

INSPECTION REPORT

BYKER PRIMARY SCHOOL

Commercial Road, Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne,
Tyne and Wear. NE6 2AT

LEA area: Newcastle upon Tyne

Unique reference number: 108458

Head teacher: Mrs. L. Bradley

Reporting inspector: Mr. C.T. Hemsley
1609

Dates of inspection: 11th to 15th March 2002

Inspection number: 194494

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Commercial Road,
Byker,
Newcastle upon Tyne,
Tyne and Wear.

Postcode: NE6 2AT

Telephone number: 0191 2656906

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Ms. M. Briggs

Date of previous inspection: 6th May 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1609	Mr. C.T. Hemsley	Registered inspector	Geography	What sort of school is it?
			Equal Opportunities	How high are standards?
				How well are pupils taught?
				How well is the school led and managed?
				What should the school do to improve further?
11468	Mrs. J. Menes	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development
				How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
1575	Mr. M. Tones	Team inspector	Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities.
			Design and technology	
			Physical education	
22667	Mrs. A. Firth	Team inspector	English	
			Foundation stage	
1550	Mr. M. Pinch	Team inspector	Mathematics	
			Information technology	
			History	
32094	Mrs. J. Bennett	Team inspector	Music	
			Religious education	

The inspection contractor was:

Durham Local Education Authority

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Byker Primary is a large community school currently educating 290 boys and girls in the 3-11 age range, including a nursery class. Numbers have fallen over recent years. Since the last inspection the school has undergone significant changes including leadership, staffing, finance and standards on entry. Byker is a distinct community with many special features but suffers from inner city social and economic problems. Pupil turnover is high. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (79%) is well above average and has increased. Pupils start school with standards well below average, these have fallen since the previous inspection. No pupil has a statement of special educational need (SEN), but the proportion of pupils with SEN (33%) is above average and many pupils have additional needs. Most pupils are from a white UK heritage and there is a small number of refugee and traveller children, with 12 pupils learning English as an additional language. The school is part of a small Education Action Zone (EAZ). There is an attached community centre.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Overall effectiveness is satisfactory, following a significant period of change and difficulties from which the school is now making a good recovery. The school has a shared commitment and good capacity to succeed. Attainment of pupils leaving school is well below average. However, standards across the school are rising and most pupils are achieving satisfactorily and responding well. Very good leadership is supporting good management and good teaching and learning. Although improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory, more recent improvements are good. The school is providing satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils are achieving better than might be expected in design and technology (DT), music and religious education (RE) by the end of Years 2 and 6 and in history and information and communication technology (ICT) by the end of Year 2.
- Most pupils are achieving satisfactorily and learning well in the work they are doing currently.
- Pupils have good attitudes to school and have very good relationships with other pupils and adults. They are polite and considerate. Their response is good.
- Very good management and control of pupils ensures that behaviour is good.
- Teaching and learning are good for pupils in Years 1 to 6.
- Teachers show a good concern for individual pupils' welfare.
- The school has a good work ethos and pupils' self-esteem is valued.
- The community makes a good contribution to pupils' learning.
- Parents have positive views of the school, and are very pleased with how their child likes school.
- The head teacher provides very good leadership.
- Good and improving school management.
- The accommodation is of good quality and pupils and staff take pride in it.

What could be improved

- Achievement in English is unsatisfactory for pupils in Year 6 and in pupils' skills in speaking and listening across the school. There is some underachievement in science. Achievement in geography is unsatisfactory. A minority of reception age children do not achieve as much as they should.
- Attendance is well below average and too many pupils arrive late for school.
- Schemes of work and guidance for teachers are not complete and these are weaknesses in curriculum planning.
- Monitoring and evaluation systems, including the role of the subject co-ordinator, do not ensure the quality of provision and improvements to standards.
- Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are unsatisfactory, they are not effective enough in monitoring and supporting progress, setting targets, and guiding curriculum planning.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

When the school was inspected in May 1997 it was found to be good with many good and improving features. Since then overall improvement is unsatisfactory. This is because standards have not risen sufficiently and progress in responding to the key issues has been too slow and ineffective. In November 1999 the Local Education Authority (LEA) produced a detailed and very critical report of the school. Significant changes have taken place since then. An "Associate Head Teacher" ran the school for part of 2000, the present head teacher being appointed in September 2000 and the deputy head teacher in 2001. Improvement in the quality of provision since the LEA review has been good but the effect on attainment at the end of key stages is not yet evident. However, the achievement of pupils in the work they are doing now is mostly satisfactory and better. The school has identified many action points needing attention from 1997 and has properly concentrated on the most important concerns. Teaching is now much better than in 1997. The response of pupils has improved. Strategies for English, mathematics and science are beginning to be effective. Work has begun on providing schemes of work and guidance for lesson planning. Monitoring systems have been introduced. While there is still much to be done the school now has good capacity to succeed.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	E	E*	E*
mathematics	E*	E	E*	E
science	E*	E*	E*	E

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Attainment across the school is below average and for pupils in Year 6 is well below average. Most pupils are doing as well as might be expected in the work that they are doing now. Achievement would be better but older pupils particularly have had gaps in the quality of their learning previously. Improvements in achievement are not yet shown in attainment in national assessments. Standards have not gone up at the same rate as schools nationally. The school has, however, set very challenging targets for improved attainment. Statistical data about pupils' progress should be treated with care because of the high number of pupils with SEN and the high turnover of pupils.

When children start school their standards are well below average. Most of the children of reception age achieve satisfactorily but are still below average. A minority of those children, being taught in a mixed-age class are not achieving enough.

Attainment of Year 2 pupils in 2001 statutory assessments was well below average in reading and writing and in the lowest 5% of schools in mathematics. This was below to well below similar schools. The attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 is below average although they are achieving satisfactorily. Their attainment in English, mathematics and science is still below average. However, they are achieving better than might be expected and reaching average levels in DT, IT, history, music, and RE. Attainment is average in art and PE. Attainment in geography is well below average, an unsatisfactory achievement.

Attainment of Year 6 pupils in 2001 national tests in English and mathematics was in the lowest 5% of schools nationally. English achievement was in the lowest 5% of similar schools, mathematics and science achievements were well below similar schools. Standards in the current Year 6 class are similarly well below average although there is a large proportion of pupils with special educational and other needs. Pupils in this class have not achieved as much as they should have done in English and geography. Their attainment in English, science and geography is well below average and in mathematics, IT, and history it is below average. Nevertheless, they are achieving better than expected and reaching average levels in DT, music and RE. Attainment is average in art and PE.

Across the school pupils are not making enough progress in developing speaking and listening. There is some underachievement in investigative skills in science even though overall achievement is satisfactory. Attainment in literacy and numeracy is below average overall. Pupils with SEN make similar progress to other pupils. Differences between boys and girls are not significant. New pupils to the school, including those with English as a second language, make similar progress to those more established.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils like to come to school and take an interest in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good, sometimes very good, a significant strength. Pupils conduct themselves well. Their good behaviour is an important influence on how well they are learning.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships are very good. Pupils willingly take responsibility and they work well together in pairs and groups. They respond well to the positive school ethos. Pupils are very polite and considerate and show a good deal of respect and a sensible approach.
Attendance	Well below average. Unauthorised absence is too high. Too many pupils arrive late and are tired at the start of the day.

Behaviour is good and improving. Pupils take a pride in their work, their school and their achievements. They are keen to be involved with activities such as the school council and looking after their environment. Pupils new to the school are well integrated and made to feel part of the school by the better-established pupils.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching of English and mathematics is good. Literacy is taught satisfactorily and the teaching of numeracy is good. The teaching meets the needs of most pupils. A minority of children in the reception year who work with pupils in Year 1 do not learn well enough because too many activities are designed for the older pupils. Teachers expect and get good behaviour, motivate and praise pupils, explain the work clearly and set work that is usually just challenging enough. This is because teachers know pupils well. When teaching is less good it is because worksheets are over-used or low-level tasks are given, or marking is unsatisfactory. Homework is used less than average. Pupils' good efforts and responses, levels of concentration and their very good relationships support the learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. Good and effective PSHE provision. Good contribution of the community. Appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Weaknesses in speaking and listening. Schemes of work and guidance for teachers are incomplete and the use of assessment is unsatisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. A significant number of pupils have additional needs but are not on school's SEN register.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory overall. Pupils are well integrated socially.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. Good provision for moral and social development, satisfactory for spiritual and cultural. Below average development of understanding life in other countries.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good, caring support for the welfare of individual pupils. Very good management of behaviour. Procedures for assessment are unsatisfactory in monitoring and supporting progress and setting targets is unsatisfactory.

The school's partnership with parents is good and improving. Although the overall contribution of parents to pupils' learning is less than average, the school rightly values the support from individuals. The school has increased the provision for ICT and this is improving pupils' standards. More needs to be done to promote good attendance and punctuality.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Good. Very good leadership from the head teacher. Good and improving management. Very good organisation, administration and communication. Much improved consultation. Good support from senior management team. There is a good work ethos and pupils' self-esteem is valued.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory with several strengths. Very good leadership. Governors know the school well and help to shape the direction. Some statutory requirements on information for parents not met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school is aware of its strengths and weaknesses. Good response to a supported self-review. An overall system for monitoring and evaluation is not yet in place and the role of the subject co-ordinator is still developing so quality of provision and improvement in standards are not ensured.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school has successfully moved from a significant deficit to a balanced budget while improving the quality of education. Very good budgeting. Good use of external funding.

There are sufficient staff and a good level of extra adult support. Accommodation is more than sufficient, of good quality and is well used. Pupils and staff take pride in this. Learning resources are mostly adequate although there are some gaps that affect the ability of teachers to cover the curriculum effectively.

Significant problems of staff morale, finance, staffing, accommodation, the response of pupils and their behaviour and lack of faith in the school by the community during the period since the last inspection have been effectively tackled and very good progress has been made to reverse those problems. The impact on learning and achievement is evident

The school applies best value principles satisfactorily.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their child likes school. • Their child makes good progress. • Behaviour is good. • Teaching is good. • The school is approachable. • The school expects their child to work hard and achieve their best. • The school works closely with parents. • The school is well led and managed. • The school is helping their child to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework. • Information for parents. • The range of activities outside of lessons.

