

INSPECTION REPORT

ST ANNE'S C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bishop Auckland, County Durham

LEA area: Durham

Unique reference number: 114220

Head teacher: Mr W H L Jopling

Reporting inspector: Mr D Hardman
17794

Dates of inspection: 1st – 4th July 2002

Inspection number: 195942

Full 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 controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Warwick Road Bishop Auckland County Durham
Postcode:	DL14 6LS
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Reverend J J Marshall
Date of previous inspection:	June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17794	Mr D Hardman	Registered inspector	Science	What sort of school is it?
			Information and communication technology	The school's results and achievements.
			Music	How well are the pupils taught?
			Religious education	How well is the school led and managed?
			Foundation stage	What should the school do to improve further?
			English as an additional language	
			Special educational needs	
			Equal opportunities	
9511	Mrs A Longfield	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
				How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
11611	Mr J Hall	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Art and design	
			Design and technology	
			History	
18819	Mr J Atkinson	Team inspector	English	
			Physical education	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Anne's C of E Primary School is an average sized school situated on the edge of Bishop Auckland in County Durham. There is a broad social mix in the school and the full range of ability is represented. The school's initial assessments of pupils' attainment when they start school show that many pupils are in line with the levels expected for their age. There are 93 boys and 121 girls currently on roll. There are few pupils who have English as an additional language. There are 20 pupils eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. Thirty-three pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, this is well below the national average and 4 have statements of special educational need, which is below the national average. Most pupils with special educational needs have either speech and communication difficulties or moderate learning difficulties.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school. Very good leadership and management by the head teacher, deputy head teacher and key staff, provide clear direction for future developments. Governors provide good support for the school and carry out their duties effectively. Teaching is good, sometimes very good and occasionally excellent. This leads to good learning and, in the current Year 6, pupils' attainment is well above the level expected for their age in English and mathematics. Pupils are responsible and relationships in school are very good. Pupils' standards are improving and they achieve well in relation to their previous attainment. Although it costs slightly more than the national average to educate each pupil the school still gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- The leadership and management of the school by the head teacher, deputy head teacher and key staff, and the quality of teamwork by staff and governors, are very good.
- The provision for children in the reception class, is very good.
- Teaching is good, sometimes very good and occasionally excellent. This leads to good learning and well above average standards in English and mathematics and above the standards expected for their age in science, religious education, history and geography in Year 6.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Relationships and opportunities for personal development are very good. The caring, family atmosphere created in the school makes a very positive contribution to pupils' learning.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and these pupils make good progress. The school implements the recent initiative for inclusion very well and this ensures that all pupils have the same educational opportunities.

What could be improved

- The use of classroom-based computers more consistently to extend and build more effectively on pupils' skills learned in the new computer suite.
- The resources available to extend pupils' learning in the practical use of sensing equipment in information and communication technology.
- Reports to parents about the progress of their children.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been good progress in dealing with the issues identified in the previous inspection in 1997. The school has established, and uses well, clear guidelines for teachers to plan their lessons. This ensures that knowledge and skills are taught systematically, effectively building on pupils' previous

experiences. The head teacher and subject co-ordinators are now playing an important part in the development and monitoring of the curriculum. They have written policies and guidelines for their subjects, lead discussions with other staff and governors and regularly observe teaching and learning to monitor pupils' progress. There has been good progress in refining the school's assessment and recording procedures, which are used well by teachers to guide their planning of lessons. In addition, pupils are more aware of their own learning because it is made clear to them what they are expected to learn in each lesson. As a result, teaching and learning continue to improve and pupils make good progress, especially in English, mathematics and science. Governors fulfil their role well. They have taken steps to deal with the key issues identified in the last inspection and they play a full part in discussions to develop the curriculum both through their committee structure and in full meetings of the governing body. They evaluate the effects of spending on the standards pupils reach and have improved the quality of the school plans for improvement since the previous inspection. These include showing the priorities identified by the school, likely costs and the evaluation of effect on pupils' attainment and learning. The school is well set to meet its challenging targets and continue to raise pupils' attainment and improve progress.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				<i>Key</i>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	A	A	A	A	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	B	B	B	C	
science	B	D	C	D	

In the 2001 National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds the school's results were well above the national average in English, above average for mathematics and in line with the average for science. When compared to similar schools, pupils' performance was well above average in English, average in mathematics but below the average in science. The lower results in mathematics and science were due to a combination of factors. The school had been following its own guidelines for science and a small number of pupils did not achieve as highly in the National Curriculum tests as expected, particularly in the investigative aspects of the subject. However, the school adopted the national guidelines for science and has given much more emphasis to investigations, which has raised pupils' attainment this year. In addition, the information gained from the detailed school analysis of the National Curriculum tests is being put to very good use and improving the quality of teaching. Inspection evidence shows that standards have been maintained in English and pupils' attainment is well above average in both English and mathematics and above average in science. This reflects the importance the school has given to the subjects and this is shown in the good teaching and learning for pupils. The recent establishment of a computer suite has greatly improved the opportunities for pupils to use up-to-date resources and good teaching in the suite is improving pupils' skills. However, computers in classrooms are not used consistently enough to develop pupils' skills in the subject further. Most children in the reception class make good progress and most reach levels above those expected for their age. In the present Year 2, pupils' attainment is above average in English, mathematics and science. The school's assessments of this group of pupils from their entry into the school show that they have made good progress in most subjects. Since the previous inspection,

pupils' attainment has improved in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The school is well set to maintain its high standards and implement any future changes in the curriculum because it sets challenging but achievable targets. The trend of pupils' attainment over time is not quite as high as the improving national trend.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to the school and their work. They enjoy coming to school and their enthusiasm for school life improves their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils know what is expected of them and their behaviour is very good. Pupils are polite and courteous towards one another and adults. There have been no exclusions from the school in the last year.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development and relationships are very good. They respond very well to the school's encouragement to take responsibility for their actions.
Attendance	Attendance is good and above the national average. The school procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory.

Pupils' very good attitudes result from the school's positive, caring, family atmosphere. This is a particular strength of the school. Pupils respond well to the very good behaviour management strategies employed by all staff. They are considerate of others when they move around the building, use the dining hall and play at break times. Pupils have very good relationships with each other and with staff. They respond very well to the trust and respect they are shown. For example, older pupils are monitors at lunchtime and they give assistance to the younger pupils sitting at their tables.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	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 is good, sometimes very good and occasionally excellent. Teaching is very good for older pupils because teachers plan exciting lessons that capture pupils' imagination and set them challenging tasks. Some very good teaching was seen throughout the school, particularly in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Teaching throughout the school has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Teaching and learning have been observed by the head teacher, deputy head teacher and subject co-ordinators and the sharing of good practice is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching throughout the school. This strategy has been successful in improving the quality of pupils' learning and their attainment by the end of Year 6.

Teachers' planning in English and mathematics is clearly linked to the guidance of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, most tasks are organised to challenge different groups in classes and pupils make good progress. Planning for all other subjects follows national guidelines or the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus for religious education, as a result, all subjects receive sufficient time to ensure that teachers are providing a rich and varied curriculum in their lessons. Standards are improving in the school and the use of assessment data to set class targets for each lesson is having a positive impact on pupils' attainment and learning. Classroom assistants give effective support to individuals and groups of pupils when they are working with them. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are well supported by good teaching that provides challenging activities. As a result, these pupils make good progress throughout the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The school provides a relevant curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils. There is a wide range of learning opportunities for all pupils, the school has adopted the most recent national guidelines and teachers are following these in their planning to ensure that all pupils have a varied and interesting curriculum. A particular strength is the very good range of visits and visitors, which enrich the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers and support assistants know the pupils well, ensure that they participate in the same activities as their classmates and this makes a very positive contribution to their attainment and learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Most of these pupils have a good grasp of English and all staff work with pupils to make sure they join in all the activities available.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The quality of relationships is very positive and makes a significant contribution to the very good behaviour in the school. This provision makes a very good contribution to promoting the school aims.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are satisfactory. There are very good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and the results of these are used effectively to set individual targets and so raise pupils' attainment further.

The curriculum meets statutory requirements and goes beyond this to include several features that enrich it considerably. For example, there is considerable effort put in to visit places of interest, including France for older pupils, and a range of visitors give pupils a wide experience and help them learn. The school has formed a very good partnership with parents, which makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning both at home and in school. The school has fully implemented the recent national initiative for "inclusion" and ensures that all pupils are provided with a very good range of learning opportunities to match their abilities.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	The head teacher, deputy head teacher and key staff provide very good leadership and management, which give a clear educational direction for the school. The quality of teamwork by all staff is very good and fosters a positive family atmosphere in which all pupils are valued and their efforts well supported.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body is committed to helping the school move forward. Governors make an effective contribution to the running of the school and are committed to maintaining and raising standards further.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school knows its strengths and areas for development. The programme for observing teaching and learning is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching and all staff work very hard to improve their own work and the educational opportunities provided for pupils.
The strategic use of resources	The school has sufficient staff and they are well deployed. Support staff play an important role in the life of the school and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. The accommodation is satisfactory and very well maintained. Resources to support pupils' learning are good and used effectively. The library is satisfactory and used effectively to support pupils' learning in all subjects. The school's finances and administration procedures are very good.

The very good leadership and management provided by the head teacher and governors are major factors in the quality of teamwork and positive atmosphere in the school. The very good strategic management of the school is evident in the way that literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology have been given priority for development recently. The school uses funds designated for particular purposes very well. For example, the school is subsidizing the funds available for pupils with special educational needs to provide extra teaching for them, which contributes to their good progress. Governors and the head teacher keep a close eye on spending, compare their results in National curriculum tests with similar schools and ensure that the school improvement plan contains challenging targets. As a result, they follow the principles of "best value" well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and are making good progress. • Teaching is good. • Behaviour in the school is good. • The amount of homework provided. • They feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems. • The school expects children to work hard. • The school helps children to become more mature and responsible. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of information about their child's progress. • The way the school works with parents. • The range of activities outside lessons.

