

INSPECTION REPORT

St. Cuthbert's R. C. (VA) Primary School
Wigton

LEA area : Cumbria

Unique Reference Number : 112310

Headteacher : Sr. C. Ryan

Reporting inspector : Mrs A. Soper
OIN 18148

Dates of inspection : 18th – 21st October 1999

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school : Junior and Infant

Type of control : Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils : 3 – 11

Gender of pupils : Mixed

School address : East End
Wigton
Cumbria
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Appropriate authority : Governing Body

Name of chair of governors : Fr. R. Horn

Date of previous inspection : March 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Mrs A. Soper, Rgl | English | Attainment and progress |
| | Art | Teaching |
| | History | Staffing, accommodation and learning resources |
| | Equal opportunities | |
| Mrs S. Dixon, Lay Inspector | | Attitudes, behaviour and personal development |
| | | Attendance |
| | | Support, guidance and pupils' welfare |
| | | Partnership with parents and the community |
| Mr P. Hayes, TI | Science | The curriculum and assessment |
| | Geography | |
| | Music | |
| | Special educational needs | |
| | Under fives | |
| Mr J. Pryor, TI | Mathematics | Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development |
| | Information technology | Leadership and management |
| | Design and technology | The efficiency of the school |
| | Physical education | |

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The Registrar
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- ◆. There is excellent provision for pupils' spiritual development and very good provision for their social and cultural development.
- ◆. There is very good leadership and management.
- ◆. There is a very good ethos and the school successfully achieves its stated aims.
- ◆. There is good teaching and staff have good relationships.
- ◆. Standards are good in English, mathematics, science, information technology, music and physical education by the end of Key Stage 2.
- ◆. There are very effective and efficient assessment procedures.
- ◆. The school provides generous resources for teaching and learning.
- ◆. The accommodation is good.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. The organisation of some lessons does not fully take into account the use of the shared, open plan space, where pupils sometimes have difficulty in hearing their teachers.
- II. The school library is insufficiently classified to enable pupils to learn how to locate both fiction and non-fiction books. Library books are variable in quality and several are in a poor state of repair.
- III. Too little action is taken to promote good attendance.
- IV. The behaviour of a small number of pupils is unsatisfactory and some staff lack knowledge and understanding of strategies to address this.

Any weaknesses are far outweighed by what the school does well, but they will form the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made a very good improvement since the last inspection. Standards have improved in most subjects, including English, mathematics, science, information technology, music and physical education. Effective strategies are used to monitor and evaluate the curricular provision and all staff with subject responsibilities have good systems for monitoring and evaluating pupils' attainment and progress. Good schemes of work have been established for most subjects to provide a clear curriculum framework, which effectively informs planning for progression and continuity. However, the art scheme lacks sufficient detail to inform planning and the programmes of study in science are not always given appropriate balance. Considerable time has been spent on developing very effective assessment procedures, which are used to monitor attainment and progress and to inform future teaching. This is reflected in the good quality of teachers' plans, which show clear objectives and expected outcomes for pupils with differing prior attainment. The variation in the quality of teaching seen at the time of the last inspection is no longer evident. Teachers' work is consistently well prepared and organised to ensure appropriate challenge is provided for all pupils. Considerable

refurbishment of the building has taken place and the school now provides good accommodation. Classrooms are spacious and teachers have the additional use of small tutorial rooms. However, some lessons are sometimes less successful

where pupils are distracted by noise levels within the open plan nature of the teaching space. The nursery has good accommodation, including outside play areas. The headteacher, governors, staff and parents have effective partnerships and the school has the potential to continue to make further improvements, based on the very good relationships and shared commitment by all who take part in school life.

Standards in subjects

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

| Performance in | Compared with all schools | Compared with similar schools | Key | |
|----------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| English | A | A | <i>well above average</i> | A |
| Mathematics | B | B | <i>above average</i> | B |
| Science | B | B | <i>average</i> | C |
| | | | <i>below average</i> | D |
| | | | <i>well below average</i> | E |

The information shows that in the 1998 National Curriculum assessments, pupils' performance in English by the end of Key Stage 2 was well above average in comparison with schools nationally and in comparison with similar schools. Their performance in mathematics and science was above average, both nationally and in relation to the performance of pupils in similar schools. These results broadly reflect the standards seen during the inspection, where standards in English, mathematics and science were all good and above average. These judgements reflect an improvement since the last inspection, where pupils' performance in these subjects was broadly satisfactory and in line with the national average. Since the last inspection, there is also clear evidence of improvement in pupils' attainment in information technology, music and physical education. Since 1996, there has been a marked improvement in standards in English, mathematics and science in the National Curriculum assessments at the end of Key Stage 2.

At the end of Key Stage 1 in the 1998 National Curriculum assessments, pupils' attainments were close to the national average in reading and mathematics. An above average proportion of pupils attained satisfactory standards in writing, though below average numbers attained beyond the national average. In mathematics, an average number attained the national average, but fewer pupils than expected nationally attained beyond this level. However, taking the three years 1996 to 1998 together, attainment in reading and mathematics was close to the national average and attainment in writing was above the national average.

Levels of attainment on admission to the school are broadly average. By the age of five, most pupils attain satisfactory standards in all areas of learning. During the inspection, it was judged that standards for most pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 were good and above national expectations in information technology, music and physical education and satisfactory in all other subjects. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are good and above the national average in English, mathematics, science, information technology, music and physical education. Standards are satisfactory in art, geography and history by the end of the key stage.

Quality of teaching

| Teaching in: | Under 5 | 5 - 7 years | 7 - 11 years |
|------------------------|---------|-----------------------|--------------|
| English | Good | Good | Good |
| Mathematics | Good | Good | Good |
| Science | - | Satisfactory | Good |
| Information technology | - | Insufficient evidence | Good |
| Other subjects | Good | Good | Good |

Teaching is good. It was very good in 21 per cent of lessons, good in 46 per cent and satisfactory in the remainder. It was particularly good in music, where the music specialist made good provision for the different age groups of pupils. Teaching in the nursery is consistently of a high standard. Other lessons seen throughout the school also contained examples of very good and good teaching.

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

Other aspects of the school

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| Behaviour | Good overall. However, a small number of pupils have inappropriate behaviour. |
| Attendance | Satisfactory. However, the attendance rate has fallen since last year. A small number of pupils do not arrive punctually and they sometimes miss the start of lessons. |
| Ethos* | Very good. Relationships are very good and there is a shared commitment to the care and education of the pupils. |
| Leadership and management | Very good. Very clear educational direction, which is known by all staff and governors. Very good support and monitoring of curriculum development and very good implementation of the school's aims and values. Very effective development planning, monitoring and evaluation. |
| Curriculum | Good. Broad, balanced and relevant, providing full equality of access and opportunity. Good planning for progression and continuity. Assessment procedures are very effective. |
| Pupils with special educational needs | Good provision. Effective identification and support. Individual education plans are good. |
| Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Excellent provision for pupils' spiritual development. Very good provision for their social and cultural development. |
| Staffing, resources and accommodation | Good overall. Good number of qualified and support staff. Good accommodation and very good resources overall. |
| Value for money | Good value for money. |

* *Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

The parents' views of the school

| What most parents like about the school | What some parents are not happy about |
|--|---|
| V. The values promoted and the school's commitment to providing equality for all. VI. The Christian ethos in which pupils of different faiths are welcomed. VII. Good standards achieved. VIII. Welcoming approach to all members of the community. | IX. Some parents expressed the wish for progress with the class teacher. X. Some are concerned about the noise on caused for their children. |

Inspectors support the very positive views expressed by parents, both in the questionnaires and at a meeting held before the inspection. The school is very welcoming and staff are very approachable. The school is, justifiably, held in high esteem by parents and friends in the community. Inspectors agree that there is some distraction caused by noise in some open plan classrooms.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to further raise standards and the quality of education, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

XI. improve the provision for pupils to develop their literacy skills by;

- *reviewing the organisation and contents of the school library, to enable pupils to use an appropriate classification system when retrieving books and to enable them to undertake independent research;*

(paragraphs 60, 61, 83 and 89)

◆. improve attendance by;

- establishing more effective procedures for promoting good attendance and punctuality;

(paragraphs 20 and 45)

◆. further develop systems for promoting good behaviour by;

- *developing whole school strategies to guide staff in the effective management of the unsatisfactory behaviour of some pupils;*

(paragraphs 15, 17, 19, 24, 39, 44, 58, 81, 88 and 139)

◆. review the use of the accommodation by;

- *developing more effective planning and organisation for some lessons in the open plan areas. to eliminate distractions for some pupils.*

(paragraphs 24, 26, 60, 65, 80, 97 and 133)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weakness should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. This can be found in paragraphs 24 and 49:

- ◆. improve the quality of information to parents.

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. St. Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School is situated in the town of Wigton, in Cumbria. Pupils from the town and surrounding areas attend the school. In addition to pupils from the Roman Catholic faith, there are many pupils from other Christian backgrounds and the school positively promotes its role as the Christian school in the vicinity.
2. Pupils come from a range of social backgrounds and their attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. The school operates an admission policy which takes pupils into the reception class each September in the year in which children will be five. The nursery provides pre-school education for children aged three and above and is part of an early years unit. During the period of the inspection, there were 21 children under five in the reception class. Twenty-seven attended the morning nursery and 17 attended in the afternoon.
3. There are 192 pupils on the school roll, aged from five to 11 years. Of these pupils, 41 have special educational needs, which is above average. Six pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need, which is broadly average. Forty-two pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is broadly average.
4. The school has had considerable refurbishment in recent years, creating spacious classrooms and additional tutorial space.
5. The school aims to help each child value his/her own self and his/her own special gifts and skills, whilst also appreciating those of others. It aims to provide a high quality of education, within a caring, Christian ethos. As a Catholic school, it aims to help children develop an understanding of faith and to acquire a personal relationship with Jesus. A strong tradition of prayer exists to support this aim. The school regards its community role as being very important and aims to continue to ensure these strong links are maintained. Priorities for the school are to continue to develop information and communication technology, along with the further development of national initiatives, such as the literacy and numeracy strategies.

Key Indicators

6. Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1
for latest reporting year:

| Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|------|------|-------|-------|
| 1999 | 11 | 14 | 25 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above | Boys | 3 | 6 | 7 |
| | Girls | 13 | 14 | 11 |
| | Total | 16 | 20 | 18 |
| Percentage at NC Level 2 or above | School | 64 (81) | 80 (90) | 72 (81) |
| | National | n/a (80) | n/a (81) | n/a (84) |

| Teacher Assessments | | Reading | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|----------|-------------|----------|
| Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above | Boys | 3 | 7 | 6 |
| | Girls | 12 | 12 | 14 |
| | Total | 15 | 19 | 20 |
| Percentage at NC Level 2 or above | School | 60 (83) | 76 (86) | 80 (79) |
| | National | n/a (81) | n/a (85) | n/a (86) |

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2
for latest reporting year:

| Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|------|------|-------|-------|
| 1999 | 13 | 12 | 25 |

| National Curriculum Test Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|----------|-------------|----------|
| Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or Above | Boys | 12 | 12 | 11 |
| | Girls | 10 | 6 | 5 |
| | Total | 22 | 18 | 16 |
| Percentage at NC Level 4 or above | School | 88 (88) | 72 (71) | 64 (79) |
| | National | n/a (65) | n/a (59) | n/a (69) |

| Teacher Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|----------|-------------|----------|
| Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or Above | Boys | 11 | 12 | 12 |
| | Girls | 7 | 7 | 5 |
| | Total | 18 | 19 | 17 |
| Percentage at NC Level 4 or above | School | 72 (75) | 76 (79) | 68 (71) |
| | National | n/a (65) | n/a (65) | n/a (72) |

The 1999 national comparative data was unavailable at the time of publication.