Parents have positive views of the school and how it is improving. Inspectors agree with what pleases parents most. The amount of homework is less than average. Information for parents, while well produced, is missing some information and parents do need further consultation on aspects such as behaviour, homework and attendance. The range of activities outside of lessons is less than average.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The school is going through a significant period of change in the attainment and achievements of pupils. Improvements are being made in the achievements of pupils through good quality teaching, particularly in Key Stages 1 and 2. Attainments in national assessment at the time of the last inspection were well below average and remain so.
2. Indications are that children start school now with standards well below average, previously new pupils were below average. During the Foundation Stage they make satisfactory progress overall, this is due to the good facilities and a satisfactory quality of teaching. During the last academic year, following a reduction in staff numbers, a minority of pupils in this stage were mixed with pupils in Key Stage 1 and they have also not had continuous education with one teacher. These children have not achieved as much as they should have done in this class because they are asked to work too much in the ways that older pupils are doing. The school rightly has plans to change this organisation.
3. Pupils' achievements in Key Stage 1 are currently satisfactory overall given their previous attainment. This is because teaching and learning are good, sometimes very good. This is helping to overcome gaps in pupils' learning. The average and above average achievement evident in some subjects is because these subjects do not rely so heavily on literacy skills and they are taught satisfactorily and better.
4. In Key Stage 2, pupils' achievements in the work they are doing now are satisfactory given their previous attainment. The average and above average achievement in some subjects is because there has been less reliance on pupils' literacy skills in order for them to learn well in these subjects.
5. Pupils In Key Stage 2 have not achieved as much as they should in English and geography. In English this is partly because the national literacy strategy has not been fully embedded, for instance in the development of phonic work, and there has not been enough attention paid to developing speaking and listening skills. In geography, pupils have had uneven coverage of the curriculum, sometimes with long periods without studying the subject and as a result pupils know little about the wider world. There is also some underachievement in science. This is because there has not been enough work on investigation, until recently there were no guidance papers for teachers and assessment was not used well enough. However, achievement in science overall is satisfactory.

6. The school has set very challenging and aspirational targets for attainment in 2002 but standards of pupils during the inspection were significantly below the targets set. This is despite teaching which is at least satisfactory and frequently good for this year 6 group and a significant amount of extra individual and group support for pupils. There is a large number of pupils in the Year 6 class with special educational and other needs. Pupils in this class have had a particularly disrupted education and despite good teaching currently there is a legacy of underachievement, particularly in English, which has affected their work in other subjects as well. Achievement is better in other year groups, attainment elsewhere in school is higher although still remains below average. Indications are that standards at the end of Key Stage 2 may rise from 2003. Assessment data points to 2 to 3 years of increasing attainment and the overall satisfactory achievement of pupils in their work now is being supported by good quality teaching and learning.
7. Although the trend in attainment in Key Stage 2 statutory assessments is lower than the national average, there have been annual variations, standards having fallen the year after the last inspection, risen for two years, then fallen back again. Similar patterns were found in each of English, mathematics and science results. In Key Stage 1 the pattern is similar in reading, writing and mathematics. Insufficient evidence was available during the inspection to indicate how these levels of attainment related to how well pupils achieved. In fact attainment rose during a time when the LEA reported to governors regarding significant concerns about the quality of educational provision.
8. The school has a small but increasing number of pupils with English as an additional language, including refugees. The school has been open and welcoming and has enabled good social integration of those pupils who respond well to the school's ethos. Their academic progress, while similar to those pupils more established in the school, would benefit from a more focused approach.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils like to come to school and take an interest in their work. They are proud of their school, particularly the recent improvements to the building, and are very friendly and courteous to visitors. They are very polite and considerate. They respond well in lessons because teaching is good and they feel secure and valued as individuals. They participate with enthusiasm in extra-curricular clubs such as the library club and in opportunities for those with an aptitude for sport to attend sessions at the Sports College.
10. Pupils usually behave well in class and sometimes very well. This is because teachers make lessons interesting and keep up a good pace. Pupils listen to the teacher, are very keen to participate and answer questions and are confident enough to risk being wrong. They usually concentrate and work well on their own and are able to work together in pairs or larger groups constructively and amicably. Good behaviour is a significant strength in a school where so many pupils have emotional and behavioural problems. Occasionally pupils become over-enthusiastic or inattentive, sometimes because they have come to school tired in the morning, when teaching is less good or when external factors such as a playground incident have disturbed them. Teachers deal well with behaviour when that occurs.

11. Pupils feel secure in school. There are few instances of bullying, and the school deals firmly with any sexism and racial harassment. No problems were seen in the week of the inspection. Pupils have good relationships with, and showed good concern for, newer pupils to the school. Although most parents are pleased with behaviour in the school and recognise the recent improvements, some do not understand or support the school's behaviour policy and further communication is needed in this respect. The response of pupils is a strength of the school and is better than at the time of the last inspection.
12. Relationships are very good. Staff show respect to pupils and teach them to be polite; pupils respond very well, growing in confidence and courtesy. Because they feel secure they are relaxed enough to be friendly and sensible with adults, and to get on well with each other. Refugee children have been quickly integrated into the school community. Pupils are willing to take on responsibilities such as helping in the dining room and picking up litter in the grounds. For instance, pupils take good care of visitors and ask sensible questions. They are very enthusiastic about the school council through which they are able to have an effective voice in the running of the school. Through discussion they get a broader view of how their suggestions may affect other people, and are able to understand why some things are possible and others not.
13. Pupils' attendance is well below the national average and although most parents are conscientious about informing the school of reasons for their child's absence, unauthorised absence is too high. A significant number of pupils arrive late each day. The school works with the education welfare officer to follow up unexplained or frequent absences and there are some good incentives for attendance, but a much quicker and more proactive approach is needed to persuade all parents of the importance of ensuring their children attend school, for instance, through first absence response and by extending the incentives systems.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

14. Teaching and learning are good overall. They are satisfactory for most pupils in the Foundation Stage. Teaching and learning are good in Key Stages 1 and 2.
15. Teaching is much better than at the time of the last inspection in 1997. At that time around one-sixth of lessons were unsatisfactory and just over one-third good or better. In the LEA review of 1999 one-third of lessons were unsatisfactory. Now only a very small proportion (representing two lessons) is unsatisfactory and over half of all lessons are good.
16. Within the core subjects, teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are good in English and mathematics and satisfactory in science. It was not possible to see a full range of teaching in the foundation subjects and RE. Judgements were made using a combination of lesson observations and scrutiny of work. Teaching and learning are good in Key Stage 1 in art, history and music, and in Key Stage 2 in art, IT, music, PE and RE. They are satisfactory in other subjects, except that it was not possible to make a full judgement in Key Stage 1 about DT, geography, IT, PE and RE. Given the standards in these subjects and the quality of teaching elsewhere it is likely that teaching and learning would be mostly satisfactory and better.

17. The teaching of literacy is satisfactory and of numeracy is good. Teaching of pupils with SEN and pupils with additional learning needs not on the school's SEN register is good, even though the short-term planning for these pupils is relatively weaker than for classes overall. Literacy teaching overall is only satisfactory, even though the teaching of English in lessons is good overall. This is because there is not a whole-school approach that ensures teaching of literacy across the curriculum and work on phonics is weaker. No separate judgement was possible about the teaching of ICT in Key Stage 1, but in Key Stage 2 teaching is good, particularly for younger pupils, this is because teachers are confident of working in the ICT suite and pupils respond well to the tasks. The teaching of ICT is making a satisfactory contribution to work across the curriculum although there are variations within individual subjects. A telling example is in geography where sound teaching of ICT in Key Stage 2 enables pupils to use spreadsheets to record, analyse and display fieldwork data.
18. The needs of most pupils are met because the satisfactory and better teaching pays good attention to the needs of individuals. Nevertheless, the minority of children in the Foundation Stage that are mixed with pupils in Key Stage 1 do not learn as well as they should. Although the school has rightly followed advice on the integration of pupils joining the school and developing English as an additional language, there are missed opportunities for the school to help develop their academic progress. The school does not have a policy and system for the identification and teaching of pupils who are gifted and talented. The more able pupils within classes learn at a similar rate to others although in a small minority of lessons these pupils are not sufficiently challenged.
19. The major features that make teaching successful are the good control and expectations of behaviour, motivation of pupils and the setting of challenging tasks, clear explanations, and the detailed planning supporting the better structured lessons.
20. Motivation is a strong feature of the best lessons. For instance in a music lesson pupils used untuned instruments to accompany chants and maintain a steady beat, the teaching was very good because the teacher set the scene clearly and maintained the focus of pupils by encouraging them to use hands, mouth, feet and voices to create sounds. The teacher's enthusiasm for the work, together with excellent relationships, meant that pupils learned a great deal in the lesson. Because of these approaches pupils made very good progress in reinforcing their musical skills.
21. Very good planning is also very effective in supporting the better teaching. In an English class where teaching was outstanding, pupils learned about scanning texts by reading about sharks. Both teacher and pupils knew what the purpose of the lesson was, how they would know if they had been successful and the activities they would carry out. With a group of pupils who had different abilities the teacher moved easily through explanations, questioning, board work, analysis of texts, use of a video and differentiated group work. This worked so well because the teacher had planned it in detail. As a result pupils learned a great deal and by the end of the lesson were scanning text with some confidence.
22. In the better lessons there is good use of a differentiated approach with work matched to the abilities of different groups within the class. Some of the work that pupils do is very well marked. In these cases pupils are told what they have done well and how to get better. As a result the quality of work improves as pupils try to reach their individual targets. Pupils' good effort and responses, level of concentration and their very good relationships support the learning. Pupils know what they have to do and why.

23. The main features that are barriers to learning are some over-reliance on worksheets, some weaknesses in marking and feedback, some lack of focus and low-level activities. Homework is used less than might be expected and the school has experienced some difficulty in ensuring parents' support for regular work at home.
24. A minority of children of reception class age work with pupils in Year 1 and do not learn enough. This is because too much of the work is directed at activities for the older pupils and there are insufficient opportunities for structured and supported play. For instance, in one lesson dealing with letter formation and simple sentences, reception age pupils were faced with very difficult technical language from the teacher and asked to carry out tasks that did not help them to understand what was meant to be learned. As a result, at the end of a long session of over an hour, pupils had still not learned enough about the intended topic. Opportunities for pupils to develop understanding through meaningful play activities were not used.
25. The tiredness of a minority of pupils, coupled with some lateness at the start of the day has a negative effect on the quality of the learning of those pupils. On occasions the inefficiencies of the school's heating system mean that some rooms are very hot. For instance, in one IT lesson pupils became a little lethargic partly as a result of the heat.

