

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. VINCENT'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Walker

LEA area: Newcastle upon Tyne

Unique reference number: 108514

Headteacher: Sister M Josepha

Lead inspector: Dr B Male

Dates of inspection: 20th – 22nd October 2003

Inspection number: 261566

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

Crown copyright 2003

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	204
School address:	Monkchester Road Walker Newcastle upon Tyne
Postcode:	NE6 2TX
Telephone number:	(0191) 2655049
Fax number:	(0191) 2656859
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Ian McCartney
Date of previous inspection:	9 th November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This medium-sized RC Aided primary school takes pupils from four to eleven years old and serves the Walker area of Newcastle. At the time of the inspection there were 204 full-time pupils in seven classes. Many pupils start school with standards of attainment well below those usually found. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is in line with the national average. There are very few pupils from ethnic minorities, and two requiring extra support for learning English.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
14806	Dr Brian Male	Lead inspector	English, history, geography, special educational needs
14404	Mr Alan Rolfe	Lay inspector	
33231	Ms Lesley Steele	Team inspector	Mathematics, art and design, design and technology, music, physical education
15015	Mr Mike Wehrmeyer	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, science, information and communication technology

The inspection contractor was:

Peakschoolhaus
BPS Business Centre
Brake Lane
Boughton
Nottinghamshire
NG22 9HQ

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	9
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	15
OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES	17
Special educational needs assessment	
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	19
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good school** with some strong features. The headteacher sets an excellent tone for the school and her influence pervades this very supportive community. Overall standards of attainment represent **good achievement** for the pupils. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Good teaching is raising standards of attainment, and achievement is very good in science and information and communication technology (ICT).
- There is very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- There are very good relationships in most classes, and teachers are committed to the welfare of the pupils.
- The approach to teaching and ensuring high standards needs to be more consistent across the school.
- Pupils behave well and have very positive attitudes to school.
- Very good links to the community and outside bodies are used to enhance the curriculum.
- The provision for ICT has been greatly improved, and it is used well across the curriculum.
- More use needs to be made of assessment information to target teaching to groups and individuals, particularly in individual education plans.
- Pupils need to be involved in more practical, independent and problem-solving activities, especially in the reception class.

The school has made generally **satisfactory** progress since the previous inspection. Pupils continue to achieve well, and good teaching has been maintained. Most of the key issues have been addressed but there is still a need to sharpen the targets in the school's development plan.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E	C	D	B
Mathematics	E	E	D	B
Science	E	D	E	C

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Overall achievement is **good**. Results in Year 6 have been lower than at Year 2 for several years. Scores in Year 6 tests in 2003 were below the national average in English and mathematics, but well below in science. This was generally above similar schools. Standards are now rising in Years 4 to 6, and represent good overall achievement. The rise in standards is associated with some good teaching. Standards in ICT and science are in line with the national average, and well above those in similar schools. Standards in English and mathematics are below the national average and above similar schools.

Many children start school with well below average attainment. Progress through reception to Year 2 has been very good in the past, and Year 2 standards have been well above those in similar schools. Standards this year are lower, partly because there is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, and partly because a number of pupils have not received a firm grounding in some basic literacy and numeracy skills. Standards are well below the national average in reading and writing, below average in mathematics, and average in science and ICT. Standards at the end of the reception year are generally well below the national average, but represent appropriate

achievement for pupils, although some basic literacy and numeracy skills are not underpinned by sufficient practical activities.

There is appropriate support for pupils with special educational needs and they make generally satisfactory progress. However, the targets on individual education plans need to be much sharper and relate more clearly to individual needs.

Pupils' personal development is **good**. Pupils behave well and have very positive attitudes to school. Children are open, friendly and self-confident. This comes from the supportive ethos of the school, the excellent tone set by the headteacher, and the very good relationships that prevail in most classes.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good**. The quality of teaching is **good** and satisfactory in the reception class. The good teaching is associated with clear expectations and the involvement of pupils in interesting practical activities. Learning is best where pupils are involved in first-hand, independent and problem-solving activities. Some lessons lack real challenge and involve pupils in mundane tasks that do not promote learning or excitement. The school has collected a great deal of assessment information but does not always use this to target teaching to different individuals and groups within lessons. Assessment of pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory. Some good teaching of ICT has raised standards in this subject.

There is a good curriculum, enhanced by visits and visitors and good opportunities for extra-curricular activities. The school's very good links to the community are used to enhance this provision. The school building has been much improved and provides good accommodation. Pupils are very well supported in terms of their welfare, but support for their learning needs to be based more precisely on assessment information.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership is **good** overall, and particularly strong in terms of the spiritual and moral aspects. The headteacher sets an excellent tone for the school and for its welcoming and supportive ethos. She is very well respected in the community, and deservedly so. The management of the school is satisfactory, but needs to ensure that approaches are more consistent across the school. Other senior staff make an effective contribution to the school, and the leadership and management of ICT have been particularly effective.

The governing body is very well led, provides very good governance and has a clear overview of the school's strengths and needs.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very positive in their views of the school, and there is no area where a significant number would like to see improvements. They hold the headteacher in high esteem. Pupils are also very positive about the school and feel part of a supportive community.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- make more use of assessment information to target teaching to groups and individuals, particularly in identifying programmes for children with special educational needs;
- ensure that the approaches to teaching and achieving high standards are more consistent across the school;
- involve pupils in more practical, independent and problem-solving activities.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The overall achievement of the pupils is good. Although standards are below the national average, there is a rising trend of standards in Years 4 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment are rising in Years 4 to 6.
- Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is particularly good in science and ICT.
- In Year 2, pupils achieve well in science, but standards are well below average in English, and below average in mathematics.
- Some younger pupils have not developed secure basic literacy and numeracy skills.
- Pupils with special educational needs do not achieve as well as they could because support is not always focused on their learning targets.
- Some good practical work has raised standards in science and ICT across the school.

