

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **NENTHEAD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Nenthead

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112116

Head teacher: Miss C Breyley

Reporting inspector: Mrs A Pullan  
30839

Dates of inspection: 26<sup>th</sup> February and 1<sup>st</sup> March 2001

Inspection number: 186378  
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:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Nenthead Alston Cumbria
Postcode:	CA9 3LS
Telephone number:	01434 381400
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr I Paterson
Date of previous inspection:	November 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

OIN	Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
30839	Mrs A Pullan	Registered inspector	Mathematics	How high are standards?
			Science	The school's results and achievements
			Religious education	How well are pupils taught?
			Information and communication technology	How well is the school is led and managed?
			Music	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Art and design	What should the school do to improve further?
			Design and technology	
			Physical education	
			Equal opportunities	
9572	Mrs K Anderson	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
				How well does the school care for pupils?
21666	Mr A Margerison	Team inspector	English	
			Geography	
			History	
			Special educational needs	
			Children in the foundation stage	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Nenthead is a small community school (15 boys and 13 girls) in quite a remote village on the fells of North East Cumbria. The school is about 1,500 feet above sea level and is sometimes inaccessible during winter and early spring. There is high unemployment in the area and 54 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is much higher than most schools nationally. The school has a variety of pupils who represent the full ability range but generally, when pupils start at the school, their attainment is below what is typical of most four year olds. There is a variety of pre-school provision in the area but many children do not attend on a regular basis. There are currently fewer pupils identified as having special educational needs (18 per cent) than other schools nationally, but this varies considerably from year to year. Only 1 child has a statement that specifies a particular need. The inspection of this school included a detailed inspection of its provision for pupils with special educational needs. There are no pupils at the school from ethnic minority groups and no pupils for whom English is not their first language.

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

This is an effective school that is very well led and managed by the head teacher. The head teacher is the only full time teacher in the school but the additional support she receives is of a high quality resulting in a good standard of teaching by all staff in the school. Pupils enter the school with below average attainment. As a result of the good teaching they receive they make good progress and, by the end of Year 6, standards are in line with what would be expected for their age in all subjects except information and communication technology. Pupils show very good attitudes to their work and behave very well. The school provides good value for money.

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

- There is very good leadership and management by the head teacher.
- The quality of teaching is good therefore pupils make good progress.
- Staff are excellent role models. This is reflected in the excellent quality of relationships in the school and the very good attitudes and behaviour of pupils.
- The school takes very good care of the pupils.
- Standards in reading and art and design are good.
- The school works well with parents and the community.

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

- The standard of attainment and provision in information and communication technology.
- The school development plan.

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

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

The school was last inspected in November 1998 when it was judged to be no longer requiring special measures. Since then the school has continued to steadily improve. The quality of teaching has improved and is now of a high standard. As a result, standards in most subjects have continued to be satisfactory with an improvement in mathematics. However, standards in information and communication technology are still too low. The school has adopted all of the nationally recommended schemes of work and is implementing them well. This has necessitated altering the suggested planning for some of these subjects to enable them to be taught to pupils of different ages and has done this effectively. The school has worked well with parents and the local community. Parents are very happy with the standards in the school and the progress their children make. The school has developed good links with the village community who use the

school for a variety of purposes. The school has a sound capacity to continue this improvement as all adults associated with the school are committed to continual development and improvement.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				<i>Key</i>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	E	D	E	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	E	E	E	C	
science	B	C	E	C	

Statistical data for this school has to be treated with great caution. All of the year groups have small numbers of pupils in them. This means that each pupil represents a very high percentage so this school cannot reliably be compared to other schools nationally who have many more pupils.

In the national tests in 2000 the schools results indicate that they attained well below what most schools attained nationally. However, the school's performance in tests matches the levels attained in schools with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals. From the work seen in lessons and in pupils' books during the inspection, inspectors feel that these results are not an accurate reflection of the standards in the school now. Pupils in the school have work that is very well matched to their needs and abilities. There is a wide range of attainment in the school; pupils who are capable of higher attainment are given more challenging activities and pupils with special educational needs are given work suitable for them. Consequently, most pupils in both key stages, make good progress and are attaining in line with their ability. As a result, standards in most areas of the curriculum, including religious education, are satisfactory. The exception to this is in information and communication technology where standards could be higher. This is mainly as a result of a lack of resources to teach all aspects of this curriculum. Standards in reading, and art and design are high. Pupils are given many opportunities to read to support staff, teachers and parents. The school has a wide variety of books that are appealing to the pupils and, consequently, they are very keen to read. The quality of teaching and provision in art and design is very high. Pupils are given a wide variety of media to use and unusual, challenging activities are presented to them. As a result, pupils are very keen to involve themselves in art activities and make very good progress. The school sets appropriate targets for the attainment of pupils by the end of Year 6.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy school. They work well at their given tasks and are keen to participate in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in and around school is very good. Pupils are conscious of the needs of others and most behave in a mature, sensible way.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Personal development is very good and relationships in the school are excellent. There is mutual respect shown between pupils and adults.

Attendance	Unsatisfactory overall. Attendance by the majority of pupils is satisfactory. However, some pupils have frequent absences because of their family involvement with travelling.
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The ethos of this school is one of a small community working together with pupils showing very good attitudes and behaviour. They are polite to one another and to visitors in the school. The school is a happy place with effective systems in place that reward pupils' good behaviour and develop their self-esteem. All pupils are highly valued and, in return, they show a great deal of respect for the adults in the school. Consequently, pupils work hard and try to do their best.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good. In the twelve lessons seen 50 per cent of the lessons were good with 25 per cent being very good and 8 per cent excellent. The remaining 17 per cent of lessons were satisfactory and no unsatisfactory lessons were seen. The head teacher is the only qualified full time teacher in the school but she has very good support from part-time teachers and other staff. All staff teach the basic skills of English and mathematics well, which is contributing to the good progress the pupils make. An emphasis has been placed on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and so opportunities are provided in other subjects for pupils to use these skills. As there are a small number of pupils all staff know them very well and so match work appropriately to individual pupils' needs and abilities. This ensures that it is suitably challenging and pupils respond well to lessons because they find them interesting. However, the school does not sufficiently use assessment and marking to set individual targets for all pupils. As a result, pupils do not always know exactly what they must do in order to make improvements in their work. There is a lot of adult support in the school which means that pupils are usually taught in small groups. This ensures that all pupils are given a high level of support if they need it and also provides many opportunities for discussion. As a result, pupils are always fully involved and engaged in their lessons. Laughter is frequently heard in this school as all staff show an enthusiasm for teaching and try to make learning fun.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is enhanced by many visits to extend pupils knowledge of life outside their community and by the good range of extra-curricular activities. However, improvement is required in the curriculum for information and communication technology.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Staff know the pupils very well so activities are well matched to pupils' needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. There is very good provision for pupils' moral and social development. Staff are excellent role models and lead by example. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good as it is enhanced with very good music, and art and design lessons. However, provision for pupils' multi-cultural development is limited. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory.

