

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **REDESDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Wallsend, Tyne and Wear

LEA area: North Tyneside

Unique reference number: 108599

Headteacher: Mr G M Mitchell

Lead inspector: Mrs Margaret Lewis

Dates of inspection: 20<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2005

Inspection number: 267548

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	346
School address:	Wiltshire Drive Wallsend Tyne and Wear
Postcode:	NE28 8TS
Telephone number:	0191 200 7326
Fax number:	0191 200 5966
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Judith Blades
Date of previous inspection:	N/A

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school's status changed from first to primary in 2002. It is situated in Wallsend on the outskirts of Newcastle upon Tyne. It is larger than most primary schools. It caters for boys and girls from the age of 3 to 11 years and has 346 pupils, including 37 children who attend part-time in the nursery. Most pupils come from the surrounding estates, comprising of a mixture of local authority and private housing. Around 7 per cent of pupils are from the local Chinese community with Cantonese as their home language. Around 6.5 per cent learn English as a second language. This is above average. Older, bilingual pupils have good speaking skills and almost all are fluent English speakers. The school has a relatively stable population.

There are 8 per cent of pupils with special educational needs. This is below average. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is around average at 1.4 per cent. Children's attainment on entry to the nursery varies from year-to-year but is broadly as is expected for their ages. The school holds the 'Basic Skills Quality Mark' and has very recently been awarded the 'Arts Mark Gold' award.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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8988	Dr J Cross	Lay inspector	
17907	Mr M Bowers	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Physical education
18370	Mr K Johnson	Team inspector	Science Geography History
30954	Mr B Ashcroft	Team Inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design
33228	Mrs C Groves	Team Inspector	The Foundation Stage Design and technology Religious education

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a very effective school** which provides very good value for money. Very good teaching and learning enable pupils to reach well above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. The pupils respond very well to the very good teaching and achieve very well.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve very well and attain well above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. They make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the age of 7. Standards in art and design are well above average throughout the school.
- Teaching is very good overall; however, teachers do not consistently plan sufficient opportunities for practical and investigative work;
- The school provides equally well for all its pupils and includes them in all aspects of school life;
- Many very good opportunities for enrichment are provided by visits out and visitors into the school;
- The headteacher gives strong direction to the work of the school. English, mathematics and science are very well led and managed but the role of some subject leaders is underdeveloped.

Since the formation of this new school in 2002, standards have risen in English and science. The quality of teaching and learning and the provision in English, mathematics and science has improved.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	N/A	B	A	A
mathematics	N/A	A*	A	A
science	N/A	C	A	C

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average.*

*A\* indicates a result in the top 5 per cent.*

*Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

**Pupils' achievement is very good.** Children in the Foundation Stage make steady progress and are on course to reach the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. They settle well into the nursery class and make good progress in their personal, social, emotional and physical development, where some exceed the expectations. Present Year 2 pupils attain above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. In the National Curriculum tests in 2004, pupils in Year 2 attained well above average standards in writing and above average standards in reading and mathematics. This was not the case in science, where all aspects were below average. Standards have improved in science and are now average for the current Year 2 pupils.

The chart above shows that by the end of Year 6 standards are well above average in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Standards have risen in English and

science in the short time that the school has had pupils in Year 6, but no overall trend can yet be established. The school successfully promotes a broad curriculum with an emphasis on the arts. Consequently, pupils achieve very well and attain well above the national expectations in art and design. Pupils' different learning needs are well catered for, enabling those with special educational needs, and those who are more able, gifted and talented, or bilingual to achieve well.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good.** Attendance is well above average. Pupils from all backgrounds have very good attitudes to learning, are courteous and behave extremely well.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides a very good quality education for its pupils and the quality of teaching and learning is very good.** Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall, with some good teaching in personal, social and emotional development and in physical development. Teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 are very good, particularly in English, mathematics, science and art and design. In these lessons, pupils are given highly challenging and demanding tasks that they enjoy. Relationships between pupils and teachers are very good and teachers set high expectations of pupils' conduct and behaviour. As a result, pupils take responsibility for their own learning and are keen to do well. Pupils with special educational needs and those whose home language is not English receive very good support, enabling them to achieve very well. Teachers give too few opportunities for pupils to develop and use their skills of enquiry and investigation in lessons such as science and history.

The school provides a good curriculum and offers a very good and varied programme of enrichment. Provision in creative arts is particularly strong. Visits and visitors are deployed very well to extend learning in the Foundation Stage and in several subjects in Years 1 to 6. Staff are very caring and do all they can to meet the personal needs of the pupils.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management of the school are very good.** The headteacher has a very clear sense of what needs to be done in order to secure further improvement. Subject leadership in English, mathematics, science and art and design is very good, but many subject leaders do not fully manage their subjects and consequently do not have an understanding of the standards or the quality of teaching and learning. The school is managed very well. Governance of the school is good. Governors ensure that it fulfils statutory requirements.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents are very supportive of the school. They are strongly encouraged to get involved in their children's education and are kept very well updated about their progress and the curriculum. Pupils are very appreciative of their school, not least because they are highly involved in decision making.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Develop further the leadership and management skills of some subject leaders, to enable them to play a stronger part in the evaluation of the school's work and its future development;
- Ensure that pupils have increased opportunities for practical enquiry and investigative work.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects**

Achievement overall is very good. It is good in the Foundation Stage, where children achieve the levels expected for their ages in all six areas of learning, and some exceed these levels in personal, social and emotional development and physical development. By the end of Year 2, pupils reach above average levels in English, mathematics and art and design, and average levels in science. By the end of Year 6, they attain well above average standards in English and mathematics, and above average standards in science and art and design. Older pupils also develop their performance skills very successfully in dance, drama and music.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve very well in tests at Year 6 and attain well above average standards in English, mathematics and science;
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well;
- Standards in art and design are above average at Years 2 and 6; pupils produce an abundance of work across the school.

#### **Commentary**

1. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well overall and most attain the nationally expected Early Learning Goals. When they join the nursery class, there is a breadth of attainment but overall their skills, knowledge and understanding are typical of those seen at this age. By the time they enter Year 1, most have made good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and physical development. They make satisfactory progress in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. Children learning English as an additional language, who arrive in nursery with scarcely any skills in the English language, achieve very well and make very good progress owing to the regular and good quality bilingual support they receive. Some higher attaining children in the reception class could do better, particularly in mathematical development to enable them to exceed the expectations for their age. Pupils identified with special educational needs in the Foundation Stage achieve well and make good progress.

#### ***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004***

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.6 (17.3)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	16.2 (16.0)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.2 (17.0)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 39 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. Test results for pupils at the end of Year 2 show that they have done consistently well over the past four years and attained at least above average levels in reading, writing and mathematics, in comparison with all schools nationally. Well above average levels in writing have been maintained over the past four years. In 2004, results were above average in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing. In comparison

with similar schools, standards in 2004 were well above average in writing and mathematics and above average in reading.

- Inspection findings indicate that standards for the current Year 2 pupils are above average in reading, writing and mathematics, and are average in science. This is an improvement on the teacher assessment in science for 2004 which showed that pupils were below average in all areas of science, including two areas where they were well below average. The reason for this positive picture of standards in English, mathematics and science is the good analysis made of pupils' results and subsequent action taken by the school. In English, for instance, analysis of pupils' results revealed a fall in the percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels in reading at Year 2, and that girls were doing better than boys in reading at Year 6. Swift action was taken to put a 'buddy' programme of paired reading into place throughout the school, where older pupils read with younger ones. This is having a good impact on the reading of older boys and the gap between the attainment of boys and girls is narrowing.

**Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004**

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.8 (27.9)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	30.1 (30.5)	27.0 (26.8)
science	30.1 (29.2)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 61 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

- Results for pupils in Year 6 are only available for 2003 and 2004, when the school had pupils in Year 6, so that it is not possible to determine an overall trend. In 2004, standards in English, mathematics and science were well above the national average and in 2003 standards in mathematics were very high and in the top 5 per cent of schools. The current Year 6 pupils do very well and standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science.
- National Curriculum test results vary from one year to the next, depending on the abilities of the pupils taking the tests in Years 2 and 6. This year in Years 2 and 6, although most pupils are achieving very well, the results of the tests in English, mathematics and science may be slightly lower, since the percentage of pupils with special educational needs is greater than it was in 2004.
- Pupils develop their skills in literacy and numeracy well. Standards in speaking and listening are good in Years 1 to 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6, so that by the time pupils leave in Year 6 they debate issues and sustain discussions well. They develop a thirst for reading a variety of books and have good skills in analysing character and finding information, using the skills they have learned. Pupils write confidently in a wide range of styles and are competent in writing play scripts, poetry and on screen. In mathematics, pupils achieve well, displaying a good understanding of number, problem solving and practical mathematics, which they use in other subjects such as geography and design and technology.
- Pupils do well in developing a good knowledge base in science, although the development of their scientific investigative skills is inconsistent. Across the school, children are well motivated in information and communication technology (ICT). They enjoy their lessons and make good progress, although ICT is not yet used sufficiently in science and mathematics.

8. Pupils do very well in art and design and produce a wealth of high quality work in all areas. They develop their confidence and skills of performance well in projects comprising of dance, singing and drama. In other subjects, including religious education, where a secure judgement is possible, pupils' knowledge and understanding is in line with expectations at Years 2 and 6. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. Most attain standards in English and mathematics close to the national average. Pupils with a statement of special educational need generally achieve well because the school has sought appropriate advice and plans activities which they can complete accurately if they work hard and, consequently, experience success. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties also achieve well to form positive relationships with their classmates and the adults who care for them. They accept the rules and conventions laid down by the school.
9. Those who learn English as a second language are helped well to assimilate into their peer group. They make very good progress so that by the end of their time in the school, they reach equivalent standards to other pupils'.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils have very good attitudes towards their learning and they are very well behaved throughout the school day. Provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Attendance is very good and pupils usually arrive at school on time.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are very keen to learn and want to succeed;
- Pupils' personal development is very good and benefits hugely from a wide range of enjoyable activities and responsibilities;
- Pupils of all ages, backgrounds and abilities get on really well together;
- Absence is rare so learning progresses evenly.

### **Commentary**

10. The school has come through the many challenges associated with its change from first to primary status very well. Staff have been mindful to adapt provision to meet the needs of their newly acquired pupils in Years 5 and 6. They have created a very strong climate for learning, within which pupils flourish academically and personally. Pupils' very positive attitudes, behaviour and attendance are key to their high achievement. They mature into well adjusted, affable, thoughtful individuals who build strong bonds with the staff and work hard.
11. Pupils say that their favourite aspects of school are their teachers, who are kind and fair to them, and their friends. Physical education, including sports and swimming, art and ICT are popular lessons. There is very little that they would like to change about their school, as they feel that staff usually take on board their ideas for improvements so long as they are practicable. Class representatives on the school council are justifiably very proud of their achievements in influencing developments that really matter to them. They love their new amphitheatre, picnic tables and flower planters in the grounds and like the new routines that give older pupils status in assembly and in the dining room.

12. The atmosphere in school is calm yet purposeful, even when learning takes place in less structured settings than classrooms. Older pupils, for example, maturely share books with younger ones in the vibrantly decorated and furnished, child-friendly communal areas around school. Pupils concentrate on their learning because of their high motivation and the well established expectations that staff have of their conduct.
13. Pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes to their work. They achieve well and experience the pleasure of success because the work they are given is appropriate to their needs. Skilled and knowledgeable learning assistants have formed positive relationships with these pupils and often work alongside them. This ensures that they quickly receive help and support when it is required. Carefully drawn up individual behaviour plans help pupils with behavioural difficulties to modify their behaviour and assess their progress towards their targets. Visual timetables very effectively help any pupil with Asperger's syndrome to remain on task and accept the routine and challenges of the school day.
14. In nursery and reception, staff promote pupils' personal and social development strongly by teaching them to share, take turns and behave acceptably. Pupils soon establish trusting relationships and gain confidence as learners. Parents say that children in the nursery particularly enjoy being at one with nature during weekly visits to a nearby countryside park.
15. Parents are rightly very pleased with pupils' behaviour. Incidents of bullying and racism are rare, helped by initiatives to prevent minor disagreements and encourage supportive, friendly behaviour. Year 6 'buddies', for example, were seen mediating when two young pupils became upset after falling out at playtime. The 'buddies' skilfully defused the situation and co-operative play resumed. Pupils of Chinese heritage integrate successfully with others and form firm friendships. There were four fixed period exclusions last year relating to two boys.
16. Extra-curricular clubs and residential visits help older pupils to mix socially whilst developing interests and talents. Parents are very appreciative of this provision. Pupils of all ages relate very positively to visitors, because they are used to working with many adults other than the staff. Specialists and performers frequently enhance pupils' learning and personal development with first-hand experiences that are often spiritually and culturally rich. Annual arts week activities, visits to places of worship and participation in local festivals very effectively raise pupils' awareness of cultural diversity.

## Attendance

### *Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)*

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.0	School data	0.1
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

## Exclusions

### *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	298	4	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Chinese	23	0	0
Any other ethnic group	3	0	0

*The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Teaching and learning are very good. The assessment of pupils' progress in English and mathematics and the quality of the curriculum are all good. The provision for enrichment is very good. Pupils are very well cared for and the school listens to their views, which helps them mature into well rounded individuals. Links with other schools are good and there are very strong links with parents and the local community.

## Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall throughout the school. There is a significant amount of very good teaching, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Teachers make good use of assessment in these subjects to ensure all pupils move on and learn rapidly. Consequently, pupils of all abilities in Years 1 to 6 achieve very well and reach high standards by the age of 11. Teaching is satisfactory overall in the Foundation Stage.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers are confident and have strong knowledge and expertise, particularly across English, mathematics, science and art and design; they have high expectations of pupils' behaviour;
- Lessons are planned and structured thoroughly to meet the needs of all pupils; pupils are generally challenged effectively and, as a result, they achieve very well and make very good progress;
- Staff have very good relationships with pupils, encouraging and motivating them to do their best; good quality support is given by teaching assistants and to those with special educational needs;
- Introductions are sometimes too long and teachers do not give enough opportunities for pupils to develop their enquiry and investigative skills; homework could be used more effectively in Years 3 to 6.