Commentary

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.4 (26.6)	26.5 (27.0)
Mathematics	25.4 (24.8)	26.6 (26.7)
Science	26.8 (28.0)	28.38 (28.3)

There were 27 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for 2002.

1. The school's scores in national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003 were below the national average in English and mathematics, and well below average in science. This was lower in English and science than in 2002, which was an unusually good year. The scores were above those of similar schools in English, in line in science, but below average in mathematics. Standards in Year 6 have been lower than in Year 2 for a number of years, and have been particularly low in mathematics, although they rose in this subject in 2003.
2. Standards are now rising in Years 4 to 6, and present standards in Year 6 are much higher than last year. Standards in English and mathematics are below the national average, and standards in science and ICT are in line with that average. These overall standards represent good achievement for the pupils. The rising standards have been brought about by some good teaching in Years 4 to 6, and because there are fewer pupils in these year groups with special educational needs. Standards are below average in history and geography, and above average in the aspects of art and music that were sampled. It was not possible to make judgements about standards in other subjects. The lower standards in history and geography result partly from the impact of pupils' below average reading and writing skills, but also because there has been insufficient focus on the higher levels of attainment in the subjects. Pupils do well in the more practical subjects of music and art, because they respond well to the more 'hands-on' and independent way of learning. This is why a more practical approach is needed within other subjects.
3. The school's scores in national tests for seven year olds have been well above those of similar schools in all three aspects tested (reading, writing and mathematics) for the last three years. 2003 scores continued this trend. However, present standards are much lower in both Year 1 and Year 2. This is partly because there is a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs, but also because some basic literacy and numeracy skills were not well established at an

early stage. Standards are well below the national average in reading and writing, and below average in mathematics. Standards in science are at the national average, because the subject is being very well taught in Year 2. Standards in ICT, art, history and geography are also generally in line with expectations as pupils are involved in a good curriculum of first-hand experiences.

4. Many children enter the reception class with standards well below those usually found. They make appropriate progress, but the present rather formal approach means that children do not always have the range of practical experiences to develop some of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Overall standards are still well below the national average for most children when they move into Year 1.
5. Pupils with special educational needs receive reasonable support and make generally satisfactory progress. However, assessment procedures are unsatisfactory as the specific learning needs of individual pupils are not being clearly identified. This means that support is targeted very generally and does not always meet specific needs. This is explored more fully in the specialist section below.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' personal development is good overall. Pupils behave well and have very positive attitudes to school. Attendance is below the national average. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are open, friendly and self-confident.
- The ethos of the school is very supportive.
- The headteacher sets an excellent tone for the very good relationships that prevail in most classes.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good.
- Pupils are very positive and confident in their approach to work.
- Attendance is below the national average.

Commentary

6. Pupils like coming to school and enjoy the opportunities it provides. They take a pride in their school and their own achievements. Most pupils work hard and make good progress as a result, with some particularly good progress in ICT. Their positive approach shows in a variety of ways in a variety of everyday situations; for example, pupils behave well towards each other and adults. They are polite, friendly and welcoming, and older pupils look after the younger pupils well. For example, Year 6 pupils have a 'buddy' in reception class to look after, and they take this responsibility seriously. Joint activities, such as singing together, are very successful.
7. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, and the school has a harmonious atmosphere of care as a result. The extremely positive influence of the headteacher is a key factor here. Pupils are welcoming to visitors, and welcoming to other children joining the school. The developing understanding of self, through each individual's social and moral growth, is guided further by the strong Christian ethos in the school. Pupils' behaviour is usually good at lunchtimes and in the playground; pupils move sensibly around the school and play energetically and happily together. There are infrequent incidents, usually at break times because of a very small number of pupils becoming boisterous or difficult. This is carefully watched by the supervising adults and they intervene quickly before it becomes too serious.
8. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and most are enthusiastic and keen to participate in lessons. This is encouraged by the very good relationships that prevail in most classes. Pupils quickly learn to co-operate and work together. For example, Year 6 pupils worked on a

PowerPoint presentation in groups of three or four on mountain environments. These were presented to the whole class and evaluated by their peers, and feedback was given. Pupils in Year 2 worked happily together to produce aerial maps. In the few incidents of inappropriate behaviour seen in class, teachers dealt with the situation quickly and effectively. There have been no exclusions, and pupils are able to work in an atmosphere free of harassment or bullying through a readiness to report incidents to staff, in confidence they will be listened to.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	7.4
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.4
National data	0.5

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

9. The rate of attendance is below the national average and a number of pupils arrive late for school. The school is taking steps to ensure that parents are aware of the importance of punctuality and attendance and is very successful with the great majority of families. However, children from a number of families have a poor attendance record and the school needs to consider the further steps it can take.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education is **good**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and of pupils' learning is good overall, and satisfactory in the reception class. Pupils' work is assessed appropriately and a huge amount of data collected, but the information gained is not always used effectively to plan learning and involve pupils. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory and does not allow specific individual needs to be addressed.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching in Years 4 to 6 is raising standards.
- In the best lessons, pupils are involved in an exciting range of practical activities.
- There are some high expectations and well-structured methods that promote good learning, and more lessons need to be like this, especially in the reception class.
- There is good use of ICT to promote learning in a range of subjects.
- More use needs to be made of assessment data to target teaching, particularly for pupils with special educational needs.
- The good quality teaching in most classes needs to be more consistent across the school.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	6 (17%)	14 (40%)	13 (37%)	2 (6%)	0	0

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

10. Teaching is good overall in English, mathematics, science, ICT and art in Key Stages 1 and 2. Teaching of personal, social and health education is generally satisfactory. It was not possible to

make overall judgements in other subjects. Teaching is satisfactory overall in the reception class.