How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares extremely well for its pupils. The small number of pupils means that staff know their pupils very well indeed. They look after their physical and social needs as well as their academic ones.
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The school works well with parents. Parents feel that they are well informed about how well their child is doing and know what their child is doing whilst in school. Good relationships have been established with parents and many are happy to bring their child into school and spend time sharing activities with them. The school is very aware that the village is some distance away from major towns and cities and tries to offer opportunities for pupils to visit other places, such as the theatre, to broaden their experiences. Staff are very willing to give their free time to the pupils and many extra-curricular activities are offered. They provide after school activities on most evenings. The school has adapted the curriculum well to meet the needs of the small number of pupils. Most pupils study the same topics at the same time but the skills developed within these topics are matched to pupils' needs and abilities. Consequently, pupils make at least satisfactory progress in all subjects. The school has recently improved its provision for information and communication technology and attainment in this subject is improving. However, the school does not yet provide sufficiently for pupils to experience all areas of this curriculum, such as control, modelling and sensing so standards are not yet high enough.

**HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Very good. The head teacher is at the centre of the development of this school. She is extremely committed and hard working and has a very clear understanding of what the school needs to do to improve further.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors know the school very well and make informed decisions as to the educational direction and priorities for development. However, there is no current school development plan that reflects the governors' knowledge of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school uses all information available to it to understand how well pupils are attaining.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Money allocated to the school is used appropriately and effectively. The school understands and applies the principles of best value.

As this school is small all staff have to undertake many roles. However, the school is very well led and managed by the head teacher who ensures that the day-to-day running of the school does not affect the quality of education the pupils receive. She is well supported by other staff, all of whom share her educational direction for the school. Consequently, there is a great team spirit in this school. Governors are very knowledgeable about the school. Many are in school on a regular basis and therefore, make informed decisions about what the schools' priorities for development should be. However, the school development plan is out of date and does not reflect the governors' knowledge or involvement with the school. As a result, governors are unable to demonstrate how their priorities are linked to the finance available to the school or how they will measure the success of any developments. There is a high level of adult support in the school, which is used and targeted effectively. All staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and carry them out well. The finance of the school is well managed and has been used to enhance the resources of the school. Consequently, the school is well resourced. The building is used well to provide two attractive classrooms and the school has clear plans for further development. However, the building is restrictive for physical education lessons. Furniture has to be moved to provide floor space, the field is frequently inaccessible and the playground is on a slope. The school uses its own accommodation

well but also uses the local high school to provide some aspects of physical education.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Their child likes school.</li><li>• Their child is making good progress.</li><li>• Behaviour in the school is good.</li><li>• Their child gets the right amount of work to do at home.</li><li>• The teaching is good.</li><li>• They are kept well informed as to how well their child is doing.</li><li>• They feel the school is approachable.</li><li>• The school expects their child to work hard.</li><li>• The school works closely with parents.</li><li>• The school is well led and managed.</li><li>• The school is helping their child to be mature and responsible.</li><li>• The school provides a good range of activities outside lessons.</li></ul>	

No parents raised any specific issues and inspectors agree that parents are right to be very happy with the school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1 In the national tests in 2000 the schools results indicate that they attained well below what most schools attained nationally. However, the school's performance in tests matches the levels attained in schools with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals. From the work seen in pupils' books and in lessons during the inspection inspectors feel that these results are not an accurate reflection of the standards in the school now.

2 In most subjects pupils are reaching the standards they should for their ages by the time they leave the school. Standards in art and design, and reading are higher than would be expected but standards in information and communication technology are not high enough. Pupils start the school with attainment below what is typical for most four year olds, although the school does have some higher achieving pupils. The very small numbers of pupils in each of the year groups means that judgements cannot reliably be given to standards pertaining to a particular key stage or cohort. For example, the largest year group has only six pupils with the smallest only having two. Pupils are given work that matches their individual needs so that all pupils make, at least, the progress of which they are capable.

3 Pupils make good progress throughout the school. They are taught in a well-supported environment that develops their confidence and self esteem. As the basic skills of English and mathematics are taught well, pupils make good progress in these areas, which helps them to achieve success in other areas of the curriculum.

4 The school places a strong emphasis on developing pupils' reading skills. Pupils are given many opportunities to read to teachers, support staff and parents. The books they choose from are very appealing to young children and are a mixture of graded reading scheme books and other books. Pupils choose from within a structured 'band' a book they wish to read. Consequently, pupils are keen, take great pleasure in reading and standards are good. Standards in writing have been maintained since the last inspection and are satisfactory. By the end of Year 6 pupils work is well presented and most pupils write at length for a variety of purposes.

5 Standards in mathematics are satisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection where standards were not high enough. Staff have attended training and have fully implemented the National numeracy Strategy. An emphasis is given to the oral and mental starters at the beginning of mathematics lessons and this is developing pupils' skills well. Staff fully understand how young children learn and many practical activities are given to the pupils so that they can apply what they have learnt to different situations.

6 Standards in science are also satisfactory. Pupils are given the opportunity to acquire scientific knowledge through many first hand and practical experiences. For example, studying insects on the River Eden.

7 Standards are not high enough in information and communication technology. Staff are not fully confident in all areas of this curriculum and there are also insufficient resources to deliver the full curriculum. Standards in some aspects of this subject, for example word processing are satisfactory but other areas, such as sensing, control and modelling, require development.

8 Standards in art and design are high. Pupils are given many varied activities that fully develop their skills in this area. All the activities are stimulating and interesting and pupils enjoy these lessons and

make very good progress.

9 Standards in religious education and all other subjects are satisfactory. Teachers know their pupils well so work is well matched to need and ability. Consequently, all pupils including those with special educational need and those pupils capable of higher attainment make good progress.

10 Pupils with special educational needs make good gains in skills, knowledge and understanding so that by the age of 11 they achieve well in relation to their age and ability in most subjects. In the small group withdrawal sessions for additional literacy support or Reading Intervention, they benefit from working with specialist teachers or trained support staff and this has a positive effect on their learning.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

11 The school has improved upon the good response pupils were found to have at the last inspection; pupils' attitudes to learning, their behaviour and personal development are now very good. Their enthusiasm for school and relationships with all staff and each other are excellent. However, the attendance rate of a few pupils is unsatisfactory due to long periods of absence whilst they are travelling with their families.

12 Pupils are very well motivated towards school and their work. They come to school happily and arrive on time. Most parents state that their children like coming to school. Pupils enjoy their work, out of school visits and social events. They talk very enthusiastically about what they are doing.

13 Behaviour both in class and around the school is very good. Response to the questionnaire and discussion at the parent's meeting indicate that parents are very happy with the standard of behaviour both in and out of school. In lessons pupils are keen to be involved and answer questions with confidence. All participate well and follow the teachers' instructions promptly. Most stay on task well and those who find concentration difficult are well supported. Movement between lessons and at break times is very orderly. Pupils are friendly and polite to visitors. They work well together in pairs or small groups and help each other when appropriate. In physical education lessons, for instance, pupils choose their partners and work on the activity together and in art and design they mix colours and share dyes well. During indoor break times behaviour is very good. Pupils understand the routine, select their own activity and play in a quiet and controlled manner. For example, a group of pupils quietly played chess together. There was a good level of discussion about a particular move and all helped to tidy up at the end. Others use construction toys to make models. One pupil was heard to comment 'That's good, I like what you have made'. This very high standard of motivation enables children to work and learn without disturbance.