Most parents consider that they have a very good partnership with the school and express satisfaction with the majority of its life and work. Inspection findings confirm the positive views expressed by parents. Parents are kept well informed about school events and how their children are getting on through regular, informative newsletters, an 'open door' policy and discussion evenings, where teachers and parents discuss pupils' achievements. However, the reports for parents on their child's progress are unsatisfactory because they do not provide sufficient information on pupils' progress in all subjects. The range of activities outside lessons is very similar to that provided by many primary schools and, therefore, the team does not agree with the parents' concerns.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 In this school the foundation stage is made up of one reception class. The provision is very good and a strength of the school. The school's assessments of children's attainment show that many enter the foundation stage with levels of attainment that are broadly in line with those of most other children of the same age. They make good progress through the foundation stage and most of the children are on course to achieve standards that are above those expected by the end of the reception year in all aspects of the foundation stage curriculum.

2 By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is well above the level expected for their age. It is above the level expected in science, religious education, history and geography. Pupils' attainment in all other subjects is in line with the level expected for their age. In information and communication technology, pupils understand the use of sensors, for example the use of a "magic eye" on a burglar alarm, but they do not use the limited sensing equipment in school sufficiently to enhance their practical skills. This is partly due to problems setting up the new computers and installing the necessary programs. However, the employment of a part time technician is rapidly overcoming this and the head teacher has plans for older pupils to improve their skills in the immediate future. In addition, there are good plans to continue the development of the computer suite and so provide a wider range of programs to support all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. However, teachers do not always plan for pupils to use classroom based computers often enough to improve their skills further. The audit of pupils' attainment, in all subjects, by the co-ordinators show that the school is well set to continue to improve standards, meet its realistic targets and implement any further changes to the curriculum. During the inspection, no significant variation was noted in the attainment of boys and girls in any subject. The trend of pupils' attainment over time is slightly below the improving national trend.

3 For pupils in the present Year 2, attainment in reading, writing and speaking and listening is above the level expected for their age. This shows an improvement since the previous inspection. In the National Curriculum tests in 2001, pupils' attainment in reading was above the level expected and well above the national average in writing. Pupils' performance in the reading tests was average in comparison with similar schools. Over time, pupils' attainment is being improved because of good teaching and the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy.

4 In the 2001 National Curriculum tests in English at the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment was well above the national average and well above the average for similar schools. Inspection findings show that in the present Year 6, pupils' attainment is well above average in reading, writing and speaking and listening. The analysis of assessment information means the school has evidence of the good progress made by these pupils over the last four years. Teachers use pupils' literacy skills in other subjects very well; for example, in the recording of experiments in science, in reporting their findings following geographical field trips and in written descriptions of events in the past in history.

5 In the National Curriculum tests in 2001 at the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in mathematics was above the national average, it was in line with the average when compared to similar schools. In the present Year 2, pupils' attainment in mathematics is above the level expected for their age. This shows an improvement in standards since the last inspection. In the National Curriculum tests in 2001 at the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in mathematics was above the national average and in line with the average when compared to similar schools. There has been good analysis of the Year 6 pupils' performance in the National Curriculum tests last year and this has resulted in the setting of clear, realistic class targets to focus on improving the weaker areas of mathematical

knowledge. As a result, in the present Year 6, pupils achieve standards that are well above the level expected for their age. The improving standards reflect the positive impact of the National Numeracy Strategy and good teaching. Pupils use their numeracy skills well in other subjects such as science by, for example, creating graphs to show the effect of exercise on the heart rate.

6 In the National Curriculum teacher assessments in 2001 at the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in science was well above the national average. It was also well above the average when compared to similar schools. Pupils in the present Year 2 are making good progress and are above the level expected for their age. There are no national averages for this year yet and so up to date comparisons cannot be made. In the National Curriculum tests in science at the end of Year 6 in 2001, pupils' attainment was in line with the national average, but below average when compared to similar schools. In the present Year 6, pupils' attainment is improving and it is above the level expected for their age. This is mainly because the school has adopted national guidelines and has placed more emphasis on the teaching of experimental science this year. The school is improving standards and setting realistic targets to improve further. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language are supported well, especially in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and they make good progress.

7 By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is in line with the level expected for their age. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is at the level expected for their age. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection because information and communication technology is valued as an essential part of the curriculum and all classes are timetabled to use the computer suite regularly. However, the time given to it varies across the school because the classroom based computers are not used sufficiently consistently by all teachers to support pupils' work in information and communication technology and in other subjects. In discussions with pupils in Year 6, they could explain how sensors are used in the real world to control traffic lights but they were unsure of how to use sensing equipment in school, for example, to measure temperature changes over time or how much light is falling on an object. The school has identified this for improvement by providing more resources to further extend pupils' practical skills in this area of the subject.

8 In religious education and geography, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment is above the level expected for their age. In all other subjects, it is in line with the level expected for their age, except in history for Year 6 pupils, where it is above the level expected. Other subjects of the National Curriculum make an effective contribution to pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, for example, through discussions in history and geography, recording their visits to places of interest, producing graphs in science and explaining their designs when working in design and technology. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress, especially in literacy skills. These pupils work at levels that are well matched to their abilities and their previous experiences. Teachers set work, paying particular attention to the targets identified in the individual education plans. Extra support is provided for these pupils and teachers assess their work regularly and review their individual educational plans accordingly. The curricular opportunities for all pupils are very good and the application of the recent initiative on "inclusion" means that teachers ensure that pupils are given work well matched to their physical and educational needs. There is a weekly timetable for extra support and during this time pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements of educational need, make good progress in their learning, particularly in their literacy and numeracy skills.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9 Pupils' attitudes to their work are very good. They are eager to come to school, enthusiastic and listen attentively to their teachers' instructions. They work and play well together and, when motivated by good teaching, are capable of sustained concentration. This was seen when pupils in

Year 4 were learning about Sir Francis Drake and life at sea in the Elizabethan age. The high quality of pupils' attitudes, values and personal development has been maintained since the last inspection.

10 The behaviour in school is very good. Pupils move around the school in a sensible manner. They take a pride in their school, looking after equipment and making sure that there is no litter or graffiti. When there is an instance of unsatisfactory behaviour, it is dealt with quickly and efficiently by the staff. There have been no exclusions in the last two years.

11 Relationships are very good, friendly and constructive throughout the school with pupils of different ages getting on well together. Year 6 pupils look after the younger pupils in the dining hall and playground and are quick to go to help them when they are upset. Pupils show respect for each other's feelings, beliefs and values and are confident to join in class discussions.

12 Pupils' personal development is very good. They develop in self-confidence and are willing to accept responsibility when the opportunities are given, quietly carrying out duties in class and around the school. For example, monitors give out milk at playtime, distribute hymn books before assemblies and help to clear away when they are finished.

13 Attendance is good. The rates of authorised absence are below the national average. Most pupils are punctual and lessons start and finish on time so that little time is wasted at the start of school sessions.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14 Teaching is good, for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 it is often very good or excellent. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when 5 per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. Discussion with teachers and analysis of pupils' work show that the quality of teaching is improving, especially in English, mathematics and science. A significant amount of this improvement has resulted from the observations undertaken by the head teacher, deputy head teacher and key staff. They observe colleagues teaching and check to ensure that all pupils are learning effectively. They provide feedback in order to improve the quality of teaching. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented and pupils' standards are improving in virtually all subjects by Year 6. Teachers regularly use a range of tests, including statutory and optional National Curriculum tests. The information available from these tests is used well to identify pupils' weaknesses and to guide teachers' planning, for example, by setting targets to improve pupils' attainment.

15 The quality of teaching for children in the foundation stage is good and sometimes very good. The teacher plans lessons well and takes account of the national guidelines that lead to children making good progress. There is a good balance between direct teaching and opportunities for structured play activities. All staff, the teacher and nursery nurse, know the children very well and are sensitive to their needs. Staff have high expectations and manage behaviour firmly, calmly and kindly. All adults are examples for children to follow because they treat everyone with care, courtesy and respect. They make sure that all children have access to all activities and children know that they are being treated equally and fairly. For example, children's speaking and listening skills develop particularly well because of the very good emphasis placed by all staff on extending and developing correct vocabulary as part of every activity.

16 The teaching of basic skills in English and mathematics is good, for older pupils it is very good. Teachers' planning is clearly linked to the requirements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The pace of most lessons is good and teachers use the techniques of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to best effect. Pupils have very good relationships with teachers and adults in the classroom, which has helped to improve the quality of pupils' learning. Teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour and effort are high and pupils are expected to do their best. This was seen in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, when pupils improved their knowledge and skills of mental recall when working out the correct method to be used to solve different problems. They listened attentively to others' answers. The brisk pace of the lesson and the mature attitude of pupils led to very good learning and

pupils' improving skills in the use of different operations using number patterns. Teachers use the Literacy Strategy effectively and plan lessons that are challenging and interesting. For example, in a Year 2 English lesson, pupils joined in enthusiastically with the shared discussion about how to find information from books. They improved their knowledge of how to use an index to find information because of the skilful questioning of the teacher.

17 Most teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects of the National Curriculum. For example, the school recognised that teachers' skills needed to be improved, especially for older pupils, in information and communication technology and training courses have been undertaken. As a result, teachers are using the computer suite well and pupils' attainment is improving. Teachers use the correct language to develop the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the particular subject. This was particularly evident in English and mathematics where specific technical language was used well. For example, in a Year 4 mathematics lesson, pupils understood the concept of solving problems by doubling and trebling numbers, such as $200+201+199$, pupils correctly stated that 200 trebled, plus 1 and then minus 1 gave the answer. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the teaching of English and mathematics and they use good observational assessment of pupils to build upon the areas that pupils need to develop. For example, in an excellent English lesson in Year 4, pupils responded very well to the teacher's request to identify the persuasive language used to advertise breakfast cereals. They understood "alliteration" and used their knowledge to write their own slogans, such as, "Shreddies are sugary, sweet and superb".