11. In the best lessons, pupils are involved in exciting practical tasks and given some independence to explore ideas and to find things out. For example, in a very good Year 6 science lesson, pupils were given scope to investigate the rate at which different solids dissolve in water, and to see how this is affected by the temperature of the water. The handling of two variables was a high challenge for these pupils, and they responded well because they received very clear guidance and had scope to follow their own line of investigation.
12. Another feature of the best lessons is the way in which methods promote learning. For example, in a very good Year 2 geography lesson, the teacher used 'story-sack' models of the journey of a lost toy boat for pupils to physically place the features of the story along the river at appropriate points as the story was read. This firmly fixed the notion of a map in their minds. They were then able to place features seen in a recent walk in their own environment on a street map of their area. It was the effectiveness of the methods that enabled the pupils to understand the rather complex idea of making a map.
13. A very good Year 4 English lesson combined high expectations and well-structured methods with very good use of ICT to promote learning. The interactive whiteboard was used very effectively to analyse text and clarify the steps pupils needed to take to edit their work. Paired discussion was used particularly effectively to explore different ideas, and then pupils were given scope to edit their own work. The lesson catered for a wide range of learning styles, even giving opportunities of acting out words such as 'staggering' and 'menacing'.
14. The above lesson is typical of the good use of ICT to promote learning in a range of subjects. The new computer suite, good quality training and the support of the Education Action Zone (EAZ) have been fundamental in this development of teaching.
15. Where teaching is satisfactory rather than good or very good, lessons lack real challenge, and involve pupils in mundane tasks that do not promote learning or excitement. These are the lessons where pupils listen to long teacher explanations and then complete a simple worksheet or draw a picture. Many lessons, especially in mathematics but also in other subjects, do not give pupils enough practical experiences to build a good understanding of some basic concepts. As a result, pupils are often able to complete set tasks from textbooks, but find it difficult to answer more general questions or apply their knowledge to solve problems. This lack of practical activities is particularly the case in the reception class where many lessons are too formal.
16. The very small number of unsatisfactory lessons resulted from low expectations and inappropriate methods that did not promote sufficient learning.
17. Most teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and provide a high standard of care and support. Most provide good role models of listening and working with others. The headteacher herself is the supreme example of this valuing approach. However, this is not consistent across the school and some teachers can be dismissive and do not always value pupils' work or the suggestions they make.
18. The school gathers a great deal of assessment information, and the data provided by the local education authority are comprehensive and very valuable indeed. However, the data are not always being used to target teaching most effectively to groups and individuals within lessons. This is particularly the case for pupils with special educational needs where assessment is unsatisfactory. In most cases, pupils have been grouped together at a particular point of learning, but no distinction has been made between those with special needs, those who might not have been well taught in the past, or who might just need some extra practice. The general support enables a satisfactory amount of progress to be made, but does not impact sufficiently on the special needs of some pupils. There is generally appropriate teaching of these pupils when they are withdrawn for extra support, but many of the activities could have taken place just as easily in

the classroom and so kept the pupils better in touch with the normal curriculum. Little use is made of the wide range of ICT support that is available to help pupils who do not find learning easy.

The curriculum

Curricular provision is good overall but pupils need more opportunities for practical activities. There is good enrichment of the curriculum through visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities. Accommodation and resources are good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The breadth of the curriculum is good, and relevant to pupils' interests.
- There are good opportunities for enrichment.
- There is a good balance of strands, and a good skills basis in science and ICT.
- Insufficient opportunities are planned for practical learning, problem solving and development of pupils' initiative, particularly in mathematics.
- Provision for mathematics in the Foundation Stage does not give children sufficient practical experiences.
- There are very good links to outside bodies such as the EAZ that enhance provision.

Commentary

19. The curriculum has improved since the previous inspection in its breadth and in giving emphasis to skills and investigative learning. This is particularly evident in the planning for science and ICT. The planning rigorously covers all the elements of the programmes of study laid down, so that pupils have the opportunity to raise standards in all aspects. Planning of these subjects takes account of the way pupils learn, and is usually related closely to their interests and experience. Teachers' planning links elements from different subjects to strengthen the curriculum overall. This is a good aid to pupils' understanding. The planning schemes for each subject ensure that pupils learn progressively more difficult material each year. The curriculum for mathematics, however, does not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to learn from practical experiences. The planning does not give pupils enough scope to approach problem solving by relying on their own strategies. This weakness runs from the Foundation Stage and the impact is on lower achievement in mathematics throughout the school. Otherwise the curriculum for the Foundation Stage is satisfactory.

20. Medium and short-term plans usually include the teachers' arrangements to fit the curriculum closely to the needs of the pupils. However, the individual education plans for pupils who have special educational needs are not sufficiently precise to guide the small steps in learning basic skills that these pupils need. Sound arrangements for personal, social and health education enable pupils to develop in maturity, a significant success of the school in recent years. For Years 5 and 6, this is enhanced by residential trips which pupils look forward to enormously, because it "enables us to do dangerous things". A programme of educational visits for each year group helps make classroom learning more purposeful and relevant. These are enhanced by the school's very good links to a range of outside bodies such as the EAZ and Newcastle United Football Club. A good range of sporting and arts activities out of school hours develops pupils' interests further and feeds valuable skills back into the classroom. The enrichment of the curriculum is good. The visit of the 'origami man', for instance, made a lasting impression on pupils' minds. Pupils are very positive about their learning experiences. However, they do not have a questioning approach to their learning, and are not strong in self-direction, because the curriculum does not build in enough opportunities for these aspects of initiative. Overall, resources contribute well to pupils' learning and progress, enhanced by pleasant and much improved accommodation set in a secure and sheltered site, well shielded from the distractions of the bustling River Tyne.