14 Mealtimes are very well organised with a strong family atmosphere. Behaviour is very good. Pupils queue in an orderly manner when waiting to be served and sit well at table. A strong emphasis is placed on table manners. Pupils are happy to sit next to visitors and very willing take part in the conversation. Mealtimes are very effective in promoting pupils' social skills.

15 In the Friday achievements assembly, pupils are given awards for good behaviour and attitudes. They take pride in their merits. They say, 'If you do lots of work you get a merit' and 'It feels good to get one'. The 'comments' book celebrates occasions when pupils have displayed particularly good attitudes to people from outside the school community. It contains some very positive comments and pupils take pride in the entries. There have been no exclusions.

16 Pupils' personal development is very good. They are given a range of responsibilities in school for instance answering the telephone, making contributions to assembly and tidying away at the end of play. These jobs, which are carried out with diligence and pride, effectively develop pupils' initiative and sense of personal responsibility. Pupils take responsibility for their own learning by selecting their own games during

play times and at the start of the day.

17 Pupils help each other and are beginning to understand the effect of their actions on others. A Key Stage 1 physical education lesson illustrated this well. A Year 1 pupil bumped a reception child and immediately stopped, asked if the other was all right and apologised. Pupils listen attentively whilst others speak. In a mathematics lesson pupils took a coin and, with eyes shut, described it and guessed what it was. All others listened carefully. Special needs pupils are fully involved in all activities. The religious education and history programmes encourage pupils to consider the values and beliefs of others. Key Stage 2 study Buddhism and how the fundamental principles can apply to modern living.

18 Relationships with each other and between pupils and staff are excellent. Teachers know their pupils well and are sensitive to their individual needs. Pupils answer teachers' questions with enthusiasm and confidence. Children of all ages and abilities play together well.

19 Attendance rates in the school are unsatisfactory. The statistics are dramatically effected by the transient lifestyle of a few families. However, the attendance of most other pupils is satisfactory and pupils arrive in school before the start of the day so lessons begin on time.

### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

20 The quality of teaching is good and consequently, pupils make good progress. Children under five are taught well. Teachers and support staff work very well together with the classroom assistant taking a major role in the teaching of these children under the supervision on the head teacher. Activities and lessons are planned that stimulate children's interests and make learning fun wherever possible. For example, when following instructions in literacy pupils decorated biscuits but because it was snowing heavily at the time they made the biscuits into snowmen. In another literacy lesson the subject was about fruit from other countries and the classroom assistant brought in many unusual fruits for the children to see. As a result of the very good relationships between the children and all staff, children gain confidence in themselves and learn to communicate very well with adults.

21 Throughout the school the skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well and teachers try to make lessons interesting. For example, in an English lesson for Key Stage 2, pupils studied the poem 'The wreck of the Hesperus'. The teacher read the poem very expressively which engaged the pupil's interest but she maintained their interest by discussing the interpretation of the parts that she felt would appeal to them most. For example, why a young, beautiful girl would be tied to the mast or the discovery of frozen corpses. This helped pupils to deduce what was happening from the text and gave them a clear understanding of the poem. As the school has only a small number of pupils, staff get to know them very well. Work is well matched to pupils' needs and abilities ensuring that all pupils are suitably challenged and individual support is always available if necessary. For example, in a Key Stage 1 mathematics lesson, pupils in Year 2 had to prepare a list of shopping they could buy with £5 from given items. Pupils in Year 1 became 'money detectives' finding out how much money had been lost from 20p and pupils in the reception class rolled dice with 1p and 2p on them then added the amount shown on the dice to money they already had. Consequently, pupils enjoy their work and work hard. In lessons, staff use questions well to check pupils' understanding. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Key Stage 2, the teacher had prepared questions for each individual pupils so that they were matched to the pupils ability and gave the teacher a good understanding of what the pupils knew. They use a good range of questions and usually these are brisk and help pupils to maintain interest. However, marking of work is very general and gives pupils too little help in how they could improve. In addition, the use of assessments are used well by teachers to track pupils' progress but the results of these assessments are not shared with the pupils or used to set clear, individual improvement targets. Consequently, pupils do not always have a full and clear understanding of what they should do to improve their work.

22 The head teacher is the only full time qualified teacher in the school but a major strength of this school is the way all staff work together as a team. The head teacher leads very much by example. She is confident and enthusiastic, demonstrating sound subject knowledge in most areas of the curriculum. She ensures all staff are fully involved in planning so that everyone has a clear understanding of what each lesson should achieve. All staff when leading either the whole class or a small group become personally involved in the lesson. For example, in dance lessons both the classroom assistant and the learning support assistant led the session through demonstration of the steps and the dance. Pupils appreciate this level of involvement and it helps them to respect and value the staff. It also gives them great enjoyment to be able to become involved with their teachers at a practical level.

23 The quality of teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is good. The planning of lessons is individualised so pupils are provided with activities that are well matched to their particular needs. The flexibility created by small, mixed aged classes is used effectively to make sure that pupils are able to work on tasks that are appropriate. The withdrawal sessions are integrated into the rest of the curriculum so pupils have equal access to other subjects. When pupils are withdrawn for specialist support, or to work with classroom support staff on their individual programmes, the teaching is tightly structured and focuses on the pupils' individual difficulties. Consequently, in these sessions pupils make good gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding in literacy and in the awareness of their behaviour. In lessons where the learning support assistant is present, pupils benefit from very sensitive and skilled support. The support staff know pupils very well and a high priority is placed upon developing pupils' independence. However, this is achieved in a caring and supportive learning environment. When external support agencies such as physiotherapy or speech therapy provide programmes for pupils, the support staff follow these carefully.

24 All staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Teachers have good strategies for controlling pupils but mainly they try to make lessons enjoyable, interesting and challenging thereby minimising the opportunity for pupils to misbehave. As a result, pupils apply themselves well to their lessons and behaviour in the school is very good.

## **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?**

25 The school's curriculum offers a broad and balanced range of experiences covering all subjects, including religious education. As the school has a small number of pupils it is very effective at being able to provide a curriculum that matches the needs of all pupils including those capable of higher attainment and those with special educational needs. The school makes good provision for pupils personal and social education, including clear attention to sex education and drug misuse. All pupils are fully included in all lessons with opportunities for pupils from Key Stage 1 to work with Key Stage 2 pupils and vice versa if necessary. The school has recently adopted all the nationally recommended schemes of work but has adapted them so that they can successfully be taught to small numbers of pupils. This means that coverage of the curriculum is well planned with all staff knowing what topics are covered and when. Teacher's lesson plans are satisfactory and make clear what pupils are expected to learn.

26 The curriculum for children in the reception class is well matched to their needs and covers all areas of learning that they should experience at this age. Where opportunities are restricted, such as out door play, staff try to compensate with the resources and facilities they have. Children have the opportunity to learn alongside and from older pupils but also have good provision for their specific needs.

27 The school rightly spends a high proportion of time teaching English and mathematics. They then provide opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. For example, pupils research topics in history and produce graphs to illustrate their findings in science. This means that the school has effectively raised or maintained standards in these very important areas.

28 Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. In collective worship pupils are given opportunities to sit quietly and think about the things discussed in the assembly for example, saying thank you for water. In religious education pupils are asked to reflect upon what they consider to be beautiful in the world. They are taught about the beliefs, festivals and rituals of other religions and learn to respect differences. Adults are excellent role models and encourage pupils to respect the views and opinions of others.

