

INSPECTION REPORT

FELLGATE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Oxford Way, Fellgate Estate, Jarrow, Tyne and Wear.
NE32 4XA

LEA area: South Tyneside

Unique reference number: 108706

Head teacher: Mrs. J. Cunningham

Reporting inspector: Mr. M. Tones
1575

Dates of inspection: 7th October – 11th October 2002

Inspection number: 246816

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

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Fellgate Primary School
Oxford Way
Fellgate Estate
Jarrow
Tyne and Wear

Postcode: NE32 4XA

Telephone number: 0191-4894801

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Moira Smith

Date of previous inspection: 02/03/1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1575	Mr. M. Tones	Registered inspector	Science	What sort of school is it?
			Design and technology	
			Special educational needs	
			English as an additional language	
11392	Mr. T. Heppenstall	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development
				How well does the school care for its pupils and students?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
27384	Mrs. J. Stephenson	Team inspector	Information and communication technology	The school's results and achievements
			Art	How well is the school led and managed?
			Music	What should the school do to improve further?
			Religious education	
			Equal opportunities	
32130	Mrs. L. Halliday	Team inspector	English	How well are pupils and students taught?
			Geography	
			History	
			Foundation Stage	
23578	Mrs. J. Edwards	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?
			Physical education	

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Fellgate Primary School is a similar size to most primary schools and provides an education for 213 girls and boys between the ages of four and eleven. It has an attached unit for 30 pupils with autistic spectrum disorders. The school is situated in an area of mixed housing most of which is privately owned. Information about the ward and the Local Education Authority (LEA) indicates that disadvantage is broadly average for the area. The 24.4% of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is broadly in line with the national average.

Attainment on entry to the school is average for the area. The 14.1% who have a statement of special educational needs (SEN) is well above the national average. There are 54 pupils (25.4%) on the register of SEN, which is in line with the national average. There are few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. Most pupils have had the benefit of nursery education. There are no pupils with English as an additional language. The school works in partnership with other local schools to raise standards, within an Education Action Zone (EAZ). Due to unforeseen circumstances the school has had a series of short-term headships. Until recently it has been without the benefit of stable leadership and was less effective.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school, which provides a sound education for all its pupils. The good leadership provided by the head teacher gives a clear focus for school improvement and on working towards fulfilling the school's most important aim of developing the full potential of all pupils. Pupils in the mainstream school make good progress in mathematics and attain above average standards by the time they leave school. The support given to those with autistic spectrum disorder and their parents is very good. Teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good for pupils in reception and very good for those attending the Autistic Unit where pupils' achievements are high. Pupils have positive attitudes to school, responding well to the provision for their personal development. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The good leadership and management of the head teacher.
- The provision for pupils' personal development.
- Support for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder and their parents.
- Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage and in the Autistic Unit.
- The development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.

What could be improved

- Standards in writing, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education (PE).
- Monitoring and evaluation by subject co-ordinators.
- Use of marking and assessment to help pupils improve their work.
- The breadth and balance between subjects of the national curriculum in Key Stage 1 and 2 of mainstream school.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan. Most areas are already part of the school's development planning.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Ofsted last inspected the school in March 1998. Since then performance has varied and been affected by the unavoidable and frequent changes of head teacher. Overall since then, satisfactory progress has been made. Standards in mathematics have improved and are now above the national average. In writing and science however, further work is needed to bring standards into line with the national average. Improvements have been made in the Autistic Unit and pupils now achieve good standards in relation to their developing knowledge and skills. The progress pupils make in ICT has not kept pace with the standards now expected.

At the time of the last inspection, monitoring the effectiveness of teaching needed development. Since then, progress has been made by the new head teacher in monitoring teaching but little progress has been made in monitoring by subject leaders. Arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment needed further development and this remains a key issue in this report.

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				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	A	E	D	B	well above average A above average B
mathematics	B	D	C	B	average C below average D
science	B	B	E	D	well below average E

The overall standard of pupils' attainment in 2001, including those in the Autistic Unit, is below the national average by the end of Year 6. Pupils in the unit achieve very well, but their attainment is well below the national average for all pupils. This should be taken into account in the table above which shows the standards of all pupils when compared to all schools. They were in line with the national average in mathematics, below the average in English and well below average in science. Compared to similar schools, standards are above average in English and mathematics and below average in science. When including the Autistic Unit, pupils overall achieve well.

Since 2001, good systems have been put in place by the new head teacher to support teaching and learning. As a result standards have improved and pupils in mainstream school are now making satisfactory progress. Due to the special efforts and intensive focus on raising standards immediately before the 2002 national tests there was a marked improvement in results for all subjects. This level of improvement is not fully reflected by the work seen during the inspection. This shows that attainment amongst pupils, other than those in the Autistic Unit, is below national expectation in writing, science, ICT and PE. Attainment in all other subjects and in religious education (RE) is in line with national expectation. The progress that pupils make in the Autistic Unit is very good.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils want to learn. Many voluntarily attend additional learning activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most staff manage pupils effectively and help them to learn how to control any negative feelings.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships encourage a caring atmosphere where children feel safe and develop confidence.
Attendance	Good. Children enjoy coming to school.

The pupils' attitudes to school and work are good. They are keen to take part in lessons and many Year 6 pupils are very willing to receive extra tuition. Pupils like coming to school and attendance is above the national average. Their behaviour is good overall, except in a few lessons where teachers make insufficient effort to maintain pupils' concentration. The school is an orderly community where there are good relationships and pupils are friendly and courteous.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

Teaching is good in reception and in Years 3 and 4. It is very good in the Autistic Unit. The quality of teaching elsewhere in Key Stages 1 and 2 is rarely less than satisfactory but is too variable. Variations within classes are either because teachers' knowledge of some of the subjects they teach is not sufficiently developed or because they allow pupils to lose concentration.

In the best lessons teachers plan in detail and are knowledgeable about what they are teaching. In these lessons they have a good understanding of what they want pupils to learn and successfully build on what pupils already know and can do. As a result pupils learn effectively and make good progress. In some lessons, however, teachers do not have a sufficiently good grasp of the subjects they teach to give clear explanations or to ask challenging questions to extend learning. As a result, some pupils become confused and do not learn effectively.

Pupils, more often in Key Stage 1, are sometimes expected to sit for too long and they become restless and lose concentration. Teachers generally manage pupils well. They have high expectations of behaviour and pupils develop good attitudes to work. In some lessons however, learning is less effective as pupils lose concentration and are not sufficiently encouraged to keep to the task in hand.

The assessment of pupils' progress in reception and in the Autistic Unit is good. In Key Stage 1 and 2 it is under-developed and gives too little information for teachers to plan effectively for the next steps in pupils' learning. Marking is not consistent and provides too little information for pupils to be able to understand how to improve.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. A rich, varied and appropriate curriculum is provided in reception and in the Autistic Unit. In Key Stages 1 and 2 the curriculum does not provide sufficient time for a balanced programme of ICT, PE and science.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good overall. Very appropriate learning opportunities are provided for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders which are well matched to their needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school has a strong commitment to all areas of pupils' personal development. Pupils learn to live together and respect each other. They learn about different religions and ways of life.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Parents are satisfied with the school and they give good support in areas which directly involve their children. The Autistic Unit receives high levels of parental support.

The curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2 is broad and relevant. However the balance of the curriculum, which has additional time allocated to literacy and numeracy, is unsatisfactory. Insufficient time is available for the programmes of study in ICT, science and PE to be covered by the end of the key stages.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Good. The head teacher has a very clear vision for school improvement. The role of subject leaders is under-developed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Supportive governors meet their statutory duties.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. New systems have started to provide a realistic view of strengths and weaknesses. Monitoring and evaluation by subject leaders is not yet effective.
The strategic use of resources	Sound. Use is made of finance to support educational priorities, particularly in raising achievement and improving the learning environment.

The school is soundly led and managed. There have been unavoidable but frequent changes of head teacher causing a long period of instability in leadership and management. The newly appointed head teacher has acted quickly to improve the confidence of staff and to raise standards. As a result, 2002 results were much improved, particularly in English and for pupils achieving the higher levels. The head teacher has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. She provides good leadership and a very clear view of how to improve performance. However, the role of monitoring and evaluation needs to be extended to subject leaders so that, where needed, improvements can be made in teaching, learning and assessment.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The leadership and management of the head teacher.• The standards achieved by pupils.• The support given to pupils with autistic spectrum disorders in the Autistic Unit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extra-curricular activities• Resources to support learning in the Autistic Unit.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Overall standards of attainment are below national average by the end of Year 6. These have varied in recent years, depending on the numbers of pupils with SEN in the Autistic Unit. These pupils achieve very well in relation to their developing knowledge and skills. Taking this into account, 2001 national test standards in mainstream school were above average in mathematics, average in English and below average in science. When compared to similar schools, these results indicate standards that represent good achievement.
2. Standards seen during the inspection shows that attainment amongst pupils, other than those in the Autistic Unit, are below national expectation in writing, science, ICT and PE. Attainment in all other subjects and in RE is in line with national expectation. Pupils are now making satisfactory progress in mainstream school because of the good systems the new head teacher has put in place to support teaching and learning. In 2002 there was a significant improvement in the national test results for all subjects because of the effective intervention strategies implemented over a short period of time.
3. Results vary from year to year with the numbers of pupils with statements of SEN from the Autistic Unit. These pupils achieve well and make very good progress but their attainment is well below national expectations. Progress has also been generally hindered by several changes in school management within a relatively short period of time. Progress overall is satisfactory, although the rate of progress in Year 2 is slower, which effects the end of key stage standards.

