

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

**Levens Primary School**  
Kendal

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique Reference Number: 112262

Inspection Number: 188237

Headteacher: Mr Alan James

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Reporting inspector: Mrs E LaBrum  
13207

Dates of inspection: 6-8 December, 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707132

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infants and Junior
Type of control:	County
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Levens Kendal Cumbria LA8 8PU
Telephone number:	015395 60694
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Alan Dobson
Date of previous inspection:	22 – 24 May 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

<b>Team members</b>	<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
E LaBrum, RgI	English Geography History Art Music Religious education	Characteristics of the school Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management The efficiency of the school
V Lamb, Lay Inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Equal Opportunities
J Bristow, Team Inspector	Mathematics  Science Design and technology  Information technology  Physical education	Areas for learning for children under five Curriculum and assessment Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Staffing, accommodation and learning resources Special educational needs

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- The school is very well led and enjoys the support of an active governing body.
- Pupils in all years make good progress. They make very good progress in their last two years in the school.
- Standards of attainment are high, particularly in English and science.
- Standards and provision in music are a strength in the school.
- Teaching in all classes is of high quality.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and the progress these pupils make are very good.
- The curriculum is well designed and teachers' own planning is excellent.
- Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and for monitoring pupils' progress and personal development are excellent.
- Pupils are actively involved in appraising their work and setting their own targets to improve.
- The partnership between pupils, staff, parents, governors and community is outstanding.
- The school implements its aims and policies very successfully.
- The staff show strong commitment to their work and work well together as a team.
- The quality of the individual Records of Achievement is outstanding.

### • Where the school has weaknesses

- I. A minority of pupils frequently distract the teacher and other pupils in lessons.
- II. The school's good behaviour policy is not applied to these pupils with sufficient rigour.
- III. Arrangements for improving the quality of teaching and pupils' responses to it through direct observation in the classroom and implementing the necessary changes are not fully in place.

**The school has many strengths, some of them outstanding. They far outweigh the few areas of weakness identified during the inspection. These issues, will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils attending the school.**

### • How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has maintained and extended the high standards of attainment, partnership with the community and leadership and management reported in the last inspection. Very good progress has been made against the key issues identified in the last report. The school has very successfully developed the curriculum throughout the school and all pupils now make at least good progress. Teaching is now of consistently high quality in all classes. The school has extended its programme for monitoring many aspects of the school's work. The governors are effective in reviewing the school's improvement against its development plan and the cost effectiveness of its spending decisions. Arrangements for monitoring pupils' attainment and the quality of the curriculum are very secure but improving the quality of teaching and learning through focused, direct observation and making the necessary changes is not yet fully in place. Since the last inspection the governors have been very effective in securing great improvements to the accommodation overall and improved facilities for pupils under-five, pupils with special educational needs and for promoting high standards in information technology. The school has a capacity for constructive but rigorous self-review and a staff and governing body determined to raise standards through high quality educational provision. The school is very well placed to bring about its own continuing improvement.

• **Standards in subjects**

This is a small school and the number of pupils taking part in the national tests or statutory assessments in any particular year are also small. Only six pupils took part in the statutory tests of eleven-year-olds in 1999. Therefore, the performance or absence of one or two pupils can have a major and undue influence on the overall test results for a single year. However, the standards attained by pupils now in the school reflect the trend shown by the test results over the last three years. Standards in English and science are high by the age of seven and are well above those seen nationally by the age of eleven. In mathematics attainment is typical for pupils of the age of seven years and by the end of Year 6 standards are above what is usually seen. Standards in information technology are average overall with good attainment in word-processing at both key stages. In religious education, pupils in Years 2 and 6 are achieving standards above those indicated in the local authority's Agreed Syllabus. Evidence indicates that pupils under-five years of age are achieving standards in line with those typical for their age. Overall, pupils make good progress, whilst those with special educational needs make very good progress.

• **Quality of teaching**

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Very good	Very good	Very good
Mathematics	Very good	Good	Very good
Science		Very good	Very good
Information technology		Very good	Very good
Religious education		Good	(i)
Other subjects	Very good	Good	Good

Teaching is of a high standard. In the lessons seen, all teaching was at least satisfactory; no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. In four out of every five lessons the quality of teaching was good or better and in over half of the lessons the teaching was judged very good. Teachers know precisely what pupils have learned and what they need to learn next. They use this information very effectively to set high expectations and to provide work that is closely matched to pupils' needs.

(i) No lessons in religious education were seen in Key Stage 2 and therefore, no judgements about the quality of teaching can be reached.