Attendance

| |
|---|
| % |
|---|

¹ Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

² Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

| | | | |
|--|--------------|---------------------------|-----|
| Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year | Authorised | School | 6.6 |
| | Absence | National comparative data | 5.7 |
| | Unauthorised | School | 0.1 |
| | Absence | National comparative data | 0.5 |

Exclusions

| | | |
|--|--------------|--------|
| Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year: | | Number |
| | Fixed period | 0 |
| | Permanent | 0 |

Quality of teaching

| | | |
|--|------------------------|-----|
| Percentage of teaching observed which is : | | % |
| | Very good or better | 21 |
| | Satisfactory or better | 100 |
| | Less than satisfactory | 0 |

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

7. National performance data for 1998 indicates that in English, the number of pupils aged 11 attaining levels expected for their age was well above the national average. In mathematics and science, the number was above the national average. The number of pupils achieving beyond the national average was well above in English and above in mathematics and science. Standards in English were well above average, whilst those achieved in mathematics and science were above average, in comparison with similar schools.

8. In the same year, national performance data shows that in reading, writing and mathematics, pupils aged 7 attained standards that were satisfactory and in line with the national average. The number of pupils achieving above this level in reading was close to the national average. However, in writing and mathematics, the number achieving beyond average levels was below the national average. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' attainment in reading and writing was broadly average, but below average in mathematics. However, taking the three years 1996 to 1998 together, pupils' performance in reading, writing and mathematics was close to the national average.

9. Pupils' performance at 11, in comparison with the national average, has varied over the last three years. National performance data shows that taking the three years 1996 to 1998 together, although pupils' performance in English was above the national average, their performance in mathematics and science was well below the national average. This does not indicate a downward trend, but reflects the poor results attained in 1996, and the school has carefully addressed the causes. Attainment has greatly improved since 1996, particularly in English and mathematics.

10. Standards seen during the inspection indicate that by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attain well and above the national average in information technology, music and physical education. Their attainment in English, mathematics and science is satisfactory and in line with the national average. Pupils' attainment broadly reflects their performance in 1998. The cohort of pupils in the present Year 2 contains a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils make good progress in reading, writing, information technology, music and physical education and sound progress in mathematics and science. They make sound progress in art, design and technology, geography and history. Standards at Key Stage 2 are good and above the national average in English, mathematics and science, where pupils make good progress. Standards are also good in information technology. Pupils make good progress in information technology, music and physical education.

11. Standards achieved by the end of Key Stage 2 reflect an improvement since the last inspection in English, mathematics, science and information technology, which were then seen to be broadly satisfactory. The good progress made in subjects such as music and physical education also reflects an improvement since the last inspection. The school has effectively addressed many of the issues of the last inspection. Most schemes of work provide clear continuity and progression, assessment procedures are effective and co-ordinators have a strong role in monitoring and evaluating the curriculum provision in the school. There are clear targets for further improvement.

12. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. Children make sound progress

and by the age of five most are likely to achieve the Desirable Learning Outcomes for their age in all areas of learning.

13. Pupils at Key Stage 1 make good progress in reading and writing and sound progress in mathematics. The younger pupils in the key stage listen attentively, respond appropriately and often make good progress in their learning. However, though most pupils make good progress in speaking and listening, a few pupils in Years 1 and 2 have underdeveloped listening skills and lack understanding of taking turns when speaking to the teachers. Pupils make good progress in handwriting throughout the key stage and sound progress in writing for a variety of purposes. In mathematics, pupils make sound progress in their understanding of number, shape, space and measurement. Pupils make good progress in information technology, music and physical education and sound progress in all other subjects.

14. At Key Stage 2, progress is good in most subjects, including English, mathematics, science, information technology, music and physical education. They make good progress in all aspects of English, where their creative writing shows good awareness of the reader, their reading is fluent and pupils can discuss their work and other interests with appropriate maturity. In mathematics, pupils develop good accuracy with numbers and they can apply their mathematical knowledge to a variety of tasks. In science, pupils can confidently explain their investigations and they have a secure understanding of fair tests. They can predict and make hypotheses, using the appropriate scientific terms to describe their work. In information technology, pupils are confident users of computers by the time they are 11. They make good progress in using the computer to store and retrieve data and as a word processor.

15. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs in literacy and numeracy make good progress, in relation to their prior attainment. Their individual education plans are used well to support their learning. However, there are a few pupils with behavioural problems, whose needs are not always fully addressed and whose progress is sometimes erratic.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

16. Most pupils have very good attitudes to their work. They work hard and most maintain concentration and effort throughout lessons and the school day. They approach lessons and activities with enthusiasm and respond eagerly to questions and requests. Most listen attentively to their teachers and pupils of all ages respond well to opportunities to share their ideas with others. For the most part, pupils work very well alone or as members of a group, such as in a Year 2 physical education lesson where pupils collaborated in developing the skills needed to play team games. Pupils are encouraged to take pride in their work and readily celebrate the achievements of others in their class.

17. Behaviour is good overall and, in general, this has a positive effect on pupils' learning. Most pupils behave consistently well in lessons, assemblies and at break and lunchtimes. They move around the school in an orderly manner, contributing well to the purposeful and happy atmosphere. However, a small number of pupils in the school display less than appropriate behaviour in lessons, which has a detrimental effect on the pace of lessons and learning. Conflict and bullying is rare and any that occurs is dealt with swiftly and effectively. There have been no exclusions in the past year and suitable procedures are in place, should the need arise.

18. Relationships amongst the whole school community are very good. All adults in school are caring and provide good role models. This is reflected in the very good quality of

relationships between staff and pupils and amongst pupils. Most pupils treat each other with consideration and respect. Older pupils set a good example and display a caring and responsible attitude towards younger ones. Pupils of different ages and gender mix and play well together, as seen at lunchtimes when boys and girls play football together.

19. The personal development of pupils is good. It is well supported by personal and social education, which is incorporated into relevant areas of the curriculum. Pupils willingly accept the opportunity to take responsibility and approach their learning with increasing independence and maturity. There are a few pupils who lack self-control and do not take sufficient responsibility for their own learning. In some lessons, the pupils' ability to make choices and take initiative for their own learning is underdeveloped. Pupils' developing confidence and social skills are well supported by the very good provision for extra-curricular activities, which include two residential visits for older pupils. Pupils learn to appreciate their community and their environment, for example, by studying the history of their town and by entertaining local residents, such as in a recent poetry event held in a nearby supermarket. Pupils learn about others' values and beliefs in lessons and by supporting schools in other countries, such as Kenya. The needs of the less fortunate are considered by supporting the work of many charities.

Attendance

20. Levels of attendance are in line with national averages and are satisfactory. Absences are due to childhood illnesses and to a significant amount of holiday taken during term time. For pupils absent on holiday, there is a detrimental effect upon their learning. Pupils generally arrive punctually, eager to start the day, but in two classes there are some pupils who arrive late. Registration is brief and polite. The time is used well for quiet individual study and lessons begin promptly afterwards. The administrative arrangements are good and the school meets statutory requirements.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

21. Teaching is good overall. It was very good in 21 per cent of lessons seen, good in 46 per cent and satisfactory in the remainder. Teaching is consistently very good in the nursery and often very good in the Year 6 class. Music is also taught well. Examples of good teaching were seen in many classes. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Experienced teaching and non-teaching staff provide good support, both when withdrawing pupils for additional tutorial work and when supporting them in classrooms.

22. Throughout the school, teachers' planning is good. Clear objectives, incorporating assessment criteria, are shown in all plans. Teachers make effective use of the wide range of resources available and most ensure that work suitably matches pupils' needs. In the best lessons, teachers used effective organisation and methods to provide appropriate direct support for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. For example, in one lesson where the teaching was very good, such as in the reception class, the teacher introduced the "Big Book of Nursery Rhymes". All pupils were asked questions appropriate to their prior levels of attainment. The teacher skilfully adapted her questions to ensure all understood. Resources were well organised and the lesson objective was carefully and imaginatively developed. The management of pupils was very good and they made good

progress in understanding the use of illustrations and in recognising the relationship between spoken and written language.

23. The features of good teaching seen included clear explanations, the effective deployment of support staff, good management and organisation and positive encouragement for all pupils to do their best. Teachers know their pupils well and most teaching ensures work is suited to pupils' prior levels of attainment. Progress is carefully assessed and monitored.

24. Where teaching is satisfactory and contains many good features, the pace of lessons is sometimes inappropriate. For example, in one lesson seen in the early stages of the school, the fast pace of the introduction confused some pupils, who were unsure about the task of anticipating likely words in sentences. The main common element in the satisfactory teaching was teachers' conscientious approach to ensuring all pupils made appropriate progress, which was sometimes difficult in those classes where the inappropriate behaviour of a few pupils caused too many distractions. Time was often spent attending to those pupils. In some classes, noise produced from adjacent year groups intruded on the lesson.

25. The quality of teaching is very good for children under five in the nursery and in the reception class. In the nursery, children are welcomed each morning by the nursery nurse and the teacher, who ensure that all remain actively involved in a range of activities. Good emphasis is placed on children's early reading and writing skills in both classes. The youngest children can handle books appropriately and quickly develop an interest in stories. Planning is good in the nursery and in the reception class and teachers ensure that consideration is made of children's varying prior attainment when setting tasks.

26. Teaching is good in most subjects throughout the school. The literacy and numeracy hours are well established and provide effective learning. Good emphasis is placed on teaching reading and writing strategies, including handwriting. Numeracy is taught well, with clear introductions to lessons, appropriate group and individual work, with high expectations. Good use is made of time at the end of lessons to review and consolidate what pupils have learned. There are strengths in the teaching of science, which, in the best lessons, ensures very good progress. This was reflected in a Year 6 lesson, where pupils studied food chains. The teacher skilfully taught pupils about consumers and producers, developing the theme well to the study of organisms. Though good overall, there were variations in the teaching of science. In a few instances, investigative work was hampered by the surrounding noise from other classes, whilst some teachers had difficulty in maintaining pupils' interest.

