

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BROOMLEY FIRST SCHOOL**

Stocksfield, Hexham

LEA area: Northumberland

Unique reference number: 122189

Headteacher: Mrs C McGuire

Reporting inspector: Mr J Heap  
18824

Dates of inspection: 15 – 16 January 2001

Inspection number: 196468

Short inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown copyright 2001

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

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Main Road Stocksfield Northumberland
Postcode:	NE43 7NN
Telephone number:	01661 842271
Fax number:	01661 842 271
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr C Cameron
Date of previous inspection:	January 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
18824	J Heap	Registered inspector
19741	T Smith	Lay inspector
31175	A Allison	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Nord Anglia School Inspection Services  
Strathblane House  
Ashfield Road  
Cheadle  
Stockport  
SK8 1BB

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

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

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>21</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school serves pupils aged four to nine years from a social background that shows very few signs of social deprivation. Most pupils live in the village of Stocksfield, which is nine miles from the town of Hexham. The village is well-established and has a mixture of local authority and private dwellings. There are 131 pupils on roll: 64 boys and 67 girls. The vast majority of the pupils are white and there are none that speak English as a second language. Four pupils (3 per cent) are on the register of special educational needs: this is below average. In the main, the nature of the need is to provide work that matches level of attainment. One pupil (0.8 per cent) has a statement of special educational needs and this is also below average. Four pupils (3 per cent) are entitled to receive a school lunch free of charge: this is well below the national average. The levels of attainment of pupils entering the reception class are above average. There are five classes in the main school and they all cater for pupils of one age group.

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

This is a good school. Standards of attainment are high in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing. Teaching is good. Pupils learn and achieve well. Pupils' attitudes to their work and the school, behaviour, personal development and relationships are very good. The school has effective strategies to promote educational inclusion. Overall, leadership and management are good and the headteacher provides strong and effective guidance. The school provides good value for money.

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

- By the ages of seven and nine, the school enables pupils to reach very high standards in reading and mathematics and well above average standards in writing.
- Overall, the quality of teaching is good.
- Pupils' attitudes to the school and their work, together with their behaviour, personal development and relationships are very good. Rates of attendance are well above average.
- The quality and range of learning opportunities are good.
- The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- Parents' views of the school are positive.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher are good. She receives good support from governors and staff.

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

- Occasionally, day-to-day lesson plans have learning objectives that are too general.
- The amount of information provided for parents about the curriculum and homework.
- Training in Child Protection issues has not been updated in recent years.

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

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

The school was last inspected in January 1997. The strengths identified have been maintained. Overall, the school has made good improvement, particularly in the areas identified as key issues in the previous report and in the results of higher attainers in national tests. Good improvements have been made in:

- the provision and teaching of religious education, and local requirements are now met;
- policies and schemes of work are now in place for all subjects and this has meant that the curriculum is effective;
- appraisal and performance management.

More generally, the quality of teaching is more effective, particularly in the good approach to investigative and exploratory work in mathematics and science. This is amply illustrated in the results of national tests. The procedures for judging pupils' attainment levels are effective and there are sound links with day-to-day planning. However, the learning objectives in a few lessons are too general. The provision for cultural development has improved well. Furthermore, the school has successfully improved the provision for the Foundation Stage, through initiatives which include the local community.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				<b>Key</b>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	A	A	A*	A	well above average A above average B Average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	A*	A	A	A	
Science	A	A	A*	A*	

By the age of five standards are above average in the areas of learning of communication, language and literacy and mathematics. By the age of seven, standards are very high (in the top five per cent of schools) in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing, when compared to all schools. Teachers' judgements in science show standards to be very high. In comparison to schools having similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals, standards are very high (in the top five per cent of schools) in mathematics and well above average in reading, writing and science. Over the last four years, pupils' performance has been well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Boys are outperforming girls in mathematics, however, there were no obvious reasons why this should be the case in the evidence gathered in the inspection.

By the age of seven and nine, the standards of work seen are well above the expected levels for pupils their age in English and mathematics. Standards in information and communication technology are above expectations, and in religious education meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

Pupils are achieving well across the school in reading and writing and very well in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs are making good progress in relation to their prior attainment and towards the targets set in their individual education plans. They benefit from the good support they receive.

