and encouraged them to write at length and use the keys to correct punctuation accurately. This work was a good example of how literacy is being promoted through other subjects. Year 4 pupils followed up a visit to a museum by producing a newspaper report. The teaching was effective because the teacher was confident in teaching the steps to produce columns and to integrate text with images.

102. Most pupils make good gains in their learning at both key stages. This is particularly evident in the acquisition of information technology skills shown through the work displayed throughout the school. Having been introduced to computers in the reception year pupils in Year 1 demonstrated much greater control in the use of drawing tools. By the age of 7 they are confident in using the mouse to select button commands and as they progress through Key Stage 2 they demonstrate a more critical and sophisticated approach to the use of colour and font styles. By the age of 11 pupils have learned to use electronic mail. In a partnership arrangement with Newcastle United Football Club they have used an information technology centre to access the Internet; a facility shortly to be available to them in school.

103. The provision of information technology has significantly improved since the last inspection because the school has successfully implemented the necessary action to tackle the previous weakness. The creation of an information technology suite from accommodation within the school has been an exciting development. Adults including

parents appreciate the opportunity to extend their knowledge and use of computers. The information technology curriculum is now appropriate; it is based on national guidance and includes a range of exciting activities. Statutory requirements are fully met. Subject leadership is good. The co-ordinator manages the information technology suite well and has successfully led on the training of staff to implement the use of a modern hardware system. The school wisely secures appropriate technical support to ensure maximum use of the new facility. Resources for learning are good. Pupils have been provided with much better access to computers and they are supported with a very good range of software covering most subjects.

ART AND MUSIC

104. During the inspection it was only possible to observe one art lesson and a small number of lessons in music. Judgements for art are based on the work on display and discussion with teachers and the headteacher who is currently the temporary subject leader.

105. Most pupils make satisfactory learning gains in both subjects at both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs make similar rates of progress given their prior attainment.

106. At Key Stage 1 pupils are provided with a good range of colours and they mix them successfully to create striking effects. For example textures and paint have been used effectively to depict a scene from the "The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse". Pupils produced very detailed work and textures were precisely applied. Most pupils can use computer software to generate attractive, colourful pictures. At Key Stage 2 pupils continue to develop a strong sense of colour and use observation skills well. They observed Van Gogh's "Sunflowers" and represented his style and colour well in their own paintings. They can successfully use coloured pencils to apply shade and create delicate effects in still life drawings. Older pupils closely observed the detail of illuminated manuscripts and produced their own versions showing intricate patterning and careful drawing. They captured the essence of portrait painting through closely observing the style of Van Gogh's "Seascape" satisfactorily.

107. In music, by the age of 7, most pupils can follow a tune satisfactorily developing a good sense of rhythm with good listening skills. Pupils sing from memory a repertoire of songs they have learnt. By the age of 11 many pupils can follow simple music. They know how to produce a "rest" and how to repeat bars. They have a secure understanding of the value of crotchets and quavers.

108. Most pupils at both key stages demonstrate satisfactory attitudes to their work in art and music. There are occasions when their behaviour is very good. Pupils listen attentively and show initiative when making suggestions such as in introducing ideas into music making. Most pupils listen to broadcast tape sequences sufficiently well to make appropriate gains in understanding of pitch and rhythm.

109. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 ranges from good to satisfactory; mostly it is good. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is good. This is similar to when the school was last inspected.

110. Teachers link art to other subjects effectively to consolidate learning. For example pupils study Greek art and patterning when learning about the Ancient Greeks. Teachers value and respect the achievement pupils make. Pictures are well mounted and effectively

displayed. Good teaching in music is based on secure preparation and attention to standards. For example in a lesson for Year 2 the teacher insisted on precision in singing, marching and clapping. Pupils in this lesson were well managed when being re-organised for percussion group work. During the playing of a tape sequence effective use was made of the pause facility to re-emphasise a teaching point.

111. Pupils acquire a range of art skills as they progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2. Numeracy skills are developed in art when younger pupils make pictures from geometrical shapes. In music pupils extend their repertoire of songs, they are introduced to a range of listening experiences and they become increasingly confident in playing percussion instruments.