29 Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The school has a clear moral code based on the understanding that the school is a community where people need to respect each other. They learn to care about each other and the environment. Teachers are again excellent role models spending time listening to pupils and valuing their opinions.

30 Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Pupils are given roles of responsibility such as answering the telephone and looking after equipment. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to work in groups with pupils younger or older than themselves. There is a strong caring atmosphere in the school and pupils respond well to this sharing equipment and co-operating well with each other. Pupils achievements are celebrated in school assemblies and all pupils are proud of each others efforts.

31 Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. It is enhanced by the high quality music, and art and design lessons and opportunities that pupils are given to experience visits outside of school. However, insufficient time is spent developing pupils understanding of a multi-cultural society.

32 The school is a welcoming place that has very good links with the local community. Pupils use the local area to support their studies in history, geography and science. The local community are invited to all school concerts and carol services. Pupils' work is displayed in the local post office and the community use the school if necessary. For example, when the village fair was affected by rain the local people used the school. The school has a computer dedicated to the local community where people can come and learn about computing or use the internet. The school works closely with the local high school preparing pupils well for the next stage of education by allowing use of their facilities for physical education and science.

33 The school is very aware of the needs of the pupils. As the village is often quite isolated the school tries to provide as many opportunities as possible for pupils to visit places outside the village to broaden their experiences. For example, to enhance the curriculum in art and design pupils took part in an arts day organised by the National Trust. To develop physical education pupils take part in local competitions and use facilities at the local high school. In addition, pupils have visited a musical concert, the local chapel and mine and have experienced a travelling theatre in school. The school tries to provide opportunities to continue learning both before and after school. Staff give freely of their time to provide sport, art, music and computer clubs. The school is open early so pupils chose if they want to come into school and read, use the computer or any other of the school's resources. This provides pupils with good opportunities to develop their learning independently.

34 Since the school was last inspected, the good provision for pupils with special educational needs has been maintained. The school has established a comprehensive policy that is reflected in the everyday provision and complies with the requirements of the Code of Practice. There are individual education plans (IEPs) for each pupil on the Register of Special Educational Needs with targets that reflect their areas of difficulty. Although the targets for pupils at the lower stages of the register are insufficiently specific and measurable to be used to track pupil progress, staff know pupils well so this has a limited impact upon the quality of the day-to-day provision. The IEPs are reviewed termly and parents and any other adults involved are invited. They are used appropriately to record the specific programmes provided for individual pupils.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

35 This school cares for its pupils well. It knows them all as individuals and is sensitive to their differing needs and situations. It places an emphasis on providing for pupils personal and social needs as well as their academic ones.

36 The school effectively achieves its aim to provide an environment where children can be safe and happy. It is a very friendly, welcoming and orderly community. Parents feel that their children are well cared for. A high priority is given to the pupil's welfare, health and safety with regular fire and safety checks being carried out. The governors, particularly the caretaker, play a valuable role in the monitoring of health and safety within the school. Systems are in place for reporting major accidents and a first aider is permanently on site. Child protection procedures are in place and staff are all aware of the relevant procedures to follow if they have any concerns. Good support is given by the school nurse who visits to carry out health checks and is available at other times if required. Dinner and play times are well supervised. Staff are constantly alert to any signs of poor behaviour, bullying or harassment. However very few instances have occurred recently. The school encourages pupils to look after each other. Movement around this small school is well organised. Classrooms and corridors are tidy and the standard of caretaking is good.

37 Pupils are assessed regularly to ensure they are making progress. These assessments are used well by teachers to plan future work that is well matched to pupils' abilities and needs. However, the results of these assessments are not shared with pupils and individual targets are not set as a result of these targets. Consequently, pupils do not always have a full and clear understanding of what they need to do to improve their work.

38 Teachers annually prepare a written report for parents. These reports are detailed and clearly indicate what pupils know understand and can do and give some indication as to what they should do to improve further. Parents appreciate and value these reports.

39 There is a high number of adults to pupils in this school, consequently, staff know their pupils well and are responsive to their needs. As a result, informal monitoring of each pupil's personal progress is continuously taking place. Staff have regular contact with most parents at the beginning and end of each day. This gives good opportunities for transfer of information. The school provides good opportunities for pupil's personal development. Children are involved in setting their own targets but these are very short term and require development. They take on some responsibilities within school and are encouraged to select their own resources and tidy away.

40 Introduction to full time education is sensitively handled and generally a positive experience. Most children joining reception are already familiar with the school however not all have attended pre-school groups. They attend school every Friday afternoon in the summer term prior to entry. Pupils start on a part time basis and progress to full time as soon as they are ready. Similarly transfer to the next stage of education is generally smooth and stress free. Every week Year 6 pupils, together with those from a neighbouring primary school, visit the High School for physical education lessons and to attend a science club. This ensures that they are familiar with their new school and the pupils they will transfer with.

41 Procedures to promote good behaviour are well established and very effective. Pupils are rewarded when they display good attitudes and behaviour. These are celebrated at the end of the week. Procedures for monitoring attendance rates are very thorough and the education welfare service provides good support. The school has been targeted by the local education authority in order to improve attendance. It works extremely hard to encourage pupils to come to school regularly. Registers are marked at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session and most parents generally comply with the school's request to inform them if their child is absent.

42 The impact of support on pupils with special educational needs in the classroom is very positive. The support staff have excellent relationships with pupils and use this very effectively to encourage, guide and support their academic and personal development. They have a good awareness of the personal as well as the academic needs of their pupils, helping to create a safe and secure environment for them. Very close links have been established with a range of external support agencies so the school makes very good use of the support available from the external services for pupils with specific difficulties. They meet regularly with the school management, work with pupils, conduct assessments and to provide learning programmes, advice and support.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

43 This school has maintained the true partnership with home, which was identified at the last inspection. It is held in high esteem by parents and the children benefit from the very good home/school links. The questionnaire, parents meeting and discussions during the inspection confirm a very high degree of satisfaction with the work of the school. Parents feel welcome and are comfortable to approach staff with any problems or concerns. Many parents bring their children into school on a morning and stay to join their child in some activities. They feel the school is very well led and that teaching is good. They also feel that the school has high expectations, encourages good behaviour and helps children to become mature and responsible. They say that their children make good progress and are happy.

44 Parental contributions have a positive impact on children's learning. Several parents are governors and are actively involved in running the school. Although no parents help in school on a regular basis they are willing to support when the need arises. A father runs the football club and another provides valuable information and communication technology expertise. Parents also organise refreshments after school performances. A Friends Association involves both parents and members of the wider local community. This Association supports a range of events, which are primarily of a social nature. These include an Autumn Fayre and Easter Sale. Any money that is raised is used for the benefit of the children, for example picnic tables for the school yard. The association produces a newsletter, which is circulated to parents and available to local residents.

45 Parents are kept very well informed about the work and routines of the school through the brochure, letters, and meetings. Reports to parents are readable, informative and comply with statutory requirements. Parents' notices are displayed in the cloakroom area. Parents have access to staff at the beginning and end of each day when informal discussions can take place. The school keeps parents informed about topics currently being studied. Parents receive booklets, which contain helpful guidance about how they can help at home. Meetings to discuss their own children's work are held every term and the majority of parents attend.