Care, guidance and support

This is a caring school, which provides a safe and secure environment where pupils feel happy and secure, and can learn and develop. There are satisfactory procedures relating to child protection but some aspects of health and safety require attention. Procedures for pupils' support and guidance are very good in the pastoral area, but assessment information is not used enough in the academic area. Good quality induction procedures enable pupils to settle quickly into the school environment. There are good arrangements for seeking pupils' views of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships between most staff and pupils are very good and provide a secure basis for the very good standard of pastoral support and guidance for pupils.
- Assessment information is not used sufficiently effectively in providing academic support and guidance.
- There are good procedures for the induction of children into the school.

Commentary

21. The school is committed to providing a safe working environment for staff and pupils. The health and safety policy meets statutory requirements. Risk assessments are carried out generally appropriately, but do not always cover fire risks sufficiently rigorously. First-aid provision is good; there are sufficient qualified first aiders and good records of accidents and injuries are maintained. There are satisfactory procedures for child protection. The deputy headteacher is the designated teacher and is supported by the headteacher who has received appropriate training. Staff have received child protection training at staff meetings; however, they need more guidance on the recognition of the signs and symptoms of child abuse.
22. The excellent tone set by the headteacher sets the standard for individual care, support and guidance, and relationships are very good in most classes. Pastoral support for pupils is very good; pupils are confident that they can approach their teachers should any problems of a personal nature arise, and that appropriate support and guidance would be forthcoming. However, the school does not always make sufficiently effective use of academic assessment to guide and support pupils' learning. The provision for pupils' welfare is enhanced by the provision of the breakfast club; a significant number of pupils use this facility. Staff have created a very warm and welcoming environment where pupils across the age range socialise well together. The school has good procedures for the induction of children into the school. Parents are given appropriate information and guidance about these procedures and how they can help to prepare their children for school life. Parents and children have opportunities to visit the school and meet with their teachers prior to admission. These procedures enable pupils to settle quickly into the school environment. Overall, the school provides pupils with a good level of care and support that enables pupils to concentrate on their lessons, and that has a positive impact on their learning.
23. The school actively seeks pupils' views of the school, mainly through the school council. The school values pupils' views and where practicable takes these views into consideration when reviewing policies and procedures. For example, bench seating has been provided in the playground as a result of a request made by the school council.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has developed a strong partnership with parents, and has developed very good links with the community that make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. There are good links with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very supportive of the school and hold the headteacher in high esteem.
- The school has developed very good links with the community that enhance the curriculum.
- There are good links with other schools.
- Pupils' reports do not always say what they need to do to improve.

Commentary

24. Overall, the quality of information given to parents is satisfactory. The school prospectus and governors' annual report provide a wide range of information about the school and its activities; however, they do not mention attendance as they should. Regular newsletters and letters about specific events ensure that parents are kept up to date about current activities. Pupils' annual reports give clear guidance on pupils' attainment and progress; however, they do not always say what pupils need to do to improve.
25. Parents have very positive views of the school. In particular, they are pleased with the quality of teaching, the expectation that their children will work hard and the way in which the school is helping children to become more responsible and mature. They are also pleased with the progress their children make in their learning, how the school is led and managed, and the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school. Evidence from the inspection confirms these positive views. A small number of parents expressed concerns about instances of bullying. However, bullying is rare, the supportive ethos in the school is strong, and the school reacts quickly and positively to known instances of bullying.
26. Parents' involvement in their children's learning is good. A significant number of parents help in the school, listening to pupils read, assisting in classrooms and accompanying pupils on educational visits. Parents say that the literacy and numeracy evenings the school has provided have given them a good insight into how these subjects are taught and have assisted them to support their children's learning at home. There is an informal grouping of parents who organise social and fund-raising events, and significant amounts of money have been raised to finance additional learning resources.
27. The school's links with the community are very good and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. There is a good range of visitors to the school, including artists, musicians, and theatre companies who enhance pupils' learning in drama, art and music. The school makes good use of the local community; visits to the local art gallery and library support pupils' learning in design and technology and art, local field trips support pupils' learning in history and geography, and links with the local parish church support pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Links to Newcastle United Football Club provide very good support for football.
28. The school's links with other educational establishments are good. There is good liaison with the local secondary school, to which the majority of pupils transfer, and good use is made of its facilities for sports, science and drama. The school has developed good transitional arrangements, including effective liaison between staff and the transfer of information relating to both pupils' academic and social skills. Pupils have a full day induction at the secondary school, at which time they meet their form tutor and experience a range of lessons. Links with a local 'beacon' school have provided staff training in a number of areas including mathematics and the provision of additional learning resources. Overall, these links have had a positive impact on pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher sets an excellent tone for the school and her influence pervades this very supportive community. The quality of leadership is good. Management of the school is satisfactory,

and steps are already being taken to evaluate provision more rigorously. The governing body provides very good governance for the school and has a particularly good overview of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher sets an excellent tone for the school and has created a very supportive community.
- The school needs to be more rigorous in its use of data to target teaching and resources to different groups of pupils, especially pupils with special educational needs.
- Management needs to ensure that the good quality of teaching in most classes is consistent across the school.
- The school has successfully used a range of outside bodies such as the EAZ to enhance its provision.
- The management of ICT has been very successful.

Commentary

29. The headteacher is universally respected for her energy, for the excellent tone she sets for relationships, and for the leadership she provides in the area of spiritual and moral development. Her commitment to the school is equalled only by her commitment to the church and to Newcastle United. She has worked hard to comply with the previous report's suggestion that she should devolve more of her responsibilities, but her great enthusiasm does not always make this easy for her. She has shown great restraint in this direction.

Example of outstanding practice

The headteacher is outstanding in her commitment to the welfare of her pupils and is willing to go to great lengths to improve pupils' personal circumstances so that they can come to school happily and learn.

Knowing that a family had recently arrived in this country and spoke little English, the headteacher visited them at home, and worked with other families to help provide furniture and other necessities. On finding out that the mother had qualifications in her own country, the headteacher arranged for her to provide services for other families, and so brought her into the local community. This helped the children settle into school, and the family to settle into the community.