Targets for pupils' attainment are appropriately challenging and realistic.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are keen, eager and enthusiastic.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are developing initiative and take on responsibility well.
Attendance	Very good. The rate of attendance is well above the national average. Unauthorised absence is below the national average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall, teaching is good. One hundred per cent of lessons were good, or better and eight percent were very good, or better. This is an improvement on the quality reported at the time of the last inspection.

The teaching of English and mathematics is good and pupils are taught the skills of literacy and numeracy well. The arrangement to mix pupils in Years 1 and 2 in the afternoon is effective and the work is well matched to the levels of attainment and maturity.

The school's introduction of a specific project to improve thinking skills is very successful. The Year 4 teacher is trialling the project and the lesson seen was excellent. Particular strengths were:

- very secure knowledge and understanding of the subject lead to good questioning;
- very good planning meant that all pupils were involved in very mature discussions;
- very high expectations lead to pupils expressing their views fluently and building on previous responses.

Occasionally, the objectives set for pupils' learning are too general. In effect, they are more like general aims rather than specific targets for learning.

All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have their needs met well and they are making good progress towards the targets set for them.

Across the school, pupils learn well in most subjects. Particular strengths are speaking, listening, reading and mathematics. Writing skills are learnt satisfactorily, but standards are inconsistent and this leads to fewer pupils achieving higher standards than ought to be the case. The school is well aware of this and has appropriate plans to modify the use of the Literacy Hour.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Visits, visitors and projects that increase pupils' thinking skills enhance the overall provision further.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Throughout the school, the work designed for pupils with special educational needs and the support they receive is good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Staff are effective role models. Many opportunities are found in the curriculum, assemblies and at playtimes to explore issues. The school is making a satisfactory effort to prepare pupils for belonging to a multi-cultural society. Statutory requirements for a daily act of collective worship are met.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Appropriate attention is paid to health and safety matters. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are effective. Child protection procedures follow the local education authority guidelines and are satisfactory. However, training needs to be updated.

Parents' views of the school are positive. Generally, the school communicates well with parents and this promotes good links and partnership. More information for parents about the curriculum and homework is needed.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership and management. She gives a good example by her own effective classroom practice. She is well supported by her staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body makes a positive contribution to leadership and management. A particularly strong element is the monitoring of provision through the targeted visits made by governors, who focus on areas for review and development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The management has a clear view of its performance, keeps most issues under review and plans effectively for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Financial management is good and there are sound practices to gauge the quality of decision-making, the use of resources and the extent to which the school achieves best value in its transactions.

The accommodation is good. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is satisfactory. There is a good range of learning resources.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The progress their child is making.</li><li>• The expectations on their child to work hard.</li><li>• The quality of teaching.</li><li>• Their children like school.</li><li>• The quality of the leadership and management.</li><li>• They feel comfortable approaching the school.</li><li>• The way the school is helping their child to become more mature.</li><li>• The closeness of the school/parent partnership.</li><li>• The information about their child.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li><li>• The amount of information about the curriculum and homework.</li></ul>

Inspectors agree with parents' positive comments. However, they also agree with parents at the meeting with inspectors that the amount of information about the curriculum and homework is insufficient. The range of activities outside lessons is satisfactory.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

**By the ages of seven and nine, the school enables pupils to reach very high standards in reading and mathematics and well above average standards in writing.**

- 1 Attainment on entry to the school at the age of four is above average. Children achieve satisfactorily in the Foundation Stage and all will achieve the nationally recommended early learning goals by the time they enter compulsory schooling. All children have appropriate early reading skills, such as following text from left to right, and they know the sounds and names of letters. They listen well and respond sensibly to questions. Their social and emotional development is progressing well; for instance, in a religious education lesson they all understood that everyone has a contribution to make when help is needed. Children know their numbers to 12 and count them forwards and backwards. Few mistakes are made. They are comfortable when using 'one more than...' and 'one less than...'. The majority of children add up to five.
  
- 2 In the 2000 national tests for seven year olds, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 and the higher Level 3 in reading and mathematics was very high (in line with the top five per cent of schools). In writing, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 was very high and well above average numbers reached the higher Level 3. In comparison to schools with similar backgrounds, results in mathematics are very high (in line with the top five per cent of schools) and well above average in reading and writing. Teacher assessments in science show well above average attainment compared to national averages and similar schools. Results have been consistently above the national average since 1996. Boys are outperforming girls in mathematics. However, girls are performing to their potential and there was no evidence that activities in the school disadvantaged them. These results are an improvement on those reported in 1997.
  