18 Teachers know and manage their pupils very well and provide good support for different activities. The very good relationships between staff and pupils create a secure climate in which to learn. Teachers use their daily observations of pupils' work to set challenging tasks. For example, in a Year 5 science lesson, pupils recalled the different parts of a flower and this led to lively discussions, led by the teacher, into how plants are pollinated. The school has an established homework policy that teachers use consistently and, as a result, the amount of homework given is about right for pupils' ages and it has a positive effect on their learning. The school has a good policy for the recent initiative on inclusion. Teachers follow it well and ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs or those who have English as an additional language, are included in all activities, which makes a positive contribution to their learning.

19 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers make early identification of pupils with special educational needs. They work closely with support assistants to plan work for these pupils that is matched to the work of other pupils in their class. Teachers make reference in their planning to work for pupils with special educational needs and good support is given in lessons either by class teachers or support assistants. All staff have a very positive attitude towards these pupils and this enhances their learning. Class teachers, the special educational needs co-ordinator and support staff all work very effectively together ensuring pupils take full part in the curriculum and make good progress. For example, the special needs teacher worked well with a small group of pupils to extend their use of language by explaining the use of prepositions in sentences. Pupils then used the words "down", "up", "opposite" and "behind" in their own sentences to illustrate their understanding of using prepositions. The provision for special educational needs is well organised throughout the school. All adults working with pupils with special educational needs are enthusiastic in their approach and keen to recognise and praise success. This effectively encourages pupils and helps them develop confidence.

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

20 The school's curriculum is very good. The school provides a very broad and relevant curriculum which meets the needs of all pupils. All statutory requirements for the National Curriculum, including the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus for religious education, are met. All

pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Boys and girls are treated with equal value and respect, whatever their background, circumstances and abilities. The governing body has approved policies for sex education and an awareness of drug misuse. Subject planning has improved since the previous inspection and the issues raised in that report have been resolved. National guidelines for the curriculum have been successfully introduced and adapted to the needs of pupils. It is now clear what pupils should be learning and achieving at each stage as they move through the school.

21 All teachers take account of the guidelines of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and these have been implemented very successfully throughout the school. Teachers' planning for lessons in English and mathematics is very thorough and firmly based on these strategies. In addition, pupils are given many opportunities to use and enhance their writing skills in other areas of the curriculum such as geography, history and religious education.

22 The curriculum is considerably enriched by activities both within and outside school. Pupils enjoy a wide variety of visits outside the classroom which are carefully planned by teachers as part of the learning experience. For example, visits to the seashore to study marine animals, a planetarium, a newspaper office and museums all consolidate the knowledge that pupils gain in the classroom by first hand experience. The arrangements for visiting specialists add much to pupils' learning. For example, an artist working with pupils in Year 6 taught silk painting techniques and each pupil produced a motif and their name, which combined to form a large scale class pattern. The inclusion of French as a subject on the curriculum gives pupils in Years 4, 5, and 6 a very good insight into a foreign language. The subject is carefully planned so that they build on their knowledge year by year both in speaking and writing, and teachers assess pupils' progress and attainment carefully. The activities that are offered for pupils outside of lesson times are what would be expected in most schools. Sports such as football, dance and gymnastics are provided and folk dancing is to be offered next year as a result of a successful bid for extra sports funding. A recorder club gives pupils the opportunity to learn a musical instrument.

23 The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The school has improved on good provision reported at the time of the previous inspection.

24 The provision made for spiritual development is very good and the school's ethos is embedded in its Christian beliefs. Assemblies provide genuine times for prayers and reflection. Themes for assemblies focus on areas such as friendship, family and God's gift of talent. Pupils celebrate through hymn singing and have time for personal thought and prayer. Assemblies are well led by teachers, classes of pupils or a visiting clergy. Year 6 pupils make an annual visit to Durham Cathedral as part of the family of Christian schools where they gather together for a service. Teachers weave into lessons many opportunities for pupils to experience a sense of awe and wonder and it is clear from some teachers' planning, that they think carefully about these opportunities. For example, in a Year 4 history lesson the skilful use of video, clothing and role play enthralled pupils when they learn about the life of sailors on board Francis Drake's ship. Expressions of disgust and astonishment are much in evidence, as they look at stale bread, tepid water, hard cheese and the ominous examples of the instruments that the ship's doctor used.

25 Very good provision is made for the moral and social development of the pupils. This is reflected in the very good standard of pupils' behaviour, their very good relationship with each other and adults and the way in which they show personal responsibility for making the school a worthwhile community for everyone involved. For example, an older pupil helped an infant who was clearly upset on the school yard and drew the attention of an adult to help. Pupils in Year 5, before school begins, come into their classroom to sort out their books or read and write quietly on their own initiative, demonstrating a strong sense of responsibility. The school encourages this very well by making use of time during assemblies to present certificates. Planning in lessons often includes opportunities to discuss the moral and social issues involved when studying other countries, for example, the effects of

famine, drought and poverty when studying Asia. The school takes many opportunities to encourage support for a wide range of charities on a regular basis and pupils respond very positively. A local hospice, Help the Aged and UNICEF are some examples of the ways in which the school encourages pupils to be aware of social issues and problems.

26 The provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. Pupils become aware of their own heritage and traditions through the wide variety of local visits that they make as part of their studies in subjects such as geography and history. The close links that the school has with the local church and Durham Cathedral enhance their understanding of their place in the Christian tradition. Funds have been established for next year so that pupils can learn local folk dances, as well as those in a European tradition. Substantial links with other countries and cultures have been made which give pupils a very good insight into communities and cultures around the world. For example, e-mails are used to communicate with schools in countries such as Holland and France when pupils exchange news. Each class has a link with pupils in a specific country such as Malta and Sweden. Pupils exchange information by letters, photographs and tapes and discuss areas such as hobbies. The "teddy bear" scheme is very successful at bringing alive the character of other countries for younger pupils. Teachers and pupils take the class teddy bear when they go abroad and take photographs of it in various locations. Displays of "teddy bear" cards, letters and photographs from places as diverse as Thailand, New Zealand and Austria add significantly to pupils' understanding of other cultures. The school takes opportunities wherever possible to encourage visitors into the school. For example, a Chinese family came on the occasion of the Chinese New Year when they demonstrated traditional cooking and brought a range of traditional items for pupils to see and an Indian mother visited who showed how a sari was made and worn.

27 There are very good arrangements to support pupils' personal education, to improve their social skills and their understanding of citizenship. Weekly class conversations address personal and social issues appropriate to pupils' ages. Pupils value such opportunities to speak, to be heard and at times just to listen. These sessions also reflect the school's success in developing pupils' self-confidence and social skills. For example, the younger children spoke in turn when suggesting ideas in response to their teacher's comment "I am thinking of a treasure" and discovering for themselves the contents of the Treasure Box. Pupils' social maturity and understanding of citizenship are developed through the closeness of the whole school community. Pupils are used to being together, working together and supporting each other.

28 Good links with the local secondary schools through the "Bridging Curricular" avoid a break in the education of the Year 6 pupils. Visits to the schools help to give pupils a confident start of the next stage of their education. The school also maintains close links with the other local primary schools. The school gets strong support from the local community to help pupils' learning. Local businesses made a valuable contribution in the setting up of the "Story Sack" project. The school uses the local church frequently for festivals and the vicar is a regular visitor in school.

29 The curricular opportunities provided for pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements of special educational need, are similar to those for all other pupils. Full access to the curriculum is provided through a range of strategies, including specially planned work within a whole class setting, separate provision in small groups with a specialist teacher and in class support of a classroom assistant. Well written individual education plans help teachers to plan more specific tasks for these pupils and so their learning is good. In addition, the very good provision for promoting pupils' social and moral development has a significant impact upon their good standards of behaviour and personal development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

30 The standard of care provided by the teaching and support staff is satisfactory. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. The head teacher takes the lead in creating a family atmosphere that includes the care of others, order and structure through the daily assemblies.

31 The school has a suitable policy for child protection. All the teaching and support staff are aware of their responsibilities and are kept up to date with child protection issues. There is a trained designated person and two trained first aiders and pupils know who to go to if sick or injured. The school has clear procedures in place for identifying and controlling risks to health and safety and there are regular fire drills.

32 The school has satisfactory procedures for monitoring and improving attendance. Registers are monitored regularly and the school liaises with the Educational Welfare Officer if any pupil's attendance gives cause for concern. The very positive approach to behaviour is detailed in the policy, resulting in very good standards of behaviour throughout the school. Any bullying is dealt with quickly and sympathetically with all members of staff presenting a united approach when dealing with discipline problems.

33 Teachers demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of the needs of the pupils. They are alert and responsive to their needs and therefore the pupils' personal and social development is monitored effectively. Personal and social issues are addressed during personal, social and health education lessons, which include talks by the police and health visitors in relation to 'Stranger Danger', road safety and drugs. Pupils know that if they have any problems, all the staff will support them sensitively.

34 The school has improved its assessment and monitoring of pupils' academic performance since the last inspection. The school rigorously analyses the results of previous National Curriculum assessment tests and uses this information to identify areas of the curriculum that need further support, development, training and resources. The school implements very good procedures to assess and track the performance of pupils in English, mathematics and science. The same procedures are now in place for other subjects and this is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Teachers consistently assess the standards of attainment that pupils reach on a regular basis and set specific targets for individuals and groups of pupils. Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment are accurate and this enables teachers to plan what pupils need to do next to reach their targets. This is an improvement since the last inspection and is making a very effective contribution to the raising of standards in most classes. Teachers evaluate their lessons thoroughly and make very effective use of their assessments when planning the activities to meet the full range of abilities in their classes. This means that the learning needs of all groups within the class are well met and teachers focus on areas of individual pupil need.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

35 The school's partnership with parents is good and has been maintained at this level since the previous inspection. Parents have positive views about the school and the replies to the questionnaires and the responses given at the parents' meeting show the level of confidence they have in the school and its staff. There are a large number of parents and friends who help in school and the inspection team does not agree that the school does not work closely with parents. The active friends association organises fund and social events for the school. Lack of space means that parents cannot be invited to the class assemblies; instead they join the school in the local church for the Christmas family service.