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

26. The school provides a satisfactory range of learning opportunities for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 and in the Foundation Stage. The statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the recommendations of the locally Agreed Syllabus for RE are fully met. Overall, the breadth and balance of the curriculum meets the needs of pupils in the school, appropriately there is a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy. The use of ICT is developing effectively and it is making a satisfactory contribution to other subjects in the curriculum. Further improvements to the range of opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills, particularly in speaking and listening, would help to raise standards in a range of subjects. The curriculum provision has not improved sufficiently since the last inspection.
27. There are suitable policies for all statutory subjects. The school has adopted nationally recommended schemes of work in many subjects as a basis for ensuring that coverage is appropriate and that knowledge, skills and understanding are developed progressively. This approach was introduced as an immediate measure from the current head teacher because insufficient progress had been made in curriculum planning since the last inspection. National strategies for literacy and numeracy have now been implemented successfully and this rightly focuses on raising standards in English and mathematics. However, development of advisory information to support schemes of work in other subjects is incomplete. The school has an appropriate time scale for developing schemes of work in all subjects and has already completed two subjects. Because this supporting advice is incomplete, individual teachers do much of their own planning. This has led to inconsistency in the quality of provision, for instance within geography, which has affected achievement and is a weakness in curriculum planning. The school is also not making sufficient use of assessment to plan improvements to the curriculum, although there has been some useful recent analysis of strengths and weaknesses in the core subjects.

28. There are some times when the curriculum for pupils is unbalanced. For example, in Key Stage 2, in preparing for statutory assessments, many pupils have time for subjects such as PE, music and art reduced as booster classes are taught during the school day. Similarly some subjects are not taught regularly enough. For example, there are long periods, up to two terms, when an individual subject such as geography or history is not taught to some pupils, leading to problems of continuity.
29. The school recognises the importance of providing full access to the curriculum to all pupils and successfully implements its equal opportunities policy. Provision for pupils with SEN is satisfactory and there is good support available from support assistants, learning support teachers and specialist staff. The school welcomes the social and cultural diversity of its pupils. The school could do more to plan for the academic needs of pupils where English is an additional language. Despite that limitation, it is clear that the school is a socially inclusive institution, identified for instance through a clear statement of policy on racial awareness.
30. The school has good links with the local community and a range of agencies. For instance, introduction to nursery is eased for many children by the presence of the playgroup in the community centre run by the school and many pupils also attend the after-school club which provides child care facilities for working parents. Links are beginning to form with other primary schools. Links with the local secondary school, which is a sports college, are good and are improving, partly as a result of both schools being in the recently set up small EAZ. Good transfer arrangements are in place that help pupils settle into their new school and to communicate information on pupils' abilities and learning.
31. The school takes advantage of the sporting facilities and the coaching offered to primary schools. This includes teaching by a member of staff from the secondary school in regular weekly PE sessions for Year 6 pupils to aid transfer between schools, as well as extra-curricular sessions and summer schools in a range of sports. Further extra-curricular opportunities in art and ICT are offered at two other secondary schools and taken up by some pupils. However, for most pupils, there are few chances to participate in team games and other sporting or recreational activities outside of the school day
32. For a school of this size there are fewer than expected additional activities made available to pupils during and after the school day. Some exist because of the voluntary work of individual teachers. There is a popular library club, opportunities to play recorders and a computer club for older pupils. There is a youth centre alongside the school that provides a number of activities which pupils make use of after school. Links are developing so that facilities and information can be shared for the benefit of pupils.
33. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is sound overall and similar in standard to that at the time of the last inspection. The school provides a good and effective curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and for sex and drugs education. This rightly emphasises raising pupils' self-esteem and health awareness. The school's council is becoming an effective and valued means of taking pupils' views into account when making decisions. The school has been successful in achieving the Healthy Schools Award, involving pupils in imaginative learning experiences.

34. Spiritual development is satisfactory. Pupils are given opportunities to consider their feelings and the actions of others during collective worship and in subjects such as English, art, music, history and RE. A visit to a church and to a mosque helps pupils to understand the meaning of the symbols of the Christian religion and of other faiths.
35. Moral development is good. The school promotes clear values, which are reflected in its management of pupils' behaviour. Pupils' views and work are valued throughout the school and pupils are also clear about expected behaviour. As a result, pupils behave well even when not under direct supervision. For instance, one pupil was observed to knock over a litter bin accidentally and then without being prompted clean up the area quickly and without seeking praise or reward. Pupils are developing a strong sense of fairness, learn to share with one another and know right from wrong. Teachers take time to explain why some actions are unkind.
36. Social development is good. Pupils are encouraged to play together, help each other and form good relationships in lessons and during the breaks and lunchtime periods. The school ensures that pupils have contact with a wide range of visitors and helps them to make appropriate contact with them by for example, helping them to decide relevant questions to ask and how to greet them on arrival. Issues such as racism are appropriately dealt with and as a result newcomers to the school are effectively integrated.
37. Cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are provided with opportunities to appreciate the beliefs and traditions of their own and other cultures. A wider cultural dimension is provided through displays and artefacts about traditions and beliefs held by different faiths and examples of art forms from different cultures. Music and the arts are represented in the curriculum and the school provides opportunities for pupils to experience performances and exhibitions outside school. Visits to places in the region, for example to Beamish Open Air Museum, enhance the curriculum and broaden pupils' experience. Pupils also visit St Mary's Lighthouse, Newcastle theatres, a marina, mosque and a church. Sports day is held in a nearby park. Some pupils in Key Stage 2 have benefited from studying the local shopping centre at first hand. Similarly visitors to school, such as two elderly ladies talking to reception children about how the area has changed in their lifetimes and theatre groups and story tellers also enliven and support learning. The school should do more to ensure that pupils have enough understanding of life in different countries, partly this is because there are weaknesses in the curriculum and resources for geography.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The school takes good care of its pupils so that they feel safe and can concentrate on their lessons. This is supported by the calm and welcoming ethos, the emphasis on building self-esteem and the accessibility of the head teacher to pupils and parents. At the time of the last inspection support for pupils' welfare and guidance was good and it remains so.
39. The head teacher is very clear about the importance of dealing immediately and effectively with any concerns about the safety of a child. Satisfactory measures are taken to ensure pupils' health and safety and a small number of minor issues were raised with the school. Staff have received training in procedures for child protection and arrangements are satisfactory. Teachers know what action to take in the event of concerns about any pupil.

40. The school has developed very good links with the school health service through the school nurse, who offers opportunities for consultation, advice and referral to other agencies to pupils' families, as well as contributing to health education in the curriculum. This support will be further strengthened by a successful bid for three new posts working with children and families, linking the school, a local Barnardo's family centre and the adjacent youth centre. The drugs liaison officer from Northumbria Police has also worked closely with the school to help children and parents cope with and combat the problems that follow drug abuse. The school is working towards its third Healthy School Award this year with input from a variety of specialists, theatre groups and sponsors that in the past have contributed to the themes of safety and healthy eating.
41. The PSHE curriculum is relevant to the needs of pupils at this school and helps them develop self-esteem and the ability to make choices and makes them aware of their relationship to other people. The after-school "Smiley Club" is a valuable resource and a very good response to the needs of the community in supporting childcare when parents are not available at the end of the school day. One clear effect of the good care for pupils from a variety of sources is that the school is working well with the community and agencies to support an agenda of inclusion for pupils and families.
42. The school's procedures to promote good attendance and punctuality are not effective enough in dealing with the difficult problems that the school faces. The rewards for pupils are a very useful and successful means of encouraging them to want to come to school but more needs to be done to encourage parents to ensure their children do attend regularly and punctually, for instance by first absence response. Many pupils know the importance of attending school and are keen to gain the award for good class attendance.
43. Procedures to promote and encourage good behaviour and discipline have been very successful. Teachers have high expectations of pupil behaviour and manage classes well to keep disturbances to a minimum and enable effective learning to take place. They have worked together to develop a consistent approach to rewards and sanctions which supports this success. There are appropriate procedures to deal with bullying and racial harassment and as a result pupils feel safe in school. They have confidence in staff, particularly the head teacher.
44. A consistent system for assessment of pupils has not yet been established and applied across the whole school curriculum. The use of assessment in monitoring and supporting pupils' academic and personal development is unsatisfactory. The school's policy for assessment had been completed shortly before the inspection and was not yet fully operational. For instance, individual pupil profiles are to be phased in from the beginning of key stages from now on and so at the time of the inspection there was no easily accessible record of an individual pupil's academic and personal development. Target setting has begun for groups of pupils but is still at an early stage and individual learning targets are not yet in use. Despite this, teachers and the head teacher know individual pupils well.

45. Some progress has been made in the core subjects, particularly English and mathematics where pupils are assessed on a year group and an individual basis and individual progress tracked. An effective system is in place for ICT that is used by Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2. The school has yet to establish and implement a system for the assessment of foundation subjects. Similarly a consistent approach for the identification of pupils with SEN is not followed and outcomes are variable. Consequently a significant number of pupils whom the school recognise as having additional needs are not recorded on the school's SEN register. Required annual reviews are carried out for individual pupils.
46. Educational support and advice for pupils is variable and monitoring is at a very early stage. Information about individual pupils is not collected together to show progress. Target setting has been very recently introduced for groups of pupils and is not yet used for tracking individual pupils and measuring achievement. Marking of pupils' work is not consistent across the school. In a few classes it is poor but in others it is very good, makes a positive contribution to teaching and learning and is valued by pupils.
47. Pupils value, understand and are motivated by the reward system in which spots are awarded in class, stuck to a chart and totalled at the end of the week for the award of prizes. Further certificates and awards, for instance for attendance, are given at Friday assemblies when parents are present and pupils' achievements out of school are also recognised.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. Most parents are pleased with the education their children receive at the school and recognise the improvements made by the head teacher in staff morale, the appearance of the building, pupils' behaviour and links with parents. At the time of the last inspection links with parents were very good. Following difficulties since then, parents now have faith in the school. The school makes parents feel welcome. The head teacher is visible around the building at the beginning and end of the school day to greet parents who bring their children into school, help them with their coats, deliver them into the classrooms and chat to teachers.
49. The school provides parents with very well presented brochures and newsletters that reflect a pride in the school and pupils' achievements. However, full statutory requirements are not met in terms of the information given, for instance in the detail of provision of assessment data. Teachers send information to parents every term on what their children will be learning. Information for parents on pupils' progress through written reports and meetings with teachers is satisfactory and parents are kept well informed on progress of pupils with SEN.
50. The school works hard to support pupils and their families and this begins in reception when all parents are invited to an interview with the school nurse to discuss health care and identify any problems she may be able to help them with. She is available for advice to all parents and can also expedite referrals to other agencies and support groups. In reception parents are also invited to participate in literacy and numeracy courses with their children, to enable them provide help and encouragement with their work at home.