46 The home/school agreement has been signed by most parents. Pupils take a 'Nenthead Book Worm' reading diary home each day. These provide a good channel for communication between home and school. Staff use them well but few parents take up the opportunity to make comments. Pupils take work home and the quantity increases as they progress through the school. Most parents are content with the amount of homework their children are given and support them in completing it.

47 The involvement of parents of pupils with special educational needs is very good. They are invited to review meetings, kept fully informed of what is being done in school to help their child and, on occasions, have particular roles to play in the individual education plans.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

48 The head teacher is leading and managing the school very well. Despite the fact that this is a small school with limited administrative support, the day-to-day management of the school is very good and

allows staff to concentrate on teaching. The improvement in standards has been maintained since the last inspection and the head teacher has a very good understanding of where the school needs to improve. As this is a small school all staff have to undertake many roles. The head teacher organises this well and leads by example. She is extremely hard working and committed to the school. All decisions made centre around the best interests of the pupils, either academically or personally. All adults in the school are highly valued. This has led to a great sense of all staff in the school working together as a team.

49 Governors are very knowledgeable about the school. Many are in school on a regular basis and therefore, make informed decisions about what the schools' priorities for development should be. However, the school development plan is out of date and does not reflect the governors' knowledge or involvement with the school. As a result, governors are unable to demonstrate on paper how their priorities are linked to the finance available to the school or how they will measure the success of any developments.

50 Governors consider how to get best value when they spend money and finance has been used prudently to improve the school building and resources. Consequently, resources in the school have been improved and are now good in most areas of the curriculum. Money has been carefully budgeted so that each year a small amount is carried forward for more costly expenditure. This has been allocated to the further improvement of the building, particularly the toilet block. Support staff are used particularly well and the school manages its resources well. Consequently, the school provides good value for money.

51 All staff have a good understanding about how the school is performing and why. English and mathematics have been priorities in the school but the school recognised the need to maintain or improve standards in other areas. Consequently, a teacher is employed part time to teach music and art and design. As the head teacher is the only full time qualified teacher the school relies on the support of the local education authority to monitor the quality of teaching although some governors have observed lessons.

52 Since the last inspection the special needs co-ordinator has continued to give a very clear direction to the development of the provision. There is a good policy that meets the requirements of the Code of Practice and clearly outlines for all staff the processes involved.

53 The school has made satisfactory improvements since the last inspection. It has a sound capacity to continue this improvement as all adults associated with the school are committed to continual development and improvement.

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

54 The school should now:

1. Raise standards in information and communication technology by:
  - Improving staff confidence and expertise in information and communication technology; (Paragraphs 87 and 89)
  - Providing the necessary resources to deliver all aspects of this curriculum. (Paragraph 87)
2. Ensure that the school has a clear development plan so that improvements and developments can be monitored and evaluated effectively. (Paragraph 49)

In addition the governors should consider the following minor issue for inclusion in the action plan:

- Use assessment and marking more effectively to set pupils individual targets and monitor their progress towards those targets. (Paragraphs 21 and 37)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	12
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	10

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
8	25	50	17	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y R – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	28
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	5

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.4
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	4	2	6

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	*	*	*
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67% (50%)	83% (50%)	83% (100%)
	National	84% (82%)	85% (83%)	90% (87%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	*	*	*
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67% (50%)	83% (100%)	83% (100%)
	National	84% (82%)	88% (86%)	88% (87%)

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

\* Where the number of boys or girls is 10 or less numbers are omitted.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	6	4	10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	*	*	*
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	50% (67%)	50% (33%)	70% (100%)
	National	75% (70%)	72% (69%)	85% (78%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	*	*	*
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60% (100%)	60% (33%)	70% (100%)
	National	70% (68%)	72% (69%)	80% (75%)

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

\* Where the number of boys or girls is 10 or less numbers are omitted.

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	28
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

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

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

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

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	28

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	57

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999 - 2000
	£
Total income	105,621
Total expenditure	104,812
Expenditure per pupil	3,615
Balance brought forward from previous year	6,579
Balance carried forward to next year	7,388

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

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	28
Number of questionnaires returned	13

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	23	0	8	0
My child is making good progress in school.	85	15	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	85	15	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	69	15	0	0	15
The teaching is good.	92	8	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	62	31	8	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	85	15	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	92	8	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	54	38	8	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	100	0	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	85	15	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	85	8	8	0	0

## **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**

55 The provision for children in the foundation stage is good. Due to the isolation of the community, there are very limited opportunities for children to have extensive pre-school experience in play school or nursery. Consequently, their attainment on entry to school is below expectations. This is particularly reflected in their under-developed knowledge and experience of the world, social and language skills, particularly in group situations. However, children make good progress in the reception class so that by the end of the foundation stage their attainment is almost in line with national expectations. In all activities, their behaviour is very good. They are interested, enthusiastic and have a very positive attitude to school.

56 Currently, there are two children in the reception class and, for the majority of the time, they work alongside other pupils in the infant class. The children have a well-developed sense of humour and work well alongside other pupils in all activities. They learn to share equipment and toys. The very good progress they make in developing personal, social and language skills makes a good contribution to the progress they make in other aspects of the curriculum. For example, they are able to take a full part in whole class discussions as part of the literacy and numeracy lessons, answer questions confidently and are willing to contribute their own ideas. The children are developing an awareness of letter sounds, are interested in books and can follow the story. Both children are developing early writing skills, hold a pencil correctly and use paint or crayons to produce pictures. They enjoy music lessons, participating enthusiastically, and are beginning to recognise rhythm and pitch. They count single objects and are developing an understanding of the relationships between numbers as the basis for simple addition sums. In physical education lessons they have good balance and move around the room with an awareness of space and each other. They follow teacher's instructions well and improve their work with practice.

57 The curriculum and quality of teaching of children in the foundation stage is good, reflecting the very secure understanding that the staff have of the needs of young children. A major strength of the teaching is the quality and effectiveness of the support children get from the classroom assistant. She works under the supervision of the head teacher, to plan and provide activities that are appropriate for young children. The learning support assistant makes a significant contribution to many lessons. The adults work very well together so the management and organisation of the lessons is good. Clear instructions and good questioning ensures that children know exactly what they have to do and are fully involved in all aspects of the lessons. The literacy and numeracy lessons are adapted so that they get good opportunities to participate with the whole class and then to work on activities that are appropriate to their own individual needs. In all lessons, they demonstrate good levels of concentration and work at a good pace. Within literacy and numeracy lessons, there are good opportunities to work on tasks that use role-play, such as 'pretend' shopping, or creative tasks such as painting to reinforce and consolidate their language and numeracy skills. Children's work is marked, but insufficient use is made of this marking to inform the children of what they need to do to improve their work. The whole-school timetable includes a session at the start of the day for all pupils to work independently. This session is used well so that children have an opportunity to read to adults, use computers and to use construction toys and role-play equipment. This session has a very positive impact upon children's development of social skills and reading.

58 The school uses the village, the local environment and visits to other places well to provide a focus for activities such as traffic surveys and drawing of maps. These activities extend children's experiences of the world effectively. Due to the weather and the outside accommodation, opportunities children have to develop their physical skills are limited, but the school has sufficient resources for large apparatus to provide this when possible.