- 3 In English, the reading standards of seven and nine year olds are very high. The best readers are very accurate, fluent and expressive and they understand their books well. They have good library skills and know how to find the books that they need. Their attitudes to reading are very good and this has been fostered by the effective support of parents. Writing skills are very good in Years 2 and 4, particularly the handwriting, spelling and punctuation of higher attainers. Most pieces of writing have good openings, for instance, in Year 2 :
  - 'I remember when'
  - 'One morning I looked out of the window'There has been particularly good progress in punctuation since September and there is much greater accuracy in sentence writing. Furthermore, most pupils were beginning their stories with 'Once upon a time.....', they are now much more mature writers. Lower attainers produce much more inconsistent work in writing, particularly in handwriting and spelling, for example:
  - handwriting is legible and printed, but the size of letters and neatness vary;
  - spelling is weak but all words are recognisable. Significant progress is being made in punctuation, with pupils using full-stops and capital letters appropriately in their sentences.

In Year 4, pupils have continued to achieve well and the higher attainers are beginning to provide the reader with some interesting detail:

‘Oh! That’s Miss Lottie calling, got to go! Miss Lottie is one of the children in the big house’.

- 4 The development of literacy skills in other areas of the curriculum is good and promotes pupils' achievement, for example:
- in Year 2, pupils label accurately their drawings of a shoe and in history they write about Florence Nightingale at some length and with interest;
  - in Year 4, pupils write out their predictions about the most useful material to produce static electricity and in history they write interesting descriptions of the similarities and differences between rich and poor people in Victorian times.
- 5 In mathematics, standards are very high at ages seven and nine. In Year 2, the higher attainers have very good numeracy skills, for example:
- counting to 100;
  - adding on and reversing in 10s;
  - ordering numbers, and knowing terms such as highest/lowest;
  - work out change from 20p and 50p;
  - balancing equations:  $6 + 8 = 8 + 6 = 14$ .

They use these skills and their reading to solve problems successfully. Lower attainers count to 20 and find the missing number in a pattern, for instance: 12, ..., 14, 15.

They add in 10s with the aid of a number square. In Year 4, the majority of pupils are good at investigative and explorative work. This is a marked improvement on the findings of the last inspection. Higher attainers are working out doubles from two up to 256504; they know half and quarter and their equivalent values in other fractions and they work out the factors of a number, for example:

- $12 = 1$  and 12; 2 and 6; 3 and 4.

The development of numerical skills in other subjects is good and promotes pupils' achievement, for example:

- in Year 2, geography work on the local village involves reading co-ordinates on a map and in art and design, pupils have to measure carefully when making 12 cm tiles;
- in Year 4, how long a balloon will stick to the wall because of static electricity, and in history the accurate use of a timeline and making judgements based on numerical census materials.

**Overall, the quality of teaching is good.**

- 6 Inspectors agree with the judgement of good teaching expressed by the parents in the questionnaires returned. Teachers have maintained the strengths identified in the last report and there have been improvements in several areas:
- teachers' knowledge and understanding of religious education has improved well, across the school standards have risen and teachers are assessing work capably;
  - the teaching of investigative work in mathematics and science is much improved and the increase in emphasis is very obvious in improved national test results and in the quality of the work scrutinised.

The school actively debates the ways and means to improve teaching quality. This is most clearly shown in the provisional decisions to modify the use of the Literacy Hour by dedicating three days a week to the Literacy Strategy and two days to developing extended pieces of writing. This is part of the school's approach to improving further the writing standards and is a justified development. Furthermore, the school is involved in a project designed to develop thinking skills. The teaching in Year 4 in this project produced an excellent lesson which prompted the inspector to write:

- 'One of the best lessons that I have seen for a very long time.'

The main strength of this lesson was the secure knowledge and understanding of the teacher. Consequently, the choice of resources and challenging tasks and the high expectations were exemplary. The main focus was on framing questions that would attract answers about a complex book, for instance:

- 'Why was the man looking at the little girl as though she had done something wrong?'
- 'Why did the girl look upset at the end of the book?'