## Commentary

17. The quality of teaching is very good overall, particularly in English, mathematics and science. In these subjects, teachers display a particularly high level of knowledge and expertise that enable pupils to learn quickly and achieve well. The quality of teaching varies across other curriculum subjects but is almost always satisfactory and most often good. Teaching and learning are very good in art and design.
18. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall and children make steady gains in their learning to reach the goals expected of them by the time they enter Year 1. They make good progress in their personal, social and emotional and physical development. Some good teaching is evident in the nursery and teaching assistants, including the bilingual assistant and nursery nurses, give children very good support across the unit. Towards the end of their year in reception, some more able children do not always have sufficiently challenging activities to help them exceed the expectations for their age, particularly in their mathematical and language and literacy development.
19. Teachers have very good skills in the teaching of English, mathematics and science and share their expertise well. A good feature of the teaching of English is the development of a paired reading initiative across the school, which is managed very well. It is highly successful in developing and improving standards for younger pupils and in particular for older boys. Teachers teach the skills of speaking and listening well, using strategies such as 'talking partners' and 'response partners' to help pupils develop ideas and vocabulary, for instance in the preparation of writing tasks. In mathematics, oral and mental introductions to lessons are particularly very well devised and handled by teachers who ensure pupils explain their answers and how they arrived at them well. In these lessons, good use is made of questioning and

resources such as whiteboards for pupils to show their answers. This helps the teacher quickly assess different pupils' learning and what they need to know next to progress.

20. Lessons in all subjects are generally planned and structured well, with teachers ensuring at the beginning of lessons that pupils know what they are expected to learn and understand. Teachers prepare tasks to ensure that pupils of differing abilities make progress. In many lessons, there is a considerable amount of challenge for pupils of average and higher abilities, although in science teachers give too few opportunities for pupils to develop their practical investigative skills. This is also the case in history, where opportunities are limited for developing pupils' enquiry skills using first-hand resources. Homework is appropriate and a feature of the teaching in most classes, although in Years 5 and 6 it is inconsistent and could be used more effectively to prepare pupils for the secondary school.
21. Relationships are very good between pupils and staff, who motivate and encourage pupils well during lessons. The younger pupils clearly enjoy their learning and activities provided for them. For instance, pupils in a Year 2 dance lesson responded very confidently and creatively, building on what they had already learned in a previous lesson to reach an above average level of movement. Older pupils in Year 6 speak positively about their physical education lessons, the many sporting opportunities they have and the importance of safety and a healthy life style.
22. Pupils with special educational needs have carefully written individual education plans (IEPs) that help them develop new skills, techniques and knowledge in English and mathematics. Teachers are skilled at providing work which is appropriate to the abilities of these pupils that enables them to experience success if they concentrate well and work hard. Skilled learning assistants actively support these pupils during whole class explanations, and continue to support them when they complete their work in small groups. Teachers frame questions carefully to ensure that these pupils have appropriate opportunities to contribute to class discussions. Very good use is made of specialist learning equipment and ICT, which helps pupils to consolidate their language and mathematical skills. Carefully identified targets in IEPs ensure that the progress these pupils make is regularly and carefully analysed and reviewed.
23. Those who have English as a second language in the main school receive very good support from staff and regular and frequent high quality support from specialist teachers. This enables them to learn English quickly and assimilate into their peer group.
24. Assessment of pupils' learning is good overall. Good systems are in place in the Foundation Stage and in English and mathematics, where teachers base their planning and grouping of pupils on the information they gain. In the Foundation Stage, staff know in general where children are up to on the 'stepping stones' but do not always use this information well enough to move higher attaining pupils on. Teachers let pupils know how well they are doing and set individual targets in English and mathematics, which helps them be aware of the progress they are making and what they need to achieve next. This good practice is ready to be extended across all year groups to science. There is good use of assessment for ICT.
25. Teachers mark pupils work regularly. However, there are inconsistencies in the quality of marking in some classes and in some subjects, where marking is not always helpful to enable pupils to progress.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 44 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3 (7)	10 (23)	21 (48)	9 (21)	1 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum is good. It meets all the statutory requirements and pupils of all abilities and backgrounds have equal access to all activities on almost all occasions. Opportunities for enrichment through sports and interest clubs with outside agencies, visits and visitors are very good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs;
- Curriculum enrichment and extra-curricular activities are very good;
- Occasionally games lessons are organised according to gender;
- Time allocations for some foundation subjects are at minimal levels;
- Resources for religious education, history, geography and design and technology are minimal.

## **Commentary**

26. The school has put very good English, mathematics, science and art and design programmes in place. These are instrumental in raising standards. The skilled use of the literacy and numeracy strategies enriches curriculum planning. The emphasis on regular, whole class reading has raised pupils' achievement and the status of reading and writing. The practice of Year 6 pupils hearing pupils from Key Stage 1 read has given reading a high level of 'street credibility', particularly amongst the boys.
27. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Teachers plan together to ensure that the curriculum is relevant and consistent. This also aids the progression of children as they move from the nursery to reception.
28. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all that the school plans and provides. Careful assessment and review of their IEPs ensures that their specific needs are met. Recently, learning resources for these pupils have been reviewed and upgraded. This has ensured that learning activities are regularly supported by interesting practical activities. In English and mathematics, pupils with special educational needs are taught alongside others with similar needs, often with specifically deployed learning assistant who are fully aware of their needs. Programmes of work are carefully prepared to respond to their specific targets. Deployment of teaching assistants and the current targets in IEPs are regularly reviewed.
29. Curriculum provision and teaching and learning opportunities are enhanced by ICT facilities. Younger pupils compose sentences and, by Year 6, pupils use word processing skills accurately to write imaginative stories, create multi media presentations and operate software relevant to the subject they are studying. Pupils benefit from the ICT suite but the limited number of interactive whiteboards restricts opportunities for the whole class to quickly learn new skills or for the teacher to plan and deliver exciting visual presentations. Investigative work in science and history is not systematically planned; consequently, there is an imbalance between pupils' acquisition of scientific knowledge and their development of investigative skills, and in their development of skills of historical enquiry.
30. The school provides very good opportunities for enrichment and is involved in many initiatives. Residential visits are organised regularly for Year 5 and 6 pupils. This enhances their personal development and introduces them to adventurous activities, such as canoeing, scrambling and abseiling. Suitable venues in the locality are identified for pupils to visit sites of historical and geographical significance. Very good links have been forged with local industry, which funds the school's woodland development and the 'Super grounds' projects. The arts curriculum is of exceptionally high quality, with opportunities for pupils to visit local galleries. Resident artists work

with the pupils during the termly arts week. Pupils' creative art displayed around the school helps to provide a stimulating and challenging learning environment.

31. The accommodation is good and well maintained and teachers and learning assistants are appropriately trained and experienced. The provision of resources is satisfactory overall. However, there are some deficiencies in resources in geography, history, religious education and design and technology.

## Care, guidance and support

Staff take very good care of the pupils and support and guide them effectively. They very actively involve pupils in school life by seeking, valuing and acting on their views.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pastoral care is very strong;
- Staff implement the school's behaviour policy very successfully;
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and guided;
- The school council is very effective in enabling pupils to influence decision making.

## Commentary

32. Caring staff know the pupils very well and respond appropriately to their individual needs. Pupils and parents enjoy strong relationships with the staff and feel able to confide in them if they have any worries. Exchange of concerns is considerably aided by teachers mingling with parents and carers in the playground at the start and end of the school day.
33. Parents are rightly very pleased with the arrangements that staff make to ensure that their children settle smoothly into the nursery or reception class when they first start school. Transition between nursery and reception is particularly seamless, because pupils are already well versed with sharing the premises and equipment through the 'carousel' system that Foundation Stage staff operate all year round.
34. The privately run, on-site breakfast club, much appreciated by parents, helps pupils to get to school on time and to be well nourished. Parents also praise the after school care facility that gives them peace of mind that their children are well looked after.
35. Staff do all they can to help pupils who have special educational needs to achieve as well as other pupils. They devise suitable individual programmes and enlist the support of classroom assistants and outside agencies to help them learn or behave as well as they can. These pupils are actively involved in setting targets and reviewing their progress towards these goals. Bilingual support for the pupils who speak other languages at home is also very beneficial. Provision for pupils who are particularly able and talented is less well developed and is an area that the school would like to improve.
36. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by both their teachers and the learning assistants who work with them. Their needs are identified quickly and support structures are promptly put in place. Individual education and behaviour plans are regularly reviewed, which ensures that their learning needs are met. External support from accredited providers, in the form of monitoring and advice, is taken into account by the special educational needs leader at the reviews of pupils' progress each term. This helps them to realise how well they are achieving and how their new targets are identified. The progress of pupils who learn English as an additional language is monitored carefully by specialist teachers and parents are kept informed of their progress with the assistance of the bilingual assistant.