30. The school is already taking steps to make more use of the great deal of assessment data it collects. The local education authority provides a very good service and an extremely comprehensive set of data for each year group. These data contain all the information required to target teaching and support to individuals and groups. It has already been suggested that the school needs to be more rigorous in its use of these data, especially in relation to pupils with special educational needs.
31. Other senior staff make an effective contribution to leadership. The leadership and management of ICT have been very effective. The development of this subject was one of the targets set by the previous report, and the school has met this very successfully. The key has been the quality of training and the way in which the use of ICT has been structured into the curriculum. The school has ensured not only that pupils are taught about ICT, but that ICT is used to teach them about other subjects. The leadership and management of English, mathematics and science are good, and are contributing to the rising standards in those subjects. The role of other subject leaders is understandably less developed as the school has been focusing on English, mathematics, science and ICT.
32. The management of special educational needs support has not been successful as the school has not ensured that individual education plans are well drawn up or that support is well directed. The school is aware of the need to ensure that the special educational needs co-ordinator has sufficient time to maintain an effective overview.

33. The school has successfully used a range of outside support to enhance its provision. For example, the school's membership of the local EAZ has been very valuable, particularly in promoting ICT. Links with Newcastle United Football Club have been used very effectively for promoting sport and also reading.
34. There is a programme for monitoring and supporting teaching, and this has been effective in developing ICT and in supporting new teachers. However, there are still inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and in the approach to pupils, across the school, and so the programme has not been completely successful. Management is aware of the differences and now needs to take appropriate steps to remove inconsistencies.
35. The school budget has been managed effectively and systems of financial control are good. The school's development plan is comprehensive and appropriately linked to the budget, but some of the targets are rather general in their nature. In some cases, they represent the preliminary steps that need to be taken before a plan can be formulated. The sharpening of the targets in the plan would allow the overall thrust of the school's approach to raising standards to be set out more clearly.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	516592
Total expenditure	523383
Expenditure per pupil	2492

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	20030
Balance carried forward to the next	13239

36. The governing body provides **very good** governance for the school and has a particularly good overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses. It is very well led by the chair who has a very good working relationship with the school. The governing body is very aware of the trend of standards and has sought ways of improving performance and the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6. These are now bearing fruit. It is also well aware of the need for the school to be rigorous in its analysis of data and targeting of support, and has used its own information very perceptively to highlight strengths and weaknesses.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The systems the school uses to assess pupils' special educational needs are unsatisfactory because they do not identify those needs sufficiently precisely.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Assessment systems do not identify individual learning needs sufficiently well.
- Individual education plans do not relate sufficiently to individual needs.

Commentary

37. The assessment of pupils' special needs is made more in terms of the programmes they will be taught rather than the nature of their learning difficulty. In almost every class, all pupils on the special needs register have virtually the same individual education plan that sets out the areas of support they will receive rather than analysing the nature of their special needs. For example, one set suggests that all pupils need to learn how to spell three-letter words of the 'consonant-vowel-consonant' type without noting whether they all need to learn the same words, or exploring the different reasons why they have found difficulty in learning these in the first place. The targets are often general and long term (for example, "improve his vocabulary") and therefore offer little direction for support or change of achievement. The usual approach is for targets to be 'short,

measurable, achievable, realistic and timed' (SMART). Very few of the individual education plan targets here fall into this 'SMART' category.

38. The school needs to ensure that its management systems pick up these issues and that the special needs co-ordinator reviews individual education plans rigorously and ensures that they are helpful for individual pupils.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the reception class is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The standards achieved represent appropriate achievement for children but some basic language, literacy and numeracy skills are not underpinned by sufficient practical activities.
- There is good provision for social development, knowledge and understanding of the world and for reading.
- Provision for mathematics is unsatisfactory.
- Assessment data are not used effectively for mathematics but are used well for reading and writing.
- Lessons are generally well prepared, and there are good resources for practical sessions.

Commentary

39. At the time of the inspection, the regular teacher was absent, the co-ordination role was not firmly established and building projects were not completed. Therefore the team did not see Foundation Stage provision as the school would have wished. The planned outdoor area had been delayed for reasons outside the school's control, and consequently there is insufficient evidence to report on physical development. The staff are about to embark on an ambitious programme of assessing all areas of learning, as the systems used at present do not show the detail of the children's position on the stepping stones for learning nor their movement along these. This limits the effectiveness of later assessment and makes it difficult to match up to the work in Year 1.

Personal, social and emotional development

40. Provision is good. The staff use all opportunities to encourage children to settle to class routines, for instance in the use of a quiet signal to get all children to attend to the teachers. They encourage good sharing and working co-operatively. The children still find it difficult to concentrate for the normal length of time expected for their age, and the teacher deals with this pleasantly but firmly. The children are making progress in this area and their present level, though low on the stepping stones, represents good achievement. The buddy system is a particularly useful feature, both in and out of the classroom. For instance, in a joint music lesson, Year 6 pupils proved what good role models they are for the younger children for good behaviour and warmth of relationships. These arrangements are effective and promoting self-confidence in the reception children.

Communication, language and literacy

41. Provision is satisfactory. Within this the teaching of reading is good. The staff have assessed the children's levels accurately and provide good materials and training in the basic skills. This involves parental help in hearing children at home and helping them learn their key words. One child was particularly proud of the five words he knew. The staff also are proud of the good achievement of the children, particularly since the first ones took home their first reading book in the inspection week. Children are close to average standards for the time of year, as they range from the first stepping stones to nearly level 1. Arrangements for writing are carefully thought-out, but too many activities are too formal for the children's stage of development. However, children make satisfactory progress because they are keen to learn. The staff do not give children enough opportunity to speak in full sentences, and situations like the role-play corner do not have sufficient adult support to draw out children's language. Consequently, standards are well below the expected level, and achievement is only just satisfactory.