36 The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. The school prospectus contains all the necessary information for pupils joining the school. There are termly newsletters providing a full account of school activities and regular, more formal information letters. Parents are provided with termly opportunities to meet staff to discuss their children's progress. However, the annual reports to parents are unsatisfactory because they do not give them sufficient information about what their children know, understand and can do, although they do include targets for the next year. The reports for the younger children cover all the areas for learning and this provides parents with the necessary information on progress as well as setting targets for future development.

37 Parental involvement in their children's learning is good. Support from home is well promoted and valued by the school. A significant number of parents and friends make a valuable contribution to the life of the school by helping in classrooms on a regular basis and accompanying children on educational visits.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

38 The head teacher, deputy head teacher and key staff provide very good leadership and management. Together they maintain a family atmosphere in the school, which has a positive effect on pupils' learning. Leadership and management have improved from good to very good since the last inspection. Governors make a good contribution to the effective running of the school and are committed to maintaining and raising standards further. The observation of teaching and learning by the head teacher and key staff is regularly discussed with governors who are well aware of the school's strengths and areas for development. The school has worked effectively to deal with the key issues from the previous report and is well placed to maintain the strengths and build effectively upon them. The head teacher and key staff give a clear educational direction for the school which is raising pupils' standards. For example, the school has used the analysis of pupils' results in National Curriculum tests to explain the latest results. This information is being used by staff to target particular areas of the curriculum in English, mathematics and science and this is successfully raising pupils' attainment in the present Year 6. For example, in science the school adopted national guidelines last year and, together with an increased emphasis on investigations, pupils' attainment in science is higher than last year. The information also shows clearly that pupils with special educational needs perform well when compared to their previous attainment and many reach the lower levels of national expectations by Year 6.

39 The governing body has a good committee structure that works effectively to support the school. For example, the governors receive reports on how the school development plan is progressing and they check on the progress of curriculum initiatives undertaken by the school. The roles and responsibilities of all staff are under constant review and evaluation because of the implementation of the "performance management" initiative. The roles of the subject co-ordinators are clearly defined and the key co-ordinators have opportunities to observe and evaluate teaching and learning in their subjects. Subject co-ordinators are well placed to implement changes in their subjects because of regular audits to check on pupils' learning and this good monitoring has been instrumental in raising standards and expectations since the last inspection. The co-ordinator for special educational needs gives very good support to staff. The co-ordinator also plays an important part in assessing pupils' difficulties when they are first identified as needing additional help. The school policy is detailed and reflects the school's current practice taking into account the new national guidance for pupils with special educational needs.

40 The head teacher and governors work together closely and are managing recent changes well. For example, the school used the available grant and money from previous years contingency funds to provide a computer suite that is used effectively to improve pupils' learning in information and communication technology. There is clear direction for the work of the school, ensuring that strategic decisions determine the financial and educational development of the school. The head teacher and governors work together to ensure that all decisions relating to the budget are closely linked to the development plan, are manageable and that the principles of "best value for money" are applied rigorously. A good example of the quality of the management of finances is the way the school has used its own finances to supplement the amount available to support pupils with special educational needs by providing a specialist teacher with more time to work with small groups of pupils. The staff meet regularly, both formally and informally, to discuss curriculum matters and to evaluate the progress being made in all aspects of school life.

41 The head teacher, staff and governors are all involved in preparing the school development plan. This working document is fully discussed before being adopted as the action plan for future years. It is a very effective document, which clearly identifies the priorities and targets to be tackled and guides the work of the school. It takes into account the changing status of the school and educational priorities are closely linked to financial planning. For example, the school is successfully developing links with other schools in Europe and the teaching of French to older pupils extends the

experiences available for pupils very well. The school knows its strengths and areas for development and has a very good grasp on how to improve. All staff work hard to improve their own performance and the educational opportunities presented to pupils. The school has clear targets for improvements. For example, the school is aware that further resources are required for information and communication technology to allow pupils to extend their skills in using programs that allow them to sense physical changes.

42 The school has sufficient staff and they are well deployed. Teaching and support assistants play an important role in the life of the school and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. The school has a designated senior management team with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. For example, all curriculum subjects have a subject co-ordinator. Procedures for the induction and support of new teachers are good. Teachers new to the school are well supported by all members of staff. Staff training is linked to priorities in the school plans for the future, which has focused recently on the development of literacy and numeracy. Arrangements for performance management are in place and meet statutory requirements. The school administrative staff make a valuable contribution to the efficient running of the school.

43 The school is situated in large attractive grounds comprising two hard surface playgrounds and a wildlife area round the edge of the sports field. There is a separate safe play area for children under the age of five. The accommodation is satisfactory. The school benefits from a small library and a well appointed computer suite. The hall is a good size for physical education lessons and is large enough to accommodate the whole school for assemblies and other collective gatherings. There is very good disabled access into and throughout the school and very good disabled toilet provision. The school is kept spotlessly clean and very well maintained.

44 The overall quality and quantity of the school's learning resources are good and they are used well. The library is satisfactorily stocked and used effectively to support pupils' learning in all subjects. Although no subject suffers from unsatisfactory resources, there is a limited amount of sensing equipment for information and communication technology. The school has recognised this and intends to extend these resources in the near future. Money is spent wisely and is linked to the school's priorities for development. There is very good leadership and management and very good relationships in school. Expenditure is just above the national average but the good quality of education provided in classes' means that the school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

45 In order to further improve the quality of education, standards and progress in the school, the head teacher, staff and governors should:

- A. Ensure the consistent use of classroom based computers by identifying in teachers' planning opportunities to use computers in other subjects in order to extend and build more effectively on pupils' skills learned in the new computer suite.
(Paragraphs 2, 7, 69, 74, 76, 92, 94 and 97)
- B. Improve the resources available to extend pupils' learning in the practical use of sensing equipment in information and communication technology.
(Paragraphs 7, 41, 44, 94 and 96)

NB. The school has identified these issues in its own priorities and has a good action plan in place to address these matters.

46 In addition to the key issues above, governors should include the following minor issue as part of the action plan:

Improve the quality of information to parents on pupils' progress, in all subjects of the National Curriculum, in the annual reports.
(Paragraph 36)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	12	27	6	0	0	0
Percentage	6	25	56	12	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	214
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	20

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	33

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	9

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	17
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	3.0
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.2
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 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	14	15	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	27	27	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93% (93%)	93% (93%)	93% (93%)
	National	84% (83%)	86% (84%)	91% (90%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	14
	Girls	14	14	15
	Total	27	27	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93% (93%)	93% (93%)	100% (96%)
	National	85% (84%)	89% (88%)	89% (88%)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	15	17	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	13	15
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	29	29	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91% (87%)	91% (73%)	97% (80%)
	National	75% (75%)	71% (72%)	87% (85%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	14	14
	Girls	14	14	15
	Total	26	28	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81% (83%)	88% (80%)	91% (80%)
	National	72% (70%)	74% (72%)	82% (79%)

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	4
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	0
White	176
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.3
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

Financial information

Financial year	2000 - 2001
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	£
Total income	420,498
Total expenditure	438,644
Expenditure per pupil	2,079
Balance brought forward from previous year	25,644

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.5
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	214
Number of questionnaires returned	110

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	50	43	6	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	53	40	3	2	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	56	4	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	52	6	6	4
The teaching is good.	60	36	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	38	18	3	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	26	8	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	41	0	1	0
The school works closely with parents.	29	44	18	8	1
The school is well led and managed.	40	46	4	4	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	39	58	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	30	28	7	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

47 The school has improved provision for children in the reception class. The school provides children with a very good start to their education. The good teaching and rich curriculum offered has a positive effect on children's learning. Children enjoy their time in the reception class. They are enthusiastic, happy, concentrate well on their activities and make good progress. The behaviour and attitude to learning is very good because children are very well managed and are kept busy. A wide variety of interesting activities are very well planned by the teacher and assessments are used very effectively to track the progress of individual children.

48 When children enter the reception class a full range of ability is represented and school assessments indicate that the attainment of the majority of children is typical for their age. By the end of the reception year, good progress has been made and the majority of children achieve standards that are above those expected for children of this age, particularly in language and communication skills, mathematical development and in personal and social development. This represents good achievement for these children from when they first enter the reception class.

49 Children who have special educational needs are identified early, with speech and language difficulties tested and monitored rigorously from when they first enter the school. The school has effective liaison with external agencies and, as a result, children with identified special educational needs have these met particularly early. This effective liaison, along with very good relationships with parents and carers, ensures that children with special educational needs are well provided for and consequently make good progress.

Personal, social and emotional development

50 By the time the children leave the foundation stage, most achieve levels above those expected in this area of learning. Personal and social development is taught very well. The teacher and staff of reception children place great emphasis on developing independence and social skills and they do this very effectively by setting good examples for the children to follow. Learning activities are organised so children experience the opportunity to make choices and take decisions. This effective strategy soon builds up the confidence of the children. They very quickly get used to the routines of the class. For example, almost all children change their clothes for physical education independently and talk quietly together until they are ready to move into the hall for a lesson. After each activity, children are encouraged to tidy up and this is made easy for them as the classroom is very well organised and children know where everything belongs. Children are aware of classroom rules and routines. For example, as they enter the classroom in the morning, they independently hang up their coats on clearly labelled pegs and place their school bags in a large box. As a result, the school day begins promptly, with all children being on the carpet and ready for registration within minutes. Many children show good levels of concentration and persistence and they eagerly involve themselves in new activities. Children share resources well with others, take turns and know that some games have special rules. Behaviour is very good and children speak politely to each other and to all adults in their classroom. Every opportunity is taken to develop children's confidence, for example, children in the reception class led a whole school assembly. A number of them read different parts of the story of Bartemaus and how Jesus was friends with everyone. This theme of friendship was well acted by children and their use of puppets greatly enhanced the performance. This type of activity makes a significant contribution to many aspects of children's development and they were thrilled with their performance.