Once sets of questions had been identified, pupils discussed and voted on the ones that would fit the main criteria:

- Which questions will enable us to find out most about the book?

The time constraints set by the teacher ensured that the lesson had a very good pace throughout. Learning was excellent throughout, and pupils were working at standards well above average.

- 7 Good standards of teaching are evident in the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Pupils learn well, mainly because of high expectations, good teacher knowledge and understanding and effective judging of pupils' attainment and progress. In the Foundation Stage, a lesson on valuing people despite their differences was illustrated by telling the story of 'The Enormous Turnip'. The teacher's good questioning provided lots of opportunities for children to clarify and communicate their thoughts. The teacher showed a good appreciation of how young children learn and the activities promoted their emotional, social, moral and spiritual development alongside their intellectual learning. In a Year 2 literacy lesson, the teacher used the Literacy Framework well, resources such as dictionaries were used appropriately to learn about definitions and the teacher used questions to check on understanding and progress. All pupils learn well, including those with special educational needs, and by the end of the lesson they were using dictionaries well and their speaking and listening skills were well above expectations. In a Year 3 geography lesson, the strengths were:

- good recap of the previous lesson which led to pupils having a clear appreciation of their knowledge and understanding;
- good use of resources, such as photographs of cloud formations, provided pupils with appropriate examples of the components of the water-cycle;
- good questioning to identify and foster learning;
- high expectations of behaviour and response which promoted good pace of working and high productivity.

**Pupils' attitudes to the school and their work, together with their behaviour, personal development and relationships are very good. Rates of attendance are well above average.**

- 8 This is an area of strength in the school and reflects the high expectations of staff, pupils, governors and parents. In the meeting with inspectors and in the questionnaires returned, parents were overwhelmingly certain that the children like to come to school and believe that the school is helping them become mature and responsible. In most respects, this reflects the standards reported at the time of the last inspection; however relationships look to be even better.
- 9 Throughout the school, pupils have very good attitudes to the school and their work. In the Foundation Stage, all children are keen to join in with the various tasks and they are interested in their work. After they have been involved in activities such as physical development, they change quickly and get themselves ready for the next session so that they can get on. They listen attentively and respond well to their teachers' questions and prompts. In Key Stage 1, pupils concentrate for long periods, persevere when tasks are challenging and respond confidently. This strength was amply illustrated in a Year 1/2 art and design lesson, when pupils found the development of a class picture about 'The Pied Piper' challenging. In Key Stage 2, the overall attitudes are very good, and in a Year 4 English lesson they were excellent and this response matched the quality of teaching. The strengths were:
- pupils' very high levels of concentration and focus on the challenging task;
  - pupils working very well in class and groups settings;
  - very high level of interest in, and response to, the very high expectations.
- In a Year 3 mathematics lesson, the pride in presentation was an important aspect in the quality and accuracy of calculations.
- 10 Behaviour, in and out of classrooms, is very good. In lessons throughout the school pupils behave in an exemplary manner. As a consequence, teachers are able to set a pace to the lesson that enhances learning, for instance, in a Year 3 mathematics lesson and in a Year 1/2 religious education lesson. Pupils move around the school very well and are polite, helpful and friendly to both visitors and staff. Furthermore, the good condition of the accommodation, pupils' displayed work and the absence of litter and graffiti demonstrates that they have learned to respect the school and others' property very well. On a very few occasions, pupils' behaviour falls below the general high standards and the school is rigorous in dealing with this. Some parents are concerned pupils made to stand by the wall at the extra Friday playtime are humiliated. This was discussed at length with pupils who have received this sanction and they say that it does have the desired effect, by making them reflect on their behaviour and also encourages them to avoid it in the future. They did not feel humiliated. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
- 11 Personal development is very good. It is fostered in many lessons and assemblies when pupils are encouraged to think about their own attitudes and the effect their behaviour has on others. Pupils' confidence and self-esteem are good as a result. They contribute to the running of the school in a variety of ways:
- at lunchtime, Year 3/4 pupils have responsibility for a 'family group' at the dining tables;
  - at assembly time, Year 4 pupils organise the entry music;
  - older pupils collect dinner numbers.