## ENGLISH

59 Standards in English for the majority of pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national averages in speaking and listening and writing and above national averages in reading. As pupils move through the school, they make good progress in developing the skills, knowledge and understanding of the subject. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets so they achieve well relative to their ability, but traveller children do not achieve the expected levels for their age due to the significant amount of absence from school.

60 Most pupils listen carefully to questions and instructions. They respond to questions appropriately and express their own ideas unprompted. By the age of 11, most pupils listen attentively and take turns to contribute to discussions. They reply appropriately to teachers' questions and have a sufficient subject vocabulary to express their thoughts and ideas in most subjects. Most pupils speak confidently to a larger audience.

61 In reading pupils make very good progress and achieve well. By the age of seven, pupils' enjoy books and their reading is fluent with some expression. They explain the key points of the plot referring to specific events and characters. When reading aloud they understand how to use punctuation to add interest to the story and to put emphasis on specific aspects such as speech or exclamations. Pupils' understanding of how to use letter sounds and pictures to work out unfamiliar words is well developed and they can explain how to use the contents and index in non-fiction books to find particular topics or sections. As pupils move through the school, they continue to develop their breadth of reading so that by the age of 11 pupils have a good knowledge of different authors. They read a wide range of texts including magazines and newspapers. Their reading is very fluent and expressive demonstrating a good awareness of how to use the full range of punctuation to structure the reading. They are adept at using a range of sources to find information including textbooks and computer-based encyclopaedias.

62 Pupils make good progress in building on the early writing skills taught in the foundation stage. By the age of seven, their writing is legible and, although some letter formation is inconsistent, it is produced with care. They are able to use capital letters and full stops appropriately and are beginning to use other types of punctuation. Ideas are developed in a series of sentences and some adjectives are used to add interest to the writing. The majority of words are spelt correctly. By the age of 11, the majority of pupils' writing is joined and neat. As noted at the last inspection, standards of presentation are good and higher attaining pupils produce extensive pieces of writing in which a range of writing devices such as alliteration are used effectively to add interest and emphasis. Pupils can write in a range of styles that suit the context or subject matter.

63 The quality of teaching of English is good. In literacy lessons teachers provide good resources and worksheets that are well matched to the different age groups within the classes. This helps maintain pupils' interest and concentration. Teachers have good subject knowledge and know their pupils very well so they are able to direct open-ended and challenging questions to individual pupils. Consequently, all pupils have to concentrate and listen carefully. Management and organisation of lessons and pupils is very good. Explanations and instructions are clear and explicit so that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, know exactly what they have to do and how to do it. The structure of the literacy lessons are adapted appropriately to allow younger pupils access to more practical activities to reinforce their development of language. Due to the small number of pupils, teachers are able to provide activities that are well-matched to each pupils' individual needs and good use is made of the mixed age classes to make sure that all pupils are working on tasks that are appropriate to them. This has a particularly positive impact upon pupils with special needs and higher attaining pupils. Teachers and support staff place a great emphasis on talking and discussing with pupils issues as they arise. Where pupils are withdrawn for specific group or individual activities such as Additional Literacy Support or Reading Intervention, they benefit from skilled and focused teaching by the support staff so they make good progress in developing

their basic letter sounds and reading skills. The quality of the support provided by the learning support assistant in lessons is very high and, although she is in class to provide support for a pupil with a statement of special educational needs, she makes a very positive contribution to the learning of all pupils.

64 Since the last inspection, the school has continued to develop the subject reflecting the great commitment to provide a high quality of education for pupils. The school has refined the use of the literacy strategy as the heart of teaching English. However, these sessions are well supported by the opportunities provided across the curriculum for pupils to use their literacy skills to produce booklets or research particular topics in history or geography. The opening session of the day, where all pupils are involved in independent activities makes a good contribution to pupils' progress in English, particularly reading. Adults are able to hear each pupil read at least three times each week, and the attention shown to reading is reflected in the good standards pupils' achieve. Pupils' work is marked, but insufficient use is made of informative comments to help pupils know how to improve their work. As a result, pupils do not always revisit work to correct it and often make the same mistake again. Pupils have some opportunities to use their information and communication technology skills in English, but this aspect of the curriculum is currently, under-used as a method of presenting work in different styles or contexts.

## **MATHEMATICS**

65 Standards in mathematics have improved since the last inspection and most pupils are now working and attaining at levels that are typical for their age. For example, by the end of Year 2, pupils add and subtract accurately to 20, divide and multiply by 3, 4, 5, 6 and 10 and find simple fractions of numbers. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in mathematics throughout the school and by the end of Year 6 add and subtract large numbers correctly to 2 decimal places, understand and use brackets such as  $(4 \times 6) - (14 - 12) + 8 < 6 \times (18 - 12) - 4$  and convert fractions to decimals and decimals to percentages. The school has successfully implemented the National Numeracy Strategy and this is the main reason for the improvement. Staff have attended training and improved their knowledge and understanding of the teaching of mathematics. The school has worked closely with the local education authority to plan work that can be taught to a wide age range of pupils but that still teaches the correct skills to pupils at their particular level. These plans are supporting staff well and ensuring that all areas of mathematics are fully covered.

66 At the beginning of each lesson staff now place a great emphasis on teaching oral and mental skills. These sessions are lively, conducted at a brisk pace and questions are very well matched to individual pupil's abilities. For example, at the beginning of a mathematics lesson in Key Stage 1, pupils pretended to be current buns in a baker's shop. Whilst all pupils sang the rhyme the teacher and one pupil bought current buns and all pupils had to work out the subtraction sum, for example  $10 - 2 = ?$  Pupils found this fun while still learning about subtraction in a very practical way. Consequently, this is developing pupils numeracy skills well and also contributes well to their listening skills.

67 Pupils know how to carry out basic arithmetical calculations and many opportunities are provided for pupils to apply their knowledge to solve problems. For example, when learning about time pupils used information to answer questions such as 'Between lunch and pond dipping they went for a walk. How long did the walk take?'. This helps pupils to understand the purpose and use of mathematics and also challenges their understanding.

68 Teaching in mathematics is good. All staff know their pupils very well and set activities and tasks that are very well matched to pupil's abilities. As a result, those pupils capable of higher attainment are sufficiently stretched and challenged and attain good results. Also, those pupils who may require longer to understand a concept are given time and activities that reinforce their knowledge. For example, in a lesson about time in Key Stage 2, Year 3 pupils learnt how to tell the time using quarter to and quarter past, Year 4 pupils had to work out how long activities took to answer questions, Year 5 pupils converted digital time to

analogue time and Year 6 pupils had to complete a train timetable. Most pupils worked independently but, because of the small numbers in the group, immediately a pupil needed help support was given. All lessons are conducted at a suitably brisk pace, which maintains pupils' interest. Staff make lessons interesting and lively, using resources well. For example, in a lesson about money younger pupils used real coins to become 'money detectives' to work out problems such as 'If a girl had 20p pocket money, lost 3 coins but still had 12p, which 3 coins had she lost?' Lessons always have a lot of practical activities that engage the pupils in working out mathematical problems using equipment, such as measuring how long it took to fill a bucket of water in a lesson about time. As a result, pupils respond well to lessons. They are keen and eager to learn and make good progress.