37. Staff treat incidents of unacceptable behaviour, including bullying and racism, very seriously. They firmly and fairly implement measures to stop inappropriate behaviour that are well publicised to parents and pupils. The school council has heavily influenced the nature of the rewards that celebrate successes of all kinds. Staff responded favourably to representatives' suggestions that pupils in Years 3 to 6 should be awarded house points to spur team effort, belonging and corporate responsibility.
38. Governors, through the vigilance of the headteacher and caretaker, maintain safety and security of the premises. They ensure that staff undertake thorough risk assessments before pupils go off-site on educational visits. Staff, including the midday team, make good arrangements to deal with any injuries that occur.
39. The school council is well established as a forum for pupils from Year 1 upwards to have their say in the school's development. Pupils could be more involved, however, in assessing how well they are doing academically and ways that they could make their work even better.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school enjoys very good partnerships with parents and the wider community. Links with other schools and colleges are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff provide very good quality information for parents;
- Nursery links with the nearby Countryside Park are excellent;
- Visitors and visits are used very effectively, particularly in respect of the creative arts;
- Sporting links with other schools are very beneficial for older pupils.

### **Commentary**

40. Staff strongly encourage parents to become partners in their children's education and establish trusting relationships with them. Parents' views matter to staff and governors and are regularly canvassed. Surveys show that parents are highly delighted with their children's progress, rightly believing that this stems from good teaching and hard work. Parents are uncommonly well satisfied with information that they receive about the curriculum and their children's progress. This is because staff keep them abreast beyond the norm by providing three written reports and face-to-face formal consultations per year. The reports clearly and simply tell parents how well their children are getting on, what they need to do next to improve and what they are learning about. Parents whose children have special educational needs are strongly involved in target setting and reviews of their progress.
41. Parents appreciate the occasional meetings that explain how and what their children are taught and how they can get involved in their learning at home. For instance, they are offered opportunities to find out how the nursery operates, how mathematics is taught nowadays and how they can help their children to read. Regular 'Parents and Children Together' courses for families with young children are also well received.
42. Parents, governors and other adults with police clearance are actively encouraged to help in school by listening to children read, assisting in class, running the library and

organising events for the Friends of Redesdale. The association's social and fundraising activities successfully draw many families into school, bingo sessions being particularly popular. Staff and pupils appreciate the considerable efforts of these volunteers.

43. Parents, friends and relatives are also welcomed into school for very well supported book fairs, performances and concerts. An enjoyable open afternoon last year during arts week enabled them to observe the acting, dancing and music making of pupils of all ages.
44. The school has very good systems for ensuring that parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the school's arrangements for supporting their children. They are informed as soon as their children are identified and are invited to attend the regular review meetings. They are kept fully aware of any proposed changes in the school's provision for their children. The school operates an 'open door' policy which enables parents to air their concerns promptly.
45. Staff use community facilities and expertise very effectively to enrich pupils' learning. The school, along with other partners such as Sightlines, has been instrumental in developing the innovative Pre-school Project at a local countryside park that wonderfully promotes creativity.
46. Artists-in-residence and other specialists and performers run workshops that give pupils super 'hands on' experiences. Visits to local amenities, such as theatres, museums and arts centres, also stimulate learning very effectively. Funding from a national bank is enabling the school to develop its outdoor provision through the 'Super grounds' project.
47. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 benefit immensely from the school's involvement in a wide range of sports festivals and tournaments. Close links are maintained with other local schools in respect of staff training and sharing of expertise. The school is proud to be chosen by the University of Northumbria as a training establishment for teachers, which keeps staff up to date with fresh ideas in education.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is very good and the school is very well managed. Governance and financial management are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has a clear sense of what the school needs to do next in order to secure further improvement;
- There is a strong and encouraging ethos that promotes an very good atmosphere for learning;
- Subject leaders are very effective in English, mathematics, science and art and design but some do not yet fully manage their subjects, consequently, they do not have an understanding of the standards or the quality of teaching and learning;
- Governors are very supportive of the school's work and ensure that it fulfils statutory requirements.

### **Commentary**

48. The very good leadership of the headteacher has a positive impact on standards and pupils' achievements. Over the last three years he has successfully created a primary

school where relationships are of a high order. There is a very positive learning atmosphere evident throughout the school. Governors, staff and parents have great confidence in him. He has successfully led the development and growth of the school since it changed from being a first school and works effectively with staff to promote high standards. He is very well supported by the deputy headteacher. He encourages staff to use their expertise, talents and enthusiasm to promote children's learning, achieve high standards and to improve the quality of the curriculum. Leadership is having a positive impact on maintaining high standards in English, mathematics, science and art and design, where children are producing work that is better than that seen in most primary schools. However, the monitoring of teaching, the management of whole school assessment and the tracking of pupils' progress are undertaken, in the main, by the headteacher and deputy headteacher and not by other senior teachers and subject leaders. This means that not all subject leaders play a significantly strong part in evaluating the school's work and the strategic planning in their subjects.

49. The special educational needs co-ordinator has ensured that the latest Code of Practice is fully embedded in the school routine. All documentation is in place and the directives identified in pupils' statements are taken into account in the provision for these pupils. The policy document is well written and ensures that all staff are fully aware of their responsibilities. Regular evaluative reviews of both pupils' progress and the effectiveness of the school's provision ensure that this aspect of school life is both effective and efficient. The co-ordinator has regular non-contact time but, as yet, the regular observation of these pupils during lessons does not take place. Overall, the quality of her leadership is very good and her management procedures are good.
50. Governance is good. The governors work hard to increase their involvement and help set a clear direction for the school. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and of what is needed to move the school forward. The expertise they share gives them a secure basis for their role as critical friend. Good initiatives, such as a 'Governors Surgery', allow them to take account of parent's views when setting school improvement priorities. Good and prudent management of finances and purposeful decisions over staffing have enabled a significant reduction in the deficit spending. Continued monitoring is likely to eliminate the current overspend within the next financial year. Newly appointed governors are keen to undertake relevant training to ensure their effective contribution to the monitoring systems which are in place.

## Financial information

### *Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005*

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	921,547	Balance from previous year	-21,661
Total expenditure	890,159	Balance carried forward to the next	12,672
Expenditure per pupil	2,473		

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

There are currently 70 children on roll in the Foundation Stage. Of these, 37 are in the nursery on a part-time basis. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff work closely together and link very well with parents.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good quality planning ensures that most opportunities are taken to develop pupils' skills;
- Respect and awareness of different cultures is fostered well;
- All staff have high expectations and set good examples.