*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**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Behaviour	Behaviour is good overall. The behaviour of most pupils is consistently very good but a significant minority does not collaborate with teachers in class sessions. Almost all pupils have very good attitudes to learning and usually work very hard once they have settled to their tasks.
Attendance	Attendance is very good at 97.4% and is well above the national average for similar schools.
Ethos*	Very good. This is a happy school with good relationships between staff and pupils. All teachers share a determination that pupils will succeed as a result of effective teaching and a high quality curriculum.
Leadership and management	Very good overall. Some aspects are excellent but arrangements for monitoring teaching and learning in the classroom are not yet fully in place.
Curriculum	Very good. Teachers plan work very thoroughly. They are excellent at assessing what pupils know and use this information to set pupils challenging targets. They ensure that pupils are able to meet these targets by providing a broad range of exciting and relevant activities.
Pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent and pupils make very good progress as a result.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	All aspects of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Resources for learning are good overall and are excellent for information technology. The school is extremely well staffed and pupils enjoy a very high standard of accommodation and facilities for learning.
Value for money	The school gives very 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**

- IV. Pupils like coming to school.
- V. Standards are high and pupils make good progress.
- VI. There is an excellent partnership between home and school.
- VII. Every one who works at the school is accessible and approachable.
- VIII. Parents receive good information about what their children will learn.
- IX. This is a happy school.
- X. Pupils have access to a wide range of activities outside the classroom.

### **What some parents are not happy about**

- XI. No significant concerns were noted.

The findings of the inspection confirm the very positive views expressed by parents.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

The school had identified most areas for further development prior to the inspection and is already in the process of implementing improvements. In response to this report the governing body, headteacher and staff should give particular attention to the following matters:

- i raise the standard of behaviour of the few pupils who interrupt lessons so that it matches the very good behaviour shown by the substantial majority of pupils; *(paragraphs 20, 21, 22)*
- ii apply the school's behaviour policy rigorously to all pupils; *(paragraph 34)*
- iii use the information gathered by senior managers from direct observation in the classrooms to help teachers promote consistently high standards of behaviour. *(paragraph 72)*

One other matter of a relatively minor nature identified in this report which the governors might wish to include in their action plan is:

- to ensure that judgements about the effectiveness of plans to improve aspects of the school's work take account of the impact they have had on raising standards of performance. *(paragraph 83)*

**The numbers in brackets relate to the main paragraphs of this report where these issues are mentioned.**

## INTRODUCTION

### Characteristics of the school

1. Levens Voluntary Controlled Church of England School is situated in the village of Levens about five miles south of Kendal in South Lakeland, Cumbria. This is a small primary school with seventy-four pupils on roll. Boys and girls from four to eleven years of age are taught in the school in three classes. Class 1 contains pupils under-five years of age, the Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. Pupils under-five and in the Reception year are taught as a separate group by an additional teacher for most of the week. In Class 2 there are pupils from Years 3, 4 and 5, but Year 5 pupils are mainly taught with Year 6 in Class 3.
2. The pupils attending the school live mainly in the village itself or come from farms in the surrounding area. They come from a mixture of houses and farms that are either privately owned or rented. The rented properties include those owned privately and by the local authority.
3. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average. There are seventeen pupils on the school's register for special educational needs support and assessment. This represents over twenty per cent of the school population and is high when compared with the national average. There were no exclusions of pupils from the school during the last school year.
4. Pupils are admitted at or near the beginning of the school year in which they will become five years old. At the time of the inspection, eight of the ten Reception pupils were under-five years of age. Most pupils starting at the school have attended some form of preschool education. The attainment of most pupils on joining the school is broadly typical for their age, but their language skills and knowledge of the world are often higher than this.
5. The school's aims are published to parents in the school prospectus. They include:
  - *to provide a broad, stimulating and balanced curriculum which satisfies national requirements and through which pupils are enabled to realise their full potential. This is reached through high expectation of individual achievement;*
  - *to develop and build on the partnerships between parents, children, governors, staff and community.*
1. This year's priorities for development include implementing the revised National Curriculum and the National Numeracy Framework. The school's efforts to raise standards focus on improving pupils' agility in mental mathematics and on maximising the impact of the new facilities for information technology to extend pupils' skills in word processing to modelling and controlling events. The school is also concerned to increase the time available to the headteacher to monitor the quality of teaching and learning.
2. The school was last inspected in May 1996.

7.

**Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:	Authorised	School	%
	Absence	National comparative data	2.6
	Unauthorised	School	5.7
	Absence	National comparative data	0.0

7.

7. **Exclusions**

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

7. **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	56
	Satisfactory or better	100
	Less than satisfactory	0

## 7. **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

### 7. **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

#### 7. **Attainment and progress**

3. The overall attainment of pupils on entry to the Reception year is in line with that found nationally. However, in this small school where the numbers in each year group are also very small the attainment varies from year to year. By the end of the Reception year most pupils are working confidently at National Curriculum Level 1 and, generally their attainment in all areas of learning is above that usually seen for pupils of their age. They make good progress in all areas of learning but particularly in language development, mathematics and knowledge of the world. The good rate of progress achieved by pupils is directly related to the high quality of the curriculum and teaching.
4. This is a small school and the results of the statutory assessment tests and teacher assessments for any single year do not necessarily give a full and accurate picture of the standards achieved in the school. This is because the performance of one or two pupils can have an undue influence on the results overall. Judgements in this section are therefore primarily based on evidence gained from a detailed examination of pupils work, teachers' records of pupils' progress, observation of lessons and from discussion with teachers and pupils.
5. Attainment in English by the age of seven is above that usually seen and reflects the trend indicated by the results of the statutory assessment tests for the last three years. They are higher than those indicated by the results of the tests for 1999. Attainment by the age of eleven is well above that found nationally and reflects the trend demonstrated in the statutory tests since 1996. The school has maintained the high standards identified in the last inspection report. Pupils in their Reception year and those in Years 1 and 2 make good progress. Pupils in the junior classes make very good progress overall and particularly those in Years 5 and 6. The excellent systems for tracking and promoting progress through individual target-setting have a very positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress.
6. The National Literacy Strategy has been very successfully implemented and the school has tailored it carefully to meet the needs of its pupils. Realistic but challenging targets for pupils to achieve for literacy have been set for the next two years.
7. Attainment in mathematics is in line with that found nationally by the end of Key Stage 1 and is above this by the end of Key Stage 2. These judgements generally reflect the results of the statutory tests over the last three years. Younger pupils make sound progress and they build on this well in Key Stage 2. Pupils' mental agility in handling number is a relatively weaker aspect of their work in mathematics which the school has already identified as an area for improvement. Teachers are currently implementing the National Numeracy Strategy but it is too early to judge its impact of pupils' attainment. The targets set for the next two years are challenging.
8. Pupils make very good progress in all classes in science so that, by the end of Key Stage 1 they achieve standards above those typical for their age and by the end of Key Stage 2 standards are very high and well above those seen nationally. These judgements reflect teacher assessments over recent years at Key Stage 1 and the statutory test results at Key Stage 2. The very good progress pupils make is the result of very effective subject leadership, excellent teamwork and very high quality teaching with an emphasis on practical and independent investigations. The school has set itself a target to raise the percentage of pupils achieving National Curriculum Level 5 (the level above the national bench-mark) to forty per cent.

9. In information technology pupils make good progress and their attainment matches the national expectations at both key stages overall. There are aspects, for instance, word processing, where pupils' skills and attainment are much higher than those seen nationally. Now that they have access to very high quality equipment and are taught by teachers with high levels of subject knowledge, pupils are making very good progress in learning how to programme, model and control events. The teachers benefit from the expertise and support of the subject co-ordinator and this has equipped the staff to provide effective teaching.
10. Pupils make good progress overall in religious education and achieve standards that are above those set out in the Cumbria Agreed Syllabus. Pupils have a good knowledge of major world faiths by the time they leave the school. The more difficult skills of reflecting on their own experience and exploring how different faiths are expressed by believers these are particularly well taught.
11. In art, history, geography, and in some aspects of music pupils make good progress as they move through the school and produce pieces of work of high quality. For instance, the oldest pupils have produced some very high quality pieces of contemporary weaving and printing showing a sophisticated use of colour and texture. However, very few lessons were seen in music and physical education and this combined with the very practical nature of these subjects makes it impossible to judge progress overall. Pupils make sound progress in design and technology.
12. Pupils with special educational needs make consistently very good progress against the targets set for them and when working alongside other pupils in the classroom. Their progress reflects the excellent provision made both by the co-ordinator and class teachers.
13. All pupils make good progress overall in every class irrespectively of their ability or gender. Once they have settled to their tasks they make very good progress. The two major factors that account for this are the interesting activities well match to their needs provided by teachers and their own very good attitudes to learning. However, progress is frequently slower in parts of the lessons where there is whole class teaching and discussion because of the distraction caused by a small number of pupils.
14. The school has successfully maintained the high standards in Key Stage 2 reported in the last inspection report. There has been significant improvement in the standards and progress achieved by pupils in Key Stage 1.
19. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**
15. Pupils' attitudes to learning throughout the school are good and often very good. They are interested in their work and well motivated to apply themselves to the tasks set for them. For example, pupils at lower Key Stage 2 thoroughly enjoyed the humour of a version of a well known fairy story and the success of those who read very well, adopting characters' voices. All pupils concentrate very well and co-operate with their teachers, classroom assistants and each other once they have settled to the individual work. In the best lessons their enthusiasm, confidence and willingness to persevere have a very positive effect on the progress they make. In Years 5 and 6, for instance, pupils enjoyed planned investigations in a science lesson and worked well together to test hypotheses and collecting materials. Pupils in the infant class demonstrated very high levels of co-operation and offered help to each other during work with computers. However, in every class there is small number of pupils who repeatedly distract the teacher during whole class sessions by seeking to gain attention or because they have not yet learned to channel their enthusiasm in an appropriate way. Despite this all pupils eventually settled to their