51. There is a well equipped community centre run by the school in another part of the building that provides very good support for parents and other members of the community through a play group and after school club. It also runs a wide variety of courses, with crèche facilities, which can lead to accreditation and supports adults in their search for employment.
52. A few parents make a significant contribution to pupils' learning by helping in school such as by running a popular library club three times a week that helps pupils to enjoy books and improve library skills. The school values parents' help and is preparing a room for their use as this side of school life is further developed.
53. Although much progress has been made to develop links with parents, more needs to be done to improve effective communication with all parents so that they can be more fully informed and consulted on school issues such as behaviour, bullying and homework and involved in supporting pupils' attendance and punctuality.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

54. Leadership and management as judged overall, is good because of the effect that they are having on improving the quality of provision and pupils' achievements.
55. The school has been through some difficult times. When the school was inspected in 1997 it was described as good with many good and improving features. At that time the school was judged to have effective leadership, a clear direction and a successful and positive ethos. However, key issues included standards, curriculum planning, monitoring and meeting statutory requirements. A detailed LEA review in November 1999 was very critical of significant features of the school including standards, teaching and management. At the instigation of the LEA, with the support of the governors, an Associate Head Teacher ran the school for part of 2000, the present head teacher being appointed in September 2000 and the deputy head teacher in June 2001. Since the LEA review there has been considerable effort to improve the quality of education, these have been effective, even though not yet reflected in the results of statutory assessments.
56. The head teacher provides very good leadership. She has effectively tackled issues identified in 1999 of teaching quality, pupil behaviour, confidence in the school, finances and morale, all of which were most important in putting the school back on a good footing. She leads very well by example and takes a very active role in inspiring and motivating staff. The local community has faith in the school, which was previously lacking. The chair of governors also provides strong and knowledgeable leadership and works effectively with the head teacher. The senior staff team provides effective leadership and support as a group of committed professionals. There has been a clear focus of all those in leadership on dealing with urgent issues in the provision of a sound education. There is a good, shared commitment to improvement and this is one of the features that mean that school has good capacity to succeed. The school has now rightly identified the need to define more clearly in its documents the vision of education it aspires to.

57. The support from the governing body is overall satisfactory with some good features. Governors know the school well and the local community in detail and there is some governor involvement in the daily life of the school. They have been fully involved, with support, in making decisions about the future of the school and its changes in leadership and management. They have taken appropriate advice regarding finance and staffing issues although they have been little involved in governor training. They are involved in the development of school strategic planning. Appraisal arrangements and target setting for the head teacher and deputy are in place.
58. Governors need to have more involvement in two areas. Firstly, they need to work with the school to develop a clearer documented educational vision. While they have rightly supported the head teacher in making the changes necessary to improve the quality of provision, they have only just begun the process of ensuring that the school's documented aims reflect practice and are sufficiently focused on raising attainment. Secondly, governors need to do more to ensure that there is an effective system for whole-school self-review, to include standards, provision of education and management. This would help to avoid instances where requirements are not met, such as where the school prospectus is missing a number of statutory and recommended pieces of information.
59. Aspects of management are very good. The head teacher has significantly improved the quality of the accommodation. This has been done in collaboration with staff and parents. The result is an impressive learning environment that has helped to raise morale. Adults and pupils are proud of their building and take care of it. The school has moved from a large deficit budget to a sound financial position by careful planning. Even though one effect was to reduce the number of staff, the quality of education has improved significantly since the 1999 review. There is a useful performance management system that has helped individual teachers to analyse and improve their own performance, linked to an increased level of confidence and morale.
60. School organisational procedures are very good with some excellent approaches to communication and high quality day-to-day administration. Some documentary systems, for instance in the recording of decision making, are very good.
61. The school has made an immediate and very good response to the conclusions of an LEA supported school self-review in November 2001 which had identified much good progress but work still to do, by preparing a detailed action plan for improvement. Some action has already been taken and the plan will help to provide the basis for the next school development plan

62. Some aspects of management need to be improved. Firstly, although the school has developed a policy for monitoring and evaluation through the work of the co-ordinator, and has a sensible approach to extending monitoring from the core subjects to the foundation subjects, they are not yet effective. Subject co-ordinators provide sound leadership in their subjects. They know the main strengths and weaknesses and have satisfactory views on the progress that needs to be made. However, because, except in the core subjects, there has been little opportunity to monitor until recently, they cannot ensure that the curriculum is adequately covered or know what the standards are across the school. There are some areas of good practice however, such as in music where teachers' plans are monitored and there is regular assessment of standards. Similarly, some progress has been made in defining quality standards by the provision of some scheme of work documentation in science and PE. The management of the foundation stage is unsatisfactory but pupils still make satisfactory progress because of the quality of teaching and facilities. Secondly, the school is not yet making effective use of data. Some detailed analysis has been done on last year's statutory assessments to judge areas for development in the core subjects. However, the use of assessment to monitor more widely and to set targets for achievement for individual pupils varies in quality and is overall not effective enough. Thirdly, development planning has been effective in moving the school forward, there is satisfactory school development plan document which contains appropriate priorities in developing the curriculum. However this plan does not link developments closely enough to specific improvements in pupil performance or an overall plan for staff development.
63. The development of work in the literacy and numeracy strategies would benefit from closer attention by the head teacher in working with subject leaders in monitoring and evaluating quality of provision and outcomes.
64. The school makes good use of its resources, finance is appropriately allocated to priorities in the school development plan, specific grants are used well and the school makes good use of external sources of funding. Support from the EAZ is having a positive influence on learning. Budget procedures are very good. Specific grants are used appropriately and the school works hard to find extra finance from a mixture of sources. Practical financial systems are satisfactory and LEA advice from an internal financial audit has been satisfactorily responded to.
65. Principles of best value are used satisfactorily, although the school does not have a specific policy to ensure that it operates as effectively as it could. It is clear that the level of consultation about approaches within the school is good and has improved significantly, the school is aware of information about relative costs of educational provision and relative standards and uses competition satisfactorily when choosing to buy services or materials. For instance, much of the work to improve the school accommodation internally is carried out by low-cost or volunteer approaches. Some financial comparisons with other schools are made.
66. The school is in a small EAZ that has been operating for less than a year. Already the school is benefiting from extra resources in staffing and ICT that are making an immediate impact on the quality of education and the level of social inclusion for pupils.

67. The school is continuing to improve its provision of new technology, there has been a variety of staff training and several teachers are now making good use of ICT to support their own management and planning. The school has benefited from LEA and EAZ support in the use of hardware, software and data analysis. The school is now well placed to develop a consistent and coherent approach to the use of new technology that would help to support staff in planning, assessment, recording progress and school and individual management.
68. Staffing is sufficient and there is an above average level of good quality support from many other adults working through a variety of approaches with pupils. The school is well supported by administrative staff skills and experience.
69. The school building is spacious, well kept and attractively decorated. It provides ample accommodation that is well used to deliver the curriculum, including a large hall, ICT suite, art room and gymnasium. Pupils in the Foundation Stage do not all work in the same part of the school and so the older pupils in that stage do not have as much access to resources as they might. The school building is available for use by the community and has been used by the local authority for public meetings. The purpose-built community centre provides very good facilities that benefit pupils and parents as well as the wider community. Outdoors, spacious playgrounds are well kept and include an enclosed area for younger children, but there is no school playing field.
70. Resources are overall satisfactory to support the curriculum although there are weaknesses in subjects such as geography and RE. The non-fiction library is in an attractive room with a high proportion of new books, appropriately classified, and stored on new shelving. Rigorous weeding out of old stock has meant that the number of books in the library at present is barely sufficient for the size of school, even though the quality is good.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

71. In order to raise standards, improve the quality of provision and the effectiveness of management, the head teacher, governors and staff should:
- (1) Raise standards overall, and particularly in English, science and geography, and for those children in the reception year working with pupils in Year 1 by:
 - in English, making better use of the National Literacy Strategy and introducing a programme of activities to improve speaking and listening;
 - in science, improving investigative work, guidance for teachers and the processes for assessment;
 - in geography, ensuring coverage of the intended scheme of work;
 - for children in the Foundation Stage working with an older class, improve school organisation and the opportunities for planned play.(Paragraphs 5, 98, 108, 110, 118, 120, 121, 135, 138, 79)
 - (2) Work to improve attendance and punctuality by extending the incentive systems and further involving parents in support.
(Paragraph 42)
 - (3) Improve curriculum planning by:
 - completing schemes of work in all subjects;
 - providing better guidance for teachers in planning for individual subjects;
 - ensuring that pupils have more regular access to all subjects.(Paragraphs 27, 28)
 - (4) Improve monitoring and evaluation systems by:
 - developing the current policy to include all aspects of the school within a regular timetable;
 - continuing the developments in the role of the subject co-ordinator to ensure that activities are closely related to ensuring the quality of provision and the standards achieved.(Paragraphs 58, 62)
 - (5) Improve assessment by developing procedures which:
 - provide useful records of individual pupils' academic and personal development;
 - set targets for individuals and groups of pupils;
 - help subject co-ordinators and teachers guide curriculum planning;
 - improve the consistency of marking.(Paragraphs 44, 45, 46, 62)
72. These areas for improvement are already recognised by the school and most are part of the school's planning.