#### **Commentary**

51. Teaching is good and as a result, children achieve well in this area and are on course to reach, and in some cases to exceed, the goals expected of them when they leave reception. All adults listen carefully to children and respect their ideas. Their positive and encouraging response enables children to grow increasingly confident in seeking help and to become adventurous in exploring activities. Nursery pupils are happy and secure in their surroundings. They follow simple rules well and are aware, for example, that they need to take turns using equipment and to listen when their teachers are talking to them. Reception children put their hands up and wait to be asked; they co-operate in pairs at the computer and share dressing up clothes because the expectations have been made clear to them. All staff provide good examples of positive attitudes and appreciation of the needs of others. Good use is made of stories and labels to promote children's awareness of other cultures. The assistance of the Chinese bilingual assistant is a valuable asset to this work, ensuring that all children who have English as an additional language take part in all activities and are fully integrated.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A strong emphasis is given to speaking and listening skills and on developing children's vocabulary;
- Good opportunities for role play are provided, both indoors and outdoors, but not all areas are fully utilised;
- Assessment is used effectively to identify the next steps in learning.

#### **Commentary**

52. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and children make steady progress. By the time children complete their time in reception, they reach the levels expected for their ages. Those with English as a second language make rapid progress. Staff use questioning effectively to help children put their thoughts into words and extend their ideas. They give clear guidance about listening to others. For example, when the teacher introduced a treasure map she asked the children where they thought it had come from. Some children asked if she had made it but others came up with more imaginative suggestions, such as 'Was it found buried in a garden?' Time was given for children to contribute and the teacher was careful not to 'take over' and speak for them.
53. Themes such as 'Pirates' inspired many relevant and purposeful activities across the different areas of learning. However, related tasks could be developed more for the more able children. Staff interact carefully with most of the children to help them get the most out of these activities. For instance, the pirate ship role play area was used well to develop spoken language and widen children's vocabulary. This excited the children.
54. Nursery children are confident in making marks on paper and ascribing meaning to them, for example when drawing and writing about 'minibeasts' they had seen on the previous days visit to a nearby Country Park. Reception children show correct pencil grip and are able to produce words with correct letter orientation and of even shape and size. Good opportunities are provided for children to share books. Children in reception talk confidently and enthusiastically when looking at books of 'minibeasts' and pirates.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers give clear demonstrations and instructions;
- Group tasks do not always support learning sufficiently well;
- Potential higher achievers are not always suitably challenged in reception.

### **Commentary**

55. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and children are likely to reach the expected standard for their ages by the time they begin Year 1. They learn soundly through attractive sorting and counting activities, which catch their interest well. A good example of this was when children in reception sorted 'treasure', a collection of buttons, jewels, sequins and coins, into different groups and explained to the teacher why they were sorting them in a particular way. In reception, good work is not always sufficiently focused to consolidate what children have been taught as a class. When there is no adult supporting the follow up activities, some children lose track of what they should be doing. As a result, the pace of learning slows. Nursery children confidently identify numerals 1 to 5 on a display, match dressing up clothes and count large building blocks accurately. Tasks are usually planned clearly to meet children's

needs, but there are occasions in the reception class when the work is too easy for potential higher achievers.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The weekly visit by nursery children to the a nearby Country Park gives exciting opportunities for children to learn from the outside environment;
- A varied range of practical activities is provided, which encourages children to explore and investigate.

## **Commentary**

56. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in this area and children are on line to reach the expected standards for their age by the time they reach Year 1. The outside environmental project offers the children in the nursery the chance to have freedom to engage with the natural world. They are given the opportunity to explore and investigate small areas of woodland. Accompanying adults support the children's curiosity and spontaneous investigating of the natural environment very well. A constant feature of the children's explorations is about the creatures, both real and imaginary, that live at the Country Park. For example, the children spoke confidently about things they had 'seen' or were going to look for. 'I saw giant's footprints last week', 'I'm going to look for a dragon' and 'I found a wriggly worm'. During regular visits, staff make detailed observations and these are followed up in a review meeting which highlights the follow up in school and preparations for the next visit.
57. Sand and water activities are constantly available for all the children in the unit. There are, for example, a desert island with wet sand and a water activity of floating objects down 2 drainpipes. Children in the nursery have planted seeds and studied their growth. They are proud of their work, talk about it and explain 'The roots look like worms', 'The beans look small', 'There is a circle at the bottom'. Four computers are available throughout the unit and reception children make frequent visits to the ICT suite to develop their skills. They quickly become confident when controlling the mouse and talk about a computer and some of its uses.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A good range of activities is provided, both indoors and outdoors;
- Teaching is good; staff manage the children well.

## **Commentary**

58. Teaching is good and children are on line to reach, and some to exceed, the goals expected of them in this area. Children are managed well and staff organise resources effectively in the outdoor area so that children use the space carefully and with good awareness of each other. Small climbing equipment and wheeled toys are available at all times. Reception children use the hall for regular physical education lessons and the good arrangement of smaller groupings ensures that the teacher has time to concentrate on individual pupil's skills.
59. Throughout nursery and reception, children learn to handle small equipment with increasing control. There are, for example, crayons and pencils in colouring and drawing and scissors for cutting out work. When playing in the outside area children are able to pour water from a container into the drainpipes. Nursery children are given further opportunities to run, crawl, roll and climb whilst at the Country Park.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Skilful questioning by some teachers to encourage children's creativity;
- Restricted choice of resources for creative activities.

## Commentary

60. The majority of reception pupils will reach the expected levels in most aspects of this area of learning by the time they enter Year 1. Teaching is sound overall. Planning shows that a wide range of opportunities are available for children to learn skills. The lack of identified resources within the planning and in some areas restricts the progress of children in reception. For example, when children were asked to design a treasure map they were given only coloured pencils, felt pens and a small sheet of brown paper. This restricted the possible outcomes for higher achievers.
61. In a nursery lesson, the children listen carefully to the sounds made by a variety of small instruments. Each instrument in turn was hidden behind a screen and the children had to guess which sound they could hear by listening carefully. Careful questioning by the teacher, for example, 'What does it sound like?' 'Is it loud or quiet?' 'It sounds like twinkle, twinkle little star' 'It sounds like horses feet' encouraged the children. The teacher was sensitive to the children's demands and listened carefully to their suggestions. Children in this lesson made good progress. In the reception class, a taped lesson was made relatively mundane because it was based almost entirely on the taped commentary, rather than direct teaching that met individual needs and circumstances.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils reach above average standards at Year 2 and well above average standards at Year 6;
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good; very good use is made of whole class, group and individual targets;
- The subject is led and managed very well, with regular and effective monitoring of teachers' planning, lessons and pupils' work;
- Teachers make very good links between children's literature and the development of drama;
- Well established and organised paired reading give good opportunities to both older and younger pupils;
- Marking is not always consistent throughout the school and the presentation of the older pupils' work is sometimes untidy.

## Commentary

62. Standards in English are very good. By the end of Year 2, they are well above the national average in reading and above average in writing, speaking and listening. This represents very good progress, which continues through Years 3 to 6 so that, by Year 6, standards in English are well above the national average.

63. The inspection found that pupils, including those learning English as an additional language, those with special educational needs and more able pupils, achieve very well. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well supported and every effort is made by staff to raise their attainment by carefully planned, good support and encouragement. Girls achieve better than boys. The school has worked successfully to raise boys' achievement and, consequently, the gap has narrowed.