Mathematical development

42. Provision is unsatisfactory. The nature of the provision in use is too formal for the children's stage of learning, as it resembles the numeracy hour for older children, and would be more suitable at the end of the reception year or even further into Year 1. While children might score reasonably well on tests for number recognition, the nature of the teaching does not provide them with nearly enough practical experience. The impact of this is evident in a weakness later in school, where pupils do not have the foundation of handling shape and experiencing number to enable them to solve problems using their own strategies. Although the staff use assessment well to adjust the provision to the different abilities, the resulting worksheets are too abstract for the children's stage of development. Standards are well below average and achievement is barely satisfactory.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

43. Provision is good because the teachers take care to give children good practical opportunities to feel and handle different materials, for instance, in the topic on the five senses. The lesson explanations are very clear and draw well on the children's own experiences. The follow-up activities are interesting and build on what the children have heard in the opening discussions. Teaching of this kind is good. Though the children's standards are still around the earliest stepping stones, they make good progress, and this represents good achievement in relation to their starting points. The use of the new computer suite is of particular benefit for children's ICT skills.

Creative Development

44. Provision is satisfactory. The strongest area is in painting, where children have a natural inclination to explore colour and subject imaginatively. Their standard here is near the average, and links to the later good quality of artwork. The weakest area is the growth of imaginative ideas in speech. This links to the limited quantity of opportunities to develop such ideas in what are otherwise sound classroom activities. This goes back to the lack of sufficient adult support attached to the quite good range of activities around the classroom.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are rising and represent good achievement for the pupils.
- Good teaching in Years 4 to 6 is raising standards.
- Some basic reading and writing skills have not been well developed through reception and Year 1, but good teaching in Year 2 is helping to compensate for this.
- Pupils would benefit from more structured opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills.
- Reading is generally well taught and pupils achieve very well.
- Standards of writing are lower than reading.

Commentary

45. Standards at the end of Year 6 have been generally below the national average, but above the average of similar schools over the last three years. Standards in the present Year 6 are now higher, although still in the category of below the national average, and are now above those in

similar schools. This is similar to the previous inspection. The rise in standards is due to fewer pupils having special educational needs, and also to the good quality of teaching in Years 4 to 6.

46. Whilst standards are rising in Years 4 to 6, they are falling in Years 1 and 2. This is because there is a far higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in those classes, and also because a number of pupils did not develop secure basic skills at an early stage. Good teaching in Year 2 is beginning to compensate for this. Overall standards in Year 2 are well below the national average.

Speaking and listening

47. Many pupils start school with poorly developed speaking and listening skills. They make satisfactory progress through the school, but need more structured opportunities for developing their skills in order to progress further, and standards for many pupils are still well below the national average by the end of Year 6. Some teachers use effective techniques such as encouraging pupils to discuss things in pairs and report back to the larger group, but this is not widespread. There is little use of such techniques as pupil questioning, 'hotseating' (where someone takes the role of a historical or fictional character and is questioned by the class), or pupils reporting back during the evaluative sessions at the end of lessons. There are school dramatic productions that give pupils good opportunities to speak in public, but little use of small-scale drama within lessons.

Reading

48. Standards of reading are higher than writing across the school and are rising in Years 4 to 6. Standards are broadly in line with the national average, and represent very good achievement for the pupils. Most pupils read accurately and with understanding by Year 6. Good teaching within the literacy hour has ensured that many pupils have a good understanding of literary conventions and forms. For example, a very good series of Year 6 English lessons had enabled pupils to develop a very good understanding of the particular nature of a newspaper article, down to such details as when a person is first mentioned in an article it is by profession, and then later by name and age.
49. Where teachers read with groups of children within the literacy hour or in the extra reading session some classes arrange, the quality of learning is often good. However, where the whole class is involved in reading at the same time, pupils not with an adult make little progress unless they are already competent readers. The school is considering ways of making better use of teaching assistants and volunteers to increase the involvement of adults.

Writing

50. Many pupils in Years 1 and 2 still have problems with some very basic skills such as letter formation and simple spelling patterns that are usually learned in the reception class. These skills are better embedded in pupils in Years 3 to 6. There is some good teaching of writing across the school, especially where it focuses on specific ways in which pupils can improve their work. For example, the very good Year 4 lesson mentioned in the teaching section above used ICT effectively for pupils to edit and improve some writing by adding adverbs. However, there are relatively few occasions on which pupils are called upon to discuss their work, or to improve it in terms of clarity and quality rather than just correcting errors. By the end of Year 6, standards are below the national average, but represent satisfactory achievement.
51. The subject is well led. The subject leader is very knowledgeable and has a good overview of the subject. Her own teaching provides a very good model for others. She now needs more time working with other teachers in order to develop the very good ideas she has for the subject.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

52. There are some opportunities within subjects such as history and geography to develop writing skills, but these are generally rather limited with few opportunities for extended pieces. Speaking and listening opportunities are usually restricted to question and answer sessions with the teacher where pupils are called upon to give simple answers to straightforward questions, but vocabulary is developed well in subjects such as science and geography. There are better opportunities for developing reading skills within other subjects; for example, some good use is being made of the Internet for pupils to research various topics.

MATHEMATICS

The provision for mathematics is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching, particularly in Years 4 to 6, is raising standards.
- Accelerated learning activities are used in the most successful lessons.
- Cross-curricular activities are used well in some classes to extend skills in the subject.
- There is a lack of consistency of planning, assessment and target setting throughout the school.
- There is a lack of investigative activities to promote problem-solving skills.