Language, literacy and communication

51 The teaching in this area of learning is good and as a result, the majority of children achieve above the standards expected for their age and ability by the end of the foundation stage. Higher attaining children have a good grasp of reading, speaking and language skills and achieve above the standard found in most schools. Speaking and listening skills develop particularly well because of the very good emphasis placed by all staff on extending and developing correct vocabulary as part of every activity. Children are constantly encouraged to talk about what they are doing and express their thoughts and feelings. The children achieve well because they are taught to listen very carefully to stories or instructions and to give extended answers to questions. For example, one activity extended language skills considerably as children discussed the different types of transport used to go on holiday. The teacher used a tape recording of different sounds and children correctly identified an aeroplane and then extended the answer by saying it was taking off because the sound became more distant as the tape played through. Speaking skills are extended in the reception class by good use of role-play activities. For example, five children pretended they were on board an aeroplane, two were passengers and the “crew” helped passengers aboard the plane. Talking about where they were going extended their use of language.

52 Children have good reading skills, they are encouraged to take books home regularly to share with their family. In the reception class, higher attaining children know the title of their reading book when asked and identify the main characters in a story. They read stories fluently, for example, one read the story of “The Three Little Pigs” using very good emphasis when shouting “help”. There is good understanding and they know that they get information from different types of book. Children of average ability read the new spellings that they have learnt and practised at home. They self-correct when making mistakes. They begin to appreciate the humour in a story, pointing out that “The Magic Key” was making two children in the story smaller and they laughed when they could not see over a pair of slippers. Children who are less confident readers are still competent and develop good strategies to tackle new words that are unfamiliar to them. They read simple sentences and use the picture clues to help them read new words, such as “trumpet”. The teachers use reading records well to track the progress of individual children and a home school reading diary provides another effective link with parents and carers. Children have very good attitudes to books and reading.

53 Early writing skills are developed well in reception. Children are given many opportunities to make marks, copy their names or add titles and labels to their drawings. Older children in the reception class are taught basic writing skills very effectively. For example, when modelling the writing of a new sentence about a story, they read the sentences as a class and then put them in the correct order. Higher attaining children write sentences clearly in their books and use full stops and some capital letters correctly. This indicates that the children have a very good understanding of the basic rules of grammar and know how their work should be set out. In small groups, children develop independent writing as they write short sentences to illustrate pictures to tell the story of a picnic. They develop good spelling strategies as they use a word dictionary in alphabetical order. Handwriting skills are taught very thoroughly, either by the teacher, parent helpers or support assistants, to small groups of children. This ensures that the teacher can see how the children form and shape their letters and any mistakes are corrected immediately. This leads to very good learning.

Mathematical development

54 This area of learning is taught very well and by the end of the reception year, children reach standards that are above those expected for their age in mathematics. All children make good progress and achieve well from when they first enter school. In a lesson where the focus was mathematics, children worked with real coins to identify the cost of various items from pictures of fruit and vegetables. They confidently wrote down the numbers and added amounts of 5p to 4p to obtain the correct answer. The teacher and support staff use questioning very effectively to extend

mathematical knowledge, for example, the teacher asked children to check their addition when using money by counting the coins they were using. In the reception class, children work on practical activities to extend their knowledge and understanding of counting numbers to 100. They develop an understanding of capacity as they fill one large container with water, using smaller jugs. They explain when one is “full” and say that it takes three jugs to fill the large container. Children learn quickly in lessons because activities are very well planned and a good selection of resources is used effectively to give them a sound base to their learning. Those children who finish activities early are given further challenging extension activities. This keeps them attentive, interested and ensures that all ability groups make equally good progress.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

55 Staff in the reception class provide rich learning experiences to ensure children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. As a result of good teaching and a wide variety of interesting and relevant activities, most children reach standards that are above those expected for their age in this area of learning. Scientific concepts are developed well as children examine plants, track the growth of ones they have planted and know that they need food, water and light to grow well. Good use of written labels giving information and an interesting selection of non-fiction books about the life cycle of plants gives good opportunities for investigations. In their imaginative play area, they learn about the church, explain their visit to a local church and one said, “We saw a picture of Jesus on the window”. This type of experience widens children’s horizons as they begin to understand the meaning of places and artefacts to particular groups of people, such as Christians.

56 A very good display shows children learning about the importance of the Chinese New Year and photographs show them eating Chinese food, creating their own celebration cards and listening attentively to a local family who came to school to talk about how they celebrate the event. Computer skills are taught effectively through either language or mathematics activities, or by using specific programs to develop certain skills, such as using an art program to develop the use of colour in pictures created on the screen. All children in the reception class have the opportunity to use the computer and most recognise popular programs and use the mouse to click on correct icons. For example, in an English lesson children were very excited when they clicked on the correct letter of a word when it was highlighted on the screen. Computer skills develop quickly and children show very good attitudes to learning these new skills. In design and technology, children make models using a variety of materials. For example, following a visit to the local sorting office and studying the local area they made models of houses, using a good range of cutting, sticking and painting techniques.

Physical development

57 Children make good progress in the development of their physical skills and reach standards above those expected in this area of learning. Teaching is good because staff provide many opportunities for children to handle construction equipment, use play dough to roll, cut and shape, play in the sand tray and use scissors, paint brushes and crayons. In a physical education lesson, children ran, skipped and changed shape quickly when the teacher gave specific instructions in a warm up session. Children showed good ball control skills in this lesson as they bounced, caught and passed the ball to their partner. Those children who have special educational needs are well supported in physical activities, enabling them to have full access to all activities. All activities are very well organised, with health and safety a strong feature of lessons. Children are taught how to use space safely and are given good examples to follow by teachers and learning support assistants. There is a good outdoor play area with a climbing frame and slide that children enjoy using. The hard surfaced yard is used effectively for children using trikes and they show good control of direction as they peddle vigorously around. As a result of this good planning and effective support, all children are fully included in physical education activities and they make good progress in their physical development.

Creative development

58 The teaching of creative development is good. Activities are well planned, resources are used effectively and support staff work with children in small groups so that knowledge and skills are developed thoroughly. As a result, children make good progress and reach standards above the level expected for their age by the end of the reception year. Children are provided with an interesting curriculum and, in particular, have the opportunity to experience a good variety of tools, materials and equipment. Children choose a selection of cardboard boxes to make model houses, which they join together with glue or sellotape. Children use colour well to paint biscuits they have made and use a range of techniques to improve their skills. For example, they create pictures using hand prints, sponge prints and block prints to create attractive designs. They recognise many colours and mix new colours by using hands and brushes when exploring shades and tones of colour. Musical activities are enjoyed as children have almost daily sessions where they sing a good selection of songs, many using appropriate actions to match the words. They particularly enjoyed the “Train” song and reacted very well as the train slowed as it came into the station and showed real excitement as it speeded up going down the track. They keep the beat when listening to music and sing a good selection of songs. The teacher uses time when children sit in a circle very well, for example, when discussing what they mean by “treasure”. A very good selection of items captivated children as they were brought out of a box one at a time. There was a sense of wonder when the treasures brought out included a beautiful rose and a glass ball filled with colour. This type of activity makes a significant contribution to many areas of learning. Accommodation for children in the foundation stage is good and used effectively to enhance learning opportunities. Resources are good and used very effectively.

ENGLISH

59 By the end of Year 6, standards of attainment in English are well above the national average and pupils’ achievements are very good. By the end of Year 2, standards of attainment are above the national average and pupils’ achievements are good. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements of special educational needs, make good progress throughout the school.

60 Since the last inspection high standards of achievement have been maintained and in Years 4 and 5 the quality of writing is very good. Literacy skills are very well developed across many subjects in the curriculum, the assessment procedures have improved and pupils’ progress is monitored with targets being set to enable them to reach the next level of attainment. The school’s focus on writing ensures that pupils extensively practise writing for a wide range of audiences, particularly in Years 4, 5 and 6.

61 Pupils’ attainment in speaking and listening is well above the level expected for their age and is a strength of the school. All pupils express themselves confidently and clearly, using a comprehensive range of vocabulary. They listen attentively to their teachers, and to each other, and contribute maturely and spontaneously in group and class discussions. In lessons, pupils listen intently to stories, poems, non-fiction texts and the teachers’ comments. They are very willing to ask and answer questions and are very enthusiastic about contributing their own ideas. Pupils’ skills are developed through the planned opportunities for expressing opinions about events and characters; for example when Year 4 pupils were discussing the techniques used to market a brand of breakfast cereal. Speaking skills are particularly enhanced when there are appropriate links with other subjects; for example, when Year 3 pupils discuss the environmental factors that are likely to occur when a small village begins to change. There is good use of drama to support the development of speaking skills when pupils act out the role of characters and events; for example Year 4 pupils acted out the story of Ganesha to develop their understanding of the Hindu religion.

62 By the end of Year 2 the standard of reading is good and the majority of pupils have a reading age that is above that expected of seven year olds. The higher attaining pupils demonstrate a

good degree of technical skill and understanding and their fluency and expression is well developed. This is because pupils are listened to regularly at home and at school and the school has good procedures for monitoring pupils' progress. The school has an established system of working collaboratively with the home which helps pupils to achieve well. When reading, pupils use picture or contextual clues appropriately, they build a comprehensive sight vocabulary and use their understanding of letter sounds to attempt unknown words. By the end of Year 6 the standard of reading is very good and the majority of pupils have a reading age well above that expected of 11 year olds. Pupils read a range of fiction and non-fiction books. Most pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 are fully independent readers and the majority of these pupils read accurately and fluently with a good standard of expression. Pupils read for pleasure, justify who is their favourite author and review books critically, taking account of aspects such as character and plot. The school is very successful in whetting the pupils' appetite for reading. However, the range of books available to older pupils is limited and therefore the school does not fully exploit this very solid foundation.