64. Younger pupils speak in sentences and by Year 2 can hold a conversation about the book they are reading, or develop a discussion about why and how deserts are formed. Pupils in Year 6 use sequenced dialogue to explain the character traits of 'The Enormous Crocodile', as they begin to create a play script using direct speech. They carefully argue the case that exercise is good for the heart and promotes healthy living. Staff have worked hard to encourage pupils' speaking and listening skills by:
- extending their vocabulary;
  - organising response partners to encourage dialogue and discussion;
  - encouraging whole class discussion and 'hot seating', where one pupil shares his or her thoughts with the class;
  - introducing drama to encourage pupils to create and experiment with script.
65. Pupils achieve very well in reading because their development of knowledge and enjoyment of books goes hand-in-hand with the improvement of their reading skills. Standards are well above average throughout the school. There is a good, structured reading programme from which pupils are able to make choices from carefully selected book titles. In Year 2, more able pupils eagerly peruse non-fiction books using content, index and glossary to answer an inspector's questions as they carry on a conversation about their current research. All pupils are encouraged to read with family members at home and this helps them to move forward well. There are very good opportunities during the school day for pupils to engage in group, paired and silent reading. Much successful work has been completed by the school to raise boys' interest in reading. Specific story titles have been identified, together with appropriate non-fiction material, where reading skills are used as analytical tools, and illustrated and captioned stories that include direct speech. The regular paired reading initiative, where the oldest pupils read with the youngest, raises self-esteem and credibility and importance to the task. Consequently, Year 2 pupils enjoy these sessions and their proficiency in reading has increased. Pupils, especially the older ones, are developing preferences for works of different authors. Paul Stewart, JK Rowling and R Dahl are firm favourites.
66. Book areas in classrooms are well organised and the library is well stocked in most subject areas, with books well classified and organised. Books written by pupils are on display, library quiz sheets are available and a video library is being developed.
67. Pupils enjoy their writing because;
- interesting tasks are set;
  - there are opportunities for extended writing;
  - older pupils have very good opportunities to experiment with vocabulary;
  - phonic and spelling skills are taught regularly.
68. Teaching and learning is very good overall. Teachers have expert knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy and use this skilfully to plan and deliver exciting and stimulating explanations. Pupils are continually engaged in discussion and teachers carefully question groups of pupils, challenging them to select the most appropriate word or phrase. There are many opportunities for pupils to use individual whiteboards, for instance to draft sentences then re-arrange, edit and add adjectives and adverbs, before writing the completed draft. The school has a very good policy for identifying relevant targets at individual, group or whole class level. These targets reflect the teachers' knowledge of their pupils' progress and help the pupils to identify the next skill or task to be worked on. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution in

lessons, actively supporting pupils with special educational needs and small groups working on the same task. Pupils with English as an additional language make rapid progress as a result of good bilingual support and sometimes excellent teaching by outside specialist teachers. Very good teaching of the Year 6 pupils incorporates reading, speaking and listening into writing tasks, as the class use inference and deduction to analyse the personalities of the various characters in R Dahl's book 'The Enormous Crocodile'. They then use what they have learned to create another character of their own and write a play script for performance to younger pupils. Pupils enjoy their work collaborating effectively. This enjoyment is present in many classes and was particularly noticeable in the Year 3 class, where pupils were engaged in writing humorous poems. Occasionally, introductions to lessons are too long and pupils become restless and uncomfortable as their interest and concentration falls away.

69. Whilst handwriting is usually well formed, legible and carefully presented, in some circumstances work in the oldest pupils' books is untidy and difficult to read. Work is marked regularly and marking is usually positive and supportive, giving pointers for improvement although this is not always the case.
70. The subject is very well led and managed. The subject leader has a comprehensive view of the standards of achievement in the subject and has successfully introduced numerous initiatives, including target setting, paired and group reading development. Much has been done to raise teachers' skills and confidence and this has in turn raised standards. A particular strength is the monitoring and evaluation programme.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

71. Pupils' use of independent language and literacy skills in other subjects varies between classes. There are some good examples of scientific report writing and use of word processing in book reviews and creative writing. However, teachers miss opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills systematically across other subjects, such as history and geography.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are well above average by the end of Year 6;
- There is a strong focus on developing pupils' numeracy and problem solving skills;
- Very good teaching enables pupils throughout the school to achieve well;
- Pupils enjoy the lessons and have very positive attitudes towards the subject;
- ICT could be used more extensively to support work in mathematics.

### **Commentary**

72. Over recent years, pupils' results in Year 2 have been consistently good and have varied between above and well above the national average. Results for pupils in Year 6 for the past two years have been consistently high in comparison with schools nationally. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, achieve very well in mathematics. This is because the very effective teaching is ensuring that all pupils are appropriately challenged.

73. The National Numeracy Strategy is firmly embedded into the school and this has a very positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning. The curriculum is planned very well and teachers match work well to the needs of all the pupils. There is a very good focus on the teaching of number and calculation skills. Throughout the school pupils are developing a secure knowledge and understanding of number that they then apply when they solve problems. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 4, pupils' thinking skills were challenged when they were required to explain their chosen method of multiplication to the rest of the class. They enthusiastically explained how they partitioned, multiplied units and then tens, added on or doubled the numbers to get their answers. This showed their understanding and helped them to achieve very well in the lesson. Many opportunities are given for pupils to apply their knowledge in practical situations.
74. Pupils enjoy mathematics and join in the lessons enthusiastically. This is seen no better than in the mental part at the beginning of the lesson. Everyone is involved when pupils use whiteboards to show their answers. These sessions are effective because questions are varied and different tasks are set, depending on ability. In Year 1, pupils challenged each other to work out doubles up to double 10. Pupils showed very quick recall and a very sound recognition of doubles. The activity cemented the excellent relationships between the teacher and pupils and got the lesson off to an exciting start.
75. The quality of teaching is very good overall. This accounts for the good levels of achievement and high standards. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and understanding of the lesson content and plan challenging activities that spark the pupils' interests. They check the pupils' understanding by very effective questioning and then develop their learning further. Clear objectives are explained and shared with the pupils, so that they understand what they are going to achieve during the lesson. In many lessons, time is used well and not a moment is wasted. However, the pace slows occasionally in Year 2 when pupils spend too much time listening to the teacher, rather than completing their tasks.
76. Leadership and management of mathematics is very good overall. Systems that are in place are used very well to assess, analyse and track pupils' progress.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

77. Pupils use mathematical skills across other curriculum subjects. In science, pupils collect data and produce graphs and charts. They use their measuring skills in design and technology and in history they use time lines to help them understand the chronology of events. ICT could be used more frequently to support learning in mathematics. Opportunities are lost for the pupils to use selected programs to further develop their mathematical skills.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **very good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are well above average at the end of Year 6;
- The overall quality of teaching is very good;

- Leadership is very good;
- The teaching of science enquiry skills is not consistent throughout the school.