Commentary

53. Overall standards of attainment are below average, as they were at the time of the previous inspection. However, standards are slowly improving through Years 4 to 6, and are set to rise further. Although standards are below the national average, they represent good achievement. This is a result of good teaching and the positive attitudes of the pupils. In some lessons, where the skilful support of the teacher matches the level of work correctly, pupils with special educational needs do well. This is a feature of the very good lessons seen in Year 4. In general, the identification of special needs is not sufficiently precise to target teaching well.
54. Standards over the last four years have tended to be higher in Year 2 than in Year 6. The situation is reversed this year. Standards in Year 6 are rising whilst standards in Years 1 and 2 are falling. This is partly because there are far more pupils with special educational needs than usual in Years 1 and 2, and partly because some basic skills and concepts were not learned well at an early stage. Some good teaching in Year 2 is helping to compensate for this. More precise targeting of pupils with special education needs would help further.
55. Teaching and learning are good overall and as a result pupils achieve well. The best lessons were seen in Year 2 and Year 4. The main factors for the success of these lessons were the accelerated learning activities which promote creativity and independence for pupils of all abilities. Pupils were encouraged to discuss their work and were confident and able to set themselves challenges. For example, in a very good Year 4 lesson using target boards, some high achieving pupils chose to use decimal numbers as well as whole numbers successfully. These activities encouraged pupils to use methods that aided understanding. In the same lesson, pupils were able to use partitioning methods to double two-digit numbers. As a result of the independence given, pupils showed confidence and learning was effective. There are areas of mathematics which are less well developed. Problem-solving and investigative work is underdeveloped, and pupils have difficulty using and applying mathematics in other contexts. This is because much of their work is from textbooks or on worksheets, and this is the reason why pupils tend not to do well in national tests which require the application of knowledge and skills. The school now follows the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy, but oral and mental sessions vary in quality and, as a result, standards are not as high as they could be. Many pupils in Years 5 and 6 struggle to calculate half of 500 or to multiply two-digit numbers by a single-digit number, and have difficulty reading numbers written in millions. More time for

mental and oral work is needed help to improve children's mental recall. These improvements would help to raise attainment further across the school.

56. In lessons which were good or better pupils were more actively involved and took responsibility for their learning; this is an improvement since the last inspection. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, children helped to decide the criteria by which to sort three-dimensional shapes. The school uses a number of different forms of assessment and these are used in some lessons to inform planning. However, this practice is at a very early stage, and there is little use of this information to set individual or group targets.

Mathematics across the curriculum

57. There is some good use of mathematics in science in some classes, which helps pupils apply their knowledge and skills, but in general these sorts of opportunities are limited. Teachers make particularly good opportunities in ICT to teach mathematical skills, but much more use could be made of ICT, especially for pupils who have special educational needs.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment represent very good achievement by the pupils.
- The subject is well managed with a good programme for development.
- Good teaching throughout the school creates practical learning conditions.
- There are valuable links with literacy, numeracy and ICT.
- Assessment data are not being used sufficiently to monitor progress and trends.
- Too few lessons build on pupils' curiosity and initiative.

Commentary

58. Standards were low at the time of the previous inspection. Good subject leadership enabled the school to act effectively on the points made in that report. The co-ordinator encouraged the staff to adopt a style of teaching that promoted much more active learning. As a result, standards are now in line with the national average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. This represents very good achievement for the pupils.
59. The co-ordinator has carried out a careful analysis of the reasons for a fall in Year 6 national test scores in 2003, and discovered that many pupils found difficulty in physical science and in interpreting the meaning of the measurements they made in experiments. The staff have responded swiftly and effectively, and more time is now being allocated to science teaching. The curriculum has been strengthened in the physical area, and is now well balanced as a whole. Annual as well as topic assessments have been strengthened. Teachers make close links in their planning with the mathematics needed to help pupils understand data. The good improvement in computer resources has come along at just the right time to enable teachers to use them particularly effectively in science.
60. Consequently, teaching in both key stages is good. It is purposeful, and takes pupils through progressively more difficult learning material. It is challenging to the higher attaining pupils and supportive of pupils who have learning difficulties. In the best lessons, which are very good, the teaching is focused very closely on pupils' learning styles. Year 6 pupils learn well from the computer displays. These show how their experimental results about dissolving different substances can be gathered as class data. By careful explanations, the teacher enables them to see that the patterns in the graphs point to certain conclusions. As a result they learn with understanding aided by their own discussions, that increasingly use the technical vocabulary of

the subject. Year 5 pupils have a similarly positive attitude to their learning about pulse rates. They love to do the counting of the pulse beats and enter their data into spreadsheets that convert them to graphs. Consequently the teachers' work is leading to improved standards and good achievement, as pupils are on course to reach standards appropriate to their age by the end of Years 2 and 6. This is good achievement for the pupils.

61. Learning for Year 2 pupils is exciting. For example, pupils enjoyed covering their hands with paint to see if it was warm or cold water that was best "for getting rid of germs". Behind this fun lies rigorous planning to ensure that at the same time the pupils learn about fair testing and structured recording. Most teachers rightly expect pupils to be sensibly responsible for key parts of their own learning. Some teachers are leading the pupils closer to a questioning attitude by structuring their lessons as a series of questions, but few pupils take the initiative to suggest their own ideas for testing.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment represent very good achievement by the pupils.
- The subject has been managed very well, and there is a clear programme to develop the subject.
- There has been very valuable support from the EAZ.
- Good teaching is developing basic skills well.
- There is a good range of applications of computer work in other subjects.
- The assessment system is not yet effective in tracking pupils' progress.
- Pupils need more independence in selecting some of their own applications.

Commentary

62. The very good subject leadership has encouraged staff to use the school's new and enhanced computer resources more effectively. A good programme of national and school-based training has increased confidence and expertise. This has been very well supported by the EAZ. As a result all teachers are able to use computers effectively to build up pupils' basic skills. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers give particularly clear demonstrations using the interactive whiteboards. Pupils can see exactly what they need to do to achieve the lesson objectives. The curriculum is good. It covers all the areas required by the National Curriculum. The good planning by all teachers takes pupils through a carefully structured set of learning steps. Consequently pupils are on course to reach the standards expected for their age by the end of Years 2 and 6. This represents good achievement.