work and co-operated with teachers. Responses to lessons overall were never less than satisfactory.

16. The school is an orderly community where the good behaviour of most pupils reflects the high standard expected by the teachers. Pupils respond well to the happy and secure learning environment. In the playground pupils of all ages play well together. Generally, pupils relate very well to adults and each other. However, there is a good deal of chatter from a few pupils during particular sessions in lessons including teachers' introductions and class discussions.
17. These pupils display an unacceptable degree of attention seeking behaviour and do not make the necessary effort to work in partnership with their teacher and other pupils. This distracts from the impact of well planned and lively presented introductions when teaching momentarily loses its pace and focus while teachers deal with the interruptions. Teachers do deal firmly with individual pupils. It is important that the school takes steps to correct this behaviour so that all pupils can benefit fully from the high quality teaching offered by the staff. Almost all pupils understand right from wrong and are courteous and friendly to visitors. They share and take turns with equipment and move sensibly around classrooms and between different areas of school. They are familiar with classroom routines which they maintain without a lot of intervention from adults.
18. Pupils' personal development is good. Many pupils are able to work independently of the teacher. In all classes, pupils are able to organise themselves without fuss and are happy to prepare for and clear away activities. Where opportunities arise pupils use their own initiative successfully and are conscientious in helping each other when appropriate. Pupils are willing to take responsibility for tasks in school, not only for general classroom duties but also for specific roles within the school council. Older pupils readily intervene as buddies to help younger ones to join in games during breaks.

23. **Attendance**

19. Attendance is very good at 97.4% and well is above the national average for similar schools. The previous inspection found discrepancies in recording attendance. The school now ensures that data is correctly recorded to satisfy legal requirements.
20. Registers are very well kept to quickly show the number of pupils present from the beginning of each session. The school requires parents to notify the office or class teachers at the beginning of the first day that their child is absent and the great majority of parents do so. There are good procedures in place to obtain reasons for any unnotified absences. The rate of unauthorised absence from school is nil.
21. Registration procedures are conducted promptly and efficiently. Pupils arrive punctually to school and routines are well managed during the day to ensure a prompt start to lessons.

26. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

26. **Teaching**

22. The quality of teaching is a strength in the school and has direct and positive effect upon the rate of progress pupils make. During the three days of the inspection thirty lessons were observed. An emphasis was placed on the teaching of English, mathematics and science. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. In four out of every five lessons the quality of teaching was good or better and in over half of the lessons the teaching was judged very good. These are high figures and

lead to the judgement that teaching throughout the school was of a high standard. Every teacher demonstrated lessons where the teaching was very good. An additional specialist music teacher joins the Class 2 teacher to take all junior pupils together. The quality of teaching is an important factor in promoting the good progress pupils make.