### **Commentary**

78. By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve well above average standards, Standards are average for pupils in Year 2. This shows an improvement since 2004, when teacher assessments of pupils showed that they were performing below the nationally expected average.
79. The quality of teaching is very good overall. Lessons are very well planned and provide enough challenge to engage pupils' interest for the whole session. Pupils learn and achieve very well in lessons because they have good attitudes to work. This stems from the very good relationships and rapport which exists between pupils and teachers. Expectations are high and teachers begin lessons by explaining the learning goals, so that all pupils know what is expected of them. Lessons are most productive where pupils are given opportunities to find things out through practical experiences. In one lesson, pupils investigated forces by testing various objects in water. They learned, for example, that it is difficult to make some things float, while others float better in a solution of salts, or that the water level can be made to rise above the rim of the beaker. These activities encouraged scientific thinking and stimulated curiosity well. In another lesson, some pupils learned that scientific testing is not always conclusive. This resulted in their learning to change the force meters they were using in order to get more accurate readings. This is an important step in the development of their enquiry skills. However, this level of enquiry is not consistent throughout the school. There was less excitement for pupils who watched the teacher demonstrate a series of experiments to show that sound is caused by vibration, then used pre-prepared worksheets to record observations. Some pupils' workbooks show that a great deal of written work is copied, resulting in limited opportunities for them to develop independent skills and use of scientific language. Marking quality is also inconsistent. At best, marking is evaluative and leaves pupils in no doubt about how well they have done and how work might be improved. In contrast, much of the marking is superficial and makes no reference to the scientific content or quality of work. Overall, the use of ICT does not feature strongly enough in lessons.
80. The subject leader provides very good leadership. She has a clear vision for the development of science. She provides a very good role model for staff and pupils and works hard to raise the profile of the subject and maintain standards, although she has very little opportunity to monitor standards and the quality of teaching. The school is beginning to embrace recent national guidance about linking pupils' learning across subjects and it is planned that science will benefit from the stronger practical bias which this will bring.

### **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well and reach nationally expected standards by the end of Years 2 and 6;

- Leadership and management are good;
- Pupils have positive attitudes about their work;
- ICT is used effectively to support learning in some subjects.

## **Commentary**

81. Pupils reach standards that are in line with those expected nationally in Years 2 and 6. The school has worked hard to keep up with the pace of change in the subject. Pupils experience all the strands of the ICT curriculum and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. There is a range of resources and a well equipped ICT suite with good quality computers for the pupils to use. Training has been provided for teachers to improve their expertise and confidence in teaching ICT. A technician is employed to help teachers and keep the computers in good working order.
82. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are confident in using computers and have a range of basic skills. They can operate the keyboard accurately using alphabet and command keys to use the different functions on the screen. They use a range of programs confidently and their use of control technology is developed when they use a programmable toy to perform different functions. In Years 3 to 6, pupils have a wide range of skills. Their word processing skills develop well and they can make changes to their work, for example altering the font size and colour. They locate information using the Internet and know how to send emails. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 independently assemble presentations that include text, graphics and sound.
83. Teaching and learning are good, with teachers carefully planning interesting activities for the pupils that maintain their concentration. Pupils work collaboratively in pairs on the computers and this makes a good contribution to their personal and social development. New ideas and techniques are explained and demonstrated clearly, so that pupils understand what they are to learn and what is expected from them. This was seen in a Year 6 lesson when the teacher carefully demonstrated how to add sound to a presentation the pupils were working on. In an excellent lesson seen in a Year 3/4 class, the pupils were using a screen turtle program to input commands proficiently to make various shapes.
84. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader has considerable expertise and is having a positive influence on the work in the school. Staff have received a programme of training and support that has improved subject knowledge and confidence in teaching ICT.

## **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

85. ICT links have been developed across other curriculum areas. Teachers are aware of the potential of ICT to improve pupils' learning. They use their word processing skills in English and the Internet to research information in history and geography. However, in some subjects, such as mathematics and science, opportunities are lost to use ICT to further develop pupils' learning.

## **HUMANITIES**

86. Work in **geography** was sampled. It is not possible to give a judgement on overall provision. Nevertheless, it is evident from the work seen that geography is well established and taught systematically throughout the school.
87. Teachers plan thoughtfully and link work in geography to other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 2 build up good mapping skills by planning routes for Red Riding Hood's walk through the forest. These show the locations of important features, such as Granny's Cottage or the tree where the wolf hides. Science and geography are linked effectively in Year 6, when pupils learn about weather cycles and rivers. Pupils in Year 6 benefit from the opportunity of a residential visit to an outdoor centre, where there are further opportunities to find out about contrasting landscapes.

## **History**

Provision in history is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well by the end of Year 2;
- The curriculum is enriched very well by opportunities to visit places of interest;
- Learning resources could be improved.

### **Commentary**

88. By the end of Year 2 pupils achieve well. The standards of work seen are better than expected for their age, because of the thoroughness of teachers' planning and the depth to which topics are taught. By the end of Year 6, standards meet expectations and pupils gain a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of historical events.
89. The annual visit to the Beamish Museum provides a rich source of information about the past for pupils in Years 1 and 2. They learn about the lifestyle of people who lived around 1900 and recognise how things change over time. Teachers used good strategies to help pupils understand chronology. For example, the teddy bear time line traces the lives of famous bears, such as 'Theodore' (1915), Rupert and Paddington, right up to Barnaby Bear (1999).
90. In Years 3 to 6, visits to Roman sites in South Shields and Wallsend, and to St Paul's Monastery in Jarrow, provide good insights into what life might have been like in the area centuries ago. Teachers link history and art very successfully. Skills are combined well in Year 5, for example, in pupils' clay models decorated with Egyptian designs, and dramatic pencil drawings of the Jarrow March. History was brought to life for pupils in Year 6, when they used their knowledge of Aztec foods and recipes to make chocolate drinks spiced with cinnamon and honey, and tortillas, in order to simulate an Aztec feast. The very good quality of teaching and learning seen in that lesson is not reflected in the work of every class. Work samples show pupils' recording is sometimes intermittent in Years 5 and 6 and does not always match the range and quality of writing of which they are capable. This is because teachers do not plan for the application of literacy skills creatively enough. This contrasts with work in Year 2 pupils' books, where there is a good range of factual and empathetic writing to challenge pupils' literacy skills. Teachers do not consistently provide enough opportunities for pupils to develop skills of historical enquiry from first-hand evidence.

91. Leadership and management of history are good. The subject leader monitors standards by looking at pupils' work and displays. However, resources are limited. There are currently too few books and artefacts to engage pupils in good practical enquiry. The leader is clear about subject development and is working hard with colleagues to raise the profile of history within the curriculum by linking it meaningfully with learning in other subjects.

## **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards at Years 2 and 6 are in line with those expected by the locally agreed syllabus;
- There are good opportunities for pupils to explore situations and feelings related to their own lives;
- Progress is sometimes restricted by the limited resources and artefacts.

### **Commentary**

92. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils attain standards in line with the locally agreed syllabus. The curriculum is well planned to enable pupils to both deepen their knowledge of religions and explore meaningful events and feelings in their own lives. Pupils throughout the school are developing a good understanding of the stories, festivals and places of worship of Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims and Jews. For example, in a lesson for pupils in Year 2 the children had prepared relevant questions to ask a visitor about her place of worship, a mosque. Previous work had been researched on the Internet and the children also made comparisons between mosques and other places of worship, such as churches and synagogues.
93. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have very secure subject knowledge and this is clearly evident in the way that they encourage full discussions, so that pupils readily express their feelings and views. Lessons are well thought through and planned to capture pupils' interest. For example, in Years 3 and 4 pupils were developing an understanding that 'special' is not merely defined by monetary value and can be subjective. The children were encouraged to bring 'special' things from home. The teacher demonstrated effectively how a personal item was special to him and encouraged pupils to articulate their feelings about their special items. The sensitive nature of the teacher brought out the best in pupils and so encouraged them to do this.
94. Pupils behave and attend well, showing respect for each other's views. They record their work well and have many opportunities to reflect and form thoughtful views on religious issues. The limited range of artefacts and books restricts pupils' progress, particularly in the junior classes.