27. Music is taught well by the specialist teacher, who carefully adapts lessons to meet the needs of all different age groups in the school. Physical education is also taught effectively. Very good teaching was seen in a Year 5 physical education lesson, where pupils developed good sequences of movements, involving balance and control. Discipline was good and there were high expectations. Only one lesson was seen in information technology, in the Year 6 class. This was taught well. The quality of teaching in other subjects, including art, design and technology, history and geography, was satisfactory overall.

28. Over one half of the teachers have up to two years' teaching experience. They have responsibility for teaching classes in both key stages and have already demonstrated their commitment to achieving high standards. Although progress has been greatest at Key Stage 2 previously, the quality of teaching demonstrated by the recently appointed teachers is effectively improving pupils' rate of progress across the school. Since the last inspection, the variation seen in the quality of teaching has been effectively addressed, though there is still some variation in the teaching of science. Considerable time has been spent on ensuring there is clear guidance from the schemes of work to inform teaching, whilst assessment procedures

effectively ensure that the needs of all pupils are met.

The curriculum and assessment

29. Overall, the school provides a good curriculum. Since the last inspection, those areas of the school's curriculum which were found to be relatively weak, have been well improved. The school continues to raise standards of achievement through a system of monitoring the curriculum on a regular basis. The roles of co-ordinators have been developed to enable them to monitor and evaluate classroom practice and they have written and adopted schemes of work to ensure all programmes of study in the National Curriculum are taught. The school also has in place effective procedures for assessment and the recording of pupils' attainment and progress. These enable teachers to plan appropriate levels of work for pupils with differing prior attainment.

30. The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. It includes all subjects of the National Curriculum, religious education, health education and sex education. An awareness of the misuse of drugs is taught to the older pupils through the personal and social education programme. There are appropriate policies and schemes of work for each subject and these are regularly reviewed to take account of national priorities. The provision for children under five is good. The children have a good range of experiences in all six areas of learning.

31. There is good access to the curriculum for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they are very effectively identified and supported. The procedures fully meet the requirements of the Code of Practice. Individual education plans are good, providing clear targets for learning. The learning support assistants receive good guidance from the special educational needs co-ordinator, who offers good advice on effective teaching methods to support pupils with special educational needs. Pupils' progress is carefully monitored.

32. Children under five have a wide range of learning experiences, which are systematically developed. Their progress and attainment is assessed and recorded. The frequent recording of progress and results from baseline assessments are used to identify and plan appropriate learning objectives for all children. In the reception class, baseline assessments are completed during the first seven weeks of the autumn term and are used to inform teaching. In Key Stages 1 and 2, long term planning is undertaken by using a grid of six half-term blocks, representing all year groups. Subject co-ordinators establish long term plans, whilst all staff collaborate in establishing cross-curricular links. Teachers then create their own medium and short term plans, which are mostly good. However, there was an imbalance of time given to one aspect of science in Key Stage 1.

33. Provision for extra-curricular activities, including sport, is very good. All teachers, the headteacher, two assistants and the secretary, contribute their time to lunchtime or after-school clubs. There are 16 activities, including crafts, music, sport, fell-walking and canoeing. Pupils also make many visits into the local area to support their learning and personal and social development. Children in the reception years and pupils in Key Stage 1 have visited local centres, such as the church, the Toy Museum and Sheep and Wool Centre at Cockermouth and the Maryport Aquarium and Steamship Museum. Key Stage 2 pupils have visited Birdoswald Roman Fort, camped at Lindisfarne and visited Keswick, Grasmere and the Water Treatment Works, amongst other places. The school receives many visitors, including those from other countries, who enhance the curriculum and bring a flavour of the wider world to the pupils.

34. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are very good throughout the school. The assessment policy is informative and provides clear guidance on the various methods of assessment that can be used. The school uses nationally agreed assessment documents to test pupils in English and mathematics in Years 3, 4 and 5, along with the National Curriculum assessments at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Assessments are undertaken weekly in classes, focussing on particular objectives and are used well to ensure work matches pupils' prior levels of attainment. The school keeps a pupil profile from the reception year onwards. This contains baseline information, reading records, end of year levelled records of all national curriculum subjects and annotated samples of work in English, mathematics and science. Class teachers also use assessment sheets for the core subjects, which show the level descriptors for each attainment target.

35. The use of assessment to inform future planning is very good throughout the school. Children under five are assessed in the six areas of learning. Information is also gathered for the local authority baseline assessment. Detailed records of attainment and progress are continuously updated to build up a picture of the child and to provide a basis for further activities and development. These records are transferred to the reception class where the teacher completes the baseline assessment. Teachers throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 make effective use of the many assessments available. They keep detailed records of pupils' performance, which assist in target setting. Teachers plan appropriate work for groups of pupils with differing prior attainment, by very good ongoing assessment of pupils' progress. Future planning for subjects is informed by the assessments made by co-ordinators, who evaluate teachers' half term plans and who monitor the delivery of the subject in the classroom. The school also uses a "Tracking Children" form, which shows pupils' progress from the baseline assessment onwards. End of year reports to parents are informative and give a good indication of pupils' progress and some detail of the work in which they have been involved.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

36. The report of the previous inspection of the school records that the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good. The findings of the current inspection fully bear this out. The Catholic Christian character of the school pervades curricular and other aspects of its life and work. It takes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils seriously.

37. The provision for the spiritual development of the pupils is excellent. It is presented in many ways, including the regular practice of prayer throughout the school day. The other major element in its provision is the extensive programme of religious education. The good range of visits, involving, for example, overnight camping on a pilgrimage to Lindisfarne, four days of personally challenging activities at Keswick, fell-walking on Saturdays for volunteers and canoeing on Derwentwater, provide an excellent spread of life-enhancing experiences for the older pupils. Activities, such as pond dipping and visits to an animal refuge, farms, to Beatrix Potter's World and Carlisle Cathedral, provide similar experiences for the younger pupils. The quality of the planning and delivery of these experiences and the sensitivity of the follow up activities enhances the provision.

38. Pupils are encouraged to express their feelings and thoughts about a wide range of experiences from the early stages and this continues through the school. The good quality of singing, for example, reflects pupils' sensitivity and spiritual awareness. The policy for the development of Christian responsibility is worked out within the personal and social education

programme and in the life of the school. It provides a significant element in the provision for spiritual development.

39. The provision for moral development is good. The programme for personal and social development and elements in the religious education programme provide opportunities for the pupils to consider and discuss matters of ethical concern, within the context of Catholic Christian belief. The behaviour policy is well thought out. The pupils are clearly taught the difference between right and wrong and are encouraged to make judgements about the quality of their own behaviour. The ethos of the school promotes moral development. In the general life of the school, the pupils are helped to understand why some behaviour is welcomed, why others are tolerated and why others are found unacceptable. However, the behaviour of some pupils is unsatisfactory and some teachers lack sufficient understanding of strategies for addressing this. Good opportunities to reflect upon moral matters are provided within the curriculum, for example, in the stories they read or hear in English.

40. The provision for social development is very good. Adults in the school provide very good examples for pupils. One example is the wholehearted commitment of the headteacher to their welfare. Another is the staff commitment over and above their duty, in the provision of a very wide range of after-school activities, including weekend commitments. A third is that of the volunteers from among the parents and grandparents, governors and friends, who give their services willingly to the school. The pupils are encouraged to accept responsibility for people in need through the long list of charities they support, this includes a school in Kenya. They are encouraged to look for opportunities to help other people and to look out for the needs of visitors and other, younger pupils. They undertake duties involved in the day to day running of the school. The pupils provide entertainment for the old people in the community and they support activities such as the school Gala. Through the personal and social education and the Christian responsibility programmes, pupils develop a perspective on citizenship and personal commitment to social welfare, which is rooted in personal faith.

41. The provision for cultural development is very good. The pupils are introduced to a wide range of European culture through the curriculum in music, art and literature. Further examples are provided by dance in physical education and through history. They paint in the style of a range of artists. Pupils learn about musicians and music, as well as producing their own performances. Pupils are also introduced to drama, puppets, poetry and storytelling from the very good range of visitors and through visits to theatres. Display in the school is rich and introduces the pupils to a wide range of artistic and cultural traditions. Provision is made for the pupils to become aware of world cultures through geography and by the choice of topics provided in art, music, dance and literature. Members of other cultural traditions, including Indian and African musicians and storytellers, are invited to the school to share aspects of their traditions with the pupils. The adopted Kenyan School provides a living experience of a different culture, which is exploited through the curriculum and through the life of the school. Other activities supplement this, such as the introduction of multicultural aspects of mathematics and work for charities, which support third world people, as well as the multi-faith week held in the summer term. Pupils are brought close to them when workers for such groups visit the school.

42. The overall very good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is an important element in the achievement of the school's aims and is central to its very good ethos.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

43. The school provides a caring and happy environment. There are very good procedures for monitoring pupils' academic and personal progress. A variety of tests and assessments are used to maintain very detailed records, which monitor individual progress, identify problems and support future planning. Pupils are involved in discussions about their work and progress which are included in the annual reports to parents. Pupils are very well supported in their personal development by the very good relationships that exist in the school. Those with special educational needs are well provided for and supported. Pupils are well prepared for life outside school. They learn about relevant issues in lessons, including aspects of personal safety, appropriate drugs education and education about personal relationships. There are good arrangements for children joining the nursery and reception class, which includes a home visit and an opportunity for parents to visit the school. Pupils transferring to secondary education benefit from visits undertaken in their last term at school.

44. There are satisfactory procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. Whilst there is a behaviour policy, staff lack sufficient guidance on the consistent application of rewards and sanctions, particularly for the few pupils whose behaviour is regularly unsatisfactory. The school's equal opportunities policy is sound. Bullying is rare and any that occurs is dealt with swiftly.

45. There are procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance. However, too little action is taken to advise parents of the detrimental effect on pupils' learning by their being late and taking holidays during term time. Attendance registers are correctly maintained and the school meets with statutory requirements.

46. There are good arrangements for child protection. Staff are suitably trained and statutory requirements are met. There are good procedures for ensuring the safety and well being of all in school. There is a suitable health and safety policy, which is well supported by efficient daily practice.

Partnership with parents and the community

47. The partnership with parents and the community is good. Parents are very supportive of the school and pleased with the education provided for their children. They are particularly satisfied with the opportunities offered to them to become involved in the life of the school and with the happiness of their children.

48. Parents provide assistance in school with a wide variety of tasks and with extra-curricular activities. Their skills are used well to support the curriculum, such as in providing support in a history lesson, by demonstrating examples of Victorian cookery. Parent helpers are well informed by a useful handbook. Homework is well supported and parents are pleased with the newly introduced homework diaries. An active and successful Friends' Association, whose fund-raising has provided a range of resources, including mats for physical education, construction kits and books, further supports the school.