Foundation Stage

4. Children enter school with a wide range of abilities broadly typical for pupils of this age. Speaking and listening skills are very good. In all other areas of learning standards are as expected for their age. Progress in the reception class is good and pupils are likely to reach the early learning goals, before the age of five. The small class size in reception means that children have a good start to their education. Teachers have created a very attractive and stimulating environment. Pupils are given opportunities to engage in activities planned by adults and also those that they plan or initiate themselves. This encourages pupils to be confident and it contributes to the good progress they make.

Key Stage 1

5. Standards of attainment overall are below those expected nationally by the end of the Key Stage 1. In mathematics they are in line with those expected by the end of Year 2. This is supported by national test results which in 2001 showed results to be in line with the national average and well above those of similar schools. In English, standards of reading and writing are below those expected nationally and have not been maintained at the level described by the last inspection. This is also supported by national test results but show achievement to be above similar schools. In science standards are below those expected, national test results showing that too few achieve the higher levels.
6. In English, pupils, including those with SEN, speak with confidence and listen well, using a wide range of vocabulary. Although some pupils can read with confidence too few read proficiently.

Their progress is hindered by an inconsistent approach to assessment and record keeping. Recent approaches to the development of teaching basic skills are showing signs of improving the progress pupils make. Pupils' skills in writing are under-developed and handwriting is too variable in quality. In mathematics pupils have sound counting skills and put them to good use in different ways. Most can join pairs of numbers that make 10 and recognise and name basic shapes. Many show sound problem-solving skills and are effective at mental calculations. In science pupils are able to explain a good range of facts about the natural world but are less confident when describing practical investigations.

Key Stage 2

7. Standards of attainment overall are below those expected nationally by the end of Key Stage 2. In mathematics they are in line with those expected nationally by the end of Year 6. This is supported by national test results which in 2001 showed results to be in line with the national average and above those of similar schools. In English, standards of reading are in line but in writing below those expected. This is also supported by national test results but show achievement to be above similar schools. In science standards are well below those expected as confirmed by the 2001 national test results.
8. In English, speaking and listening skills are good. Pupils give clear explanations and have confidence when speaking in front of one another. They use wide variety of vocabulary to describe events and stories. Pupils' reading is satisfactory and most want to read. Many can recall favourite books they have read and know who wrote them. Writing is not well organised and lacks purpose and style. There are too few chances for pupils to plan and organise their writing to enable them to make good progress.
9. Standards in design and technology (DT), geography, history, art, music and in RE are in line with those nationally and pupils make satisfactory progress. In ICT and PE standards are below what is expected. Pupils are not using ICT in their work sufficiently in different subjects. They show a lack of confidence in using computer programmes and too many are unable to work independently. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 have a narrow range of word-processing skills. In PE the amount of time spent on swimming enables satisfactory standards to be achieved but too little time is spent on other activities and standards suffer.
10. Pupils with SEN, especially those in the Autistic Unit make good progress against the targets set for them. The school has set challenging targets for standards to be reached in both English and mathematics in the national tests and is now making every effort to achieve them.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils like coming to school. They settle quickly into the daily routines and they have good attitudes to the school and to learning. Attitudes and behaviour were good or better in approximately three-quarters of the lessons observed and excellent in four. A broadly similar position was reported at the previous inspection. Both attitudes to learning and behaviour are better in the Foundation Stage than in Key Stage 1 and 2. Examples of good attitudes include the keenness of pupils to participate in lessons, which occurs in all year groups, and the willingness of many Year 6 pupils to get extra help and tuition.
12. Behaviour is generally good in classes and around the school but, when teaching is weak, talking and lack of attention can occur. However, the school is an orderly community. Pupils are courteous and trustworthy, which is much appreciated by the non-teaching staff. No oppressive behaviour was observed during the inspection but bullying is a concern to some parents. Two exclusions were made in the last academic year.
13. Pupils are aware of, and sensitive to, the needs of others. For example, the Autistic Unit's aim to improve social inclusion is possible, in part, because of the main school pupils' caring attitudes. At all age groups, they listen when fellow pupils make contributions. For example, in a whole school assembly, they showed a clear understanding of the nature of giving to charities. Furthermore, in a presentation to Year 5 by the police, pupils showed they understood well how their actions could affect others.
14. Relationships in school are good. Pupils like and feel supported by their teachers. Personal development is also good. Pupils relate effectively to adults. They co-operate successfully in lessons and during breaks and they respond well to roles of responsibility. A particular example is the school council, which is viewed positively by councillors and the pupils. Younger pupils would like more opportunities to take responsibility.
15. The level of attendance is good. It has varied over recent years but it has been consistently better than the national average. Holidays in term time are discouraged but they form a significant proportion of the absences. There are no unauthorised absences. Punctuality is good. Registration periods are prompt and efficient and this allows lessons to start on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. During the Inspection, Year 4 pupils were being taught by a supply teacher. Teaching is good and sometimes very good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 and 4. In a very small minority of lessons in Key Stage 1 where the work is not challenging, teaching is unsatisfactory. The varying quality of teaching is a significant factor affecting the progress that pupils make, especially when very good and satisfactory teaching can occur in the same class, depending on what is being taught. Teaching in the Autistic Unit is very good and effective in meeting the needs of pupils.

17. Teaching at Key Stage 1 is mostly satisfactory. There are examples of good teaching in Year 1 but at the end of the key stage, although teaching is generally satisfactory there are some weaknesses in subject knowledge. Teaching is good in Years 3 and 4 and consequently pupils learn effectively. In Years 5 and 6 teaching varies considerably between satisfactory and very good. This affects the progress that pupils' make within subjects and between classes.
18. In the best lessons teachers plan in detail and have a thorough understanding of what they want pupils to learn. In these lessons teachers have a good knowledge of the subject they are teaching. As a result tasks are well matched to current levels of attainment for different groups of pupils and they learn effectively. This was seen during an ICT lesson with a Year 4 class where the teacher's excellent subject knowledge and effective questioning techniques, successfully enabled pupils to build on their prior learning to create designs, evaluate images and use repeating patterns. In some lessons, however, teachers do not have sufficient subject knowledge to give clear explanations or to ask challenging questions to extend learning. As a result, some pupils are confused and do not learn effectively.
19. Some teachers adopt very suitable methods to engage pupils and to promote good progress in lessons. Methods that are particularly effective include, lively introductions that capture pupils' interest and the use of varied tasks that encourages a brisk pace to learning. In an English lesson about autobiographical writing with a Year 6 class, the teacher successfully motivated the pupils by explaining the origin of the word "autobiography", before using a Roald Dahl text to search for examples. Pupils were then involved in making a "human sentence" that effectively practised skills of sentence structure and grammar. In a Year 3 mathematics lesson, very good quality explanation of lines of symmetry led to pupils working independently to develop a good understanding of the properties of shape. In Key Stage 1, however, pupils were sometimes expected to sit for extended periods of time and as a result their concentration waned.
20. Teachers' management of pupils is generally good. When teachers have high expectations for good behaviour pupils' attitudes to work are positive. In some lessons there are incidents of low-level misbehaviour, which are not immediately or effectively dealt with. This interferes with the quality of learning and progress, for some pupils, is not as good as it should be.
21. Overall, day-to-day marking and assessment in the mainstream school, is unsatisfactory. Very little marking was seen in books and, therefore, pupils do not know what they have to do to improve their work. This means that teachers do not always take sufficient account of what pupils can already do when planning the next lesson.
22. Teaching in the Autistic Unit is of high quality. Here planning is very detailed, with clear learning objectives linked to pupils' individual needs. Teachers know their pupils very well and personal targets to develop academic and social areas of learning are set for each child. Very good relationships between pupils and teachers promote high levels of confidence and self-esteem. Behaviour is very good and when intervention is necessary it is quick, appropriate and effective. All adults in the unit give very good support to pupils. Close team work ensures a trusting, positive and productive learning environment for all pupils.

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

23. The curriculum provided for the children in the Foundation Stage is very good. It is broad, balanced and relevant and satisfies all the requirements of the early learning goals. Purposeful play provides a wide range of opportunities where children's personal, social and emotional development is nurtured. As a result they make good progress in the development of knowledge and skills in language, literacy and mathematics.
24. The curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2 is broad and relevant. However, in the mainstream school, the balance of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. Additional time is allocated to literacy and numeracy. This does not provide sufficient time for the programmes of study in ICT and PE to be covered by the end of the key stages and therefore standards in these areas are not as good as they should be. A shortage of appropriate resources for the delivery of these subjects has further limited provision. The new computer suite will enable the school to plan to deliver the full ICT curriculum. The time allocated for swimming, the limited availability of the hall and some shortfall in resources for outdoor games limit the provision for physical development. In science the investigative aspect of the programme of study is not adequately covered.
25. The school has successfully implemented the national literacy and numeracy strategies and all teachers are guided by these in their planning. The school has recently provided additional programmes including early learning support, additional learning support, "Springboard" and booster sessions in preparation for the national tests. These are improving standards in English and mathematics.
26. Overall, teachers' planning for the curriculum is satisfactory. There is a common framework for lesson planning, which shows what pupils need to learn and if they have been achieved. Where these are shared with pupils, valuable opportunities are provided for pupils to judge their own progress. This makes a valuable contribution to their personal development. Where the assessments of what pupils have achieved is not complete, plans for the next steps in learning are not always well matched to pupils abilities and work is unchallenging. Planning for pupils in the Autistic Unit is very good because it is based on a thorough assessment of their needs.
27. Opportunities are created in some curriculum areas for pupils to apply and further develop their basic skills. In most subjects pupils are encouraged to explain their methods and ideas. They are given opportunities to use and improve their speaking and listening skills when commenting on each other's work. As yet teachers do not make full use of the opportunities for pupils to use their knowledge, understanding and skills in other curriculum areas.
28. The systems for assessing pupils' efforts and attainment are not well established. There are inconsistencies in the marking of pupils' work and comments are not often used to support future learning. The use of homework to provide additional learning opportunities is satisfactory. Pupils regularly take their reading books home.