95. The subject is led and managed satisfactorily. The subject leader has established a portfolio of work ready for moderating after the new locally agreed syllabus is introduced next term. However, no monitoring of work or teaching has recently taken place, so that she is not in a position to have an informed view of the standards reached in the subject or the quality of teaching and learning.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

96. Insufficient evidence was collected during the inspection to make a secure judgment on the provision, standards and quality of teaching and learning in **design and technology** and only one lesson was seen in **music**, so no overall judgement is made on provision in these subjects.
97. In design and technology. The subject leader has collected samples of work and photographs to monitor coverage. This work has been matched to National Curriculum levels to guide staff in their assessment of pupils' work and the subject leader offers assistance to staff. An unsatisfactory range of resources restrict opportunities for pupils to choose and work with a wide variety of tools and equipment.
98. Music has a high profile in the school and parents, staff, governors and pupils spoke highly of the concerts that take place frequently in the school and at the nearby playhouse in Whitley Bay. At the time of the inspection, pupils in Year 6 were practising sea shanties for a public performance to take place at the 'Sage' concert hall in Newcastle, in connection with the arrival in the area of the Tall Sailing Ships. Meanwhile, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were practising with a music specialist for a performance of newly written work on the history of the region, to perform with four other local schools. Pupils who learn the recorder in their own time show good proficiency in their understanding of standard notation and playing in a consort of descant, treble, tenor and bass recorders. Pupils throughout the school build up a good repertoire of songs. They sing tunefully and enthusiastically, often in several parts. Music is used well for listening as pupils enter and leave the hall. Confident teaching was a good feature of the lesson enjoyed by pupils in Year 6. The pupils explored rhythm successfully, with the use of un-tuned percussion such as 'Boomwackers', and added movement and actions to their performance.

### **Art and design**

Provision in art and design is **very good**.

- Teaching is very good throughout the school, enabling pupils to achieve well and reach well above average standards at the end of Year 6;
- Pupils are introduced to a wide range of media and materials;
- Very good quality displays are used very effectively to promote pupils' interest;
- The subject benefits from very good leadership and management.

### **Commentary**

99. Pupils throughout the school achieve very well and reach standards that are well above expectations by the end of Year 6. They cover a very wide range of work and are able to build upon and develop their skills in painting, drawing and all other strands of the art and design curriculum.

100. The school is abundant with examples of pupils' completed work and these help to produce a very attractive environment for learning. The effective way in which work is displayed in classrooms and around the school promotes pupils' interest and indicates how much it is valued. The school has achieved the 'Arts Mark Gold' award and the way in which pupils' work together with local artists is a strength of the school. For example, Year 5 pupils worked with a local professional Artist-in-Residence to create boat pictures. Natural objects were laid out on light sensitive paper and fabric to make images for a large outdoor sculpture. This will form a 'river of flags' coinciding with the arrival of the tall ships to this part of Britain in July of this year.
101. Teaching and learning is very good. The teachers have a good knowledge and understanding in the subject and this inspires pupils. They plan lessons carefully and use a wide range of good quality resources to interest pupils. Skills are taught very well and pupils are then given the opportunity to use the skills in their own work. For example, in a lesson in Year 6, the teacher used illustrations to give pupils ideas before they began their own pencil observational drawings. They worked skilfully and effectively, paying good attention to detail and shading as they produced drawings of their trainers. Pupils enjoy art lessons and work hard with a good level of concentration.
102. Leadership and management are very good. The subject leader uses considerable expertise to influence the artwork in school. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils are encouraged to work together and take pride in their achievements.

## **Physical education**

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school organises a good range of sports clubs and competitive teams;
- Teaching of games and dance is good;
- Standards in swimming by the end of Year 6 are below the national level.

### **Commentary**

103. Judgements can only be made on aspects of dance and games, since these were the only aspects seen during the inspection. Discussion with the subject leader indicates that in swimming the school does not achieve the national standard of 80 per cent of its Year 6 pupils being able to swim 25 metres. The school recognises that the unsuccessful pupils do not receive further swimming tuition after the regular sessions in Years 3 and 4. Plans are in place to provide these pupils with extra swimming lessons, to ensure that the minimum national standard is achieved.
104. Pupils work hard to develop their competence in games and dance. Consequently, their fitness levels are high. Older pupils in Year 6 record their physical achievements during circuits of planned physical activity, which enables them to measure their rate of improvement. Pupils are very aware of the importance of exercise in order to maintain a healthy heart and increase their fitness and strength. However, opportunities are missed for older pupils to include ICT skills, such as data logging, to their record keeping. In Year 2, the teaching of dance is good and pupils achieve well

to attain high levels of competence. They respond to the music imaginatively, running, jumping, twisting, turning and gesturing as they interpret the melody of Handel's Water Music. They work together in small groups, responding to the mood of the music by changing their rhythm, the speed, level and direction of their movements successfully. Brief observations of Year 3 and 4 pupils' dance, indicate that this high level of work is continued as they move through the school.

105. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers are skilled and enthusiastic and ask pupils to demonstrate their expertise. Most lessons are challenging and exciting, and both boys and girls achieve well and respond positively to their teachers' exciting lessons, which are enhanced by the use of audio tapes and music sequences. Consequently, lessons move forward with a brisk pace.
106. In other lessons, pupils achieve satisfactory progress because the planned activities are insufficiently challenging and the interpretation of the commercial subject syllabus is not sufficiently rigorous. Occasionally, unsatisfactory organisation results in pupils not having enough time to exercise their hearts, develop their fitness or practise their skills.
107. A very good range of extra-curricular sports activities are planned and well attended by the pupils. Both boys and girls benefit from joining all the organised games and mixed teams that the school runs. However, occasionally, in some lessons, boys and girls are inappropriately segregated to practise skills in cricket and rounders. Year 6 are successfully introduced to many adventurous activities during their annual residential week.
108. Leadership and management are satisfactory. During the eighteen months since appointment, the subject leader has adapted a long-term plan to ensure that all aspects of the subject are taught. This is still being evaluated. The school has gained good support from a local initiative and substantial funds have been allocated to increase the range of equipment.

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

109. Only one lesson was observed in **personal, social and health education and citizenship** (PSHCE) so a judgement on overall provision is not possible.
110. The school places high importance upon PSHCE, recognising it as essential in helping pupils to make healthy lifestyle choices and become good citizens. Work towards gaining 'Healthy School' accreditation and the 'Active Mark' standard demonstrates the school's commitment to these aspects. Sex education and drugs education are taught effectively. The PSHCE programme is well established and ensures all pupils are included in activities.
111. Pupils are very actively encouraged to relate positively to others and be alert to their needs and sensitivities. The 'buddy' initiative paired reading scheme and monitor duties, for instance, enable older pupils to bond with younger ones by sharing responsibility for looking after them and meeting their needs.
112. Pupils successfully debate topical issues in lessons, recently focusing upon whether their school dinners are healthy. Discussion of moral dilemmas helps pupils to distinguish right from wrong behaviour. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, through a storyboard pupils suggested how the characters might feel and respond after

accidentally breaking a window. The teacher respected their ideas and skilfully steered them into deciding that the best course of action was to be truthful and apologetic.

113. The school council gives pupils a real taste of democracy. Classmates in Years 1 to 6 elect representatives, who proudly and confidently canvass their ideas for discussion at full council meetings. Even the youngest councillors realise that their aspirations are sometimes over ambitious, but appreciate that staff will value their views and respond favourably if at all possible. Visiting magistrates have usefully explained to the council their role in society and in administering justice.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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