73. In addition to the above, the school may wish to consider including these areas for improvement in the action plan following the inspection, significant references are indicated:

- the approach for pupils with EAL; (Paragraph 8)
- barriers to learning in lessons; (Paragraph 23)
- team games, sport and extra-curricular activities; (Paragraph 32)
- identification of pupils with SEN; (Paragraph 45)
- information for parents; (Paragraphs 53, 58)
- school development planning; (Paragraph 62)
- the school's heating system and the level of resources in individual subjects. (Paragraphs 25, 70).
- preparation of documented vision. (Paragraph 58)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

56

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

60

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	5	23	23	2	0	0
Percentage	5	9	41	41	4	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	34	256
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	201

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	97

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	12

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	53
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	69

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	20	15	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	10	13
	Girls	14	13	13
	Total	25	23	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (74)	66 (74)	74 (89)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	16	17
	Girls	14	15	15
	Total	23	31	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	66 (66)	89 (92)	91 (95)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	19	28	47

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	2	6	9
	Girls	10	11	15
	Total	12	17	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	26 (52)	36 (49)	51 (51)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	2	7	9
	Girls	11	12	16
	Total	13	19	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	28 (56)	40 (60)	53 (57)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	204
Any other minority ethnic group	11

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28.4:1
Average class size	28.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	172

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	34:1
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	60
Number of pupils per FTE adult	34:1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	783,517.00
Total expenditure	764,114.00
Expenditure per pupil	2,457.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	187.00
Balance carried forward to next year	19,590.00

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0.5

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	290
Number of questionnaires returned	74

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55.4	41.9	0	1.4	1.4
My child is making good progress in school.	44.6	48.6	2.7	1.4	2.7
Behaviour in the school is good.	43.8	39.7	5.5	0	11
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31.5	41.1	16.4	1.4	9.6
The teaching is good.	54.1	41.9	1.4	1.4	1.4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40.5	44.6	12.2	2.7	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	55.4	36.5	0	4.1	4.1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52.7	39.2	4.0	0	4.1
The school works closely with parents.	43.2	40.5	8.1	2.7	5.4
The school is well led and managed.	43.2	44.6	4.1	4.1	6.8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	42.5	49.3	5.5	1.4	1.4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21.9	41.1	16.4	4.1	16.4

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

75. Attainment is below average at the end of the Foundation Stage. Children in school now are not on course to reach all of the early learning goals by the end of this stage in learning. Nevertheless, given the low starting point, their achievement is satisfactory and is supported by satisfactory teaching and good facilities. A minority of children do not achieve as much as they should. Management is unsatisfactory. There has not been enough improvement since the last inspection when this stage was a good feature of the school, despite the current satisfactory provision.
76. The attainment of children entering the nursery is well below average, particularly in the area of speech and language. This is lower than at the time of the last inspection. Although some of the children have attended a local playgroup, levels of attainment on entry to the nursery are still well below average. The children make overall satisfactory progress in the nursery and reception but still achieve below average levels in the early learning goals by the end of the key stage.
77. Many children begin school with well below average personal, social and emotional development. By the end of this key stage they make good progress in these areas, achieve well and most children reach the expected levels. They also make good progress in their physical development and reach the expected levels. In mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development, children achieve satisfactorily but are still below average at the end of the key stage. This is also true of the development of skills and knowledge in ICT, where children show increasing confidence.
78. Children' difficulties in speaking and listening affect their progress in the nursery and reception classes and teachers also do not plan sufficiently to improve these skills. By the end of the Foundation Stage children are still well below average in communication, language and literacy, as a result children have not achieved as much as should be expected in these aspects given their previous attainment.
79. A minority of children in the reception year is taught with a class in Key Stage 1. These children are taught away from the main Foundation Stage area. They have not made as much progress as they should have done because the teaching and activities are more suited to the older children, with some unsatisfactory teaching. This class organisation arose following a reduction in staffing to balance the school budget. It has also not been possible to ensure a continuity of teaching because of staff absence. The school has rightly planned to change this organisation at the end of the school year.
80. Overall, the teaching is satisfactory. Relations are positive and teachers create an ethos of safety and security, children are happy in this environment and parents are happy with how well children are cared for. Management of children is good, as is the use of assessment. Teachers know their children well. Children respond well to this and behave well; they are keen to show how well they are doing, taking a pride in their work. Children treat resources with respect and adults ensure that children learn to tidy up and return resources to the correct place. There is insufficient planning to ensure that when younger children are investigating and playing there are adults who can help them move forward.

81. Long-term curriculum planning is satisfactory in ensuring coverage of the early learning goals. Short term planning is overall unsatisfactory despite the satisfactory teaching. This is because it does not ensure sufficient differentiation and as a result, although activities are mostly appropriate, reception age children spend too long on worksheets at the expense of practical activities, particularly those that would support their language development.
82. The facilities for children are good and have a good influence on children' learning. A tidy, ordered and bright learning environment has been created. The range and quality of resources are satisfactory for most children. Opportunities to make the best use of outside provision during lunch times are hindered by older children passing through.
83. The appointment of a team leader for this key stage is recent and she does not teach daily in that phase of education. There is no effective monitoring system. Teachers and adults working within the Foundation Stage do not meet as a separate team and there are no regular planned arrangements to consider common issues. The curriculum needs some review. There are inconsistent approaches to numeracy and literacy, such as in phonics. Some adults deal with misbehaviour inappropriately. Assessment is not used well enough to support teachers in planning for the range of needs of children.
84. Very few parents were observed supporting in classes and documentation to help parents' understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum is weak in comparison with other school documentation. However, parents do come into school to collect their children and so have opportunity to speak to the teacher should they need to do so. Parents are pleased with this arrangement.

Personal, social and emotional development

85. Although children's personal, social and emotional development is well below average on their entry to school, it is the most well developed of their skills by the time they enter Key Stage 1. The teachers and support staff plan activities to ensure that co-operative learning takes place in pairs and in small and large groups. There are clearly demarcated work areas that provide an ordered environment in which children feel secure and confident. Staff set high expectations and children are taught to take responsibility for tidying. Nursery children are beginning to learn to take turns during circle time and in games that involve waiting. They understand that there are codes of behaviour for people to work together. The nursery children clearly understand the reward system of "Golden Stars", which is used effectively by staff to motivate all groups of children. This good progress is built upon effectively in reception classes, as a result most children enter Key Stage 1 having reached the expected levels of attainment identified within the Foundation Stage curriculum for personal, social and emotional development.

Communication, language and literacy

86. At the end of the Foundation Stage children are well below expected standards in these areas. Insufficient emphasis on the development of structured speech and language activities and the extension of vocabulary inhibits attainment in both reading and writing activities. As a result children make unsatisfactory progress.

87. Many of the children entering the nursery are in the early stages of language development. Many are difficult to understand and, though willing, their ability to engage in conversation is limited. Children handle books appropriately in a comfortable library area. One child sat sensibly with a book pretending to read and starting with "Once upon a time...". More able children showed that they understood that print carries meaning. One child in nursery recognised that she could not write yet but would when she got older. Writing materials that included the provision of paper, crayons and pencils were accessible to children but the school should do more to evaluate children's own attempts at writing.
88. Poor language and a limited vocabulary range continues to impede progress for reception aged children. More able children can identify the middle sound in simple three letter words. They know that sentences end with a full stop and in writing activities display good pencil control, forming most letters correctly. However, the majority of children will not achieve the expected goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Progress is impeded because there are too few planned opportunities for promoting language activities through play. Work in children's books indicates that there is too much emphasis on copying under an adult's writing and little evidence of the children's own attempts at writing. Evaluation of children's work showed a limited range of writing experiences with the bulk of the tasks being completed on worksheets. Very often there is an over-emphasis on "tidy colouring" at the expense of understanding the value of the concept. Although aspects of the national literacy are in place for reception class children, methods of delivery do not consistently support the delivery of the learning objective.

Mathematical development

89. Although children in the nursery and reception classes are developing an awareness of mathematics through a wide range of activities they do not reach the expected levels at the end of the reception year.
90. In nursery there is a good quality range of appropriate resources. Table-top activities are set up to develop skills of number recognition 1-5. Teddy bear finger puppets interest the children, as do teacher-made resources. Children are able to relate numbers to sets of "dots" to 5. They can match colours and count accurately with adult help. Good teacher relationships and effective questioning by the teacher ensures that the children remain focused on the game, this consolidates understanding. The teacher assesses children's progress recording the outcomes on a grid. However, the children's limited range of vocabulary and restricted code of speaking skills affects their progress.
91. Too much work for reception age children is completed on worksheets and the emphasis for the child is on "colouring in" rather than on consolidation of the concept of "one more". Insufficient emphasis is placed on developing in children an appropriate mathematical vocabulary. In one lesson observed the teacher used the term "add" throughout the oral session. Alternatives such as "more", "and", "sum" and "total" were not used, this limited opportunity to extend language capacity. Although in this lesson the planning sheet referred to recognition of numbers to twenty, this was not adhered to, the focus being on standard notation to 10 with little opportunity for children to practise skills.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

92. Children do not reach the levels expected by the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Children have access to satisfactory resources and materials that promotes children' interest and learning, their language development hinders their progress.
93. In nursery a display of flower bulbs is used to develop children's concepts of growing as, over the weeks, they see the flowers emerge. Children have opportunity to actively investigate "sweet and sour" through practical science activity. This is also used to promote and develop the children's understanding of scientific language. Very good adult modelling of language is used to promote the use of descriptive language for all groups of children. However, children with SEN in one lesson could respond using facial expression only. There is too much use of worksheets. Children in reception display developing ICT confidence working within the computer suite. A more able child could competently control the mouse as she used the "paintbrush" in the programme "Draw" to draw and colour a house. This was printed out in colour and used to good effect by the teacher to show children what could be achieved.

Physical development

94. The children are likely to attain the early learning goals for physical development by the end of reception and make good progress because of the facilities available. Children in the nursery have opportunity to play outside three times a day. A new climbing frame enhances outdoor provision. Bikes, prams, and wheeled toys are of good quality. Nursery children showed confidence in using outdoor play resources. Two boys displayed very good skills in steering a wooden wheeled "aeroplane" at speed. All children have opportunity to learn to develop skills of peddling, steering, kicking, running and climbing, however opportunities are reduced for those reception children in the mixed-age class. Skills such as cutting, gluing, painting, manipulating brushes and other media, though satisfactory, are less well developed. Reception children are able to use the gymnasium to develop further skills of hopping, walking and running in different directions.

Creative development

95. By the end of the reception year children do not attain standards in line with those expected in development of their creative skills. However, children do have opportunities to cover a range of creative activities including drawing, painting and sticking. A collage of "Peter and the Wolf" was clearly linked to the development of interest in books on display in the library area of the nursery. Children were able to talk about the "nasty wolf" using a limited range of vocabulary. More able children in the nursery were able to participate in singing to songs played on a cassette. They could use actions and remember most of the words, however less able children are unable to maintain concentration and lose interest. The opportunity to develop imagination and communication skills through role-play is not sufficiently highlighted in planning nor is the role of adult intervention and support, so as to promote effective learning for all groups of children. The balance between direct teaching and play has yet to be established consistently.