112. The curriculum for art has been modified to fit a reduced time allocation and new guidelines are to be introduced in September 2000. Teachers are provided with a commercial scheme to help them plan and teach music. Statutory requirements are met for both subjects. Curriculum leadership is at present unsatisfactory in these subjects. There is no monitoring of provision and limited direction to staff. The governors are aware of the need to address these deficiencies and intend to address these matters through forthcoming staffing appointments. Resources for both subjects are satisfactory. Good use is made of the computer to develop artistic ideas through the use of a range of software.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

113. During the week of the inspection lessons in design and technology were only observed in Years 2, 3 and 6. However, sufficient evidence was available from pupils' work, displays around the school, lesson planning and interviews with the co-ordinator to enable judgements to be made. At the time of the last inspection most pupils made unsatisfactory progress. The school has systematically addressed the weaknesses outlined in the previous inspection report and most pupils now make satisfactory progress.

114. By the age of 7 most pupils demonstrate satisfactory co-ordination and control and use tools and construction kits to make products. Pupils cut carefully with scissors when making celebration cards. They fold card accurately and use flexi-straws appropriately to construct vehicles for a Scottish Island project. Most pupils talk about their designs confidently.

115. By the age of 11 most pupils continue to demonstrate improving "making" skills and all pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory gains in their learning. They improve their accuracy when measuring, folding and joining. They use appropriate construction techniques when working with different materials. Pupils have acquired a good understanding of the requirements for a healthy diet and categorise foods depending on their fat content. They have successfully made photograph frames, evaluated their results and suggested improvements. Pupils demonstrated good knowledge of food preparation techniques when making home made soup. There was a good link with the history curriculum with this project as pupils investigated the living conditions during World War 2.

116. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work. They are very attentive when listening to instructions and they are keen to talk about their work. Pupils work well in groups and respect each other's views. Year 6 pupils discussed a visit to a discovery museum and attempted a range of design and make activities with considerable success. Pupils' behaviour is good and they often work diligently without direct supervision.

117. The teaching of design and technology is satisfactory in both key stages. All aspects of the design and technology curriculum are covered. Teachers plan their lessons with appropriate consideration for health and safety issues. Sometimes the work is linked to other subjects. Very good relationships exist between teachers, pupils, support staff and volunteer helpers who make a significant contribution to pupils' attainment, progress, personal and social skills. The school uses commercially produced guidelines for design and technology. This ensures that the curriculum is broad and balanced. The guidelines are used satisfactorily by teachers to ensure pupils build on their previous experiences. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and pupils are beginning to become involved with their own assessments. Although the co-ordinator monitors teachers' plans no formal monitoring of teaching takes place. The quality and quantity of resources including tools has improved and is now satisfactory.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

118. The provision in these subjects is similar to when the school was last inspected. During the inspection it was only possible to observe three lessons of history and one of geography. One lesson took place on a visit to Newcastle Quayside. Additional evidence was drawn from analysis of books, displays around the school, teachers' planning and discussion with the co-ordinator and headteacher. Despite a reduction in the time allocated to the humanities, history remains a strong subject at Key Stage 2.

119. Most pupils make satisfactory gains in their learning in both subjects. This is also true of pupils with special educational needs.

120. By the age of 7 most pupils increase their knowledge and understanding of the past and can place events in chronological order and record their findings appropriately. They discussed old lamps, lanterns and candleholders with interest and asked pertinent questions. Pupils have satisfactorily gained a wide knowledge of the past. They know that early man depended on fire and sunlight as a light source. They can compare modern street lighting with that of Victorian times. By the age of 11 most pupils have acquired a good understanding of different periods in history such as the Tudors and the Second World War. Pupils know that the Tudor era can be divided into different periods of time. They have studied the reign of Henry VIII, making comparisons between rich and poor life styles. Year 6 pupils acquired a good understanding of World War 2 when a visitor described her experiences as an evacuee. They appreciated the hardships and difficulties of the war. Key Stage 2 pupils have improved their knowledge of local history when they visited the river frontage in Newcastle to study bridges and buildings of local interest.

121. In geography, by the age of 7, most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of different types of buildings. They have studied construction materials and they have learned to compare a range of climatic conditions including those appropriate to a polar landscape, a rainforest and a desert. They have compared their local area with a distant place such as the West Indies and they have made comparisons of climate, food and clothing. By the age of 11 most pupils have a good understanding of environmental themes through work they have carried out on a community wildlife park. They have revisited the park to study environmental change and the way it has been colonised by plants, birds and animals. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how to interpret the landscape through the study of aerial photographs and they have analysed land usage.

122. Most pupils have positive attitudes to history and geography and they are particularly interested in the studies they make of their local area. During the inspection

pupils demonstrated satisfactory attitudes at Key Stage 1 and good attitudes at Key Stage 2. Pupils are interested in learning about the past, they concentrate well and their behaviour is good.

123. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is good. At Key Stage 2 it ranges from very good to good in equal proportions. This is similar to when the school was last inspected. Teachers prepare resources very well and ensure pupils have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the topic prior to making a visit. The Year 5 teacher took photographs of Tudor Durham prior to the visit and the Year 6 teacher weighed out appropriate foods so that pupils knew exactly the amounts rationed to adults during the war. Lessons are planned systematically, building successfully on from prior learning. History is frequently 'brought alive' to pupils. For example in a lesson for pupils in Year 1 the teacher made good use of resources such as old lanterns and a poem about a lamp lighter to raise pupils' awareness of chronology. Year 3 pupils who visited Newcastle Quayside benefited from their teacher's secure subject knowledge in both history and geography to make the excursion an enjoyable and valuable experience.

124. Most pupils make satisfactory gains in learning at each key stage. From Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 pupils make steady gains in their understanding of historical and geographical themes. In Key Stage 2 the strength of the subject lies in historical enquiry, and the philosophy of the school to extend learning beyond the classroom whenever possible. Pupils' awareness of past events is consolidated and extended through meaningful teaching supported by good resources and a successful programme of school visits. Year 4 pupils successfully retrieved information from books and pictures during their history lesson. Their knowledge and understanding of life in Victorian times is good. In geography pupils grow in confidence in the use of analytical skills to compare how land is used. They confidently discuss the impact of climate on the way life is conducted in one country compared with another.

125. A broad and balanced programme of humanities is provided at both key stages and statutory requirements are met. The school has wisely adopted the national guidance for the teaching programmes in these subjects so that it can concentrate on priorities for literacy and numeracy. The current programme of history and geography provides many good opportunities through speaking, listening and writing for literacy skills to be practised. These subjects make a positive impact on the social and cultural development of pupils. Subject leadership is satisfactory and covers an annual audit of provision. Although the co-ordinator monitors planning satisfactorily the monitoring of lessons has not yet commenced. Good use is made of opportunities to extend pupils' learning through the use of parents on visits and members of the community to share experiences. Resources for learning are satisfactory in both subjects.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

126. During the inspection it was only possible to observe two lessons, one in each key stage. Evidence is drawn from records of pupils' achievements, school documents and discussion with the co-ordinator.

127. Pupils in Key Stage 1, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory gains in learning. Good progress was seen in the lesson observed. Pupils in Key Stage 2, including those with special educational needs, build successfully on to skills also developed and make good progress. This is similar to when the school was last inspected.

128. By the age of 7 most pupils display satisfactory co-ordination skills, and good control of movements. They run, skip, jump and run effectively varying the pace. They roll balls accurately to a partner and set themselves new challenges. Pupils practise the activities well to improve their skills. Pupils work sensibly and safely.

129. The strength of the subject lies in the quality of teaching and use of high quality resources at the local sports centre. Here Key Stage 2 pupils in have the opportunity to enjoy a weekly programme of varied activities. By the age of 11 most pupils make good progress, particularly in games and athletic skills as they are taught in small groups often by skilled experts. Good progress is made in pupils' knowledge of their own achievements, they set their own challenges and keep their own records. Progress in swimming over three years is also good and sometimes it is very good. All the current Year 6 pupils have achieved the 25 metres swimming distance award. One third of pupils in Year 6 are expected to achieve swimming achievements of between 100 and 500 metres, including a swimming survival award. Two thirds of pupils are expected to achieve swimming distances of between 1000 and 1500 metres and gain survival awards 2 and 3.

130. Pupils take part in inter-schools football, netball, athletics, cross-country and swimming competitions. Extra-curricular sports activities are popular. Pupils in Year 6 develop more adventurous skills. The close links with the community and the extra-curricular activities make a positive impact not only on the progress pupils make in term of physical development, but also in their personal and social skills.

131. Pupils display very positive attitudes to the subject, they enjoy learning and are highly motivated by a sense of achievement. Their behaviour is very good.

132. The quality of teaching is at least good and mostly it is very good. Lessons are appropriately pitched to suit all levels of attainment and good levels of challenges are set. Coaching is detailed and effective. As a result pupils make good gains in learning. Teachers encourage pupils to set their own challenges, based on pupils' knowledge of their own performance.

133. Accommodation within school is barely adequate. The hall is adequate for the younger children for gymnastics, and small games. However, there is no playing field. Resources for learning are satisfactory.