49. The information provided for parents is satisfactory. The school brochure, governors' annual report and letters are well written and informative. There are booklets offering information for nursery parents and for general school routines, but little written information is provided about the curriculum or the work which pupils will be doing in future terms. Parents have been invited to an information evening about the literacy and numeracy projects and other aspects of school life and they are welcomed to school assemblies. Reporting on pupils' work

and progress is made at consultation events and through written reports. These provide detailed information about the work that children have done, any problems that may be emerging and good guidance for future improvement. Parents of pupils with special needs are fully involved in their children's learning and discussions about their children's individual education plans.

50. The links with the community are good. These enrich pupils' lives and enhance their learning. Pupils take part in the life of the community by contributing to seasonal celebrations and by entertaining the elderly at Christmas. Members of the community come to school to share their experience, such as in coaching football skills in physical education lessons. The links with, and the support from, the church community are especially strong. There are many visitors who support the curriculum with special events and who provide specialist knowledge to support personal and social education. These include a visitor from Kenya, a puppet group, the police, a chiropodist and representatives from various charities. Pupils gain additional experience from visits to museums, the countryside and towns. They visit places of special interest, including Lindisfarne, a Roman fort and Keswick Pencil Museum.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

51. The strong, effective and pastoral leadership of the headteacher gives the school a clear vision, sense of direction and common purpose and contributes to its very good ethos. These are shared by the governing body, which plays a full role in the strategic leadership of the school, helping to identify priorities, establishing the budget and overseeing its implementation. The management of the school is ably undertaken by the headteacher and the members of the senior management team, who have been recently organised to support the headteacher, during the prolonged absence of the deputy headteacher.

52. The school has produced policies covering all the subjects in the curriculum, as well as those concerned with the efficient running and the development of the communal life of the school. These are subject to regular review. The governors have been appropriately involved in their creation and in their acceptance and ratification. The governing body has established an efficient structure of committees, which take into account members' preferences or skills. In this way and through visits to the school to look at particular subjects in the curriculum, or features of the life of the school, they are very much aware of how the school is functioning. Governors' visits are structured and reports are made to the full governing body. In addition, governors play a full part in the life of the school. The careful committee structure and well-managed governance of the school ensures that the governing body fully meets its statutory obligations.

53. The well-structured school development plan, effective curriculum planning, carefully produced policies and comprehensive schemes of work are related to the central values held and promoted by the school. These are clearly and consciously linked to its Christian ethos. Potential areas for inclusion in the development plan are identified by the headteacher, in consultation with all the staff. Curriculum areas are supported by curriculum audits to establish needs. Teachers who co-ordinate subject areas consult with colleagues and draw up proposals, which are then assimilated by the headteacher and management team for presentation to the governors. They are assessed according to cost, put in priority order along with other areas of development identified by the governing body and, after further

consultation, the plan is agreed and adopted. Committees and staff with particular responsibilities draw up action plans to establish how the items in the plan will be dealt with and give more precise details. The implementation of the plans is monitored by the headteacher, responsible members of the governing body and staff and regular reports are made.

54. Subject co-ordinators have clear job descriptions and are given opportunities to gain further training to keep up to date with current ideas, which they share with colleagues. They are given time to support the teaching of their subject. They monitor subject progress throughout the school. The leadership of the school places considerable emphasis on ensuring that staff have good opportunities for professional development.

55. A copy of the school's aims and mission statement is presented to each parent and this is prominently displayed about the school. The aims are being effectively implemented, especially in the ways in which individuals are valued. Very good attitudes and relationships, good behaviour and personal development are fostered in the school. The high quality of relationships encouraged in the school is a significant feature in the development of its very good ethos, in which development as people, as well as academic progress, are equally valued.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

56. The school has a good number of suitably qualified teachers. Over the past three years, the school has appointed two newly qualified teachers each year. Currently, there are two recently qualified teachers. The needs of newly qualified teachers are carefully met through the school's good induction policy and the provision of mentors, who support teachers well.

57. The deployment of teachers is effective overall. Teachers have appropriate qualifications and experience to meet the needs of the curriculum. Their interests and expertise are taken into account when delegating subject leadership responsibilities and teachers have opportunities to exchange these responsibilities, to widen their expertise. Good opportunities are provided for subject co-ordinators to fulfil their development, monitoring and evaluation roles. Because of the long term absence of the deputy headteacher, a management team has been formed to provide support. This comprises members of staff from each unit in the school, who contribute well towards school management. Overall, teachers work effectively as a team and share a common commitment to curriculum development, monitoring and evaluation.

58. Appraisal has been used successfully to establish teachers' professional needs and the school is ready to begin a new system later this year. Teachers have annual meetings with the headteacher to discuss their responsibilities and job descriptions, which clearly indicate their roles and what is required of them. The professional development needs of staff are well catered for and they attend relevant courses to widen their expertise, fully addressing the issue raised at the time of the last inspection, when curriculum leaders were not attending appropriate training courses. However, the school has yet to effectively address the management of some pupils' unsatisfactory behaviour where teachers lack guidance on the use of effective strategies.

59. Non-teaching staff, including support assistants, catering, cleaning and supervisory

staff, make a significant contribution to the work of the school. There is efficient secretarial and administrative support. Parents and other volunteers contribute well, by helping individuals and small groups. The overall quality of staff and their cohesive approach to school life have a positive effect on the quality of education.

60. At the time of the previous inspection, accommodation was seen to be limited. Considerable refurbishment has taken place since then and the accommodation is now good. Extensions have been built and teachers and pupils benefit from the availability of tutorial rooms, computer areas and spacious classrooms. There are good storage facilities and areas for displaying pupils' work, which enhances the building. However, in some instances, the use of the open plan accommodation is insufficiently well planned and organised to ensure that pupils can work without distractions. The Key Stage 2 library is situated in the entrance area of the school. Pupils visit the library regularly to exchange books, but have few opportunities to use this as a resource for independent research, or to learn how to use an appropriate classification system. The grounds are well maintained and good playground markings provide additional interest for pupils when at play. The school benefits from the voluntary help provided by parents and friends, such as the painting team, who willingly give their free time to decorate the building. There is an attractive outdoor playground, with climbing equipment for younger pupils and a suitable play area for the youngest children. Although there is no wildlife or conservation area, as stated in the previous report, the school makes very good use of its immediate and wider localities for studies in geography, history and science.

61. The school is very well resourced overall. There are good quality resources for most subjects, including books, equipment and computers. The school makes very good use of resources outside the school, such as museums, art galleries, field study centres and other places of interest in Cumbria and further afield. Parents and friends give very good support in fund-raising activities, such as in providing a mini-bus, which is maintained by a benefactor. The level and quality of resources overall, makes a positive contribution to the standards achieved. However, though plentiful, some books in the class and Key Stage 2 libraries are out of date; some require repair and others need to be reviewed in terms of their appeal to pupils. In some classes, such as Year 6, there is a restricted range of good quality fiction available.

The efficiency of the school

62. The financial planning undertaken by the headteacher, in close co-operation with the finance committee, ensures that appropriate priorities are identified and linked effectively to the school development plan. Draft budget proposals are gathered from the staff by the headteacher and senior management team. Regular costs, such as staffing, are assessed by the finance committee, in the light of governing body decisions a draft budget is prepared for discussion. The finance committee discusses priorities and the proposed budget is presented to the governing body for approval. Governors seek value for money in all purchases. They look for cost-effectiveness and recognise the need to evaluate and monitor expenditure decisions, in the best interest of the school.

63. The headteacher and school secretary efficiently carry out the day-to-day running, oversight and monitoring of budget decisions. The chair of the finance committee also carefully oversees the finance of the school at least monthly, reconciling the accounts from printouts. He also checks the petty cash account and the school's private funds on a monthly basis, ensuring that proper accounting principles are maintained and good practice is adhered to. This tight management of financial matters ensures that the school is able to react quickly, effectively and economically to changes in circumstances. From the changes in staff costs, the

school has brought forward a large amount of money, which is to be used for major developments, including the purchase of adjacent ground, the installation of a secure perimeter fence and the creation of a suitable car park. The school's accounts have been audited and were found to be efficiently kept. The two minor items identified have been addressed.

64. Good use is made of the teaching and support staff, who are effectively deployed according to their strengths and the needs of the school. A long period of sickness on the part of a senior member of staff has accounted for strains on finances and in the pattern of staffing, though the responsibilities have been well shared by a management team. This has provided an opportunity for a change in the management structure for the school, which has proved to be beneficial for efficiency and improved standards. Very good use is made of the support staff for pupils with special educational needs.

65. Routine administration is conscientiously carried out by support staff, who, along with the lunchtime supervisors and care-taking staff are very effective in supporting the school's very good ethos. Very good use is made of the plentiful and good quality learning resources. The new accommodation, which is open plan, has presented the staff with challenges to develop alternative teaching styles, in order to manage shared open spaces. They are coming to terms with this, but while its benefits are recognised, not all of its deficiencies have been removed. The rest of the accommodation, including the grounds, is efficiently used.

66. In relation to the context within which it works, the progress the pupils make and the quality of support and education provided, the school provides good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

67. Children under five are taught in the nursery and reception class. Twenty-seven children attend the nursery in the mornings, with 17 attending in the afternoons. Twenty-one children in the reception class have yet to reach their fifth birthday. The spacious nursery unit is attached to the reception classroom in the main school building and is part of the early years unit.

68. The children's attainment upon entry is broadly average, although there are wide variations in each intake. By the age of five, most are likely to achieve the Desirable Learning Outcomes in all areas of learning. The school has a good induction policy for children who are to attend the nursery. A meeting is held for all parents of pre-school children, to explain procedures and to answer any questions. A useful and informative booklet about details of the nursery arrangements is given to parents and is followed up by a home visit in the summer term before the children start.

69. Children's personal and social development is sound. The nursery and reception classes provide a welcoming approach to parents. Parents feel encouraged to help their children settle into nursery and school. Children enjoy their activities and these help them to establish good relationships with each other and with adults. In the nursery, children quickly learn to take turns and to share. They initiate their own ideas, such as when undertaking role-play in the home corner, where three children select their house badge from pegs and move into the house. They clean and tidy, vacuum the carpets and prepare and cook meals. Children in the reception class are encouraged to develop independence and to help each other. They can express their feelings and behave appropriately, having a good understanding of right and wrong. They are able to select their own activities and are proud of their ability to show growing independence, such as in changing their clothes for physical education.

70. In language and literacy, children in the nursery listen attentively to adults and to each other and take turns to speak. They listen and take part in rhymes and stories and some talk confidently, such as when discussing the shapes they are cutting from play dough. Other children, when handling jigsaws, can name colours on the various scenes. In the reception class, the teacher's story about "Little Miss Muffet" is used effectively to encourage them to repeat the words. Children answer and ask questions, make suggestions, express opinions and use an increasing range of vocabulary. There are good opportunities provided for children to develop their speaking and listening skills.