Overall, pupils at Broomley are prepared very well for the next stages of their education and life in society, generally. A good example of this was seen in the Year 3 class when the day started with a story about the pollution of towns and cities. A number of issues were raised that led to reflective thought, for example:

- how does pollution have an effect on people's lives?
- who is responsible for pollution and is it necessary?

The lesson is supported by a useful classroom display which goes some way to explaining these issues.

- 12 The quality of relationships amongst pupils and between staff and pupils are also very good. These relationships have a significant impact on the quality of teaching and the overall provision of education. Parents rightly pointed to the family atmosphere in the school and they wish this to continue. There are many occasions when the friendliness and sociability of pupils is evident, for instance:
- lunchtimes; the meal is a calm and social event and the playground provides good-natured and energetic play;
  - at playtimes, it is noticeable that pupils talk with adults confidently and well;
  - they are invariably polite and well mannered.
- 13 Attendance is well above the average for primary schools nationally. Unauthorised absence is below the national average. Lateness is not a problem. Pupils arrive on time and settle quickly to activities. Registration is efficient. These findings are similar to those of the last inspection.

**The quality and range of learning opportunities are good.**

- 14 The curriculum meets statutory requirements, including the arrangements for children aged five and under. There are appropriate policies and schemes of work in place for all subjects and these provide targets for learning, and this has helped to improve the overall standard of teachers' lesson planning. This is a good improvement from the findings of the last inspection.
- 15 In religious education, the curriculum is now firmly guided by the local Agreed Syllabus. This is a good improvement on the findings of the last inspection. The programme includes sufficient emphasis on world faiths, such as Judaism and Hinduism. Consequently, the subject now plays a more significant part in the provision of cultural development and helps to provide pupils with multicultural experiences in this mainly white school. The religious education curriculum is supported well by the use of artefacts, books, visits and visitors, for example:
- puja tray; bell, water pot and diva lamp;
  - the new millennium library has books on several faiths;
  - visits to Hexham Abbey in Year 1, and local churches;
  - visitors include a member of the local Baptist church in Year 3 and members of the local clergy.

- 16 The implementation of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is effective. Planning and teaching are faithful to the national initiatives. However, the school has the confidence, through detailed discussion involving staff and governors, to look at modifying the format of the Literacy Hour so that improvement to writing can be brought about. The proposal is to follow the strategy for three days each week and devote two of the sessions to the development of writing skills and the production of longer pieces of writing. This makes a lot of sense. In addition, clearer learning objectives would be set to improve individual pupil's skills, knowledge and understanding in writing.
- 17 The school makes a strong input to pupils' personal, social and health education. The focus of this work is developing self-discipline and self-motivation and the outcomes reported earlier in this report indicate successful provision. This begins appropriately in the Foundation Stage with focus on:
- being kind to people, pets and plants;
  - caring for others;
  - telling the truth;
  - being polite.
- 18 Assemblies are used to promote the school's attitudes and values generally, and they often provide pupils with insights and questions about diversity, such as in race or disability. Opportunities are provided to reflect on how we are different, but that it does not matter.

**The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.**

- 19 The school has improved the standards of provision identified in the last report, particularly in spiritual and cultural development which were judged to be satisfactory last time and are now judged to be good. The statutory requirements for collective worship are appropriately met. Parents are highly supportive of the attitudes and values promoted by the school. They describe the school as a 'family'.
- 20 Pupils' spiritual development is well supported by acts of collective worship. Pupils have ample opportunities for reflection and communicating feelings, both orally and in writing. Sensitive and global issues such as pollution and its effect, and racial diversity are raised regularly and pupils are expected to form a view. Music makes an effective contribution in assemblies.
- 21 Good provision is made for moral development. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to understand the difference between right and wrong. The school's clear moral code promotes a structured and caring environment. This code has a sufficiently balanced approach to rewards and sanctions, which pupils say are consistently administered. Rewards include:
- a certificate of appreciation;
  - an extra playtime on Friday afternoon. Pupils enjoy this and are upset if their behaviour causes them to miss out.
- The positive approach to behaviour fosters the school's approach to valuing all pupils. This, in turn, is a significant reason for the very good relationships in the school.