29. The support for pupils with SEN is excellent in the Autistic Unit and satisfactory elsewhere. Where the provision is well planned it helps pupils take full advantage of curriculum opportunities. Mainstream teachers do not always provide pupils who have SEN with tasks that are matched to their individual learning needs, based on an assessment of prior attainment. Opportunities to challenge higher attaining and gifted and talented pupils to apply their knowledge, skills and understanding in other contexts are sometimes missed.
30. RE is taught according to the locally Agreed Syllabus and standards are in line with those expected for their age. Teaching and learning in RE lessons is supplemented by assemblies and by personal, social, health and citizenship lessons and through the daily acts of collective worship.
31. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education. The governors have an approved policy, which is effectively built in to a well-structured programme. Weekly "circle" sessions are planned for pupils to share their concerns with teachers and classmates in a very supportive environment. As a result all pupils listen with consideration to the problems of others. The school effectively uses this strategy as a successful way of removing barriers to learning by reducing social problems, fostering respect for others and building pupils' self-esteem. "Buddy Time", when pupils of different ages and of differing abilities, from both the mainstream classes and the Autistic Unit work together, is regarded throughout the school as being very valuable in building and maintaining relationships. These sessions underpin the personal development of all the pupils in the school. Currently a programme to promote citizenship is being developed.
32. The school's provision for health education, including sex education, is satisfactory. Science lessons address the importance of healthy eating and personal hygiene and fitness. The school has reviewed and revised its policy for sex education but this is yet to be approved by the governing body. The school nurse contributes to the teaching of sex education. A policy has yet to be formulated for the teaching of drug awareness.
33. The school provides a good range of extra curricular activities, which complement the taught curriculum and provide opportunities for pupils to spend leisure time with their friends. These include clubs for recorder playing, drama, computer skills, reviewing books as well as a range of sporting clubs for football, cross-country running and "High Five" netball. On one morning a week there is a breakfast club at which pupils enjoy a range of thinking skills activities. Participation in these clubs is good.
34. The school has a good range of links with the community that improve the curriculum and provide opportunities for pupils' personal development and for staff development. These include visits to a variety of places of interest, a range of sporting activities such as canoeing, climbing and orienteering, and in public musical performances. The school has a good range of visitors, which include the Police, Fire Service and religious and theatre groups. Links with the Education Business Partnership resulted in a work placement for a member of staff.

35. There are good links with partner institutions and, in particular, with the receiving secondary school. A range of projects has been designed to help with the move from primary school. These include mentors for Year 6 pupils and opportunities for them to work with secondary pupils. Community links have been very favourably affected by the EAZ. This has brought about some effective developments in primary/secondary transition, family learning, staff development and curriculum enhancement.
36. Provision for pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development is good and for moral development it is very good. This is an improvement on the last inspection. The development of spirituality is addressed throughout the school in RE lessons where pupils talk about Christian and other faiths. In the daily acts of collective worship pupils are given time to reflect on the theme of the week and to listen and think about the meaning of the words of the prayer, the hymn or the reading. They write prayers and include them in their class assemblies. In personal, social, health and citizenship lessons pupils reflect on the meaning of caring. In the Autistic Unit the pupils had written and illustrated their feelings about what we can do to help "poor people". In a whole-school assembly held jointly for the pupils and teachers from both the mainstream and the Autistic Unit, pupils were invited to think about the importance of working together and helping each.
37. The school has set itself a very important objective to create an environment in which all adults and children feel valued. In developing the school's mission statement everybody associated with the school was invited to write their own pledge. The majority of these emphasised the importance of caring for one another and respecting and valuing each other. The development of the sensory garden will further enhance the existing provision for the development of the pupils' spirituality.
38. The school has been very effective in teaching pupils the principles that distinguish right from wrong. This process begins when the pupils start school in the reception class and develops well as the pupils progress through the school. Teachers focus on rewarding good behaviour and pupils begin to know and understand what constitutes unacceptable behaviour. They ensure that their approaches in dealing with issues are consistent, firm and fair. When pupils are likely to lack a little self-discipline, as sometimes happens when they get excited, the teachers gently remind them to think about how they are behaving. When this strategy of allowing the pupil to manage and be responsible for his/her own behaviour was used with a pupil in Year 4 who has an individual education plan (IEP) for behaviour management, the effect was one of limiting any potential disruption and enabling the pupil to develop his own self-esteem. All the staff in the school provide good role models by the way they work together with pupils and with each other. Through the establishment of the school's council, pupils are encouraged to develop concepts of right and wrong and to take responsibility for making rules and decisions. In ensuring a safe learning environment and in training pupils to look after their surroundings, the school is reinforcing a moral code and laying the foundations of citizenship.

39. Pupils work well together in lessons and have opportunities to work collaboratively in pairs and in small groups. The links the school has with other schools in the area create further opportunities to develop social skills. The transition project which operates between the Year 6 pupils and the Year 9 students at the neighbouring comprehensive school is a particularly successful example of this provision. The house system that operates within the school provides pupils with a sense of belonging and of working together for the benefit of the group. From activities such as the “buddy time” sessions and involvement with the school council, pupils develop confidence in presenting and sharing their ideas and opinions. In citizenship and the associated visits from representatives from the community, pupils have opportunities to clarify and extend their understanding of social issues.
40. The school makes good provision for pupils' cultural development through the study of other communities, in other times and in other countries. In geography pupils study, compare and contrast their locality with that of other parts of Britain. Centres of local interest such as the Roman Fort at South Shields are used well to promote the pupils' awareness of their cultural heritage. An assembly on diversity, which was attended by pupils of ethnic origin from an inner city school, made a valuable contribution to the school's work on racism and discrimination. Pupils' cultural development is enhanced by the opportunities they have to participate in lessons on literature, drama, music and in other cultural events. In art, pupils in Year 3 explored pattern making from around the world. An imminent visit from a children's author will be another valuable source of enhancement of the pupils' cultural development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The school is a caring organisation and it provides a safe and secure environment for the pupils to learn. Good standards were reported at the last inspection. Examples of care are the high level of support for parents of children in the Autistic Unit and the provision of a breakfast club to provide extra tuition for Year 6 pupils.
42. The school's welfare provisions, including arrangements for child protection are satisfactory. There are two designated teachers, one in the Autistic Unit, a useful policy, which is distributed to all staff, but no one has received recent training. Lunchtime supervision arrangements are satisfactory. The supervisors are clear about their responsibilities and they have had training in behaviour management. Health and safety provisions are also satisfactory. There is a comprehensive policy and involvement by staff and governors. Legal requirements are fulfilled and inspections of the premises are carried out. However, there is no clear understanding of the roles of the staff and governors and there are no written procedures to ensure a consistent implementation of the policy. The poor condition of some external doors and the surfaces of some pathways are health and safety concerns.

43. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment has recently improved and is now satisfactory. In addition to the National Curriculum tests at the end of each key stage, additional standardised tests have been introduced for Years 3, 4 and 5. Senior management has begun to use this information in order to match planned work to pupils' needs and ensure more accurate groupings of pupils, especially with regard to intervention programmes in literacy and numeracy. For children in the Foundation Stage regular assessment of pupil progress is made against the early learning goals. In addition, more formal assessments are carried out each term in number and reading. The progress of pupils in the Autistic Unit is very well assessed against levels which are appropriate to their learning needs and against National Curriculum levels where appropriate. This data is then compared to the progress of similar groups. In the mainstream school, systems for tracking pupils' attainment has not been sufficiently developed in the foundation subjects. Insufficient use is made of information from assessments to guide curricular planning. It is under-developed and is inconsistent between subjects. In mathematics, analysis of pupil attainment in end of year tests was used to adapt the curriculum where there were low scores. Writing has been identified as a whole-school target. However, in-depth analyses of the steps that children need to take have not been identified and this hinders progress. Opportunities for assessment to inform teachers' daily planning are not identified and this prevents further analysis taking place to identify the next steps in pupils' learning. There is currently no formal system for assessment of the foundation subjects. Feedback from teachers to pupils is not yet precise enough to help pupils to make progress.
44. The procedures to monitor and promote attendance are satisfactory. There is no policy or system of rewards to promote attendance but there is a culture of good attendance in the school. Registers satisfy legal requirements. They are monitored regularly and there is a good relationship with the Education Welfare Officer. Administrative arrangements for the day-to-day management of attendance recording are appropriate. However, there is no formal procedure to record temporary absence during the course of the school day. The procedures for pupils absent without a known cause are not fully understood by the school and parents. This provides opportunities for dispute about the extent of the school's responsibilities for the welfare of its pupils.
45. The school's arrangements to promote good behaviour are very good. They are based on rules that are backed up by rewards and sanctions. All staff and the house captains have a role in the rewards system and good behaviour is celebrated. Imaginative strategies are available for managing poor behaviour that include the use of behaviour targets and friendship contracts. The pupils understand the arrangements and believe they work well although there is minor resentment about "superior" rewards on offer in some classes. The school has worked hard with arrangements to prevent bullying. Pupils and parents have been involved and procedures are in place, which are intended to identify any problems at an early stage.
46. Arrangements to monitor personal development are satisfactory. They rely heavily on each teacher's personal knowledge of their class and, hence, the information is not readily available to other members of staff. Brief comments are made on the pupils' annual progress reports and a personal profile for each pupil, which will contain relevant information, is at a very early stage of development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. At the last inspection, it was noted that the school benefited from its relationship with parents. Since then the school has gone through a period of frequent changes in headship and this has sometimes strained relationships with some parents. However, efforts have been in hand for the last eighteen months to make parents feel more valued. Meetings with parents and the questionnaire indicate that, overall, they are now satisfied with the school and some are very pleased. Parents are particularly pleased that their children like school, that they make good progress and that the school has high expectations for them. Some parents are unhappy with the range of out-of-lesson activities, the way the school works with parents and the information which is provided about progress. Inspectors do not endorse these concerns.
48. The school operates an open-door policy and tries hard to involve parents in its activities. These include initiatives by the EAZ such as the family literacy and numeracy programmes. The response from parents is variable but satisfactory overall. It is good at parents' consultation evenings, when attendance is high, at SEN participate well in discussions about their educational plans. However, there is very little direct parental help in school and, although there is a small parents' group, the Fellgate Society, it makes little contribution. The parents of children in the Autistic Unit provide very high levels of support including considerable fund raising.
49. There is a satisfactory range of information, including information on pupils' progress. The prospectus and governors' annual report are well presented and informative. There are regular newsletters, which provide information about the curriculum, and a variety of pamphlets on helping children read. Information about homework needs to be improved. The pupils' annual progress reports are satisfactory and give emphasis to pupils' achievements. Targets for improvement are also included. However, there is little information about what pupils find difficult or should know. Homework and reading records that pass between home and school, also give some information on progress. Parents are encouraged to help their children at home and their response is satisfactory.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. The head teacher took up post at the beginning of the year, following a long period of instability in leadership and management. Prior to her appointment there had been two head teachers and one acting head teacher, which had resulted in low staff morale and under-performance of some groups of pupils, particularly higher attainers. The head teacher immediately identified short-term priorities of action, which included raising attainment for Year 6 pupils and improving the confidence and self-esteem of the staff. Action to address these priorities has been successful. 2002 results were much improved, particularly in English and for pupils achieving the higher levels. The head teacher provides good leadership and she has a very clear view of the future direction of the school. The school improvement plan is an effective and useful document. It is detailed and has a number of highly appropriate priorities, including raising attainment in English and ICT. Included in this plan is a long-term overview, which provides a very appropriate focus for the school without incorporating excessive detail.

51. Increasingly, staff are gaining in confidence and a positive, optimistic climate is developing. The head teacher has worked energetically to achieve this and the school now has a firm foundation upon which it can grow. She is very well supported by the capable assistant head teacher in charge of the Autistic Unit. She leads by her very good example and manages to motivate staff, as well as effectively supporting the head teacher. A very good, shared assembly with pupils from both schools demonstrated the professional relationship and mutual respect the head teacher and assistant head teacher have with each other. The two schools are now in a strong position to work together to develop breadth and diversity of opportunity for the benefit of all pupils.
52. The governing body satisfactorily fulfils its statutory duties. There is a good record of attendance at both the full governing body and sub-committee meetings. This keeps them well informed and enables them to fully meet their statutory obligations. The governing body monitors the budget carefully. Due to the absence of stable leadership, the schools' budget has built up a very significant surplus. The new head teacher and the governors have now invested in a new ICT suite and have good plans for investment in further resources well linked to their improvement plan. They have a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. For example, their support for developments in ICT is set to raise standards. They recognise the importance of high achievement within the school and are aware of the issues regarding curriculum time and staff training. The governors, with the support of the LEA have effectively supported the school in managing the recent difficulties in senior management stability. They are less influential in shaping the future direction of the school and are too reliant on the head teacher's advice and professional expertise in moving the school forward.
53. The senior management team is effective and meet regularly to discuss relevant issues relating to the development of the Autistic Unit and the mainstream school. However, roles and responsibilities will need to be re-defined in view of the long-term illness of the deputy head teacher and the delegation of the Autistic Unit budget to the school in April 2003. This will ensure that management tasks are organised efficiently.
54. Very good systems and structures are in place to ensure a smooth running organisation. The head teacher has high expectations and is committed to improving the school. Good strategies have been implemented to ensure a consistent approach to school development. New planning and assessment procedures, whilst in their infancy, have improved and will contribute to improve teaching and learning.
55. The head teacher has a firm commitment to the value of monitoring and evaluation in school. However, although a programme is now in place and some teaching observations have been undertaken, with the support of the LEA, little work has been done to involve the subject leaders' role in improving teaching and learning. A system for the monitoring and tracking of the academic progress of children has been introduced. The information is currently used to set realistic yearly targets for the improvement of individual groups and children. Personal targets for pupils' writing have been introduced fairly recently. Pupils are aware of their targets. Progress is monitored by staff and feedback is given through marking. However, this is not yet consistent for all classes.

56. Subject leaders do not evaluate planning on a regular basis and as a result they do not have enough information to help identify strengths and weaknesses, to effect changes in curriculum, teaching and learning. In order to raise standards further there is an urgent need to monitor with a specific focus to improve areas of weakness. For example, in the development of assessment for learning to ensure that pupils know exactly what they have to do to improve their work.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

57. In order to raise standards and improve the quality of education further, the head teacher, staff and governors should work together to:
58. Raise standards, particularly in writing, science, ICT and PE by:
 - (1) reviewing the role of subject leaders to ensure that they monitor and evaluate teaching plans and the quality of teaching and learning; (Paragraphs 55, 56)
 - (2) putting in place marking and assessment strategies, which better inform the next steps in pupils' learning; (Paragraphs 21, 26, 28, 29, 43)
 - (3) reviewing the time allocated to the subjects of the National Curriculum to provide a balanced curriculum. (Paragraph 24)
59. In addition the school should consider improving the use of the results of improved monitoring and evaluation to identify weaknesses in teachers subject knowledge and provide appropriate training. (Paragraph 18)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	43
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	18

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	11	13	18	1	0	0
Percentage	0	26	30	42	2	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	213
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	51

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	28
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	20

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	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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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	16	14	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	13	15
	Girls	13	12	13
	Total	27	25	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (88)	83 (85)	93 (88)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	15	13
	Girls	13	12	14
	Total	26	27	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (94)	90 (94)	90 (94)
	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	16	15	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	11	11
	Girls	12	11	14
	Total	20	22	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (65)	71 (70)	81 (91)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	9	8
	Girls	14	11	10
	Total	22	20	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (74)	65 (70)	58 (74)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	209	2	0
White – Irish			
White – any other White background			
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean			
Mixed – White and Black African			
Mixed – White and Asian	3	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background			
Asian or Asian British - Indian			
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani			
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi			
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background			
Black or Black British – Caribbean			
Black or Black British – African			
Black or Black British – any other Black background			
Chinese			
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded			

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, 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)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.0:1
Average class size	30.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	422

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0
Number of pupils per FTE adult	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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	1

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.6
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001
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	£
Total income	503075.00
Total expenditure	443003.00
Expenditure per pupil	2071.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	4176.00
Balance carried forward to next year	101836.00

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	213
Number of questionnaires returned	70

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	41.4	51.4	4.3	1.4	1.4
My child is making good progress in school.	41.4	50	2.9	0	4.4
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	40	11.4	0	8.6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	15.7	57.1	14.3	4.3	8.6
The teaching is good.	38.6	50	4.3	1.4	5.7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	27.1	51.4	12.9	7.1	1.4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	47.1	40	10	1.4	1.4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55.7	35.7	2.9	0	5.7
The school works closely with parents.	32.9	38.6	17.1	5.7	5.7
The school is well led and managed.	42.9	37.1	7.1	1.4	11.4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47.1	41.4	7.1	0	4.3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	15.7	28.6	20	14.3	21.4

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Most parents are pleased with the progress their children make. Some feel that there are not enough interesting activities outside lessons. Inspectors, whilst agreeing that most pupils make at least satisfactory progress, found that the provision of activities outside lessons was good.

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

60. The provision for children in the reception class is good and has improved since the last inspection because all the issues identified have been successfully addressed. Children join the reception class at the beginning of the academic year of their fifth birthday. The environment provided, which has recently been relocated and refurbished, is attractive and well-planned providing areas and spaces related to the early learning goals. The school has plans in place to further improve provision by adding a specially planned outside area for learning.
61. All children, including those with SEN, make good progress because of good teaching and the work of supportive adults. Baseline assessments describe above average attainment in all areas by the end of reception. The experienced staff work together as a very efficient team to provide an effective curriculum across all the areas of learning. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable about this phase of education, in particular the needs of young children and how they learn. She is very committed to school improvement, prepared to listen and provides very good leadership.
62. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good and sometimes very good. It is strongest in the teaching of the basic skills in literacy, the development of speaking and listening and also in developing children's personal, social and emotional development. Lessons are well structured and there are very good opportunities for children to plan their own activities and this ensures that children are able to become independent and creative.