71. Children handle books well. In the nursery, they are able to discuss the plot and characters and understand that books carry meaning. They know that print is read from left to right and some children begin to recognise familiar words and letters. An attractive reading area provides a good variety of books and the teacher makes effective use of big books as a focus for storytelling and as an aid to developing children's ability to anticipate, using the illustrations. In the reception class, most children recognise several words and initial letter sounds, as seen in their study of the big book rhyme of "Little Miss Muffet". They are able to hear the letter "m" in several words, identify objects in the story beginning with this letter, whilst several children with higher prior attainment can choose words of their own, such as "mum, milk and marmalade". The children are able to sing the alphabet and many can recognise and name most letters.

72. In their early writing, children in the nursery communicate ideas through pictures,

drawings and some familiar letters. They develop appropriate control of writing tools. In both the nursery and reception class, writing areas are provided, containing paper, stencils, envelopes and mark makers of all kinds, which suitably encourage independent writing. In the reception class, many children write their own names and begin to form their letters accurately. Groups of children practise their pencil hold and learn different strategies to ensure correct letter formation. Children make use of the computer to click on familiar objects on the screen and use the displayed alphabet to spell words. There are good opportunities provided to widen the children's awareness of the different purposes for writing.

73. Children's early mathematical understanding is sound. In the nursery, children use a variety of materials, toys, jigsaws, sand and water trays, construction equipment and farmyard animals and vehicles to support their knowledge and understanding of mathematical terms and concepts. They are able to sort, match, order, sequence and compare objects. They understand "in front of, behind, round, long" and recognise shapes, such as triangle and circle. Many children know their colours and recognise that numbers can be recorded as written numerals. In the reception class, children show good knowledge of number sequence and can count up to 10, whilst some can count to 20 and beyond. They have good opportunities to match and count numbers in many activities, such as counting children and numbers of objects and during counting songs. Children are able to identify and discuss the properties of common solid shapes, when comparing them with everyday objects.

74. Children make sound progress in their physical development. Large indoor and outdoor equipment is shared by children in the nursery and reception classes and this supports their developing control and co-ordination. In their physical education lessons, nursery children can handle hoops and show satisfactory control of their movements and the equipment. They show agility in moving in and out of the hoop and good control when rolling the hoop on the ground and in swinging it around their body. Children also have satisfactory manipulative skills, such as when they handle malleable materials, use jigsaws, make figures with construction equipment and cut with scissors. Reception class pupils develop sound skills when using the computer mouse to select and move around the clothes for "Teddy" and exhibit good control of pencils when following or tracing letters. They are able to use a range of small equipment to learn skills such as throwing and catching beanbags. They have satisfactory skills in physical education lessons where they make large movements such as hopping, skipping and jumping. They show suitable awareness of space.

75. In their knowledge and understanding of the world, children talk about events in their own and their family's lives in the past and the present and show an understanding of similarities and differences between them. Children look at objects in the natural world and use magnifying glasses for close study. They learn about the weather by making a daily, pictorial weather chart, where they change the day and date. In the reception class, children understand the concept of journeys and discuss their way to and from school and visits to places further afield. They talk about man-made things they see, as they travel. Children are knowledgeable about different vehicles and types of transport they have travelled in. In their work in science, they study and describe objects and, with help, are able to use terms such as rough, smooth, hard and soft, to classify them.

76. Children make sound progress in their creative development. In the nursery, they explore colour, texture and sound. They paint with different colours and sizes of brushes, experimenting to find the best way to create pictures. Others use materials to create collage images. They use stories and imaginative play to stimulate and improve their language and creative skills. Children play well together in the house, such as when looking after the baby, using the telephone and making breakfast. In their music lesson, children handle percussion

instruments appropriately and are able to follow instructions. They can identify musical instruments that are played. Older children in the reception class can follow music and listen to the beat and rhythm. They can copy the rhythms demonstrated by the teacher and can play three notes correctly. They are able to match movements to words and music and can suggest which instruments make certain sounds. In their artistic work, children can make use of imaginative stories, such as those about monsters and dinosaurs, to use glue and egg shells to create monsters of long ago. They can use a variety of media, such as pencils, paint, crayons and felt-tips to produce pictures. In their work on journeys, children made good use of junk materials to make models of houses and buildings they see on their way to school. They have produced an attractive cross-curricular display of mathematical shapes using card, glue and sequins.

77. The quality of teaching is at least good and often very good in both the nursery and the reception classes. Teachers and learning support assistants effectively build on children's prior attainment by providing a wide range of activities that ensure appropriate challenge. Children with special educational needs are well supported and encouraged to take part in all activities. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the areas of learning and efficiently monitor and record progress to inform future work. Teachers and support staff collaborate well in planning, organising and developing activities to meet the needs of all children. Very good use is made of time and resources to fully extend the learning experiences of children under five. The environment is caring and stimulating and children feel happy and valued. Baseline assessments are used well to identify children's future needs and provide good records for future teaching. The accommodation for children under five is good, with very good learning and play resources in both the nursery and reception areas.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

78. In the National Curriculum assessments in 1998, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was well above the national average in English. The number of pupils attaining beyond average levels was well above the national average. Taking the three years 1996 to 1998 together, pupils' performance was above the national average. In comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, pupils' performance was well above average. These results broadly reflect the observations of the inspection, where pupils' attainment was good overall and above levels expected nationally.

79. In the 1998 National Curriculum assessments at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' performance in reading and writing was broadly average. An appropriate proportion of pupils achieved above the average in reading, though fewer than expected pupils attained beyond average levels in writing. Over the last three years, pupils' performance in reading was close to the national average, whilst their performance in writing was above the national average. Observations during the inspection reflect the results of the 1998 National Curriculum assessments, where attainment in reading and writing is broadly average by the time pupils are 7.

80. At Key Stage 1, most pupils develop good speaking and listening skills, but a few have difficulty in listening attentively and in taking turns to respond. In a good lesson observed in the reception class, pupils successfully made suggestions about what might happen next, during a story about a monster and showed appreciation of others' ideas. However, in Year 1, though most collaborated well when discussing a story, a few pupils repeatedly interrupted the lesson by calling out of turn. This was also reflected in work in some other subject lessons. In

some lessons, Year 1 and 2 pupils are distracted by noise in their shared area.

81. At Key Stage 2, pupils generally make good progress in speaking and listening, with the exception of a few pupils in Year 3, who lack self control and an appropriate awareness of how they should respond. In Years 4, 5 and 6, pupils have good speaking and listening skills, reflected in their good use of an increasing vocabulary and in their ability to appreciate others' points of view. By the end of the key stage, pupils settle to work quickly, requiring minimum supervision and show a generous appreciation of others' responses.

82. In reading, most pupils make good progress throughout the school, achieving sound standards by the end of Key Stage 1 and good standards by the end of Key Stage 2. The youngest pupils handle books knowledgeably, progressing well from the nursery, where children recognise the direction of pages in a book, understand that illustrations and print are meaningful and can begin to select their favourite parts of a story. In the reception class and in Years 1 and 2, most pupils continue to make good progress. They enjoy whole class reading periods during the literacy hour, making good progress in predicting and anticipating what might happen next in a story. In Year 1, pupils know and use vocabulary such as "title, author, illustrator and blurb". Those with higher prior attainment refer to the "character" and "plot" in a story. By the end of the key stage, most pupils have made sound progress in recognising familiar letter patterns, such as "ay". Some pupils in Year 2 achieve well and above the national average. For example, in one Year 2 class, pupils with higher prior attainment recognise rhyming patterns in types of poems, such as "The Bunny" and "The Rabbit" and can compose their own similar verses. However, in the year group overall, a considerable proportion of pupils have special educational needs and the attainment of the majority is broadly average.

83. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to read for a range of purposes, using a variety of books and other materials. They have good understanding of ways in which they can find information in books, using the contents and index pages effectively. A good example was seen in a Year 5 science lesson, where pupils worked conscientiously to research information about growth, using the books provided. Similarly, they showed good understanding when reading and answering questions about the Victorian period. However, a few pupils' inappropriate behaviour limited the rate of progress for the majority, who, as a result, had to wait for the teacher's attention. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have good understanding of the conventions of written English. They recognise the use of punctuation, including exclamation marks and inverted commas, in dialogue and show secure understanding of the differences between reported and direct speech. Generally, pupils enjoy reading. By the end of the key stage, they appreciate the different styles used by authors and can state their preferences. However, Year 6 pupils expressed a wish for a wider range of fiction than presently provided by the school. Many bring their own books from home as a result.

84. Pupils' attainment in writing is satisfactory by the end of Key Stage 1 and good by the end of Key Stage 2. A good start is made in the early stages of the school, where pupils are taught letter formation, using a good variety of strategies. Effective additional support in writing is provided by the special educational needs teacher, who makes good use of resources, such as specific letter formation equipment, to ensure pupils with special educational needs learn the correct formation and orientation of letters. The systematic development of handwriting skills ensures most pupils develop good pencil control and acquire a joined script by the age of 7. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils write for a range of purposes, such as writing accounts of visits, poems, letters and descriptions. They answer questions appropriately, in the required formats, such as in completing diagrams, charts and worksheets. Most write sentences with appropriate attention to punctuation. However, though some Year 2 pupils achieve well in

writing, most attain levels that are broadly satisfactory for their age, reflecting their prior levels of attainment.

85. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to write for a range of purposes and for different audiences. For example, pupils in Year 3 complete worksheet questions about the Vikings, whilst those in Year 4 use their knowledge and understanding of the locality to develop a “radio” script to entice visitors to their area. In Year 5, pupils use their experience of accounts they have read in the literacy hour to devise their own newspaper report. Most write interesting reports, in the appropriate style, attaining above average standards of writing. By the end of the key stage, pupils have experienced a good variety of writing tasks, which is often reflected in the high quality of their work. Pupils make good progress in writing at Key Stage 2, presentation is neat and reflects the pride most pupils take in their work. Spelling and handwriting are good overall, though a few pupils in the key stage show the use of an inappropriate pencil hold. The school is aware of this and appropriate attention is now being paid to the way in which younger pupils develop their writing and control skills.

86. Overall, pupils with special educational needs make good progress in English. Their needs are effectively met through a well-organised system of support, which involves individual and group help from the experienced special educational needs teacher, support staff and the good discrimination of work in classes. Individual education plans provide clear targets and guidance for planning work for pupils with special educational needs.

87. Most pupils in the school respond well. Most show enthusiasm for English and pleasure in reading. Pupils are suitably encouraged to contribute to discussions, reading and writing tasks and usually respond well. The imaginative and well-planned lessons often enhance pupils’ enjoyment of the subject. The literacy hour has been well established and pupils show particular interest in the wide range of shared reading texts provided. In a few instances, however, the inappropriate behaviour of a few pupils in some classes restricts the enjoyment of the majority. At times, the use of the shared open plan space causes disruption to some lessons, such as when pupils are unable to hear what the teacher and other pupils are saying because of undue noise.