22 There is good provision for social development. Staff provide good role models. The school successfully encourages pupils to work together and to grow into responsible members of the school and wider society by:

- providing opportunities for them to take responsibility for others at lunchtimes and playtimes;
- helping them to understand how their actions might impact on neighbours;
- celebrating the importance of the village through local study and events such as the harvest festival.

The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities, including instrument tuition, sporting clubs and "Le Club Francais". Pupils relate well to each other and the school ensures that those with special educational needs are fully involved in all school activities. Visits and visitors provide pupils with wider views of society and the residential stay in Year 4 is an important milestone in a young persons' early life. Pupils' understanding of people less well placed than themselves is fostered through support for charities, for instance, the 'cancer run' which raised in excess of £2,000.

23 Cultural development is good. Highly attractive displays in rooms and corridors celebrate a range of cultural activities:

- Africa: books, musical instruments;
- Divali: books, artwork, labelling from computer program;
- Evening Chronicle: follow up to visit; pupils writing in a journalistic style.

The school arranges for a wide range of musicians and other entertainers to visit the school. Visits undertaken by pupils include:

- a local arts centre;
- Wallington Hall, where pupils made puppets and music;
- Corbridge Roman site;
- local farm and churches.

24 Visitors provide insights into local culture, for instance a former headteacher comes in to school to talk about its history. Overall, pupils are prepared well for life in a culturally diverse Britain. Pupils have links with a school in Gateshead which has a much higher level of pupils from a range of ethnic heritages. The daughter of the headteacher is travelling in India currently and sending e-mail to the school about her activities. In addition to the displays already mentioned there is also a silk drape which was produced in conjunction with an artist in residence, and celebrates the important aspects of Eastern faith and cultures.

#### **Parents' views of the school are positive.**

25 The parents who attended the meeting with inspectors and those who returned questionnaires provide a positive picture of the school. At the meeting, parents were particularly happy with the attitudes and values the school promotes, the standards of behaviour and attendance, reporting about pupils' progress and the school's approachability when suggestions or complaints are necessary. The only area in the questionnaire returns that raised concern was the small range of activities outside the school day. Inspectors found that the range is satisfactory, and in line with most schools serving pupils of this age.

- 26 Parents are generous in their personal support of the school. They offer financial support and assist substantially with their children's work, both at home and at school. This is particularly noticeable in the work they do to support reading.
- 27 Information for parents about the social aspects of school life is provided appropriately through newsletters and a noticeboard.

**The leadership and management of the headteacher are good. She receives good support from governors and staff.**

- 28 The head teacher is an effective leader and manager. Her strengths include:
- being a good classroom teacher, who has a teaching commitment for three days a week;
  - dedication to the well-being of pupils in academic and pastoral matters;
  - willingness to listen to pupils, colleagues, governors and parents about provision and discuss improvements;
  - an understanding of the importance of the school to the community, and vice versa.
- She benefits from the good support of her staff, most particularly her deputy. Not only does the deputy head provide effective support in day-to-day management and curriculum co-ordination, she also provides leadership in her piloting of the thinking skills project. This is proving to be a highly challenging project which is raising standards in Year 4. All staff have responsibilities and they carry them out in a thorough and diligent manner.
- 29 The governing body carries out its responsibilities effectively. The governors assist the head teacher in determining the strategic direction of the school. The governors are kept fully informed about the school's work and this is assisted by the good links between the headteacher and chair of governors and the regular contact they arrange. The governors have active committees for finance, curriculum, buildings and health and safety. The committees meet regularly and make a positive impact to policy. This aspect of their work is fostered by the planned visits of governors, who monitor a particular aspect of school life. A good example of this is the coming review of the behaviour policy. A group of 'visitor' governors will make a focussed monitoring visit to look at behaviour; they will report their findings and help in the review of the new policy. This is a good practice.
- 30 The monitoring and evaluation of performance is good. The main strengths are:
- regular screening of standards based on national test results and other measures used at various times;
  - targets are set and focussed on regularly;
  - findings from monitoring are reported to governors;
  - the school development plan identifies appropriate priorities and these are supported by individual action plans, for example, the detailed plan to develop information and communication technology.
- In addition, the headteacher monitors teaching effectively. This has played a significant part in the re-establishment of the teacher appraisal programme, which was unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. This is a good improvement. Arrangements for performance management for teachers are well established and will include the deputy head monitoring teaching. This is a good development.