63. The strongest areas are linked to word-processing, graphics and the handling of data. Year 6 pupils are confident in finding files, moving text about and illustrating it. They open up the Internet rapidly and are proud of their research work in various subjects. A lively display of pupils' work across the school indicates the consistent level of progress through the years. Teachers are becoming aware of the different levels of ability in computer skills. They give good support to pupils who are not as fast as others. This includes some pupils who have special educational needs. However, many of these pupils love computer work because it enables them to achieve success that does not come as easily in other lessons, and their work is always neat! The teachers are now looking for strategies that will make these differences easier to handle in lessons. The present assessment system records what pupils have done, but is not in a form that enables teachers to track the progress easily. To promote pupils' independence in their learning, their next step is to recognise opportunities for using ICT in their work, on their own initiative. The school has acted on the recommendations of the previous report with determination to achieve significantly improved provision.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

64. Teachers use a good range of opportunities to enable pupils to apply their ICT skills in other subjects. All teachers regularly make good use of the classroom and the suite computers to make learning more effective in English and mathematics; for example, in compiling a brochure for their reception year buddies, Year 6 pupils learned how to adjust the text to suit the reader. Year 5 and 6 pupils use spreadsheets effectively to turn their science data into graphs. Most years use the Internet to get information for history and geography. Older pupils learn about e-mails and the school website, as part of their language and communication awareness. All classes have the opportunity to incorporate the computer into art activities.

HUMANITIES

History and Geography

65. These subjects were not a focus of the inspection and so are not reported on in detail. Two history and one geography lessons were seen, and pupils' work was reviewed. There is a very good programme of visits and visitors for both subjects and all classes. This enhances the curriculum and adds to the interest and enjoyment of the pupils. The programme through Years 1 and 2 ensures that pupils receive a good grounding in basic skills, concepts and knowledge. There is a good focus on building these concepts, and good use of practical activities to build them. For example, a very good Year 2 geography lesson (described above) used 'story sack' models very effectively to develop mapping skills which the pupils were then able to apply to their own walk around the local area. It was the first-hand and practical nature of the activities, together with some independence for the pupils to construct their own maps, that made this lesson so effective. Standards of attainment at the end of Year 2 are in line with those usually found, and represent good achievement for the pupils.

66. The programme through Years 3 to 6 does not always focus sufficiently clearly on the higher expectations of these subjects. As a result, standards are generally below those usually found. Most pupils have reasonable recall of the topics they have studied and can talk, for example, about different countries or periods of history, but few have the detailed knowledge or the ability to relate one aspect to another, which is the usual expectation for older pupils.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

67. This area was not a focus of the inspection and it is not possible to report in detail. No lessons were seen in design and technology or physical education. Observations in music were mainly of singing in assembly and singing practice.

68. Standards of attainment in art are in line with those usually found and represent good achievement for these pupils. Pupils have good opportunities to represent their ideas and experiences in a range of media in a variety of ways, and much of their work is colourful and bold. There is a good example of this in the Year 3 work where African patterns have been made using body paints in vibrant colours. This work was also linked well to work in geography and ICT. Conversely, Year 6 pupils used black and white to paint pictures of landscapes, and the absence of colour enabled them to experiment with tone and shade to produce their final pieces which demonstrated a good understanding of perspective.

69. There is a good variety of work in design and technology. For example, Year 4 pupils designed a money container, chose appropriate materials and made templates using knowledge of perimeter learned in a mathematics lesson; thus demonstrating the effectiveness of learning in a cross-curricular way. Other examples are of healthy food plates designed and made in Year 3 and Year 2, and the large patchwork quilt designed by pupils with their parents at home, illustrating their thoughts and feelings about the school. This is an example of the home-school links which are important to the school.

70. The music observed was limited. The whole-school singing session was very effective. Staff joined in and pupils were attentive, appreciative and very enthusiastic. The singing was linked well to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils. Children and staff both spoke with real enthusiasm about an African musician who visited the school. He worked with every class, and parents were invited along after school to listen and to join in. A large book of photographs shows that it was great fun for all involved and a valuable contribution to multi-cultural development. The school also took part in the 'Singing Bridges' project which involved schools from Gateshead and Newcastle at the Baltic Centre.
71. The provision for physical education has improved since the last inspection, and there is now a full swimming programme for Years 3 and 4 and reception children. The EAZ has made a good contribution through arranging various sporting events with the school. These include a basketball tournament, a gymnastics day and a 'dad's football tournament'. Football training for both girls and boys is undertaken with Newcastle United Football Club. This has made a significant impact on the quality of football, and the school team has been remarkably successful at national level.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION (PSHCE)

Provision for PSHCE is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils benefit from the school's very supportive ethos, although not all teachers are valuing of pupils' work.
- There are some good arrangements, such as the 'buddy' system, that give pupils responsibility for others.
- The format for PSHCE lessons does not always encourage the exchange of personal views often necessary within this area.

Commentary

72. The specific PSHCE lessons seen were satisfactory overall and gave pupils appropriate opportunities to discuss matters of importance, but did not always provide the setting in which matters of personal importance could be discussed with the sensitivity that enables full expression. The school does not make use of the usual 'circle time' format that takes pupils out of the usual classroom arrangement where the teacher leads and pupils put up their hands to talk. By not using the format that gives each contribution equal weight, the school misses opportunities for sustained speaking and listening that would be of benefit to pupils here.
73. Other arrangements for giving pupils responsibility and encouraging consideration for others are good. The headteacher sets a very good example of listening and valuing, and for having concern for others. Arrangements such as the Year 6/reception class 'buddy system' are very effective in giving older pupils responsibilities for others. Another example is pupils selling fruit at break and being responsible for the money taken. All of these make a good contribution to pupils' personal development.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	4

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).