ENGLISH

96. Attainment is below average in Key Stage 1 and well below average in Key Stage 2. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily in the work they are doing now in both key stages because of good teaching and learning. Pupils currently at the end of Key Stage 2 have not made as much progress as they should have done. There is a legacy of insufficient focus on developing literacy skills. There has not been enough improvement since the last inspection. The school is fully aware of the deficiencies and has a detailed action plan with steps for improvement.
97. Pupils currently in Key Stage 1 are below average, this is better than in 2001 statutory assessments when that year group of pupils were well below average. A comparison with similar schools in 2001 showed those pupils to be achieving less than average. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are well below average, although there is higher, but still below average, attainment in Years 3, 4 and 5. Pupils in 2001 had very low attainment, statistical comparisons showed the achievement also to be very low. There is no discernible difference between the progress of girls and of boys.

Speaking and listening

98. Attainment is well below average in both key stages. Although keen to engage in conversation a significant number of younger pupils are difficult to understand. Their range of vocabulary is very narrow and their expressive language is poor. There are variations between individual pupils, a more able boy in Year 2 was able to explain confidently the difference between a list and a story using relevant language. He was able to listen carefully and ask and respond to questions. Replies were sensible and appropriate. However, the majority of pupils in Key Stage 1 struggle to understand when involved in conversation and discussion. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are also well below average in speaking and listening skills. Pupils' limited vocabulary affects their ability to learn in some other subjects and affects progress in some individual lessons. A less able group of pupils in Year 6, involved in text marking activities using the computer, clearly understood what it was they were to do but could not explain verbally.
99. Teaching is good and in subject lessons teachers usually endeavour to use appropriate technical vocabulary. Although good teaching and effective questioning is supporting pupils' learning, teachers do not plan specifically for opportunities to develop speaking and listening activities in a progressive and structured way and there has not been an overall plan to develop pupils' skills effectively. As a result pupils do not achieve as much as they should. Improvements are being made through the national literacy strategy.

Reading

100. Attainment is below average in Key Stage 1 and well below average in Key Stage 2.
101. From well below average attainment on entry into Key Stage 1 pupils are currently making satisfactory progress in reading as a result of good teaching. The most able pupils in Year 1 are able to use whole-word recognition in familiar texts whilst middle attaining pupils try to use simple decoding techniques. There is a very wide range of ability in reading in Year 2. The better readers read with some expression. More able readers understand what they have read but recount briefly and with some difficulty. More able and middle attaining pupils could remember the title of a favourite book whilst a less able stated that he did not have one because "I don't read".

102. In Key Stage 2 attainment is well below average and although pupils across the key stage are now learning satisfactorily because of good teaching, the achievement of pupils currently at the end of the key stage is below what should have been expected. Pupils do not consistently apply decoding or word attack skills and very few pupils display phonological awareness. Most pupils read hesitantly with only a very few more able pupils able to talk confidently about characters they have read about. Skills of inference and prediction are in the early stages of development for only the most able pupils. Pupils indicated a reliance on “reading scheme” material with more able pupils reading “free readers”. Pupils do not have a broad repertoire of reading experiences.
103. The school is beginning to address the issue of teaching phonics effectively. A teaching assistant worked with a small group of pupils using a teaching programme advocated by the national literacy strategy. Her explanations were clear and precise and praise was used to good effect. The pupils used white boards and felt pens to record their answers. They made good progress and showed that they could “sound out”, read and spell simple three letter words. The lack of effective work in phonics previously is one reason for pupils not having made enough progress.
104. Features other than teaching need to be developed further in order for pupils learn to read effectively. The school needs to improve its approach to the teaching of reading and ensure that strategies advocated by the NLS are embedded into planning. Little guided reading was observed during the week of the inspection. Reading records are not used effectively and consistently across the school. There is also an inconsistent approach to the taking of books home by pupils and of the use of parents to support pupils’ reading development. Only a small proportion of parents supports the school on a regular basis. Their support is valued and they are effective in their role as “Better Reading Partners”. The library has recently been refurbished, it is both colourful and comfortable, but the quantity of books is small. Pupils enjoy opportunities to work within the library

Writing

105. Attainment is below average in Key Stage 1 and well below average in Key Stage 2.
106. By the end of Key Stage 1 only a minority of pupils can write in simple sentences using capital letters and full stops, this is despite good quality teaching. Spelling is generally weak even though pupils now have regular spelling practise. Only the more able pupils can spell a range of simple common words consistently. In Year 2 pupils are being taught to join letter strings together. This will support both their spelling and handwriting development and should continue. The focus of much of the written work is based on the completion of worksheets. There are limited opportunities for pupils in Key Stage 1 to write freely and independently, which hinders progress. The school should ensure that staff trained to deliver NLS programmes to develop early writing skills do so and that alternative methods, other than worksheets, are considered.

197. Pupils currently at the end of Key Stage 2 display significant gaps in knowledge, skills and concepts needed to become a proficient writer and pupils have not made as much progress as they should have, although the achievement of pupils elsewhere in the key stage is satisfactory. Handwriting is often untidy showing fluctuations in size, shape and style. Although teaching is currently good there has not been an effective overall approach to develop writing skills consistently. Writing skills are not consolidated or extended as worksheets are used too frequently. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to write in an extended form. Writing is not always marked thoroughly and too much of the work is incomplete. Pupils have insufficient time to consolidate and practise skills taught. Less able pupils are well supported by teaching assistants. Effective use is made of additional adults, primarily to give extra help to the very high proportion of pupils identified as having SEN.

Literacy

108. The national literacy strategy has been adopted into practice and resources purchased designed to support effective implementation. Staff have been trained to deliver intervention strategies, acquire new skills and become conversant with new support materials. However, not all of the skills, strategies and support materials are fully embedded into practice. Further to this, teaching across the curriculum is not yet focused strongly enough on raising literacy standards, particularly in speaking and listening. As a result, although the teaching of English is good, that of literacy is only satisfactory overall.
109. Pupils' attitudes to lessons are positive in both key stages. Pupils throughout the school are learning to work independently when the teacher is working with a guided group. Skills of concentration are developing and the ability to stay on task for extended periods is improving. All groups of pupils collaborate and enjoy good relationships in an inclusive ethos. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well, as a result even the most challenging pupils generally conform and try to please.

General

110. The subject leader for literacy and English is knowledgeable and has ensured that staff have had access to national training. Time has been allocated for monitoring. The school should consider strategies to involve the head teacher more fully in the monitoring, evaluation and implementation of literacy developments in order to ensure that appropriate targets to raise attainment are identified and addressed. The use of ICT in lessons is making a satisfactory contribution to learning in English; for instance a lesson using an interactive white board had a very positive effect on encouraging pupils in their spelling. Assessment, although showing some recent improvements, is not yet effective enough in supporting increasing standards.

MATHEMATICS

111. Standards of work seen in mathematics are currently below average at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. However, given pupils' previous attainment and the current good quality of learning, achievement is satisfactory. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.
112. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make sound progress and achieve satisfactory standards. They can count and sequence numbers in multiples of two, five and ten and can recognise and write a range of number patterns. These are used effectively to introduce the basic steps of multiplication. Pupils are learning how to collect and use information and can tally, list and organise data in tables. Most know how to make pictograms and block graphs. The most able can discuss and explain their results without the help of adults. By the end of the key stage pupils can solve simple problems using small numbers involving money. In their oral counting and written work pupils are familiar with zero. Pupils gain a sound understanding of the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes. They are familiar with the associated vocabulary and use angles, faces, sides and edges with confidence. Pupils become familiar with clocks but make slow progress in learning to tell the time. In the early stages they learn how to read times on the hour and half hour, but have difficulty using the vocabulary associated with more complex times. Pupils progress more slowly at the beginning of the key stage where much of their work consists of completing worksheets. By the end of Key Stage 1 a greater range and variety of tasks enables them to progress much more quickly.
113. The achievement of most pupils at Key Stage 2 is in line with their ability. Younger pupils often make good progress while those at the end of the key stage have more difficulty with basic calculations when working on topics such as angles, money and time. Pupils continue to develop their knowledge of how numbers operate through work on place value. They learn multiplication and division facts that they use progressively in problem-solving and practical situations such as using money. Throughout Key Stage 2 there is particular emphasis on numbers and calculations although other aspects of mathematics such as measures, money, time, angles and shape are adequately addressed. They extend their earlier work about the properties of shapes and by the time they are eleven the more able can understand the relationship between numbers of edges, sides, angles and faces in two and three-dimensional figures. Older pupils also know how to calculate and measure the angles of simple figures. Their tasks on collecting, organising and representing data are also extended in complexity and difficulty and it is usual to use computers to support this work.
114. The quality of teaching in mathematics is good in both key stages. In lessons where teaching is good a significant contribution is made to pupils' achievement and progress. These lessons are well planned and organised and good use is made of a wide range of materials. The pace of lessons is brisk and tasks for pupils and questions are challenging. Teachers generally provide tasks that are well matched to pupils' ability although in lessons that are less effective these can be routine, unimaginative and do not allow pupils sufficient independence in their learning. In some classes there is an overuse of worksheets that are limiting to pupils' learning. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and they respond by behaving well, working hard and answering questions enthusiastically in most lessons. Classroom assistants usually provide useful support, particularly for less able pupils, however in some lessons they are not deployed to best advantage.

Numeracy

115. The national numeracy strategy has been satisfactorily introduced and teaching is good. Staff training has taken place appropriately. Most teachers have a good knowledge of mathematics and they are beginning to employ the national numeracy strategy in more advantageous ways for the pupils that they teach. Pupils respond well to numeracy lessons and enjoy the variety of challenges and short-term activities that teachers organise. Some of the numeracy developments are beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' understanding of the mathematics that they use in other subjects. For instance, in one ICT lesson while pupils used a spreadsheet to calculate costs of a shopping list, some were able to add the list mentally using numeracy strategy techniques. ICT is making a satisfactory contribution to the teaching of mathematics.

General

116. The mathematics curriculum is covered satisfactorily. There has been some monitoring of teaching that has helped to support teachers. Assessment is not yet used well enough to set individual pupils' targets for improvement. However, the school has used a LEA analysis of the outcomes of statutory assessments to identify strengths and weaknesses in attainment and this approach, together with the introduction of group targets, is a positive step. The marking of work in mathematics varies between being very poor and excellent. Where it is best, teachers set small challenges for pupils that extend their thinking and inform them of their next stage of learning in a suitably personal way. Where marking is poor it is because of the limited quality and quantity of feedback.