## **SCIENCE**

69 The school has adopted the nationally recommended scheme of work for science. However, because of the small number of pupils in the school, this scheme has had to be adapted to fit the school's specific needs. Staff teach all pupils in the key stage the same topic, for example, electricity. However, within these lessons activities are then given to pupils that match their specific ability or level. For example, a pupil in Year 3 will work on constructing a simple circuit, whereas a pupil in Year 6 will construct a series or parallel circuit. This enables pupils to be taught together and allows younger pupils to learn from older ones. It also gives older pupils the opportunity to reinforce their knowledge and understanding by helping younger pupils with their tasks.

70 Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in learning scientific facts and are working and attaining standards that are typical for their age. Younger pupils sort materials into groups and conduct experiments to test how waterproof some materials are. They then use this information to design a waterproof city. Older pupils study forces and understand stored and unstored energy. They then use their knowledge to design balloon powered vehicles.

71 No science lessons were seen but work in pupils' books indicates that science is taught well. Pupils are given many practical experiences to help their knowledge and understanding. Consequently, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils understand how to form a hypothesis, devise an experiment to test that hypothesis, choose the equipment for the experiment and evaluate the conclusions they reach. All staff make lessons interesting and fun and try to link what they have taught to something the pupils can relate to and understand. For example, when studying food chains pupils weren't just given information but actually studied the insect population on the River Eden. Consequently, pupils enjoy these lessons, apply themselves well and make good progress.

72 Good links are made with this subject to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. For example, when studying how to keep healthy Key Stage 2 pupils had to present a written, reasoned argument against smoking. In Key Stage 1, when studying the effects of pushing and pulling pupils had to carefully measure how far cars travelled when pushed down ramps set at different angles.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

73 Standards are high and pupils make very good progress in art and design. The main reason for this is the high quality of teaching. The school has a very good understanding of the needs of the pupils. Many pupils live in remote areas and do not always have access to the facilities associated with towns and cities. The school has given a high priority to the development of pupils' creative skills and employ a part time teacher to develop art and design. This teacher has excellent subject knowledge and provides activities that are very exciting and stimulating. All planning is based on the nationally recommended scheme of work but the activities and materials used are not what are usually seen in most schools. For example, pupils experienced the craft of weaving. However, they wove with natural materials such as straw, feathers, ferns and tulips. The frames for their weaving were bicycle wheels, picture frames and

large cardboard boxes. The result was some very interesting and attractive articles that enhanced the display in the school.

74 All pupils have full access to this very varied aspect of the curriculum. Activities provided give pupils many experiences at which they can participate at their own level. For example, all pupils in Key Stage 1 experimented with mixing fabric dyes and painting onto material. From initial discussion it was decided that the material would become a curtain to use when they watched television. Each pupil was then assigned their part of the material to design and paint as they chose. Pupils show very good knowledge when talking about the material, for example they know about the warp and weft and what the material would look like if it was deconstructed. All pupils know how to mix colours to make another colour and how to make colours darker and lighter. They show good levels of observation such as when a reception child commented that the dye was 'printing through the fabric onto the paper below' or when a pupil in Year 2 commented that the colour he had mixed was a 'peacock' colour.

75 Pupils find art and design lessons stimulating and fun. Consequently, they look forward to them and participate fully. They share materials and equipment well and learn from each other. For example, they would look at the colours other pupils had mixed and if they liked them tried to mix that colour themselves.

76 No art and design lessons were seen in Key Stage 2 but work on display around the school indicates high standards. For example, pupils studied the work of a variety of artists all of whom composed portraits of two people in a variety of settings. Pupils then produced their own portraits to depict different aspects of relationships. For example, two people playing a duet on the piano and two friends at the beach. Pupils accurately drew figures in a variety of poses such as standing, lying or sitting. All portraits showed good attention to detail and form. Pupils used water-colours but added glue or sand to the paints to give added texture.

77 Pupils work well with a variety of media and art and design is linked well with other subjects. For example, to complement their history topics pupils made and decorated papier-mâché Greek urns. They used 'mod rock' to create Egyptian mummies and designed and made paper sarcophaguses to put them in. However, information and communication technology is not used sufficiently in this subject.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

78 Pupils attain standards in design and technology that are typical of their age. As they progress through the school, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, gain a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject. The school is now using the nationally recommended scheme of work as a framework to link design and technology activities into topics and work in other areas of the curriculum. For example, in science pupils study the properties of a variety of materials. This is linked well with design and technology where pupils experiment with different ways of joining materials together such as plaiting, knotting, twisting and tying. They practice how to tear, cut and fold accurately then use their knowledge of these skills and materials well to design and make purses in Key Stage 2 or design a coat of many colours for 'Joseph' in Key Stage 1.

79 No design and technology lessons were seen but standards of work indicate that the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Good use is made of a wide range of materials and resources that are appropriately matched to pupils' needs and ages. Staff give pupils many opportunities to experience design and the use of materials in everyday life, including those of other cultures. A large display of a wide variety of materials is accessible to the pupils for them to sort into particular categories. This is linked closely to another display showing real garments such as hats, dresses and jewellery and how materials have to be chosen carefully for their specific purpose. Examples are shown of the use of colour and pattern in Islamic culture, African masks and Egyptian headwear. Pupils interact and use these opportunities well. They are

enthusiastic about design and technology activities which prompt a lot of discussion between the pupils and the staff.

80 Good links are also made with design and technology and geography. Younger pupils learn how to make boxes and how to join the sides using different techniques such as punching small holes and joining the sides with treasury tags. This skill is then extended into making model houses that are representations of the houses in Nenthead. After looking at the village closely in geography, pupils designed and built model houses and buildings that are placed on a large map of the village.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

81 Pupils attain standards in both these subjects that are typical for their age. The school has adopted the nationally recommended schemes of work but has adapted them in order to teach their small number of pupils effectively. Teachers plan their work carefully to this curriculum so the range of activities is broad. All pupils within a key stage study the same topic but work is well matched to individual needs so that they report, research or use the specific skills that are right for their age. As they progress through the school, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, gain a secure knowledge and understanding of the two subjects. Teachers use the local area well as the starting point for many topics so pupils develop the subjects' skills such as observation and mapping well.

82 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Explanations and instructions are clear and explicit so pupils understand what is expected of them and what they have to do. The resources provided for pupils are appropriately matched to the wide age differences, and the support staff give very sensitive and positive help to all pupils. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic and interested in lessons and behave well.

83 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a secure sense of chronology and learn how the lives of people change over time and how inventions affect the lives of ordinary people. They learn about some famous people from the past and how what they achieved affects the present day. In geography pupils develop an understanding of how maps are used to describe an area and that symbols and colour are used to show particular features. The majority of pupils draw simple maps of Nenthead showing the main roads and buildings. Higher attaining pupils draw more detailed maps using a key to show main features such as buildings, roads and the river. All pupils are developing a secure understanding of the importance of road safety and how signs are used to warn people of danger or hazards ahead.