88. At the time of the previous inspection, the quality of presentation of work was inconsistent in the school, largely due to teachers’ variable expectations. This is no longer evident and teachers share a commitment to achieving high standards. The quality of teaching, which was sound at the time of the last inspection, is good overall. Teachers have worked hard to develop and establish a consistent approach to teaching English and have made good progress in teaching the literacy hour. Most make effective use of time and resources, within some limitations caused by the use of the accommodation. Expectations are generally high and teachers have good subject knowledge. Planning is detailed and contains clear criteria for assessing and monitoring pupils’ progress. Most teachers manage and organise pupils effectively, though, in some classes, particularly those with pupils with behavioural related difficulties, discipline is not fully effective. Teachers lack clear guidance on ways in which to address the behavioural difficulties of some pupils.

89. The accommodation is good overall. There has been considerable improvement in the building since the last inspection. Teaching areas are supplemented by the use of quiet rooms, where many whole class lessons are introduced. Pupils have designated areas for enhancing their learning in English, through the use of computers, and there are suitable areas where pupils with special educational needs in literacy can be supported. However, in some lessons, the open plan area causes distraction between classes, especially where pupils in one class are engaged in a noisy activity. The Key Stage 2 library, which is situated in the entrance

hall, lacks a wide range of good quality books and is insufficiently classified to provide a resource for developing pupils' retrieval skills. Overall, resources are very good for promoting literacy, with the exception of the quality and range of fiction available for older pupils.

Mathematics

90. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1, in the 1998 National Curriculum assessments was close to the national average. Their performance was also average in relation to that of pupils in similar schools. The proportion of pupils attaining higher levels was below the national average. The area of mathematics in which the pupils were most successful was number, whilst shape, space and measure and the use and application of mathematics were not so strong. The school has addressed this discrepancy in its current planning and the enhanced results in the 1999 tests indicate improvement. There has been little change in the pattern of results over the past three years. The results for boys are marginally lower than that for girls, but the variations are well within the range expected for the size of the group assessed and are not significant.

91. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards achieved in the 1998 National Curriculum assessments were above the national average, both for those pupils gaining average levels and for those attaining higher than average levels. These results reflected a very considerable improvement from 1996, where a low percentage achieved average levels. There has also been consistent progress since 1998, which reflects the positive involvement of the management and the staff. There was no appreciable difference between the performances of boys and girls.

92. Evidence from the inspection indicates that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and in line with the national average, reflecting the standards seen in the National Curriculum assessments in 1998. Pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 is good and above the national average, also reflecting the 1998 results.

93. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn to handle numbers, patterns and relationships, shapes, measures and undertake comparisons, using everyday objects as well as special equipment. They become increasingly fluent in the use of proper mathematical terms, such as "add, more and less than". Their curriculum is enriched by the use of number rhymes, songs and games aimed at encouraging mathematical thinking. In number work, pupils add and subtract two digit numbers with ease. They order numbers forwards and backwards and count on in multiples of three, five and ten with confidence. They understand halves and quarters, add and subtract money and understand how to work out change from larger amounts. They can make up sums of money, using a variety of coins. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils understand the names and qualities of simple two and three-dimensional shapes, such as triangles and cubes. They use these mathematical skills in dealing with everyday problems, as well as in other subjects, such as data collection in science.

94. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in mathematics is above average and standards show an improvement over recent years. Pupils have good mental recall, as seen for example, in a Year 6 lesson about the addition of decimals. Pupils understand probability and handle decimals with confidence, linking them to fractions. They work with thousands in number and are learning how to use calculators effectively and accurately. They are familiar with the names and characteristics of a wide range of two and three-dimensional shapes, such as polygons and hexagons and can use that knowledge to describe objects accurately. They use their knowledge of angles to investigate perspective in art. They effectively handle data

generated in science and other studies.

95. Progress in mathematics is sound at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Overall, pupils are challenged by the work that is provided for them and they develop mathematical skills that can be applied in other areas of the curriculum and in everyday life. They develop confidence in the subject and show an increased facility with numbers, shapes, measures and other mathematical concepts, such as estimation and probability. Good use is made of information technology to enhance pupils' progress.

96. Pupils generally respond well to mathematics. Most settle to work quickly and maintain concentration. They develop independence by the time they are 11, where they require the minimum of supervision. Most pupils in both key stages work together very well, however, occasionally, the disruptive behaviour of a few pupils adversely affects others' concentration. They are enthusiastic about mathematics. They answer questions well in class. The opportunities they are given for working on their own enhances their personal development and most develop effective learning skills in the subject.

97. The quality of teaching is good, overall. Teachers demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and of how pupils learn mathematics. Expectations of what pupils in Key Stage 1 can achieve are sound and are good in Key Stage 2. The quality of planning is generally effective and enables the pupils to make good progress in Key Stage 2. The National Numeracy Strategy is being implemented soundly. Teachers use appropriate methods in their teaching and organisation of their classes. There are some difficulties caused by the sharing of open plan classes, to which teachers have not yet found satisfactory solutions. The teachers manage the pupils effectively in most classes. Where there are distractions from a few pupils, in most cases they are dealt with rapidly and effectively by either the class teacher or the support staff. On occasion, however, teachers with less experience lack a wide range of suitable strategies for dealing with these problems. Teachers make good use of resources and make full use of the time available. Good quality assessment is a feature of the school and this is used effectively to plan the work for the pupils. Pupils are encouraged to learn tables and number bonds for homework, which enhances their learning.

98. Good use is made of the support staff, who contribute well to the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs. Planning is often imaginative. The scheme of work provides effective guidance. The assessment of lessons and of individual pupils' work is good and contributes well to the good quality of provision provided in the school and the good standards that are achieved by the end of Key Stage 2. Numeracy is well supported by work in other lessons.

Science

99. The performance of the pupils aged 7 in the 1998 National Curriculum teacher assessments was below the national average. In comparison with schools in similar contexts, the number of pupils attaining average and higher levels was below average. However, pupils' performance in the study of life and living processes was well above the national average.

100. For pupils aged 11, the number reaching the national average in the 1998 National Curriculum assessments was above average and the number reaching higher levels was also above average. Taking the three years 1996 to 1998 together, pupils' performance in science was well below the national average. This reflected the poor results that were attained in 1996 and does not indicate a downward trend in standards. In comparison with schools in similar

contexts, pupils' results were above the average for similar schools. Evidence gained from the inspection shows that attainment in science is satisfactory by the end of Key Stage 1 and good by the end of Key Stage 2.

101. At Key Stage 1, there has previously been an overemphasis on teaching the aspect of science which focuses on life and living processes, which has yet to be fully addressed. However, the co-ordinator has recently made plans to ensure planning is more suitably focused on an appropriate balance between all aspects of the programmes of study. There is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Year 2 whose attainment by the end of the current year is likely to be only broadly average.

102. At Key Stage 1, pupils study life and living processes in some depth. They appreciate the need for a balanced diet and can identify foods that are requirements for healthy living. They can gather and record evidence when working co-operatively and can research books and information technology sources. In their work in experimental and investigative science, pupils conscientiously observe and record aspects of human growth, such as teeth. Most pupils know the names and functions of teeth, such as canines, molars and incisors. Other pupils, in their work on diet, know that sugar is bad for teeth and discuss their own visits to dentists. They talk about methods of investigating the effect of different foods upon human teeth. Various liquids, such as artificial carbonated drinks, milk, water and orange juice are poured into containers in which pieces of egg-shell are placed. Higher attaining children make simple predictions about the possible outcomes of the experiment. Other pupils, in their studies of humans as organisms, have a good understanding of the life cycle of human beings.

103. Pupils also study other aspects of science, including identifying and appreciating the properties of common materials, such as wood, brick, rock, tile, metals, glass and plastics. They sort materials using everyday terms, such as hardness, texture and weight. By the end of Key Stage 1, they describe how some materials are changed by heating or cooling. Pupils can compare differences in sound and the ways in which it is made. They appreciate that light comes from sources other than the sun and that electrical devices need unbroken circuits and a battery to enable them to work.

104. At Key Stage, 2 younger pupils reinforce their learning about plant growth. They understand that the purpose of the stem, roots and leaves is to take up minerals, to anchor the plant and to absorb sunlight. Other pupils, in their study of the human body, learn that muscles are attached to the skeleton and cause movement. They use their skills of measuring and recording to gain good understanding of the changing size of muscles, when in relaxation or in contraction. They know the names of several muscles, such as 'biceps, pectoral and femoral' and understand that they are made up of fibres. Older pupils, in their study of human growth, know the changing features of physical development and understand that human babies take nine months to develop in the womb. They are able to compare and contrast animal and human growth. Pupils have a very good understanding of food chains within ecosystems and know that almost all food chains begin with a green plant. They recognise the feeding relationships between animals and plants. Many pupils show higher than average understanding of different environments, such as deserts, polar regions and tropical areas, which support a variety of differently adapted organisms.

105. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils recognise the need for a fair test, such as when they investigate the solubility of materials. They devise methods of separating mixtures and understand that some changes made by heating or cooling can be irreversible. They know that dough when cooked cannot be returned to its original constituents. They know that water can exist in three states by heating or cooling. In their work on physical processes, pupils

appreciate that a variety of light sources give rise to reflections and shadows. They understand the terms 'opaque, transparent and translucent'. Pupils carry out investigations on forces such as friction, gravity and magnetism and present their observations and measurements in a variety of ways, including the use of information technology.

106. Pupils' progress in science is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall, in relation to their prior attainment. Pupils make good progress where tasks are practical and open-ended, where they make use of reference material and where there are good links with other subjects. Their investigative skills improve where work is undertaken collaboratively. They increase their knowledge and understanding of the need for fair testing and their ability to create hypotheses.

107. Pupils' attitudes to work are generally good. They behave responsibly and co-operate together, especially in the older classes, where good behaviour and enthusiasm for the subject are evident. Pupils enjoy science and like to work independently, using their initiative. They are generally well motivated and respond well to a challenge. On some occasions, some younger pupils are less sensible and are sometimes disruptive, limiting the pace of these lessons. However, most pupils have a desire to do well and take pride in presenting their reports neatly.

108. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good overall in Key Stage 2. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject is good and planning and learning objectives are appropriate. In the good lessons, the pace is brisk, teachers' expectations are high and pupils and time are managed well. Tasks are imaginative and are aimed at a level appropriate to pupils' differing prior attainment. Pupils are encouraged to contribute effectively in investigative work. In some lessons, however, there are limited opportunities for pupils to take part in scientific experiments.

109. The science curriculum has a recently amended policy and is well planned to provide for complete coverage of the programmes of study and for progression and continuity throughout both key stages. The school has adopted a nationally agreed document for the subject, which clearly shows the content and standard of work expected for all age groups. There is a clear timetable for science work each half term. There has been however, an imbalance of time spent on the study of life and living processes in Key Stage 1, which the subject co-ordinator has identified as requiring amendment.

110. Leadership and management of the subject are sound and appropriate support and guidance is given where required. Assessment of pupils' work is systematic. Teachers focus assessment on an aspect of science twice each half term and this is recorded formally on the useful strategic planning sheets. The range and quality of resources for the teaching of science are very good and readily available. The accommodation is spacious and is used effectively for the teaching of science.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Information technology

111. The school has been paying special attention to information technology over the past year. The result has been that it is a growing strength in the curriculum. The pupils make good progress in the subject throughout the school and attain well by the end of both key stages.