Personal and social education

63. This area of learning is promoted effectively and children make good progress. All issues with regard to this area of development identified during the last inspection have been addressed. Staff have built excellent relationships with the children and provide very good role models for them. Staff trust children to work sensibly, co-operate on group tasks and to share resources. Children accept responsibility well, carrying out jobs such as moving equipment outdoors without fuss. Adults link with particular groups of children, which allows time for the development of sound relationships and social competence.
64. Children have the opportunity to learn how to concentrate well. High expectations ensure that planned tasks chosen by the children are carried through to completion. They select these activities and resources independently displaying high levels of involvement and persistence. They work within an effective system of established routines. During tasks children are encouraged to help each other to find an answer, allowing them to experience success and develop their self-esteem. Children make good progress because of very good teaching based upon respect, patience and courtesy for all. By the time they are five children will meet or exceed the early learning goals for this area.

Communication, language and literacy

65. Children make good progress and most children will reach or exceed the expected standard in this area of learning. Speaking and listening skills are very good. Adults ask a wide range of questions to focus the children's attention on particular areas of learning. As a result, they are able to concentrate and listen for considerable periods of time. A daily planning session, which involves children explaining their choice of activity and the materials that they will require to the group, is followed up by a plenary discussion in which they are encouraged to describe their experience of the task. Talk is used to organise, sequence and clarify their thinking, for example one child explained, "I'll go into the writing area. I'm going to draw a picture. It's very hard to make a pussycat. "This talk of their experience extends their language and allows them to grow in confidence.
66. The daily literacy session is appropriately structured across the school year. It provides good opportunities for children to develop skills in reading and writing. Children enjoy listening to stories and react with wonder as pages are turned in a book and new pictures are revealed. They respond to stories by making relevant comments and asking appropriate questions. The use of good resources enables children to discuss the characters they have met in the story and the sequence of events.
67. Children are encouraged to write for their own purposes by providing for them a range of resources that are easy to find. During planned sessions children write letters for family relatives, write lists and compose stories. By the end of the first month in reception all children recognise their own name, can say and recognise the initial letter of their name and a number of children can write their name.

Mathematical development

68. Most children make good progress in acquiring mathematical skills and will reach the expected level of attainment. This area is given importance through the provision of a daily numeracy session. A good variety of spoken and practical activities give children experience of working with numbers. The teacher ensures that children have the opportunity to use their mathematical knowledge in activities such as number songs. Lessons are planned well to develop children's skills in counting and ordering numbers.
69. During planned activities children's use of mathematical language is actively encouraged and refined as, for example, one child discussed whether his creation was "taller" or "smaller" than the toy he compared it with. Children make good progress because the teacher and assistant work very closely with focussed groups of children upon well-thought-out tasks, which engage the children in active learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

70. Children make good progress in this area and will reach the expected level of attainment. Evidence from teachers' planning show that a variety of experiences are provided for the children. Children's early geographical skills are fostered by visits to the seaside where they explore physical features relating to the coastline such as caves, and observe changes over time with regard to the tide. They are encouraged to use all their senses to investigate materials, as when touch, taste and smell were used to identify a range of fruits and vegetables. There are a variety of objects, including construction kits, from which children can choose to build models. They are able to handle and investigate a range of interesting natural materials, which are on the display provided. In ICT lessons children use a mouse successfully to work through a programme.
71. The teaching in this area of learning is good. It is characterised by clear planning and excellent organisation, enabling support teachers and assistants to play a full part in each lesson. The activities provided are interesting and enjoyable which helps to maintain children's interest and enthusiasm. Plenary sessions are effectively used to reinforce learning through good questioning by the teacher and pupils' explaining and discussing the session. All issues identified at the last inspection have been addressed.

Physical development

72. Children achieve the early learning goals for physical development by the time they leave the reception class. In the classroom children organise themselves very well, sitting on the carpet, arranging themselves for group work or moving to work in groups with other children. During an outdoor session children moved with control and co-ordination when operating wheeled vehicles and stilts. They demonstrated an awareness of space, changing directions accurately and with an awareness of others. They learn to kick a ball and walk and run with confidence and enjoyment. There is a range of wheeled and large play apparatus including vehicles, which help children play together. There are also good resources for games, which enable development of hand/eye co-ordination. The provision of a "trim-trail" in the playground also helps the development of gross motor skills. When weather is poor there is access to climbing apparatus in the school hall and also a range of soft-play provision. In the classroom, children demonstrate good control handling tools and cutting dough. They are able to hold pens and pencils correctly and as they play with construction kits and malleable materials they increase their levels of manipulative control. The school is aware that it can use the outdoor area to provide an environment in which all areas of learning are developed. To this end the school has good plans to create an enclosed area which will be used as an extension to the reception classroom.
73. Teaching in this area is good. The adults provide a good range of supported and independent activities, which ensure the development of children's fine and gross motor skills.

Creative development

74. There are good opportunities for children to progress creatively. This is because a balance of approaches ensure that children have the freedom to develop their own ideas and skills whilst being well supported by adults. For example, children are provided with a good range of activities from which they can select – construction, malleable, collage, role-play, writing area, etc. Planned sessions developing children’s skills such as a pattern making session in which, because of clear explanations and good questioning manner from the teacher, children make clear progress in technique.

75. Children are well supported in making choices and decisions and adults know when to intervene. For example, one adult supported a child in the making of a post box, which she had decided to make for the postman. Making a shape was difficult but the child was able to succeed through the timely assistance of the support assistant. Children are likely to meet or exceed the early learning goals in this area.

ENGLISH

76. By the age of eleven standards of attainment are below average. This is supported by the national tests taken in 2001. These tests also show that pupils of seven years of age performed in line with national averages in writing but below for reading. These standards were above average when compared to similar schools. Standards have not been maintained at the level described by the last inspection. Results fluctuate yearly with the varying proportion of pupils with SEN from the Autistic Unit. These pupils achieve very well compared to the targets set for them. Pupils' progress has also been generally hindered by several changes in school management within a relatively short period of time. For example, subject monitoring is not sufficiently developed.
77. Standards seen during the inspection show that attainment of pupils is below national expectations in English. The progress that pupils make in the Autistic Unit is very good. In mainstream school, pupils are now beginning to make satisfactory progress with the improved strategies put in place to support teaching and learning. For example, extra support is currently being given to developing pupils' literacy skills. Staff training to improve additional literacy support has begun. In 2002 there were significant improvements in the results for English because of the emphasis on very effective intervention strategies over a short period of time. Analysis of data is now enabling the subject leader to identify and target particular groups of children and effectively implement the intervention strategies provided by the national strategy.
78. Overall the teaching and learning for Years 3 to 6 is good. This is because teachers have good subject knowledge, are very clear about the expected outcomes and therefore structure teaching well, enabling the children to make good progress. In Year 1, children make good progress because planning is clear, subject knowledge is good and expectations are high. The rate of progress for children in Year 2 is slower. Teaching for children with autistic spectrum disorder is at least good. This is underpinned by very good relationships, which supports confidence and self-esteem.

Speaking and Listening

79. Most pupils, including those with SEN, are confident speakers. The quality of teaching is good providing good examples of the spoken word, for pupils to follow, giving good explanations and practical use of technical vocabulary. A high level of support, for children with SEN, ensure that tasks are matched to individual ability and that children's communication skills are developed. Adults accurately pitch learning to take children onto the next steps. This is particularly the case for the development of language skills. Teachers enable and encourage discussion by use of relevant and open questions. In Year 6 speaking and listening skills are good. Children are articulate and have confidence when speaking in front of one another. A wide variety of vocabulary is used to describe and explain. For children in Year 1, speaking and listening skills are in-line with national expectations. For example, children give clear explanations and can use descriptive language - "I think the dark brown circus bear is very terrifying." Learning is supported by good resources that motivate children. Teachers create a learning environment in which all children feel secure and "have a go".

Reading

80. Standards are average in reading at Year 6 and below average at Year 2. Many pupils are self-motivated to read and some are proficient and confident readers. However, although teachers are becoming more adept in using the literacy strategy to teach reading, there is insufficient structure across the school to ensure good progress. There is not a consistent approach to record keeping and a lack of subject knowledge sometimes leads to the inaccurate assessment of pupils reading at Key Stage 1. A home/school reading record has been established. This is a positive development, encouraging the participation of parents and raising the profile of reading across the school. This system is not yet embedded, as not all staff are using this as a real opportunity for discussions with parents and children about how to improve attainment. The resources for reading are adequate and the co-ordinator plans to incorporate additional reading books into the main scheme. This will add breadth and diversity to children's reading. The school library has recently been fully established and updated. Most children do not as yet display an understanding of the systems and research skills are under-developed. Strategies to raise attainment in reading are clearly identified in the school improvement plan. Recent initiatives to develop children's basic skills are currently being evaluated and early indications point to children making good progress.

Writing

81. Standards for Year 6 and Year 2 are below national expectations in writing. Although targets have been set for pupils to improve their writing, teachers have no clear understanding of the progression of skills, nor are they employing the key strategies that underpin the effective teaching of writing. Resources such as frameworks, which can help to improve children's writing, are not used and although good examples of book reviews and letters are displayed, these are not mirrored in children's books. The school's policy for handwriting has not been implemented in Key Stage 1, therefore children are unable to attain higher levels of attainment in writing.
82. Strategies to raise attainment in writing are clearly identified in the school improvement plan. Some are already in place to raise the profile of writing, which are helping to increase pupils' enthusiasm for, and skills in, writing. These include a story club for children and parents in Year 1, a desk-top publishing initiative supported by a local newspaper for Years 4,5, and 6, a planned visit from a children's author and a creative arts development. The latter has involved a creative writer, working with children to develop stories relating to myths and magic. Sound systems are in place to support the development of spelling including the setting of appropriate homework.