63 Attainment in writing is just above the level expected by the age of seven and well above by the age of 11. By the age of seven, pupils' achievement is good with due attention given to handwriting, punctuation and spelling. By the end of Year 2, pupils' writing shows clear structure and the appropriate use of verbs, adjectives and adverbs. Pupils in Year 1 retell the tale of Little Red Hiding Hood well. Pupils are secure in their construction of sentences and write for a good range of purposes; for example, Year 2 pupils write clear instructions about, "How to brush your teeth". In Years 3 to 6, pupils' achievement is good and sometimes exceptional, particularly in Year 4 and Year 5. For example, pupils in Year 5 produced outstanding pieces of writing on the legend of King Arthur. By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils plan and redraft written work including stories, drama scripts, instructions, narrative, poetry and letters. Some of the work is of a very high standard, for example, the stories of Year 4 pupils responding to their work on "bullying" showed a very good use of descriptive writing with a powerful sense of emotion. Pupils write in a range of styles, paying good attention to punctuation and employing specific techniques such as the use of similes and alliteration, for example, when Year 6 pupils rewrite a traditional fairy tale to portray the main characters differently from the original. The excellent work done in developing pupils' skills in persuasive writing is a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. They construct powerful letters with convincing arguments on a number of issues, ranging from the arguments for and against school uniform to the better treatment of animals by humans.

64 The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers have a good knowledge of English, teach with enthusiasm and confidence and, as a result, pupils enjoy what they are learning. This leads to pupils being highly motivated, working hard and concentrating for a sustained period of time. Excellent and very good teaching was seen in lessons which were thoroughly prepared, expectations are high and challenging activities are used to captivate pupils' interests. As a result, pupils show great interest in their lessons, behave very well and respond enthusiastically to the teachers' skilful questioning. There are very good relationships between teachers and pupils and as a result pupils participate willingly in discussions, freely offering their opinions and feelings. Teachers have high expectations of both behaviour and learning, give supportive feedback and set targets for pupils to help them make progress. Teaching has a good balance of class, group and individual work. Most pupils work both independently and collaboratively and this leads to very good relationships with each other. A strength of the teaching is that teachers and support staff collaborate effectively to ensure that pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language are fully included in all English activities.

65 The subject leader provides good leadership and management and has established clear priorities for the subject's future development. There are good formal procedures for monitoring and evaluating the teaching of English and literacy throughout the school. This results in teachers evaluating their teaching and constantly striving to improve the quality of pupils' learning and the standards of attainment.

MATHEMATICS

66 By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in mathematics is above the level expected for their age. By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve standards which are well above those expected nationally. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection report and a significant improvement among 11 year old pupils. This rise in standards of attainment is demonstrated by the continuing trend of improvement over the last three years in National Curriculum tests, and is particularly noticeable in Year 6 where the trend of improvement in test results over the previous four years is better than the national trend.

67 Most pupils in Year 1 read an analogue clock in steps of half an hour and match them successfully when playing a dominoes game. A significant minority of these pupils recognise digital times on a clock from 01:00 to 12:00 and understand that, for example, 03:00 is the equivalent of three o'clock on an analogue clock face. By the time they are seven years old, pupils readily add two 2 digit numbers by writing down the problem. A significant number of higher attaining pupils add two and three digit numbers together accurately using a number line. These pupils readily add two digit numbers together mentally.

68 Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress as they move through the school. In a Year 4 lesson, most pupils had a clear understanding of the methods of multiplication when they mentally multiplied, for example, 32×2 . They know the reverse process of division and use it to check their answers. Year 5 pupils successfully identify their own strategies for solving word problems. They understand when to use a mental, written or calculator approach. These problems involve all four mathematical operations, when using money and decimals. A majority of these pupils solve problems such as, "Dad bought a two kilogram bag of carrots. He used 478 grams to make soup. How many grams of carrots were left?" By the time they are 11 years old most pupils have acquired the skill to represent data in the form of graphs and pie charts. They measure the temperature of a room throughout a day and show the results in a line graph, interpreting their findings to show, for example, the highest and lowest temperatures and the trend. A significant minority of these higher attaining pupils understand the use of a two operation algebraic formula to express a problem from words in a game involving dice. For example; "Twice the dice score plus 5 can be represented as $d \times 2 + 5 = ?$ " Pupils' books and folders show that they record their work in a systematic way and they have completed a very substantial volume of work across all the appropriate programmes of study.

69 Teaching in mathematics is very good and has improved significantly since the previous inspection. High expectations of pupils' effort, pace of working and amount of work they should do has a significant impact on attainment, particularly among older pupils. The National Numeracy Strategy has been very effectively implemented and has had a positive impact on teaching, learning and attainment since its introduction in the school. Teachers have a thorough understanding of the numeracy guidance and use this well to inform their planning and assessment. Consequently, the areas of concern raised in the previous inspection report have been fully resolved. Teachers now follow guidelines which give pupils comprehensive and progressive access to the National Curriculum programmes of study. Teachers plan the use of homework well to reinforce pupils' skills. In the best teaching, expectations of what pupils should achieve are high and there is a great sense of urgency in the approach to activities. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, the mental activity at the beginning of the lesson was timed, so that pupils responded quickly and concentration levels were very high. Pupils were very eager to demonstrate their skill in finding out how many ways they could find to reach 36 using as many operations as possible. This strategy also allowed all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to find an answer according to their ability. In a good lesson in Year 1, the teacher made effective use of a computer to demonstrate the relationship between a digital and an analogue clock. The game, "Digital Dan and Analogue Anne", enthralled pupils as they see the clocks move to match each other when an answer is given. Individual pupils have the opportunity to enhance their

learning with this program. However, there is little other evidence in the lessons observed and in the work seen that pupils have the opportunities to use information and communication technology to enhance their learning in mathematics lessons across the school as a whole.

70 The subject is managed well. The co-ordinator has a thorough grasp of the issues involved and has a clear picture of future development. Assessment procedures have been developed substantially since the previous inspection. Strategies, such as regular monitoring of examples of pupils' work, setting targets and a range of tests give teachers a very good picture of individual pupils' attainment and progress as they move through the school. Regular monitoring of planning and teaching helps to give the co-ordinator a coherent picture of the subject, which helps to ensure the progress of pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, is consistent.

SCIENCE

71 By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment in science is above the level expected for their age. Standards have been improved since the previous inspection. The standards achieved by 11 year olds have improved since the 2001 National Curriculum tests mainly because the good analysis of the results meant that the school changed its guidelines for science and they now follow national guidelines. Pupils' attainment is improving because of the focus the school has placed on the investigative and experimental aspects of science, particularly for the older pupils in the school. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and they make good progress. As a result, there is a good capacity for further improvement. During the inspection, there was no significant variation in the attainment of boys and girls.

72 In Year 1, pupils experiment with different materials and have a sound knowledge of the foods needed for a healthy lifestyle and the requirements for growth in plants. Pupils understand that plants need sun and water to grow. In a good lesson in Year 1, pupils used the school grounds to investigate where different plants can be found. They used observational and identification skills well to record what they found and then referred to books about plants to identify the different species. In Year 2, science work is developed well and experiments with sounds show their good development of the need to record the results accurately. For example, they write simple accounts of their experiments with sounds and understand that the volume diminishes as you move further away. Pupils conduct simple experiments using wires and batteries and understand the effects of having two bulbs in the circuit. They understand the concept of materials changing when they experiment with bread and turn it into toast. They use their knowledge to record different types of materials found in the classroom and they record how materials can be grouped together, for example, wood, glass and metal. In their recording of simple experiments, they sometimes make predictions and indicate why the test is fair.

73 These improving standards develop as pupils move through the school. Pupils develop their understanding of each area of the curriculum steadily and improve their scientific skills through the teachers' strong emphasis on experimental work. For example, pupils In Year 4 investigated the habitats preferred by snails by preparing a tank with dry, light places and damp, gloomy locations and they carefully recorded which the snails preferred. This type of study on habitats was followed up very well in a lesson to consider the effects of destroying valuable habitats. The teacher made very good use of a video about animal life in the rain forests and what happens to it when trees are cut down and undergrowth cleared. Pupils in Year 5 measure human pulse rates under different conditions, as part of their work on health education. In each year group, teachers ensure that a good range of topics is covered, so that pupils make good progress in all areas of science. This is one of the strengths of the curriculum and is made possible because staff are skilled in teaching all aspects of science and have the confidence to use experiments as the basis of teaching.

74 Teachers' planning ensures that pupils cover all the science curriculum. However, the inconsistent use of classroom based computers means that information and communication technology is not used as often as it could be to support and extend pupils' research and recording skills. By the age of 11, most pupils have a clear understanding of experimental methods and apply these to a range of tests. They conduct experiments to see how liquids evaporate when heated and know these processes can be reversed. Pupils understand the idea of a fair test, for example, when they study solutions and make appropriate graphs to show how long it takes to dissolve different substances in water. Pupils know of the interdependence of plants and animals, describe different habitats and relate these to food chains. They construct simple circuits and improve the brightness of the bulb by connecting more batteries in the circuit. There is evidence of good work across the ability range. Teachers make sure that they include all pupils in the activities, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Most pupils possess good recording skills, using graphs and tables accurately to illustrate their knowledge and understanding.

75 The good science teaching and the range of stimulating scientific activities contribute well to the improving quality of pupils' learning. In the lessons seen and in discussions with pupils it is clear that their attitudes and behaviour are one of the reasons why their learning is improving. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject contribute to the well planned provision, such as the improving use of investigations to encourage pupils to use scientific skills in a practical way. In Year 2 work, there are good examples of how to record the results of experiments with forces as they record how far different vehicles travelled over a range of surfaces. In Year 6, in a good practical lesson on soil examination, pupils used microscopes and magnifying glasses well to observe and record the make up of each type of soil. This type of work makes a good contribution to pupils' improving scientific skills in predicting, testing, recording and drawing conclusions. Teachers include positive comments when marking and often provide precise guidance on what pupils need to do in order to improve.

76 The school has responded to the latest changes in the National Curriculum and introduced new guidance for teachers. The science co-ordinator provides good leadership and undertakes a regular audit of the subject. There have been regular observations of teaching and learning and there are regular checks on teachers' planning and pupils' work to ensure that all aspects of the subject are covered. Resources for the subject are very good and used well to improve pupils' learning, for example, when testing circuits, magnetic fields or how forces affect objects. However, there is inconsistent use of the classroom based computers to support pupils' learning and to extend their methods of recording experiments. The curriculum for science covers all the required aspects and ensures that pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good gains in learning as they move through the school. The good attention to the use of appropriate scientific language and the use of charts and graphs ensures that science makes a positive contribution to the development of basic literacy and numeracy skills.