84 As pupils progress from Year 3 to Year 6 they build on previously learnt skills in both history and geography. Pupils know about different periods, events and important people in the history of the United Kingdom and in the ancient worlds of Greece and Egypt. Pupils develop their research skills well so they can use a range of sources such as textbooks, computer-held encyclopaedias, photographs and artefacts to find evidence about specific topics. In geography, they develop a much broader understanding of both physical and human geography. They learn about the impact of human demand for resources such as water has upon the environment by, for example, the building of reservoirs. They build on the mapping skills taught in Key Stage 1 to use grid references to find specific places on a map. They learn about countries around the world and develop an understanding of different climates and how this affects the lives of the population. In both subjects teachers use the local area effectively to develop pupils' skills and their appreciation of the local heritage and attractions.

85 In lessons, questions are used well to check pupils' understanding, but marking of work is very general and gives pupils too little help on how they could improve. For example, the targets set for pupils are not used explicitly as a focus for marking. Although, pupils have plenty of opportunities to use their literacy and numeracy skills in history and geography, the range of opportunities pupils are given in lessons to develop their basic skills in information and communications technology are limited.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

86 Standards in information and communication technology are not as high as they should be. Pupils develop their basic skills in word processing and simple graphics packages systematically. However, at present, the school does not have sufficient resources and staff are not fully confident in all aspects of the information and communication technology curriculum, such as control, modelling and sensing. The school is aware of this and teachers are currently undergoing training to improve their knowledge.

87 Teaching in information and communication technology is not satisfactory as pupils are not experiencing the breadth of curriculum they should. Pupils are enthusiastic about this area of the curriculum and are very keen to learn about computers. Many pupils come to school early and choose to work on a computer in their own time. They show good levels of concentration when working at activities on the computer and will persevere with a task until it is completed. Most pupils in Key Stage 1 know the basic features of a word processing package and enter and edit text independently. They use this to produce stories, poems and letters and some can insert clip art as illustrations to their stories. However, they have limited knowledge and understanding about how information is stored and presented in different ways and do not have access to a floor robot to understand how to program it to follow a sequence of instructions.

88 In Key Stage 2, pupils build on their previous skills, extend the range of work they undertake and most pupils use a computer confidently. For example, they change the type size, colour and font when using a word-processor and use a CD-ROM to find out more about the topics they are studying. In Years 5 and 6, pupils gradually use more of the features of software packages such as word-processors and presentation packages. However, pupils do not fully understand how spreadsheets can be used to manipulate numbers or how databases can be used to interrogate data and detect patterns. Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently in other subjects. For example, pupils do not use sensing equipment in science to measure things such as temperature in their experiments and do not use the computer to store and interpret their results.

89 Staff are currently attending training on information and communication technology and are aware that the curriculum at present is limited. The school is exploring ways of purchasing or sharing the necessary resources with other local schools.

## **MUSIC**

90 Pupils attain standards in music that are typical for their age. The school has adopted the nationally recommended scheme of work for music but also employs a part time teacher to specifically teach music. This teacher has good subject knowledge and makes lessons interesting and enjoyable for the pupils and, consequently, they make good progress. Planning is very clear and precise identifying exactly what the pupils will learn in the lesson and ensuring that all pupils are able to fully participate at their own level. The school has a wide variety of musical instruments that pupils respond to enthusiastically.

91 The quality of music teaching is good. The classroom is well organised and prepared so that there are no interruptions and the pupils can fully concentrate and listen to the teacher. Well chosen activities inspire the pupils so they show an enjoyment of music lessons. In Key Stage 1 pupils listen well to music and show an awareness of the different types of instruments that are playing and whether the pitch is high or low. They sing well, following a rhythm and identify high and low sounds within a song. The lesson was made interesting and appealing to them, as they had to act like the donkey in the song.

92 In Key Stage 2 all pupils play the recorder and have a sound understanding of basic notation. They are keen and interested in music taking their recorders home regularly to practice and taking advantage of the extra-curricular music opportunities offered. A specialist teacher visits the school for those pupils who wish to learn the flute or clarinet.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

93 The school has very limited opportunities for physical education. The furniture in one of the classrooms has to be moved to create space, the field is usually water logged and inaccessible and the playground is on a slope. Despite this, the school uses what it has well. Lessons are vibrant and fun and pupils make good progress. Although only dance was seen during the inspection, evidence from discussion

with staff, pupils and parents indicate that pupils are attaining standards that are typical for their age.

94 All pupils enjoy these lessons and respond well to instruction. The lesson content is carefully thought out and additional support is available so that all pupils, including those with special educational needs can fully participate. The only aspect of physical education seen was dance. All pupils respond well to music and move in time to the beat and rhythm. This was seen when the younger pupils copied 'follow my leader' style the movements of the person in front whilst still maintaining the correct timing. In this very lively lesson much laughter was heard and shared between pupils and staff. This contributed to the lesson, as pupils were still able to count how many times they had to repeat a particular step before moving to the next one but thoroughly enjoyed what they were doing.

95 In Key Stage 2 all pupils participate with enthusiasm and a sense of fun. They listen well to the instructions from the teacher or from the tape recording. They then try hard to carry out whatever instructions they were given. All follow the correct eight beat rhythm and manage to complete the quite complex dance successfully.

96 The school makes good use of additional venues to enhance the physical education provision. Pupils are taken to the nearest town to participate in swimming and, by the end of Year 6, most pupils are able to swim at least 24 metres. These lessons carefully timed to be at the end of a day so that the long travelling times do not encroach on other subjects. The local secondary school makes facilities available for gymnastics and athletics and the school takes full advantage of these. The fact that the school is very small has not stopped it from participating in local competitions for football and kwik cricket. The school also gives pupils the opportunity to participate in outdoor adventurous activities with a residential experience.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

97 Pupils' knowledge and understanding of religious education is satisfactory. The school meets requirements, following the locally agreed syllabus, but has not yet fully determined the exact content of their own scheme of work.

98 The teacher has sound subject knowledge of this area and so pupils experience appropriate activities. At the beginning of each lesson questions are used well to establish what pupils know and remember from previous lessons. For example, pupils explained and discussed the four Noble Truths of Buddhism. The teacher was then able to link these effectively with present, everyday vices that the pupils could relate to. This developed their knowledge and understanding of the fundamental principles of Buddhism well. Lessons progress at a sound pace and pupils listen, concentrate and contribute well. Consequently, by the end of the lesson pupils are beginning to have a sound understanding of some of the fundamental principles of Buddhism including the 'Middle Way'.

99 In Key Stage 1 pupils study the Christian view of creation and understand the impact man has had upon the earth. The teacher shows good subject knowledge constantly challenging and checking pupils' understanding. Pupils' literacy skills are developed well to sequence the story of 'The Creation' into the main points. Most pupils know that the Bible is divided into the New and Old Testaments and that Adam and Eve were the first man and woman. They show a sound understanding of the events of creation knowing it took seven days and what happened on those days. They are given opportunities in moments of stillness and quiet to consider the beauty around them; to describe what they think is beautiful and why. They then transfer these thoughts to the various aspects of creation to identify what on earth represents the beauty of creation.

100 In Key Stage 2, pupils study other religions and faiths. They appreciate the purposes for different festivals for example, the Hindu festival of Khumba Mela, the Buddhist festival of Wesak and the Christian festival of Easter. They understand that different faiths have different sacred buildings and know which

buildings relate to which faith. They learn about religions but then discuss and evaluate what they have learnt from religion.