83. The quality of English teaching is satisfactory overall. Throughout the school there are good classroom management techniques. Teachers use praise and encouragement to effectively involve children in their learning. Teaching is good where teachers are thoroughly prepared in terms of researching appropriate subject knowledge and when opportunities are taken to link current learning to prior learning. Pupils make good progress when the objectives for the lesson are discussed by the teacher and good examples given, so pupils are able to say what they will learn by the end of the lesson. When teachers' questioning is well structured it promotes a good range of answers. For example pupils in Year 3 were able to appreciate how much they had learned against agreed measures when in discussions with their teacher. Pupils in the Autistic Unit are independent within their own setting and make good progress because of the clear focus to learning and the good quality input from teachers. Objectives are clearly shared with children enabling them to understand the focus of the lesson and there is good revision of strategies for reading unfamiliar words.
84. However, there is as yet no effective structure for the teaching of writing. Although there is a heavy weighting of time towards literacy, the time allocated for the development of writing is not yet consistently and effectively used across the school. Writing skills are under-developed because no structure is taught to support writing, for example key strategies such as planning, drafting and editing. Children launch straight into writing and this lack of preliminary thinking about the writing does little to improve quality. Writing across the school demonstrates that while the national literacy strategy has been in place, there have been low expectations of depth and accuracy. There is little evidence of work being set to stimulate pupils' interest and marking has not helped them to improve. Where the subject knowledge of the teacher is not secure there is a negative effect on children's learning. More generally, there are sometimes missed opportunities for assessment within lessons.
85. Senior management has raised the profile of English and the school improvement plan clearly identifies the raising of attainment in reading and writing as a key school priority and strategies that will underpin this development. These systems are not yet fully effective in all classes across the school. The head teacher has initially ensured that focussed support and development has been targeted at Years 5 and 6. A good analysis has been made of test results in these year groups and strategies to raise attainment were effectively put into action this year. This short-term strategy was effective in raising standards as reflected in the 2002 results. However, a strategy to develop the quality of teaching of writing across the school has yet to be developed. Effective intervention strategies have been put in place to support those children who are not making suitable progress. This strategy should impact upon the high number of pupils who achieve the lower levels at the end of Key Stage 2. The school policy for English has been recently improved. The work of the co-ordinator was supported by the EAZ staff who have also helped to develop the school's new system of assessment. Monitoring of this subject has not been effective. Strategies for the effective monitoring of standards and agreed school priorities have now been clearly identified by the senior management team. The school is now well placed to raise attainment in this subject.

86. Cross-curricular links with literacy are very evident. These range from planned links within lessons, such as the use of literacy skills within an historical context, involving the use of persuasive argument during a study of Henry VIII. A good contribution to literacy was made during assembly in the Autistic Unit that focussed upon the introduction of new words such as "precious". The skills of note-taking and the construction of reports were used effectively in Year 6 geography. Various projects have been introduced to support the raising of attainment in English. These include a family literacy initiative for Reception and Year 2, which is helping to develop children's basic skills, whilst also developing excellent links with parents. Also, a "Storybags" development with a local comprehensive school effectively linked literacy with ICT. The development of literacy skills is also supported by the display in the school, for instance the sequential relationships within a story supported by a "3 Bear" display and an attractive and relevant display of books celebrated in the school hall.

MATHEMATICS

87. Standards are improving and by the age of eleven pupils attain standards above that expected for their age. In the 2001 national tests the attainment of all pupils was in line with the national average. This achievement was above average when compared to schools in similar circumstances. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 was well below the average percentage nationally. Those pupils in the Autistic Unit achieved well against the targets set for them. The most recent national tests taken in 2002 indicate a significant improvement with attainment being above the national average. There is a comparable improvement in percentage of pupils attaining Level 5. In Key Stage 2 pupils make greater progress where the teacher is familiar with the teaching programmes from the national numeracy strategy. In these classes more able pupils are challenged to use and apply their mathematical knowledge when solving problems and less confident and lower attaining pupils are given tasks that are well matched to their individual needs. The good progress identified for all pupils in Year 6 during a lesson based on the interpretation, representation and extraction of data was as a direct result of matching the task to the abilities of different groups.
88. By the age of 7, pupils attain the standards expected for their age and make sound progress. The 2001 national tests, which include those pupils in the Autistic Unit, was in line with the national average and was well above the averages of similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 2B and above was above the average nationally. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 3 was similar to that found nationally. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are working within the expected levels for their age. In Year 1 they consolidate and further develop their counting skills, applying them in a range of everyday activities and in games. Practical equipment is used to support the development of understanding of addition for the less confident and less able pupils. The majority of pupils are able to identify and combine pairs of numbers that total 10. They know the names of the basic shapes and can describe them using everyday language. The Year 2 pupils demonstrate progress in their concept of number and are able to identify all the pairings of numbers that total 20. They make gains in problem-solving by devising ways of recording their findings systematically. In this key stage pupils explore the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes. In Year 2 the majority of pupils use mathematical language accurately, including edges and corners to describe and classify polygons. They make effective use of mental mathematic strategies such as adding near doubles when calculating.
89. Pupils with SEN in the Autistic Unit make very good progress. Individual pupils' learning needs are continually assessed and tasks are designed to address specific areas of learning. Teachers use praise and encouragement effectively to maintain pupils' interest and attention. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support the learning.

90. Teaching in mathematics is satisfactory throughout the age and ability range. There are examples of good teaching in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 2. The teachers have adopted a common planning format that reflects the impact of the national literacy and numeracy strategies. The majority of the teachers share the learning objectives with their pupils and help them understand when these have been achieved. In most lessons the oral and mental starter is used effectively to give a crisp start to the lesson and to hold pupils' interest. Where teaching is less effective, teachers are less confident in their own subject knowledge and tasks set, particularly in the main part of the lesson, are not well matched to the learning objective or to the pupils' existing knowledge and abilities. The quality of teachers' marking of written work is variable. Where teachers make supportive remarks on pupils' written work, pupils gain an understanding of how they can further improve. In some classes the teachers identify, in their marking, the extent to which the pupil has achieved the learning objective. This enhances pupil's self-esteem by pointing out the value placed on his/her efforts.
91. In all the lessons observed in mathematics pupils' attitudes to learning were never less than satisfactory, being good or very good in the majority of lessons and excellent in the Foundation Stage. Considering the strengths in teaching and the resultant progress in learning and attainment, the positive attitudes to learning shown by the pupils and the potential strength in subject leadership, there is a strong capacity in this curriculum area for further improvement.
92. The subject leader for mathematics is effective. She has completed a subject audit and analysed assessments. From this analysis a portfolio of pupils' attainment has been produced and this has been shared with the teacher for each year group to assist them in setting a "predicted" target based on prior attainment and a "Smart" ambitious target. In addition she has produced an action plan, of which the three key priorities were identified and presented to senior management as part of the review for the school improvement plan. The current level of monitoring planning is insufficient. As yet no classroom observations of teaching and learning have been undertaken. However, this has been identified as an area for her professional development.

SCIENCE

93. Standards in science are below expected levels by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils make insufficient progress. This is supported by the national test results for 2001, which found attainment well below the national average and below similar schools. This is mainly due to an over-emphasis on life and living processes at the expense of learning about some other areas of the science curriculum.
94. By the end of Year 2 pupils of all abilities are aware of correct science terms. For example, higher attaining pupils know the word classification in relation to how foods might be grouped as healthy and unhealthy. All pupils recognise that living things grow. Most have a reasonable understanding of which foods are healthy and which are not, but none could suggest why. Average attaining pupils know that living things are found in various habitats, such as squirrels in woodlands.
95. By the end of Year 6 most pupils can identify the main organs of a plant but only a few higher attaining pupils can name the parts of a flower. These pupils achieve well in their scientific knowledge, describing the functions of the main organs of both humans and plants. Most know why a bulb might not light up in a circuit. However apart from a few high attaining pupils, most have a poor understanding of forces such as gravity and the effect of friction or of the characteristics of solids, liquids and gases. Some lower attaining pupils lack competence in explaining what they observe. Higher attaining pupils name various sources of light and sound. However, few can explain in scientific terms what they have discovered from their investigations, for instance about how they might reduce the variables to make a fair test. They infrequently suggest ways of improving what they have done and how. This is partly because pupils' lack of independent investigation skills limits their achievement throughout the school. Pupils with SEN, especially in the Autistic Unit, make good progress.
96. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Where good, planning ensures that what pupils already know forms the foundation for new learning and it is made clear what they are expected to learn. In these lessons interesting activities are sequenced to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. For example, in a Year 3 lesson to plan a fair test, pupils were able to draw on their knowledge of the absorbency of materials to predict which might be the most or least absorbent. Other strengths include good questioning by the teacher, which enable the higher attaining pupils to understand for example, how to design a "fair test". Where there are weaknesses, activities are not stepped so that they can make connections in learning. Sometimes activities are not well matched to what it is pupils need to learn. Here, where teachers do not fully challenge pupils of different abilities, learning is not always as good as it could be. This can lead to some occasions where pupils do not concentrate on the task and prevents them making good progress.
97. The teaching of scientific skills is satisfactory but could improve if teachers plan to give pupils enough opportunity to use their own initiative when carrying out investigations and when they record what they find out. Here a lack in opportunities result in most pupils having limited skills in making their own independent decisions about how they might go about devising an investigation, what resources they could use and how best to record their findings. A strength of teaching throughout the school is teachers' good management of pupils that is underpinned by teachers' good relationships with them. Teachers value pupils and welcome their ideas. This results in pupils' good behaviour, good levels of concentration and enthusiasm for learning, combined with confidence to offer comments. On the rare occasions that pupils become restless it is sometimes because the teacher has been talking for too long.