SCIENCE

117. Standards are below average in Key Stage 1 and well below average in Key Stage 2. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily because of sound teaching although there is some underachievement in pupils' investigative skills. Not enough improvement has been made since the last inspection.
118. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils can do practical investigations, for example when comparing the organs of different plants. They make mostly accurate observations but can only recall a small range of facts and are often unsure about the names for parts of a plant. They are less able at recognising fair tests or at predicting the outcomes of investigation. By the end of Year 6 pupils' skills at conducting investigations remain below those expected and pupils are not making enough progress in this aspect. Most pupils know of fair testing but too few are able to explain how this can be put into practice. Higher attaining pupils know a small range of scientific principles. For example, with a little support they understand the principles of resistance and some can give real life examples of how this is used during parachuting. However, middle and low attaining pupils, whilst knowing the scientific words, are unable to provide a satisfactory explanation of their meaning. Pupils are learning to apply scientific principles to practical situations, as when Year 6 investigated the effects of applying forces to an elastic band. In this example they were able to make accurate predictions but were unable to apply this skill to an appropriate range of scientific events. Pupils, including those with SEN, are acquiring a range of knowledge and skills about scientific phenomena and higher attaining pupils extend their thinking and scientific skills.
119. Pupils show positive attitudes to science throughout the school and listen carefully to teachers. Relationships with teachers and other adults are very good and they are well behaved both in and out of the classroom. Pupils are enthusiastic and keen to be involved, especially when working in small groups. They are less willing to take responsibility for their own decisions and show initiative in investigations of a more open-ended nature.
120. The teaching of science is satisfactory in both key stages. Where teaching is good, teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the activities planned. The wide range of practical activities prepared for pupils has a positive impact on pupils' interest, enjoyment, attainment and progress. Lessons are well organised with good working routines established. Pupils understand the purpose of lessons and teachers use good questions and discussion to support and extend pupils' learning. Lessons have clear learning objectives and are well matched to pupils' abilities. Where teaching is less effective too much emphasis is put on the use of worksheets rather than pupils recording the investigation they have been doing. Sometimes teachers provide too few opportunities for pupils to design their own experiments. ICT is making a satisfactory contribution to the subject.
121. A science policy is in place, and the scheme of work is based upon nationally produced schemes. The school has recently completed some documentation that helps to define quality standards and expectations in the teaching of science as part of the subject scheme of work. This is a useful step forward to build upon. However, guidance to help teachers plan science lessons effectively and ensure that skills are progressively learned is insufficient. Procedures for the assessment of science are unsatisfactory and are not used sufficiently to plan the curriculum. Recent analysis of the results from statutory assessments and the beginning of target setting for groups of pupils are useful starts to improving assessment.

ART AND DESIGN

122. Standards are average and pupils are achieving satisfactorily because of good teaching and effective preparation. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.
123. Although a limited number of lessons were observed during the inspection, the attractive display and range of pupils' work showed that pupils' work is valued and pupils attain satisfactory standards.
124. In Key Stage 1 pupils are given activities and experience to develop a range of skills through painting, drawing, printing and working with textiles. They are able to use ICT to produce interesting pictures and have access to the programme "Draw". Pupils use their cutting skills to work with a wide variety of materials that include card, foil, wood and leather. For example, they worked with materials to produce a tile collage that could be either rough or smooth. In this lesson pupils had the opportunity to improve scissors control and extend their knowledge of the properties of materials. They can distinguish between rough and smooth and are beginning to develop simple design techniques as they apply the range of fabrics to their tile. Observational drawings included in a class museum are of good quality as are the "Pirate Self-portraits" produced by pupils in Year 2.
125. Pupils in Key Stage 2 use increasing detail and accuracy in observational drawings. In a Year 6 class pupils were observed as being fully engaged in sketching activities based on a teacher-painted exemplar of Durham Cathedral. They learned to use shapes to support their understanding of composition skills used in pictorial and landscape settings. Pupils had opportunity to contrast ideas and methods used by the teacher to those of their own. Other work observed indicated that pupils had opportunity to work in the style of William Morris and Mark Rothko.
126. The quality of teaching observed is good overall. Although planning is brief, pupils are given a detailed verbal outline of what it is they are to learn. Preparatory work needed for lessons is thorough, though the quality of resources is variable and not always appropriate for the lesson. For example, the paper used by pupils involved in observational drawings of Durham was of poor quality. Despite this the work produced was of a good standard. Where teaching was good the teacher moved around the group of pupils offering specific advice, support and guidance. The teacher's personal level of expertise within the art curriculum ensured that pupils were provided with high quality individual feedback. This supports progress across all levels of ability. Where teaching was not as good, opportunities to develop skills were missed by the teacher, and some inappropriate class control impeded learning.
127. Overall, pupils make sound progress, including pupils with SEN. Effective use of praise by teachers ensures that pupils respond positively. Teachers encourage pupils, this coupled with sound advice instils in pupils the confidence to try and as a result all groups of pupils make progress.

128. The school has recently adopted the nationally developed art schemes of work. As yet the units of work assigned to each class are not supported by any school-produced guidelines for teachers. The impact of other national initiatives, designed to improve basic skills, has resulted in art being assigned a lower priority area for development. However, the recent refurbishment of a classroom in which to deliver whole-class art lessons will significantly enhance teaching and learning opportunities in the school. The management role of the subject leader within the school is underdeveloped. At present there is no system to ensure that pupils' work is systematically assessed, standardised or moderated. The quality of art and craft display in the school is good. This, coupled with the recent redecoration in the school, ensures that the environment is colourful and stimulating for both adults and pupils. ICT makes a satisfactory contribution to the subject, but opportunities to enhance the curriculum in a planned development of those skills need to be introduced systematically.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

129. Pupils' attainment in DT is average by the end of both key stages and achievement is good. Teaching is at least satisfactory with good features in Key Stage 2 although it was not possible to make a judgement about Key Stage 1. Sound progress has been made in standards since the last inspection, but work to develop management is more recent.
130. By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils can develop simple ideas independently. Few have begun to evaluate and suggest improvements to their designs. Pupils use a selection tools and can select suitable materials to cut out, shape and join models. For example, the African masks are well constructed. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have begun to think creatively about designs, but are less able to produce accurate plans. Most pupils have a sound understanding of the design process and younger pupils in the key stage can evaluate their products and suggest sensible ways of improvement. They are less knowledgeable of a range of materials and their properties. Most pupils are developing their skills in the use of a range of tools. Pupils are acquiring a range of design skills progressively and are able to generate ideas. They are less effective at clarifying their ideas through discussion as well as considering the strengths and weaknesses of their design. They are beginning to make use of hand tools with due regard to health and safety.
131. Pupils' approach to their work is generally good at both key stages, showing interest and the ability to maintain concentration. They can explain their constructions and look forward to completing the task. Pupils are not usually confident when working independently and rarely take the initiative. They share resources to good effect and are appreciative of each other's work.
132. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory with good features. Planning is detailed and includes ideas for the development of design skills. For example, with tuition from the teacher, pupils in Year 6 were able to improve their cutting, folding and building skills during the construction of toys. Pupils are well supported and effective use is made of resources to support learning. Focused questions are used to establish understanding and extend thinking and pupils are encouraged to concentrate on the production of quality products.

133. Teachers are supported by a sound policy, but guidelines are not yet in place to identify the skills to be taught as pupils progress through school. Planning is supported by good materials. A coherent assessment strategy is not in place that would enable teachers to build on pupils' previous learning. Resources to support teaching and learning are generally satisfactory. The school needs to plan how pupils develop their skills in DT with the aid of ICT.

GEOGRAPHY

134. Attainment is well below average in both key stages, pupils do not achieve as much as they should. No judgement is made on teaching in Key Stage 1, but it is satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Not enough improvement has been made since the last inspection.
135. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have some limited knowledge about the local area and can describe some nearby places that they have visited with the school. However, they do not know about more distant places within or beyond the UK. There has been some teaching about the travels of "Barnaby Bear" but there is insufficient retained work to demonstrate how well the curriculum intentions have been met or to help teachers know how well pupils are achieving.
136. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have similar limited knowledge of the wider world. For instance, they can remember looking at Australia at some point but can remember little about the country. They are uncertain of the ideas of different types of settlements and name the parts of the United Kingdom only with support. Teachers have worked with pupils to investigate whether it would be a good idea to pedestrianise the local shopping area. This has had a good effect because pupils can describe their fieldwork experiences and why they collected information about traffic movements. They also describe the good and bad points of the local area.
137. Some of the teaching supports pupils' learning very well through very good and detailed marking which helps pupils to improve their work. However, some other work is poorly marked, with comments only at the end of a substantial investigation and important mistakes by pupils left unchecked.
138. The subject co-ordinator is keen for progress to be made in the subject. She has set out intentions for coverage of topics across year groups but there has not been enough monitoring to ensure that those intentions have been met and what the outcomes were. There are not enough resources for the subject and although a start has been made on improving provision for this subject, it is not an immediate priority on the school development plan. This is one reason why pupils' knowledge of the wider world is unsatisfactory. The lack of resources makes it difficult for teachers to cover the curriculum other than by over-reliance on worksheets and home made materials. Further, the curriculum has been planned with long gaps between periods of learning. There is insufficient supporting guidance for teachers to know how to approach the units of work. ICT is making a sound contribution in Key Stage 2, and the co-ordinator is making a good start on teaching pupils to use spreadsheets to record fieldwork data and then graph results.