- 31 Financial management is good. The governors look ahead and gather information that will help them prepare for future budgets, for instance, the projections on pupil numbers. At present, there is a small budget deficit which has been caused by unforeseen difficulties with staffing costs: there is a satisfactory plan to deal with the deficit. Educational priorities are funded appropriately and extra grants are used for their designated purposes such as supporting pupils with special educational needs. The management has applied satisfactory principles for gaining value for money in its buying of services and resources, for example:
- they compare standards with other schools through the information provided by the local education authority;
  - challenges are responded to, such as the setting up of the millennium library;
  - consultation with parents, by regular questionnaire;
  - competitive tendering is employed when large outgoings are expected.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

### **Occasionally, day-to-day lesson plans have learning objectives that are too general.**

- 32 An issue raised in the last inspection report was:  
'The quality of short-term planning varies from teacher to teacher with some focussing more on describing the activities that children will do rather than identifying the specific skills and knowledge that children will acquire. '  
This shortcoming has been dealt with in the majority of lessons seen and by all the teachers, and the quality of teachers' planning has improved satisfactorily. It is accurate to report that the setting of learning objectives in daily planning is better than at the last inspection. However, this is not so in all lesson plans. In a Year 4 literacy lesson about a little box of treasures the stated outcomes for learning were too general. There are specific shortcomings that a small number of pupils have, that are not identified in the daily plan, for instance the variable quality of the pupils' presentation and inconsistencies in spelling and punctuation.

### **The amount of information provided for parents and carers about the curriculum and homework is insufficient.**

- 33 It is understood clearly by the school that parents and carers are very keen for their children to do well at school and that they have high aspirations for them. The school shares these aspirations with the parents and carers. Discussions with pupils indicate that parents take time to help their children with homework and provide them with a range of opportunities at weekends and at holiday time. However, some parents feel frustrated on two counts:
- they do not receive a regular, written account of the work their children will be doing that term;
  - they are unsure of the arrangements for homework, and parents at the meeting with inspectors felt that the arrangements were inconsistent.
- 34 In order to maximise parental involvement in their children's learning they need to have sufficient written information about the teaching and learning programme for the term. This will allow parents to plan ahead if they wish and further broaden their children's knowledge and understanding by supporting their learning within the family.

- 35 On the question of homework, the school is rightly wary of over-burdening young children who work hard during the day. Some parents are unaware at this time of the school's policy on homework and the thoughts and ideas that inform the policy. Here, once more, there is a need to maximise parents' involvement in their children's learning. This can be achieved by clarifying the school's policy on homework, sharing it with parents and inviting comment. The policy needs to make explicit the expectations of pupils and parents and for this to be conveyed in a consistent message.

**Training in Child Protection issues has not been updated in recent years.**

- 36 Overall, the procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are effective. The headteacher is the named child protection officer and the school has properly adopted the local education authority guidelines. The school has a policy in place which is satisfactory. However, none of the staff has been on any training to update skills, knowledge and understanding since 1996. This is too long a period to go without refreshing knowledge and learning about new initiatives and techniques.

**WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

- (i) Improve the setting of learning objectives to the standard of the best, in order to bring about greater consistency in short-term lesson-planning.
- (ii) Increase the amount of information for parents about the curriculum and homework by:
  - providing termly information sheets illustrating the areas of study;
  - sharing the homework policy with parents and consult with them on the final outcome.
- (iii) Update the training for all staff in Child Protection procedures.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

12

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

17

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

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
8	0	92	0	0	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		131
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		4

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		4

#### **English as an additional language**

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

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	4.0
National comparative data	5.2

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	19	13	32

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	9	19
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	32	32	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	7	9
	Girls	13	9	10
	Total	32	16	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

*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	1
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	98
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

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

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

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

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.3
Average class size	26.2

#### **Education support staff: YR– Y4**

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	42

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/00
	£
Total income	232,556
Total expenditure	243,834
Expenditure per pupil	1,891
Balance brought forward from previous year	10,424
Balance carried forward to next year	-854

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

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out

131
36

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	81	17	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	36	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	58	36	3	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	56	6	0	0
The teaching is good.	56	42	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	58	8	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	78	19	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	42	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	44	50	6	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	69	28	3	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	69	28	0	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	64	8	0	8