Standards of attainment are above levels expected nationally.

112. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn keyboard skills, how to use the mouse and how to save work they have produced. They use a variety of programs to support their learning in other subjects, such as language and numeracy, as well as foundation subjects. They find information from CD-ROM encyclopaedias. They write poems and other pieces of creative writing, using word processing programs, combining text and graphics, which are then printed. They are also introduced to simple control technology through a programmable floor toy, where they control the movements of a "floor turtle".

113. These skills are developed further in Key Stage 2. By the end of the key stage, most pupils confidently handle desktop publishing programs to create illustrated poems and stories, posters and information packages. They use material gained from searching CD-ROM encyclopaedias and other sources to support a variety of subjects, such as history, with interactive and informational programs on, for example, the Egyptians or the Vikings. They successfully manipulate images on the screen for inclusion in their publications. They use spreadsheets and graphs, handling data derived from other areas of the curriculum, such as mathematics, with accuracy and confidence. Pupils have their own disks for storing their work. They are confident in saving work, amending it and printing it.

114. In both key stages, pupils are introduced progressively to the functions of the computer. They develop skills that enable them to use computers effectively as a means of developing their work in other subjects and they are encouraged to become self-reliant. Overall, pupils make good progress at both key stages.

115. Pupils respond well. They enjoy using computers and other audio-visual resources, such as tape recorders. Pupils develop independence and show responsible attitudes to their work. Generally, they behave well when using computers and co-operate effectively.

116. Very little direct teaching of information technology took place during the inspection period, but the brief moments of instruction by teachers and the longer sessions provided by support staff and knowledgeable volunteers was of a good quality. This, along with the evidence gained from the scrutiny of pupils' work, indicates that the teachers have, or are developing, confidence in information technology. The planning of the subject is good and the provision of assessment opportunities within the planning is effective. The work observed showed that there were high expectations of the pupils and that there was good instruction and demonstration, to enable pupils to learn for themselves. The aim of producing independent learners was achieved when, for example, a group of Year 6 pupils worked as a self-motivated and mutually supportive group, which produced very well illustrated poems using "Publisher". These included CD-ROM produced graphics, which were undertaken independently, in a short time.

117. The resources provided for information technology are very generous in quantity and consist of a very good range and number of both personal computers and laptop computers. There is an equally generous number of printers and other hardware. The range of software is being extended as the programme of study and scheme of work is developed from national guidelines and as more appropriate programs are produced. The quality of the resources is good and their distribution around the school ensures that they are used well.

118. The work in information technology is carefully assessed against the planning and this information is used well for future developments in the subject, as well as for providing shorter term targets for groups and individuals. Teachers take appropriate account of pupils' individual

expertise, such as in providing further challenge for those with skills learned at home.

119. The pupils are enthusiastic about information technology. They support one another very well. They carry out their tasks effectively and at a good pace so that other pupils can share the resources. Those who have resources at home are supportive of those whose opportunities to practise outside school hours are limited.

120. The good provision for pupils is enhanced by teachers' enthusiasm. Teachers are willing to develop their own skills in the subject and the headteacher and governing body promote and support the subject. A governor with good expertise in information technology helps to support the teaching and, with others, has been instrumental in acquiring the good number of good quality, second-hand computers. This has supported the good progress made in the subject.

.. **Art**

121. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in art throughout the school.

122. At Key Stage 1, pupils suitably learn a range of techniques, including painting, printing, drawing and collage. The younger pupils, for example, have produced flower pictures, using finger painting as a technique to create the effect of petals. Pupils learn to mix colours and to observe and learn closely. For example, younger pupils paint portraits of themselves, whilst pupils in Year 2 have undertaken observational work on fruit and vegetables to produce satisfactory representations.

123. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop a variety of techniques. They study and copy styles such as Pointillism and paint in the style of artists such as Pablo Picasso. As part of their topic work, pupils in Year 3 sketch footwear, such as a sandal, roller skate and boot, paying good attention to line and form. Pupils in Year 4 sketch parts of the human body, as part of their topic in science. For example, they have sketched hands, showing knuckles and veins and have copied a drawing of a bodybuilder as part of their study on muscles in the human body. Pupils develop good understanding of shade and tone.

124. Pupils respond well in lessons. They share materials and concentrate. They can evaluate their work and try hard to improve it. Behaviour is good and pupils show positive attitudes to their work.

125. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are appropriately planned and are well resourced. Teachers have sound subject knowledge and provide appropriate guidance and support for pupils. Instructions and explanations are clear. Pace is generally satisfactory.

126. There is a good scheme of work for art, which ensures continuity and progression, though the art policy is in need of review. Leadership of the subject has recently been delegated to the co-ordinator who is supportive of colleagues. Teachers' plans are seen each half term and the co-ordinator monitors pupils' progress. Informal meetings with staff are held to discuss progress and to contribute ideas. Pupils' work is assessed regularly and examples of their work are kept in pupils' portfolios. Sketchbooks appropriately show the progress pupils have made over several years and pupils enjoy evaluating their own development.

127. Although the school visits art galleries and museums, there have been no visits by other

artists to the school in recent months. However, pupils have good opportunities to look at art from other cultures, such as African art and design, supported by their links with a Kenyan school and the art demonstrated by visitors from different countries. Resources are very good and the school makes effective use of visits to places of interest. One particularly interesting visit is made to the pencil museum and factory, where pupils can look at their different sizes, styles, shapes and purposes. The accommodation is good. Suitable displays of pupils' work enhance the building.

.. **Design and technology**

128. The quality of the work available for scrutiny, the records of planning, the evaluation by pupils of their designs and the observation of work during the inspection, indicate that, in both key stages, the pupils make satisfactory progress in this subject.

129. At Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress in designing, making and evaluating what they have done, in order to improve it. They make musical instruments from a range of materials. They develop techniques of dyeing materials, using tie and dye techniques. Older pupils in Key Stage 1 design and make vehicles which run on rotating wheels, as part of a study of transport. They also design a playground and model it to assess its potential. They make appropriate use of their mathematical skills to measure and estimate. Pupils design and prepare menus for particular meals, as part of their healthy eating topic, showing satisfactory understanding of foods required for sustaining life. By the end of the key stage, they have made sound progress.

130. At Key Stage 2, pupils further develop their designing and making skills. They evaluate their designs and creations with increasing perception. They recognise the need for information about the topic or the object of their designs, such as the necessary research about bread, before planning an informative poster. They design packets for seeds, considering the need to keep them fresh in sealed packages, as well as the need for providing information on the packet. They use clay to make decorated Greek theatrical masks and use other malleable materials to make coil pots in Greek vase shapes, adapted from ancient illustrations.

131. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, in relation to their prior attainment, in both key stages. The planning of the subject ensures that pupils with higher prior attainment are challenged when developing their designs to produce them accurately.

132. Pupils' attitudes to design and technology are positive. They enjoy the work and they learn the advantages of designing and then making. They work co-operatively on joint projects and share resources well. In their evaluation of others' work, they are sensitive of each other's feelings. They talk about their constructions, developing an appropriate vocabulary, such as strength and suitability. Pupils listen to instructions and generally carry them out well, though there are occasions when some pupils ignore instructions and rush ahead, which results in less successful products. Pupils make increasing use of the skills developed in numeracy when they are planning their work, especially in measuring and in estimating what is needed.

133. The teaching of design and technology is never less than satisfactory and is sometimes good. The teachers have a good knowledge of the skills required to accomplish the planned curriculum. This, however, does not include the use of electrical components at present. Teachers' expectations of their pupils are sound overall. Planning is satisfactory, including learning objectives that are used to assess pupils' attainment and progress. The subject is still being developed with national advice being used to establish a new scheme of work, to ensure

a balanced and complete coverage of the subject. The teachers' management of pupils and organisation of the work in classes is good overall, though design and technology provides particular challenges to some teachers working in open plan areas, to avoid the disturbance of other classes. Good use is made of support staff in maintaining the pace of lessons by providing support to all the pupils, including those with special educational needs. The good quality resources are used effectively. The subject is enthusiastically co-ordinated and there are good plans for its further development.

134. The pupils' work is assessed at the end of each topic against the learning objectives identified in the planning. The recording of pupils' achievement is effective and provides a sound basis for recording it in reports to parents. Topics derived from other areas of the curriculum provide opportunities for design and technology work. These include, for example, the study of transport in geography and healthy eating in science. There is a close connection between history, design and technology and art, for example, in the work undertaken on Ancient Greece, where pupils make masks and pots. These links with other subjects support pupils' knowledge and understanding.

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Geography

135. Only two lessons of geography were observed during the week of the inspection. Evidence from observations, the scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and teachers, indicates that progress is satisfactory throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.

136. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn about the effect of weather and climate on people and their surroundings during their work about contrasting areas of the world. They can identify North America on a map of the world and indicate the approximate position of the State of Utah. Pupils know that the climate in Utah is much hotter and dryer than in Britain and that this is reflected in the types of animals and vegetation, which are to be found there. They appreciate

that the weather has an influence on the way people live. Pupils have good mapping skills. They understand and use symbols and can produce maps and plans of their school and their classroom. In their study of places, pupils have conducted a survey of Wigton, its facilities and services and can compare these to a nearby village.

137. At Key Stage 2, pupils communicate their ideas about the facilities and attractions of Wigton. Their literacy skills are enhanced where pupils produce a short broadcast about the town for the local radio station. They work co-operatively to list the physical and man-made features of Wigton and its surrounding area, such as the coast and the Lake District. They show a good understanding of features that are attractive to tourists and are able to express and present these in imaginative ways. By the end of the key stage, older pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of places and themes. They recognise the effect of physical processes on the landscape and understand how human influence can change the features of places. Pupils make use of many fieldwork visits and residential experiences to further their geographical knowledge. They understand the importance of location for the siting of some industries and during their visit to Lindisfarne they study tourism and its effects on the community. They make and use maps, study and measure bridges on a journey and measure river flow and speed. They use a range of geographical vocabulary in their studies and fieldwork and generally present their work in a variety of ways.

138. In the lessons seen, most pupils enjoy geography. They work conscientiously and

enthusiastically, showing obvious interest in the subject. They generally concentrate well and take a pride in their work, although some pupils show immature behaviour.

139. In the lessons observed, introductions were clear and lesson planning was good. One lesson was good and the other satisfactory. In the good lesson, the teacher's expectations of behaviour and standards were high and pupils were managed well. Work was well linked to other areas of the curriculum. In the satisfactory lesson, the teacher worked hard to motivate pupils, many of whom have special educational needs, though the unsatisfactory behaviour of some pupils was less than effectively addressed. Plans show that teachers make good use of the local environment as a stimulus for work. The quality and use of day-to-day assessment is very good.