HISTORY

139. Pupils' attainment in history is average in Key Stage 1 and below average in Key Stage 2. Their achievement is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. This is because of the good teaching in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory teaching in Key Stage 2. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection but further work is needed to improve monitoring and assessment.
140. In Key Stage 1 the youngest pupils are beginning to understand the passage of time through the use of artefacts such as teddy bears, new, older and oldest. They collect pictures of when they were babies and show a keen awareness of how old they are. Older pupils develop their sense of time in a more formal context, particularly through their work on the Victorians. They can sort artefacts by age and are interested to know the use of those that they do not recognise. Pupils are beginning to make associations between the past and present in terms of what people did then and what they do now. Pupils' interest, learning and understanding have been heightened and extended by their visit to Beamish Open Air Museum where they were able to experience many aspects of Victorian life. The teacher's display work makes a good contribution to this learning.
141. More able pupils in Key Stage 2 are keen to demonstrate their factual knowledge and discuss their information. Middle and lower ability pupils often find this difficult because their oral skills are less well developed. However, they demonstrate satisfactory levels of understanding and most have a sound understanding of chronology. Pupils use books, artefacts and pictures to gather evidence that they are beginning to learn to interpret. Such a connection was made when discussions about a Victorian seaside pier were associated with other work done by a famous Victorian engineer. From their research pupils have completed extended written work about events such as the Roman invasion of Britain, the Tudors and the Egyptians at the same time extending their literacy skills. In upper Key Stage 2 too much work, such as that about exploration in the Middle Ages is heavily based on worksheets that do not extend pupils' history or literary skills sufficiently. Pupils make good progress at the beginning of the key stage but this is not sustained when they are older.
142. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good and is satisfactory at Key Stage 2. In the best lessons the purpose is clear and pupils know what they have to do and understand what they are expected to learn. Teachers make good use of artefacts and other materials to challenge and encourage pupils to predict and to collect information. In Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2 skills such as drawing inferences from observation and using data are carefully taught. Pupils are given opportunities to extend their work independently and share their findings with others. In these lessons the response of pupils is good and they are well behaved. No lessons were seen in upper Key Stage 2 but the range and quality of pupils' work indicates a less enthusiastic and imaginative approach.
143. The curriculum for history is based upon nationally produced schemes of work that, if followed, will ensure sufficient use of IC, but there is insufficient guidance for teachers. Assessment of pupils' progress has had little effect in contributing to the raising of attainment. Monitoring arrangements are not yet properly in place. The school arranges a limited number of educational visits that are supported by parents. These make a significant contribution to the teaching and learning of history.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

144. Pupils' attainment in ICT is average at Key Stage 1 and below average at Key Stage 2. This is a good achievement for pupils in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory achievement for pupils in Key Stage 2. No judgement is made about teaching in Key Stage 1 but it is good in Key Stage 2, although it is weaker in the upper part of the key stage with corresponding effects on pupils' progress. Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory although there has been recent better improvement with the introduction and use of new resources.
145. Pupils in Key Stage 1 learn how to use the keyboard and mouse effectively and to print documents in the initial stages. They later acquire useful word-processing skills and draft work on the computer. Pupils know how to find insertion points using the cursor and insert appropriate letters, spaces and punctuation. Drawing, painting and graphics packages are used to good effect, providing a suitable context for developing skills such as saving work, loading software from both disk and CD-ROM and entering data. Some pupils work with the EAZ learning support assistant using computers to support their work in literacy and numeracy. Most can navigate CD-ROMs with a little help to complete tasks and gather information. A little work has been done in control technology using the "Pixie". Pupils' work indicates a wide range of skills that most pupils can use effectively.
146. At Key Stage 2 pupils learn more advanced skills and use word-processing packages, graph data in several formats and decorate their work by incorporating art images with text. Pupils' work indicates that they can change fonts, cut, paste and copy, use spell check systems and organise text on screen. There is an evident progression of a number of skills that is successively built upon through the key stage. However, the range of activities and applications does not match the range of skills they acquire. For instance, the use of databases and the Internet to access sources of information are not frequent activities.
147. The quality of teaching in ICT at Key Stage 2 is good, however while the requirements of the National Curriculum are met, there is over-emphasis on learning technical machine skills. Teachers use electronic classroom aids such as a "Smart-board" effectively in connection with ICT and other lessons such as extended literacy work on spelling patterns. Pupils follow well-known routines such as logging on with ease. Teachers provide good individual and group instruction for pupils and provide opportunities for them to pursue their ideas independently. In most lessons pupils are well behaved and concentrate on their tasks. Pupils are given choices and can make their work as technically challenging as their skills will allow. Teachers have a satisfactory level of ICT skill and knowledge and are confident and competent working in the ICT suite. Pupils respond well to their tasks but these are not always useful and serve only as a vehicle for the improvement of technical skills.
148. The school has a clear scheme for the development of pupils' ICT skills but this is not accompanied by suitable contextual tasks through which to apply them. At Key Stage 1 and in lower Key Stage 2 teachers keep extensive portfolios of pupils' work but there is no formal assessment of what pupils do to inform and guide their future learning. The ICT curriculum is well supported by the frequently used suite of computers. It is usefully extended through an active computer club and weekly opportunities for parents to use the school's computers to develop their personal ICT skills.

MUSIC

149. Attainment is average in both key stages and achievement is good. This is because there is good teaching in each key stage. Satisfactory improvement has been made since the last inspection.
150. Teachers plan lessons well and ask pupils probing questions that make them think hard about their work. For example, pupils in Year 6 compared the lyrics of a current chart song with a song written in the 1940s. Pupils make good links between the lyrics and the feelings of the songwriter. They explain the lyrics of a song by Vera Lynn by describing how it reflected life during the Second World War. A significant number of pupils find it difficult to fully articulate their thoughts and feelings because of their limited speaking skills.
151. Teachers have high expectations of their class and plan interesting work that is appropriate for the age of their pupils. As a result, pupils behave well and try hard. Pupils are enthusiastic learners. Year 2 pupils enjoy using their voices, their hands and their feet to provide musical accompaniment to poems and they use percussion instruments to accompany songs. They maintain a steady beat and control their playing in order to observe silences and to play in time with others.
152. In Year 6 good links are made between music and other subjects, for example an English lesson about song lyrics was used well to extend and consolidate pupils' understanding of terms such as "phrase", "chorus" and "tend".
153. Satisfactory opportunities are provided for Key Stage 2 pupils to extend their instrumental playing. However, there are insufficient opportunities for all pupils to listen to and respond to music, beyond music lessons. For example, insufficient use is made of music to create atmosphere and promote reflection within acts of collective worship. Nevertheless teachers make good use of time in assembly for pupils to practise singing and listen to music, with a good emphasis on developing confidence in performance.
154. A scheme of work has been recently introduced which ensures coverage of the music curriculum. Teachers' planning is monitored to ensure that what is being taught is appropriate and that pupils' progress is assessed at the end of each unit of work, these are good approaches. Current assessment systems do not provide a sufficiently clear picture of pupils' progress in order to inform planning for their next steps in learning.
155. Resources are generally satisfactory, however the lack of appropriate software means that insufficient use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

156. Attainment is average in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and pupils are achieving satisfactorily. No judgement is made about teaching in Key Stage 1 but it is good in Key Stage 2. Standards are similar to at the time of the last inspection and although more progress should have been made in management recent developments are more positive.

157. Most pupils are aware of issues related to the health advantages gained from exercise. Pupils can invent a range of appropriate ways to move with posture and balance. For example, in a Year 3 lesson on throwing and catching, pupils learned how to throw under-arm and over-arm. They are less able to evaluate performance or suggest ways of improving movements. Pupils' basic fitness levels are satisfactory. Pupils' progress, including those with SEN, is satisfactory when planning and performing movements. In Year 6 the quality of movement when performing chest passes was improved by learning to "follow the ball". Here the use of a specialist teacher from a local secondary school enabled pupils to make very good progress.
158. The pupils' attitudes to PE are good throughout the school. Pupils dress appropriately and they change efficiently. They work well in groups and in pairs in virtually every context. Pupils with physical difficulties participate in appropriate activities and enjoy doing so.
159. The teaching of PE is good in Key Stage 2. The best lessons are seen when the teacher maintains a brisk pace of activity and pupils are given periods of practice to learn and adjust to new movements or skills. This quality is especially evident when teaching is very good, for example when "expert" teachers are used from outside the school. However, not all pupils have the opportunity to benefit from these experiences, as when some attend, for example, a "booster" class held at the same time. The best lessons have vigour and the pupils work physically hard. When used, demonstrations are effective in helping pupils learn to recognise elements of good performance.
160. Given the size of the school there are few opportunities for pupils to take part in a range of out-of-school sport. There are some good opportunities for higher attaining pupils but these are not extended for all. Swimming forms a regular part of the curriculum, which is based on the LEA scheme. Good resources, notably the gymnasium, are available to support pupils' learning. The co-ordinator has recently produced a scheme of work for PE and this provides a sound basis for further work to support teachers in their planning. There is insufficient planning and opportunities to ensure that ICT makes a sufficient contribution to the subject. The lack of a playing field causes some difficulty for teachers and pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

161. At the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils attain in line with expected levels described within the Agreed Syllabus. Pupils are achieving better than might be expected. No judgement is made about teaching in Key Stage 1; it is good in Key Stage 2. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection but there has been insufficient progress in management. Nevertheless, recent changes to develop monitoring are a good basis for development.
162. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is good, consequently pupils make good progress and achieve well. Although good overall, progress within Key Stage 2 is inconsistent. The school does not have a detailed scheme of work, which means that pupils' learning is not consistently built upon.

163. Teachers plan lessons well. They challenge pupils in order to extend their learning and give time for pupils to reflect in order to explore depth of meaning. This was evident in a Year 4 lesson when pupils were asked to consider different types of love, and were challenged to examine their own feelings. Similarly, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils were asked to consider their own actions and the effect that these have upon others. As a result pupils thought carefully about their own behaviour and the negative impact which it can have upon the lives of others.
164. A good balance is achieved between learning about religion and learning from religion. Year 2 pupils talk knowledgeably about artefacts from the Jewish Faith. They use the technical terms “tallit”, “kepa” and “Torah” with confidence and they understand their significance to Jewish people. They relate this to things that are special to them in their daily lives. Similarly pupils in Year 5 consider why Christians behave in the way that they do and they identify what the parable of “The Good Samaritan” means for them today.
165. Teachers use sound methods that help pupils to learn well. Year 2 pupils used DT skills to make replicas of religious artefacts after exploring authentic materials within the classroom. Although the range of resources generally available is satisfactory, there is a need for further extension in order to reflect all religions studied. Insufficient use is made of ICT to promote learning.
166. The co-ordinator remains up-to-date in relation to new developments through membership of a local RE network group. All teachers plan their work from the locally Agreed Syllabus making individual decisions about the range of work covered. Pupils’ knowledge about religion is assessed at the beginning and end of each unit of work in order to inform planning. There is a need to develop a scheme of work that will provide a clear framework from which teachers can plan, and which will ensure pupils’ knowledge and understanding is systematically built upon. There is no systematic approach to monitoring and evaluation.