ART AND DESIGN

77 By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment in art and design is at the level expected for their age. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection report.

78 Pupils in Year 1 respond well to a visit to the school by an owner of birds of prey by drawing their own interpretations of what they have seen in pencil and pastel. In a history topic on toys, they extend their drawing and observational skills by drawing teddy bears using line and colour. By the time they are seven years old, pupils plan their work more carefully. They make their own designs for a collage and describe the materials they are going to use. In a study of a hedgerow, pupils draw in pencil, a variety of plants from direct observation and contribute good quality colour work for inclusion in a larger scale class frieze.

79 Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Pupils in Year 4 explore ways in which they can make a block to print a T-shirt pattern. They design and cut a polystyrene block and print the motif on the cloth, repeating the pattern. These pupils, in discussion, evaluate their work and progress well. From their experience, they comment on the best approach to use with observations such as, “Don’t press too hard it can slip” and “Make sure you don’t use too much ink”. By the time pupils are 11 years old, they use their skills in a number of ways to enhance their learning in other subjects. For example, when studying Ancient Egypt in a history topic, they make good quality masks from card and papier-mâché, which are painted well. A visiting artist gave pupils the opportunity to extend their skills and produce silk paintings. Pupils painted motifs which combined to form a larger scale piece of work. Whilst pupils acquire a wide variety of skills as they progress through the school which they use effectively to enhance their learning in other areas of the curriculum, their ability to observe and record the world around them is limited. Pupils’ sketchbooks and preparatory drawings show that their ability to record what they can see at first hand does not progress as well as the techniques in making images and artefacts.

80 There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. However, the implication from the standard of work seen and discussions with pupils is that teachers have a consistent approach to planning the work that pupils do. Schemes of work are now based on national guidelines which help to ensure that pupils’ skills and understanding build progressively as they move through the school which is reflected in teachers’ planning. This resolves the issues of subject guidance and the continuity of pupils’ work which were raised in the previous inspection report. The work that pupils do shows that teachers give them many opportunities to develop their skills in a wide variety of media, both in two and three dimensions. This is demonstrated in work on techniques such as silk painting, block printing, collage and making masks. However, there is currently insufficient attention paid to increasing pupils’ ability to explore visual images through direct observation by using, for example, sketchbooks to record their ideas.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

81 By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils’ attainment in design and technology is at the level expected for their age. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection report.

82 Pupils in Year 1 design items to make a model playground. They discuss and plan the most attractive objects to include, such as swings and slides, and build these using card, tubes, fabrics and string. They talk about the finished class work describing what they think about it. Year 2 pupils design cards with moving parts. They describe in writing what they are going to do and label the parts that are going to move. The cards are made and finished in colour and split pins are used to ensure that the appropriate pieces, for example a butterfly or a whale on the sea, move correctly.

83 Pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Pupils in Year 5 demonstrate their design skills when making a model vehicle. Diagrams, sketches and descriptions of the construction and materials, all show that pupils understand how to think ahead about the order of their work, using the appropriate materials and techniques. The completed vehicles, largely of very similar appearance and construction materials, have moving axles and wheels and some pupils have installed electric motors to drive the vehicle by an elastic band. Most pupils identify, in their evaluation, the problems that they have encountered and how they could improve their work. By the time pupils are 11, they explore their own ways of joining materials. Experiments with joints using wood and straws when building a model bridge in pairs, demonstrate how they generate their own ideas and modify their work as it progresses. These models are well constructed and show that pupils understand how to work with accuracy from a given range of materials. They know that the primary function of their bridge is to carry weight and they carry out tests accordingly.

84 There was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. However, the implication from the standard of work seen and discussions with staff and pupils is that teachers have a methodical approach to planning the work that pupils do. Design and technology has been a recent focus for review and a new policy and guidelines are now in place, which has helped teachers to enhance their subject knowledge. The emphasis on the way pupils should design and evaluate their work at each stage helps to ensure that pupils build on their skills progressively as they move through the school. The subject manager monitors the work that pupils produce in displays of individual classes, with informal verbal feedback to teachers. There are currently no formal procedures for monitoring planning and teaching.

GEOGRAPHY

85 By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment in geography is at a level that is above what is expected for their age and they make good progress in geography. They have good geographical skills and their knowledge of places around the world and the local area is well developed.

86 A strength of the curriculum is the pupils' knowledge of their local environment and the effects of environmental change. Year 1 pupils identify what makes the school environment good and bad and what they can do to make it better. This is developed well by Year 4 pupils who investigate the impact of pollution on the local area by conducting a litter survey. Year 5 pupils conduct a traffic survey in the town centre to ascertain whether or not the town would benefit by having the high street closed to traffic. Both classes write persuasive letters to convince an outside audience of their findings and opinions. A further strength in geography is the pupils' ability to compare and contrast their own locality with other parts of the world. Year 2 pupils identify the similarities and differences of the local area with a fishing village in Scotland and a village in Mexico. This leads to pupils being aware of what they like and dislike about their local area and appreciating the positive qualities of other places. This is developed well by Year 4 pupils who study a village in India and compare the daily experiences of a child in that village with their own. Pupils use geographical terminology accurately; for example Year 6 pupils have undertaken a river study, from two different positions on the river, and confidently explain the terms erosion, meander and deposition.

87 The quality of teaching is good. Teachers' planning is very good and they use specific geographical language well. There are good links with other subjects and opportunities are planned to support the development of the pupils' literacy skills. There are very good relationships between teachers and pupils. This enables the learning in school and in the community to be carried out effectively and increases pupils' ability to work independently by using the Internet to complement their investigations. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, set challenging tasks and use good resources to support the learning. As a result, pupils' attitudes to learning are good throughout the school. The pupils take pride in the presentation of their work and record their findings of investigations and field trips with a good degree of accuracy. They are given many opportunities to work co-operatively and collaboratively. They particularly enjoy opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills through field trips and visits to the local area.

88 The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management and this had led to very thorough planning and assessment procedures. As a result, the pupils are achieving higher standards than the last inspection and experiencing a breadth of geographical experiences.

HISTORY

89 By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in history is at the level expected for their age. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is above the level expected, which is an improvement in attainment since the previous inspection.

90 Pupils in Year 2 demonstrate their sense of chronology by identifying a series of photographs of the seaside and using terms such as recent, older and oldest to describe their age. They recognise how modern dress and seaside environment differs from the past by looking at photographs and identifying clues such as a modern baby buggy and an Edwardian changing hut. A minority of higher attaining pupils recognise that the past and present have similarities as well as differences, such as sandcastles and deckchairs on the beach. These pupils use their developing writing skills to describe, in their own words, The Great Fire of London and work of Florence Nightingale.

91 Pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make good progress as they move through the school. They make increasing use of their own writing skills to give their own accounts and reports. For example, Year 5 pupils use evidence from a variety of sources to write a report to Lord Shaftesbury on child labour and they write a biography of George Stephenson. In discussion, pupils in Year 4 show good understanding of what life was like at sea in the time of Francis Drake, using their knowledge of vocabulary such as “crow’s nest” and “bow of the ship” in their descriptions. They use and interpret a variety of sources to write an account of a doctor’s work and life aboard ship. By the time they are 11 years old, pupils have a good factual knowledge of a range of aspects of British history and the wider world. They research the life story of Howard Carter and background of Tutankhamun, skilfully weaving their research into a diary of the events leading up to the discovery of the tomb. When studying World War II, Year 6 pupils have a good knowledge of why events such as Dunkirk and the evacuation of the civilian population took place. In discussions, they contribute personal recollections from relatives and confidently use the appropriate language and vocabulary such as, Operation Sea Lion, Battle of Britain and Anderson shelter. A significant minority of higher attaining pupils use a range of resources such as tapes, old magazines and photographs to identify and extract the key facts they will need to produce a structured narrative of The Home Front. This type of work makes a very good contribution to their literacy skills.

92 Teaching of history is good, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Some excellent teaching was evident in Year 4. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and make very good use of resources, which benefits the learning of older pupils significantly. Pupils in Year 2 gain a good insight into how their lives are different from people in the past by studying carefully selected photographs of the seaside taken at different periods. In a Year 6 lesson on World War II, a wide variety of tapes, magazines, books photographs and artefacts stimulated pupils’ interest and provided a substantial basis to develop their research skills. Very good use of information and communication technology was evident in this lesson when one pupil searched the Internet for facts on the Anderson shelter. This was then used by other pupils to plot the dimensions and layout on the classroom floor using tape, chairs and desks. The completed task drew cries of disbelief from pupils at the cramped conditions. The use of computers to enhance learning in the subject is not consistently in evidence across the school and classroom computers are currently underused in this respect. In an excellent lesson in Year 4 on Francis Drake, the impact of a very wide range of exciting tasks and resources enthralled and excited pupils. The teacher very skilfully used role-play, poetry, video, artefacts, tapes and written material to stimulate pupils’ interest. The teacher had very high expectations of the quality and quantity of independent work that pupils should produce, to which the pupils responded readily.

93 The management of the subject is good. There are comprehensive guidelines based on national ones which resolves the issue raised in the previous inspection. The subject co-ordinator reviews planning regularly and there are good assessment procedures used to monitor pupils’ progress. A good file of examples of pupils’ work is maintained in each year to provide information which helps teachers to plan, share ideas and have a common view of standards.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

94 By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils’ attainment is in line with the levels expected for their age in skills and knowledge in information and communication technology. Pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make good progress and achieve well in lessons. This is largely attributable to the consistently good teaching and the good quality resources, including the new computer suite. The school has done well to maintain the standards found in the last inspection because of the change to more modern computers, problems with the installation of the new suite and the networking needed for all computers in the school. This has now been completed and the employment of a part time technician shows the commitment to improvement. Although older

pupils understand the use of sensors, for example, in burglar alarms and the control of traffic lights, they have limited knowledge of how to use computers to sense physical changes, such as temperature. The school is aware of this and has good plans in place to provide more resources and so extend pupils' practical skills in this aspect of the subject. Information and communication technology is valued as an essential part of the curriculum, although the time given to it still varies from class to class. For example, pupils' use of information and communication technology to enhance other subjects and to consolidate their computing skills by using classroom based computers is not consistently undertaken in all classes.