98. The co-ordinator is aware that standards are below what is expected. The science curriculum is not sufficiently balanced. Too much emphasis is placed on “Life and Living Processes” at the expense of some other areas of science. More time should be given to the development of investigative skills and to other areas of the science curriculum. Learning resources are well organised and easily accessible. ICT is rarely used to support learning and the co-ordinator is aware that ICT needs to be planned more systematically to support pupils' progress. The monitoring and evaluation role of the co-ordinator is as yet under-developed. For example, there has been little impact on the subject by observing and developing teaching in science through the school.

ART AND DESIGN

99. At the time of the last inspection standards in art and design at the end of both key stages were judged to be broadly typical of those found in most schools. This continues to be true. By the age of seven most pupils can use a good variety of art materials including paint, wax crayon and fabrics to produce interesting work. Pupils are introduced to art and design skills from an early age and past work shows they can cut gummed paper, card and sticky tape satisfactorily. Pupils quickly begin to appreciate how colours can be combined in pleasing combinations. Pupils can achieve satisfactory standards of shape and proportion when using pencils or crayons to draw a house.
100. By the age of eleven pupils have a satisfactory understanding of harmonising and contrasting colours. Most can apply successfully the skills they have acquired to produce good quality results in both two and three-dimensional form. Pupils in Year 3 can identify different types of pattern and the methods and skills used to produce them. The pupils were confident and articulate in justifying their favourites. On being shown pictures and postcards of Aboriginal and Egyptian patterns the pupils drew on previous learning, offering suggestions as to the techniques employed in creating them. The finger painting patterns produced by the pupils subsequently were very effective and demonstrated that they had grasped the basic skills of this media. When illustrating their writing in other subjects, such as history and geography, they carefully use pencils, crayons and felt pens to produce detailed drawings. Both boys and girls make sound progress in the development of art skills and those with SEN make good progress in terms of the targets set for them.
101. The teaching seen is good. Planning is good, with an appropriate balance between the exploration of ideas and the actual production of individual patterns. The resources compiled to stimulate pupils' interest in the topic were well matched to their previous learning and experience. Effective links are made to other curriculum areas such as to the current study of ancient Egypt. This lesson provided very good opportunities for pupils to explain their thoughts and to justify their choices and preferences. Teaching carefully used structured questioning as an assessment opportunity encouraging pupils to use their skills of speculation and deduction.
102. Pupils' attitudes are good and they enjoy art and design. The mutually respectful manner in which they join in discussions and the co-operation they show when collecting the paints, brushes and water needed, demonstrate the high expectations the teacher had of their social skills. The pupils were keen to undertake responsibility.
103. The co-ordination of this subject is effective. The need for in-service training in art and design is identified in the school's long-term plan for improvement. Currently the school is reviewing its scheme of work and is considering alternative schemes which are more closely aligned to the guidance provided by the national Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA). Pupils' work is as yet not formally assessed. Individual portfolios of actual drawings and paintings and photographs of other art forms are planned. As yet the pupils do not use sketch books. Currently the focus is on ensuring that pupils' efforts and achievements are seen to be valued. To this end the teachers are required to ensure that all work on display is mounted effectively with the learning objective clearly shown. Almost all the curriculum areas are represented in the many displays around the school, including three-dimensional art forms. These displays make the school a colourful and stimulating environment in which to learn.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

104. Standards in DT are broadly typical of what most pupils achieve at ages seven and eleven and reflect those at the time of last inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress over time because teaching is sound. Pupils are able to use their initiative to select from a range of materials and tools when they design for example, a healthy meal in Year 1. In a Year 6 class teaching effectively encouraged pupils to think about what structures contributed to the strength of a bridge. This resulted in a better understanding about why lattice structures are strong.
105. Teaching is satisfactory and has effectively established the process of pupils designing, making and evaluating what they have made. Many pupils know about this cycle and they can talk about it with some degree of understanding. Although teachers expect pupils to talk about what they have made, pupils are less able to evaluate their products. This is notable in Key Stage 1 where pupils' skills of evaluation are not always developed. Pupils with SEN are well supported and make good progress. In the Year 6 lesson, the strengths were the teacher's warm but firm relationships, questions that focused pupils' concentration well and a clear sense of direction to the lesson. As a result many made good progress. Pupils' attitudes in the lesson were generally good but were spoilt by some boys who did not listen. Good attitudes are reflected in conversations with pupils in Year 1 as well as in pupils' pride in their work in all year groups.
106. The planning of DT meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. A satisfactory range of resources supports an informative policy and a developing scheme of work. Since the last inspection the school has not sufficiently developed its arrangements for assessing the attainment and progress of pupils. The role of the co-ordinator in monitoring teaching and learning is under-developed.

GEOGRAPHY

107. Standards in geography are satisfactory by the end of both key stages. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection, where they were found to be in line with national expectations for pupils in Years 2 and 6. Because the time allocated to the foundation subjects of geography and history is arranged in blocks, work samples from only some classes were available at the time of the inspection. These samples, together with lesson observations, school display and discussions with the head teacher and pupils, provided information on pupil progress and attainment.
108. By the end of Year 2, pupils acquire a sound range of geographical skills, increase their knowledge and gain a deeper understanding of the physical and human aspects of the subject. Children have investigated life on the Island of Struay. This work included some research on the Internet. They are able to identify human and physical features of the island on a map. They develop appropriate geographical vocabulary and are able to discuss the features of farms, forests, islands and deserts. Children in Year 1 have investigated the work of the farmer at harvest time. They use correct vocabulary and understand that harvesting provides a food supply for the following year. They evaluate their own locality and are able to recognise and record key features of the local area.

109. In Year 6, children investigate the water supply, extending their knowledge of environmental change and the need for sustainable development. In Year 4, very clear learning objectives inform the children's work. They are able to locate the UK and India on a world map. They identify both the physical and human features of India. They construct their own maps and investigate, by using atlases, travel routes from the UK to India. They study the locality of Chembakolli Village and investigate life in the village using a good resource in the form of a survey of residents' opinions. Pupils are generally interested and participate willingly in discussion. They express their views clearly using appropriate geographical vocabulary.
110. Teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are appropriately planned and what pupils are expected to learn is shared with them. Pupils are taught relevant geographical vocabulary and this links well to the development of their literacy skills. Work is matched to pupils working at different levels of ability and helps them make satisfactory progress. More help on extending pupils' understanding of physical features is needed where they have little of their own experience to draw on. Lower attaining pupils and those with SEN are well supported by adults, are given appropriate resources and make satisfactory progress. There are good links to other subjects demonstrated by the mathematical calculations of the volume of water used in the study of the water supply. There are links to historical references with regard to disease and pollution and finally, to literacy, in the use of note-making and report writing skills.
111. There is an agreed planning format for staff and objectives are clearly indicated and explained to children. Resources to support the subject are adequate. However, quality resources to support the development of pupils' enquiry skills are limited. The absence of the subject co-ordinator has impacted upon development of the subject. Monitoring has been infrequent and currently there is no formal system for the assessment of pupil progress.

HISTORY

112. Standards of attainment in history are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Overall, achievement is satisfactory because of the growing use of units of work which have been taken from national guidance by QCA and the varied and interesting visits to historical sites and museums.
113. Pupils are interested in history and some have developed a good knowledge of the periods they have studied. This was particularly evident in a Year 3 class, where pupils talked enthusiastically about the Egyptian period. This is further enhanced by their interest in the history of their local environment and community.
114. The youngest pupils identify their personal history through pictures of them as babies and toys they used to play with. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have opportunities to develop a sound balance of history topics taken from a number of themes such as "Homes Long Ago" and about famous people such as Florence Nightingale. Their work shows a developing appreciation of change and chronology. They communicate their findings in different ways, though there is little evidence of developed written responses.

115. At Key Stage 2 pupils develop a sound knowledge of the important periods in history and understand their order through the use of time lines. Work on the Egyptians done during the inspection demonstrated a good range of information and strategies for exploring sources. Pupils in Year 5 enjoyed studying Henry VIII and were fascinated by his life style. Good links were made to literacy in this topic. Pupils demonstrated their ability to develop the issue of divorce in a logical and persuasive manner. Overall, written work is of a sound standard and sometimes better, as when a good standard of work was displayed from a visit to Killhope Mine.
116. Teaching is satisfactory. Pupils are well managed and therefore behave well. Lessons are appropriately planned. Learning is enhanced by visits, for example by a visit to the Hancock Museum in Newcastle. Good use is made of open-ended questions that encourage pupils to think more widely about historical events. Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to use research skills by using the library and the Internet.
117. Co-ordination of history is satisfactory. Strengths and weaknesses within the subject have been clearly identified. However, there are few opportunities to consult, discuss or train staff to further develop teaching approaches to history that would make a real difference to pupils' learning. Monitoring of the curriculum is at an early stage of development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

118. The good attainment described during the last inspection has not been maintained. Standards of attainment are below those expected at both key stages. Changes in school management have hindered the development of this subject. The completion of the ICT suite in September 2002 and recent acquisition of whiteboard technology will allow the school to fully develop a suitable and up-to-date curriculum for ICT. The senior management team has identified ICT as a priority for development. They have constructed a detailed action plan and suitable resources have been acquired. The school is well placed to take the subject forward and raise standards.
119. Observations of, and discussion with, the "expert" teacher indicate that good teaching based upon excellent teacher knowledge is beginning to ensure the development of relevant skills for pupils in Year 6. Plans indicate that this will be extended across the school. This has not yet had sufficient time to impact upon standards of attainment.
120. There was no evidence available of pupils' work samples from Key Stage 1 and very limited evidence from Key Stage 2. Observations of teaching and displays and discussion with staff provided information with regard to pupil attainment. Pupils across the school have very limited skills. Pupils in Year 6 investigated a multi-media package. They created a page combining text and graphics. Year 4 pupils used paintbrush. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 used the Internet to research topics in English and geography. Pupils across Key Stage 2 have had experience of word, usually linked to work in literacy.
121. There is a lack of suitable breadth to the curriculum and the use of the suite is not yet fully timetabled to support a rigorous development of relevant skills for all pupils across all stages. Links with other subjects were evident, for example a link with literacy through the development of story bags for young children. Children show interest in, and enthusiasm for this subject. They listen attentively, respond to instructions and pose questions when they need additional information.