140. The co-ordination of the subject is good. The policy is to be reviewed shortly, but is a useful document to guide teachers' planning. The co-ordinator is well qualified and experienced and is able to offer support and guidance where required. The long-term planning grids ensure progression and continuity and the use of half-term assessments ensures that standards are maintained. The school uses a nationally agreed document for geography and teachers write their medium and short term plans from this. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning each half-term. There are good resources for the subject and the accommodation is good for the teaching of geography.

History

141. Pupils make sound progress in history throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. History and geography are taught in separate terms.

142. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn about their homes and the ways in which life has changed. Pupils in Year 1, for example, look at old toys, how they were made and ways in which different materials were used to produce toys. They understand that some operate by clockwork and some by the use of a battery. Pupils can suggest which sources of evidence can be used to find information, such as objects, the use of books and by asking older people, for example, their grandparents. In Year 2, pupils have studied seaside towns and holidays by the seaside, both in the past and at present. They can explain similarities and differences, such as in bathing clothes and customs used then and now.

143. At Key Stage 2, pupils have studied Victorian times, looking at life in different families and taking part in a Victorian afternoon at school, where they learned about the rules and systems used in the classroom. Older pupils have visited places of historical interest in the area, such as the stone circles in Castlerigg and they understand the role of societies in protecting the country's historical heritage. In their study of Ancient Greece, pupils in Year 6 have good understanding of the Greek theatre, supporting their work in other subjects such as English and design and technology. For example, pupils have made Greek theatre masks in a good likeness of those depicted in their studies. By the end of the key stage, pupils have sound understanding of the main events and famous people in history and good understanding of the range of sources of evidence which inform them about life in the past.

144. Pupils' response is satisfactory overall, though the oldest pupils respond well, taking particular interest in undertaking independent research. This was especially evident during their study of Ancient Greek artefacts, where pupils could explain the contrasting scenes depicted on two urns. Pupils worked quietly and conscientiously, at a sustained pace and

required minimum support and guidance from the teacher. Their attitudes and behaviour were good. Though most Year 1 pupils were interested in their lesson about old toys, and most pupils' behaviour was good, a few pupils' response was unsatisfactory in the lesson seen. They were restless during the class discussion and some were reluctant to undertake subsequent tasks. Similarly, some pupils in Year 5 were unable to concentrate when the teacher was explaining the lesson objective.

145. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, though good in Year 6. In this class, stimulating tasks were provided to challenge pupils with differing prior attainment. Pupils were managed well and discipline was effective. Good support was provided for pupils with special educational needs, in the form of appropriate language, modified tasks and individual attention. In the sound lessons, though topics were appropriate and resources were well organised, some work provided insufficient challenge for all pupils. For example, some younger pupils lost interest in their lesson, which was largely a recall of prior work undertaken on toys. Most teachers have secure subject knowledge and planning shows appropriate continuity throughout the school. The best lessons, such as in Year 6, included stimulating and imaginative teaching strategies.

146. There is an appropriate scheme of work, which is used consistently to inform planning. Good links are often made between geography and history, though each subject is taught discretely. Research work in history supports pupils' literacy development. Assessment opportunities are carefully built into planning and pupils' achievements are systematically recorded to inform progress. The accommodation is good. Good use is made of visits to places of historical interest, for example, Lindisfarne, a Roman fort and Keswick Pencil Museum. Visitors, such as grandparents, are often welcomed to share their knowledge of the past with the pupils.

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Music

147. Seven lessons of music were observed during the week of the inspection. These lessons included instrumental tuition, orchestra practice, choir practice and music lessons in different classes. Lessons were led by the music specialist from the Cumbria Music Service, assisted by class teachers. Evidence gained during the inspection indicates that progress in music is good throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

148. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn about the need to listen and can repeat simple songs sung by the teacher. They respond to songs and music and recognise changes in musical elements, making simple appraisals. Pupils make good progress in responding to rhythms by clapping and by singing the song and are able to produce a combined effect by creating simple compositions. By the end of the key stage, pupils can sing together, using actions and show a good awareness of rhythm. They can memorise and perform a growing repertoire of songs and actions. They recognise music heard from previous lessons. Pupils play tuned percussion instruments and handle beaters correctly. They can put together a performance, play up and down the scale on their instrument and play an accompaniment to a steady beat.

149. At Key Stage 2, pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6 combine to form an orchestra containing guitars, violins, recorders, a flute and tin whistles. Pupils can play and practise their instrument in groups, prior to a performance. Standards of playing are high, reflecting good control, good listening skills and accurate reading of the music. Pupils are aware of others' playing and respond very well. They all contribute impressively to a performance and make good progress

in refining their work. In a further lesson containing all Key Stage 2 pupils, the quality of singing is improved and their range of songs extended. Pupils sing with enthusiasm and accuracy, with clear diction. They clap to improve their ability to pay attention to the beat. In their appraisal of music, pupils recognise instruments that are played in the piece, "Carnival of the Animals". Pupils show a clear development in their quality of singing and in understanding of beat and rhythm.

150. Pupils make good progress in their knowledge of instrument playing and in their singing skills. They co-operate well to produce accompanied performances and practise and consolidate those skills to perform, such as in Christmas concerts and musical dramas, for parents and other members of the community.

151. Pupils are enthusiastic about music. They are responsive and listen attentively when learning new songs and when playing instruments. Pupils are disciplined and have learned the need for silence between their individual parts in a performance. They have a mature desire to concentrate and co-operate with others to produce good performances. Music makes a very good contribution to the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.

152. The quality of teaching is very good. The visiting music specialist has a very good knowledge and understanding of the subject and manages pupils very well, with some assistance from the class teachers. Expectations of pupils are high and the methods and organisation of the music lessons result in very good standards.

153. The school's music co-ordinator and the specialist teacher work closely together and have produced an effective policy and scheme of work, which details the learning objectives for music throughout the school and offers guidance to other class teachers. Children benefit from visiting violin and flute tutors and from lunchtime tuition given by class teachers to three recorder groups. Resources are very good and are used well for the teaching of music. The accommodation is good for the teaching of music.

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Physical education

154. Throughout the school, progress in physical education is good. At Key Stage 1, pupils understand about healthy lifestyles and about the need to warm-up before physical activity. They develop sequences of movement, evaluate them and then improve their performance. They develop increasing control over their movements, which show improving accuracy and style. In gymnastics, they participate in the "Funfit" scheme with good effect. This provides a means of assessment to monitor pupils' developing skills. Pupils devise and play small games, developing a good team attitude. They take part in organised team games and are taught football skills by a former parent. They participate in competitive games with other schools and benefit from the challenge. The school has also participated in the Top Sport scheme at both key stages. This has had the added benefit of providing in-service training for the staff and has provided well-devised lesson outlines and plans for games' lessons. Appropriate work is planned for pupils with special educational needs, who make good progress.

155. Pupils at Key Stage 2 continue to make good progress. They swim both as a part of the curriculum in physical education and as an out of school activity. There is a large number of physical education based after school activities which supplement the physical education lessons. These lessons are provided by friends of the school as well as by members of staff. Outdoor education and fell-walking are undertaken by pupils as a voluntary weekend activity and during a four day residential visit to Keswick. Canoeing is also offered on Derwentwater.

In dance, pupils create imaginative sequences, developing a good body control and sense of rhythmical movement. School teams take part in competitive games with other schools. By the end of the key stage, pupils have developed good skills in the subject. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress.

156. Pupils' response to physical education lessons is invariably good and occasionally very good. Pupils are well motivated, listen well to instructions and follow them. They are sensitive when commenting on others' performance and imaginative in the development of sequences of movements, either independently or as members of a group, working well together. The popularity of the after school clubs is a significant element in the provision for physical education. It is also an important feature in the establishment of the very good ethos of the school.

157. The after school sports activities are popular. Sometimes the demand for places exceeds numbers that can be taken, though the school ensures all have opportunities to take part. The mixture of class lessons and voluntary activities ensures that the pupils have very good opportunities to engage in an extensive range of games, gymnastics, outdoor activities, swimming and other physical activities such as fell-walking. The organisation of the after school activities ensures that all the pupils, both boys and girls and those with differing prior attainment, can have equality of access and opportunity.

158. The teaching of physical education throughout the school is good and sometimes very good. The teachers, support staff and helpers have a good understanding of the skills they are teaching. They have high, but realistic, expectations of their pupils' ability to perform and this encourages the good standards that are found throughout the school. The methods used in physical education lessons are good and motivate the pupils to do well. There is a good balance in lessons between activities, evaluation and improvement of performance. The good resources for physical education are used well and cared for by the pupils. Pupils are made aware of health and safety issues in the subject.

159. Physical education activities are assessed at the end of each half term against the learning objectives identified in the planning. The earning of certificates and similar schemes in gymnastics and swimming also provide objective means of assessment of the pupils' progress. This is used for planning and the setting of targets. The accommodation is good for physical education.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

160. The school was inspected over four days by four inspectors. A preliminary visit was made to the school. In total, 14 inspector days were spent making observations of 52 lessons or parts of lessons. Inspectors also attended assemblies. All classes were seen, examples of pupils' work were scrutinised and discussions were held with governors, the headteacher, teachers and pupils. A representative sample of pupils read to inspectors. Eighteen parents contributed their views at a meeting held prior to the inspection and 85 responded to a questionnaire.

DATA AND INDICATORS

161. Pupil data

| | Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent) | Number of pupils with statements of SEN | Number of pupils on school's register of SEN | Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals |
|----------------------|---|---|--|---|
| YR – Y6 | 192 | 6 | 41 | 42 |
| Nursery unit / class | 22 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

| | |
|---|----------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent) | 9.65 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 19.9 : 1 |

Education support staff (YR – Y6)

| | |
|---|------|
| Total number of education support staff | 4 |
| Total aggregate hours worked each week | 75.2 |

Primary schools

| | |
|---------------------|----|
| Average class size: | 24 |
|---------------------|----|

Financial data

Financial year:

| |
|---------|
| 1998/99 |
|---------|

| | £ |
|--|---------|
| Total Income | 374,926 |
| Total Expenditure | 357,649 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 1,806 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 65,211 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 82,488 |

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

| |
|-----|
| 136 |
|-----|

Number of questionnaires returned:

| |
|----|
| 85 |
|----|

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

| | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school | 59 | 38 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren) | 65 | 26 | 3 | 6 | 0 |
| The school handles complaints from parents well | 34 | 41 | 19 | 6 | 0 |
| The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught | 47 | 44 | 7 | 2 | 0 |
| The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress | 51 | 39 | 6 | 3 | 1 |
| The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work | 53 | 38 | 8 | 1 | 0 |
| The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons | 56 | 35 | 8 | 1 | 0 |
| I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home | 44 | 44 | 7 | 5 | 0 |
| The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren) | 51 | 35 | 12 | 2 | 0 |
| The school achieves high standards of good behaviour | 49 | 40 | 3 | 7 | 1 |
| My child(ren) like(s) school | 53 | 44 | 2 | 1 | 0 |