95 By the end of Year 2, pupils use computers to write poems and short paragraphs on a range of subjects. They use directions in a program that shows an ant searching for food and enter east, west, north or south with the number of squares the ant has to cross to reach the food. This type of program shows a good link with both mathematics and geography. They create block graphs to show the favourite ice creams enjoyed by the class. Pupils in Year 2 use specific programs well, for example, they create a "decision tree diagram" by entering data for different fish. Other children can then use the program to ask specific questions and following a yes/no response to the characteristics of the fish to reach a conclusion. Pupils develop appropriate skills and understanding of the Internet. For example, Year 2 pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, located information on mini beasts, they selected the information they required and printed it to use in their science studies. Higher attaining pupils use the menu bar competently and understand the term "scroll", average and lower attaining pupils require more support. Many pupils know that computers are used to control devices such as cookers and video equipment.

96 By the end of Year 6, pupils make sound gains in skills and knowledge and continue to achieve well in lessons. They know how to set up and use simple databases and to interrogate these for information. Teachers use the computer suite well to introduce pupils to spreadsheets to organise and analyse different forms of data. Pupils use the term "field", "file" and "icon" accurately and higher attaining pupils in Year 6 explain what these terms mean. Year 6 pupils understand the use of sensor devices to measure the temperature in a house and turn on the heating when it is cold but they have limited practical experience of using them in school. There are good plans in place to use the limited sensing equipment in the near future and to extend the resources needed for pupils to undertake more sophisticated experiments. Although no lessons linked to more advanced control technology were seen during the inspection, teachers' planning and discussion with the co-ordinator and pupils indicated that this has occurred in the past. Pupils understand the importance and scope of the Internet and have used it to locate information on Ancient Egypt and to e-mail messages to other pupils. In Year 6, they use the Internet to support their studies in religious education by finding places of interest and importance for their studies of pilgrimages. For example, they know that Hindus go to Benares City when they make their pilgrimage at least once in their lifetime. There are no significant differences between the attainment of girls and boys. Pupils of all ages enjoy using the computers and treat them with respect. In many lessons, pupils offer assistance to other pupils and are uninhibited when asking for advice from the teacher.

97 The quality of teaching in the computer suite is good. Teachers use their knowledge well to give clear instructions and to test pupils' understanding with skilful questioning. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, the teacher checked pupils' understanding of previous work on the Victorians and set the challenging task of entering the information they acquired to create a database that they could use to answer specific questions. They knew that the information for each person was called a "record" and that each one could have up to seven "fields" in it. Teachers' very good management of behaviour allows most pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, to work independently and gain confidence. In many lessons, teachers use opportunities to consolidate pupils' spelling and reading skills by linking questions to text that has been read on the screen or created by pupils. Teachers are particularly skilful in managing the behaviour of pupils, particularly in the confined space of the computer suite. This means pupils remain focused and

persevere with their tasks. However, most teachers do not plan for the use of information and communication technology in other subjects, including English and mathematics. Although some use in English, mathematics and science was observed, it is generally inadequately used in most classes. The recently appointed co-ordinator has identified future training needs, provides specialist teaching to other year groups and is fully aware of the developments needed which are shown in the good plan for future improvements. As a result, the school is well placed to continue the recent good development of the subject.

MUSIC

98 It was possible to see only one lesson of music during the inspection, however, discussions with teachers, the co-ordinator and pupils show that pupils' attainment in some aspects of music is in line with the level expected for their age by the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. In assemblies, pupils' singing is tuneful and most pupils thoroughly enjoy the experience. In an assembly for younger pupils, recorded music was used well to produce a family atmosphere and the two hymns were sung very well by pupils who knew and used all the actions for one hymn. Singing is developed well in Years 1 and 2, often in short sessions at the end of other lessons. For example, in Year 1 pupils sang a variety of songs and used happy, sad or grumpy voices to show different ways of expressing feelings. They were fully involved in the activity and this showed in the way their faces changed to reflect the feelings in the singing. This work develops well in Year 2 as pupils sing in high or low voices which they use effectively when singing in the "round" the song London's Burning. Pupils study the works of famous musicians that fit in well with their topic work. For example, in Year 2 pupils listen to the Four Seasons by Vivaldi, to Snowflakes by Debussy and Thunder and Lightning by Strauss during their study of weather.

99 Older pupils in Year 6 use tuned percussion instruments to create a tune using different notes well. They compose their own to fit in with a topic and as one pupil reads the words others create sounds to imitate the wind. The good use of language to accompany a piece on forest creatures showed a very good link to literacy as one pupil read, "Silence is overcoming the darkness. Creatures getting work". As part of their work on the solar system, Year 6 pupils listen and appreciate the work of Holst in the Planet Suite. Year 5 pupils watched and listened to a visiting specialist with a "Travelling Tuba", they then conducted their own experiments with sound by blowing over the top of bottles filled with varying amounts of water. A very good lesson in Year 5 used a mixture of tuned and untuned instruments when pupils created their own composition based on the "Pentatonic Scale". Towards the end of the lesson, each group performed their composition and then the class discussed the parts they liked best and why. This type of activity makes a significant contribution to pupils' language and communication skills. A video of Year 6 pupils making and performing their own "rap" songs showed how hard they worked on the composition of music and words. It also helped pupils understand the use of music in different cultures.

100 The records of work held by the co-ordinator show the full curricular coverage during the year in all aspects of music. There was clear photographic evidence of pupils performing using a variety of instruments and the Christmas productions are always well received by parents. Two extra curricular activities were observed when pupils were playing recorders and older ones were line dancing. Both activities, as well as the use of specialist teachers for a few pupils who are learning to play the keyboard, clarinet or cello, make a significant contribution to the participants' attainment in music. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable, has undertaken an audit of resources and controls the budget for the subject. This provides a good lead and genuine management role. Resources for music are good, well organised and readily available for the use of staff and pupils.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

101 By the end of Years 2 and 6, in physical education pupils are working at a level that is in line with what is expected for their age. All pupils experience a broad and relevant curriculum through a good range of physical activities. Pupils have a thorough understanding of the relationship between exercise and health and fitness. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.

102 By the end of Year 2, pupils travel and balance well when moving across the floor. They perform simple skills with agility showing good control of their movements when running, walking and changing directions. In dance, Year 1 pupils combine a sequence of movements but do not pay enough attention to starting and finishing positions. By the end of Year 6, pupils have good levels of

co-ordination and are agile and balanced in their movements. A strength is that pupils make perceptive evaluations of their performances and are keen to refine their ideas in response to suggestions for improvement. Pupils in Year 3 have regular swimming lessons and the standard is good. In Years 5 and 6 pupils' skills in dance are developing well. They devised a very good dance routine for the Queen's Jubilee celebrations and performed a line dancing routine at the local dance festival.

103 The quality of teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good. The best teaching is characterised by a secure subject knowledge, an emphasis on pupil demonstrations, high expectations of behaviour and the effective use of available resources. This leads to pupils' enthusiastic responses, good standards of concentration and positive attitudes to their work. All teachers have good relationships with pupils and use praise appropriately which ensures that pupils are prepared to persevere with tasks and practise their skills. Teachers make effective use of the hall and are conscious of health and safety matters. Consequently, pupils show an appreciation of the importance of warming up and relaxing after exercise. The quality of pupils' relationships is good, they co-operate well in pairs and are sensitive when evaluating each other's performances.

104 Physical education makes an effective contribution to the social and health development of the pupils as well as promoting the importance of fitness. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and has undertaken an audit of resources. The school has a good involvement in many inter-school competitions and festivals; for example in dance, athletics, gymnastics and football.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

105 By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment in religious education is above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Since the last inspection good standards have been maintained and the new syllabus has been implemented well.

106 Pupils achieve well by the end of Year 2. They are aware that different people have different places of worship and that there are similarities and differences in Christian and Hindu weddings. Year 2 pupils are introduced to the basic beliefs of the Buddhist religion and relate this to their own life by considering what they would find hard to give up. Pupils' knowledge about Christianity and Bible stories is good and they describe many of the features of the Easter and Christmas stories. A strength is the work done on "feelings" which encourages pupils to talk and write about their own feelings in a sensitive manner.

107 Pupils achieve well by the end of Year 6. Pupils are introduced to the essential principles of a variety of world religions, for example, Hinduism, Judaism and Sikhism. Pupils in Year 6 have a good knowledge of Judaism and reflect this in their diary writing of the feelings and experiences of an individual undergoing preparation for Bar Mitzvah. Pupils are aware of a variety of world religions and explain how and where their followers pray, who is their god and who founded their religion. For example, Year 4 pupils have a good knowledge of the role of the Muslim Imam in carrying out his duties and identify the similarities with the duties of a Christian Minister. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills; for example, pupils in Year 5 retell a Bible story to stress the moral in a modern day context. A strength of religious education is the links made between religion and the pupils' own daily lives. It makes an effective contribution to pupils' personal development by making them aware and respectful of the needs and beliefs of others.

108 The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well planned, learning outcomes are clear and proper attention is paid to encouraging pupils to explore their feelings and thoughts. Teachers have a good relationship with pupils, are aware of their individual needs and differences and approach issues sensitively. The skilful questioning of teachers encourages pupils to express and justify their opinions, which results in pupils becoming more confident and mature. Excellent teaching was seen in Year 4

when pupils used role play to deepen their knowledge of Hinduism when investigating the story of Ganesha. This resulted in pupils becoming fully involved in their learning which inspired them to seek out further knowledge and understanding of the topic.

109 Very good use is made of visits, for example, Year 3 pupils visited Darlington's Gurdwara to extend their understanding of the Sikh religion. The teachers make very effective use of displays and resources to stimulate pupils' interest in and appreciation of a number of world religions. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and has undertaken a useful audit of resources which is used well to guide future spending.