122. Strengths include up-to-date hardware, staff confidence raised by recent training and the provision of an EAZ funded technician to support staff. A well structured action plan drawn up by the new head teacher and senior management team outlines developments in detail and establishes this area as a key school priority.
123. The co-ordination of subject has been weak, with gaps in knowledge of the requirements of the subject. The scheme of work involves the use of QCA guidance and a commercial scheme for skills' development. There is no formal evaluation of the curricular provision and the recently acquired system of assessment has not yet been implemented. Monitoring of the subject has been restricted to infrequent evaluation of planning. However, the head teacher has established the basis for the improvement of standards in ICT.

MUSIC

124. Standards of attainment in music are in line with expectations at the end of both key stages and pupils make satisfactory progress. Observations of lessons, singing in assemblies and evaluation of display work show that standards are similar to those observed during the last inspection.
125. Pupils in Year 1 develop their listening skills using music and are able to identify where sounds come from. For instance, the majority of pupils are able to link the sound of a seagull to the seaside. Their enthusiasm for, and commitment to, the subject was a significant factor in the satisfactory progress made by the pupils in this lesson. The pupils in Key Stage 1 display a great deal of pleasure in singing and listening to music. This was observed in the whole-school assembly where pupils from the Autistic Unit were integrated. They too demonstrated their intense pleasure, not only when singing, but also when listening to the song "What a Perfect Day".
126. Pupils in Key Stage 2 sing well together during assembly. They demonstrate control, good pitch and rhythmic accuracy. Their diction is clear and they sing tunefully with enthusiasm and enjoyment. A music specialist successfully supports music teaching throughout Key Stage 2. His subject knowledge, enthusiasm and keenness to involve pupils, contributes to the sound progress they make. As a result of this, pupils in Year 5 are able to successfully sing a two part round of "London's Burning" and "Catch a Falling Star". These pupils are able to use musical instruments in an appropriate manner to develop rhythmic patterns. Sound compositional skills are demonstrated by pupils who create a "sound picture" to accompany an interpretation of "Thunder and Lightning".
127. Music lessons are enriched and supported by a sound range of additional musical activities. Pupils have the opportunity to participate in recorder or singing clubs. Year 5 pupils had the exciting opportunity to be involved in the "Four Corners Workshop", where they learned about the different elements of music through the music of East Africa.
128. The school follows the commercial scheme of work, "Lively Music". This helps to provide sound progression in knowledge and skills. The co-ordinator is very interested in music and this is evident in her own classroom.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

129. The standard of attainment in the Key Stage 2 gymnastic lesson was below that expected for pupils in the final year of the key stage. Pupils were given too little opportunity to improve or evaluate their performance. It was not possible during the inspection to observe a Key Stage 1 lesson in this subject. No observations were possible of games or dance lessons in Key Stages 1 or 2. No comparison with the last inspection can therefore be made on overall attainment in PE.
130. The planned curriculum for PE across the school is broad and includes all the elements of the National Curriculum programmes. However, the actual curriculum delivered does not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum programmes of study. Insufficient curriculum time has been allocated to the teaching of PE. Swimming is included for Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. As a consequence of the travelling time involved this provision reduces the time available to deliver the other elements of the programmes of study adequately.
131. Some sporting opportunities that complement the planned PE curriculum are provided through the school's programme of extra-curricular activities. Not all pupils participate in these sessions, which include lunchtime coaching in football by Sunderland Football Club, a mixed gender "High Five" netball team, cross-country running and a residential visit for outdoor and adventurous activities.
132. There are limited opportunities for pupils to participate in competitive net, striking/fielding and invasion games due to a shortage in equipment for these activities. The many demands for the use of the hall, including the daily use of it as a dining area limits the opportunities to use the large apparatus effectively in gymnastics.
133. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. The children are well supported as the result of the effective partnership between the class teacher and the nursery nurse. A positive feature in the reception class is the good management of pupils' behaviour. This is promoted through the good relationship between the teacher and the children and ensures that pupils respond promptly to teachers' instructions.
134. The teaching in the Key Stage 2 lesson was satisfactory. Good classroom management techniques were used to keep the pupils focussed on their tasks. The teacher was conscious of the time constraints and endeavoured to ensure that all the planned activities for the lesson were included. However, the warm-up and cool down programmes were not sufficiently graduated to achieve their purpose. Planned opportunities to develop pupils' awareness and understanding of the importance and impact of vigorous physical exercise on their health were not maximised. In this lesson there were few opportunities for developing pupils' personal and social skills through working in mixed ability and mixed gender groups. This was not well managed. Pupils chose to work in single sex groups.
135. Progress in the Year 6 lesson was unsatisfactory. The twenty minute lesson slot was insufficient for pupils to practise and to further improve their own skills or to evaluate the performance of their peers. Pupils with SEN made satisfactory progress in their learning as a direct result of the intervention and coaching by the teacher.
136. The pupils' response and involvement in the Year 6 lesson was satisfactory. The girls took greater pride in their achievements than did many of the boys.

137. The leadership of this curriculum area is satisfactory. There are plans to change the scheme of work to one that reflects more closely the guidelines issued for physical development from the national QCA. The monitoring of planning is infrequent and there is no monitoring of teaching and learning. As yet there is no formal assessment and recording of pupils' performance.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

138. Pupils' attainment in both key stages is in line with the expected level for age. There is a comprehensive policy for the teaching of RE. The scheme of work meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally Agreed Syllabus for RE. Each year group class has one lesson of RE each week. Clear learning objectives are identified within weekly plans. Pupils in the mainstream and in the Autistic Unit learn about religion and from religion. In the unit RE is incorporated into knowledge and understanding of the world. Through the teaching in this subject pupils develop the understanding and skills they need to help them to relate their knowledge of RE to their own personal lives and experiences.
139. Pupils in Reception learn about religion from hearing the Bible stories. They know about the festival of harvest. In Year 1 pupils learn about the importance of belonging to a family. They talk about how members of a family or a group look after each other. This theme is further developed in the curriculum time allocated for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education and also in assemblies and collective worship. Pupils have opportunities to discuss "caring" and "belonging" in circle time and in buddy sessions when pupils from different year groups and from the unit work and talk together.
140. The planned progression within the curriculum for Key Stage 1 provides opportunities for pupils to begin to explore and understand what prayer means. In Year 1 pupils begin to write their own prayers. They understand that in saying prayers Christians use "special language" both at the beginning and at the end of the prayer. They make good progress in their understanding of the purpose of prayer. They are aware that in praying we do not only ask God to help us but we can also ask God to help people who are in greater need of his help.
141. In Key Stage 2, pupils further develop their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and begin to explore the beliefs and values of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. In a lesson in Year 5 the pupils compared the Christian and Jewish version of the Creation. They knew about, and were confident in talking about and handling the Torah. They understood that the Torah is the holy book of Judaism and began to recognise similarities and differences in the two faiths and their impacts on the daily lives of the people of that faith. By the end of the key stage pupils know how special the Koran is to Muslims. They can recall and write accurately about Bible stories such as that of Abraham and Hagar and know that the Ten Commandments are important to Christians. Through the teaching in RE pupils come to know right from wrong and are developing a sense of values.

142. Teaching is satisfactory. Displays of pupils' work and religious artefacts supported the learning of the lower attaining pupils, in a lesson about Judaism. In the Year 5 lesson the discussion groups were arranged by ability. The theme for the discussion was quite challenging and the associated task not appropriately matched to the differing abilities of the pupils. The lower attaining group found it difficult to exemplify their thoughts and opinions as to how people can act to uphold a common message from the teaching of both the Christian and Jewish faiths; to "look after our world". In both of the lessons observed the teachers showed good subject knowledge and this impacted positively on the quality of their questioning. The latter was used effectively to assess the level of the pupils' understanding and to further develop the pupils' own powers of reasoning.
143. Pupils' attitudes to RE in the lessons observed were satisfactory. Pupils listened to each other and to the teacher. The majority of the pupils were prepared to share their views and did so confidently. The subject makes a good contribution to the school's promotion of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils. Assemblies and the daily act of collective worship are strongly linked to the teaching in RE. Pupils are taught to respect each other's feelings and beliefs in assemblies and RE lessons.
144. The subject leader for this curriculum area has only taken over this responsibility since September 2002. Currently the monitoring of the planning is infrequent. As yet there has not been any monitoring of teaching and learning of RE in the classroom. There are no formal systems in place for the assessment of pupils' progress in this subject.