23. The quality of teaching for pupils under-five was at least consistently good and in the majority of lessons it was very good. The teacher has a thorough grasp of how young children learn and provides a relevant, exciting and varied range of activities and experiences. There is a clear commitment to achieving high standards that runs parallel to a deep concern for pupils' personal development and self-confidence. From their earliest days in the school pupils are taught how to find, use and return equipment on their own and how to choose and engage in activities independently of the teacher. The teacher knows the pupils very well and assessment and tracking of their progress are exceptionally good. Pupils have access to the school hall where they can enjoy practical activities and boisterous play suitable to their age. All those who support learning in the classroom have a clear understanding of their roles and contribute effectively to pupils' progress.
24. Overall the teaching of English observed across the whole curriculum was very good. It was never less than satisfactory and was frequently very good. Teachers communicate an enthusiasm for literature very effectively and as a result pupils talk animatedly about the books they have enjoyed. Teachers also set high expectations of the amount and quality of work they expect from pupils in a given time. An excellent example was seen in the English lesson in Class 3 where pupils learned to analyse the styles of writing in newspaper articles and apply this successfully to writing their own articles that demonstrated effective ways of persuading the reader of their views and opinions. Pupils respond with very positive attitudes and, once they have settled to their tasks, they work with a sense of purpose that matches the teachers' demands on them. The teachers' planning and assessment are consistent strengths found throughout the school. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy. Time is allocated each day for teaching literacy and the time is spent well to promote pupils' learning.
25. The teaching of mathematics ranged in quality from satisfactory to very good but was good overall. The teaching of mathematics is good because of the way teachers plan meticulously for different groups of pupils and because of their skills in explaining concepts and processes. A good example of this was seen in the lesson where pupils in Years 3 and 4 learned to construct tally-charts and then communicate their information using block graphs. Teachers are introducing the National Numeracy Strategy. They are making good use of the mental warm up sessions to improve pupils' mental agility in handling number but it is too early to judge its impact on standards of attainment.
26. Additional teachers are employed on a part-time basis to support the teaching of music and to work with pupils with special education needs. Their expertise and support to class teachers in both these areas and in art and information technology contributes significantly to the standards pupils achieve and to the progress they make.
27. A particular strength of the school is the way in which all teachers work together as a team. There is a very open culture where they plan their lessons together and share good practice. Each teacher has responsibility for co-ordinating the work in a number of subjects. The special educational needs and subject co-ordinators have a very positive impact on lesson planning and the close liaison between teachers is an important factor in promoting the good progress that pupils make as they move through the school. The very good teaching of pupils with special educational needs provides an excellent example of this partnership, combining the skills of the co-ordinator, the class teachers and the all those who help in the classrooms. Meticulous

assessment ensures that teachers have high quality information about each pupil's strengths and weaknesses to set these pupils realistic but challenging targets and to plan work that meets their needs. Teachers are very careful to promote pupils' sense of self-worth and an awareness of their strengths as well as an appreciation of where they find aspects of learning difficult. Pupils respond with very positive attitudes and an eagerness to learn.

28. Throughout the school and in all subjects, teachers demonstrated consistent strengths. Teachers bring enthusiasm and energy to their lessons and their expertise within each subject is of a high order. They draw on these strengths to motivate pupils, to provide clear explanations and to question pupils in a way that deepens their understanding and helps them articulate their thinking. The quality of preparation and planning of lessons is very good and in the class for the oldest pupils it is outstanding. Teachers know exactly what they want pupils to learn and provide interesting and varied tasks that aid that learning. The school takes good advantage of its small size to know each pupil very well. The quality of teachers' assessments and recording is excellent and information is very effectively used to group pupils for learning in mixed age classes and to provide work that meets the needs of all pupils. Relationships between pupils and teachers are warm and most pupils strive willingly to achieve what teachers have asked of them.
29. Where the quality of teaching was judged less than good, there were parts of the lessons, most often in whole class introductions and discussions, when the teachers' lively presentations were spoilt by the behaviour of a small number of pupils. Whilst teachers were quick to deal with such instances, the business of teaching and learning lost some of its pace and focus. Although control is secure, in too many lessons teachers have to make discipline very obvious to curb attention seeking and immature behaviour. An example of this were seen when individual pupils in Years 3 and 4 repeatedly disrupted the flow of a good quality class discussion based on an updated version of the story of *Little Riding Hood*. The teacher intervened promptly and the pupils were quickly obedient to her instructions. However, this did not have the necessary long-term effect and the same sort of distraction from the same pupils was observed in a later mathematics lesson. Similar incidents were seen in both the other classes. Apart from correcting pupils immediately or later and moving them away from other pupils the teachers do not make sufficient use of the sanctions outlined in the behaviour policy for their reprimands to have a lasting effect. Despite this, lessons were still well taught and, despite the interruptions, teachers enabled all pupils to make at least satisfactory progress. It is important that the school takes action to provide appropriate guidance to teachers to help them ensure that all pupils work in a consistently productive partnership.
30. Homework is given to pupils in both key stages, particularly for reading. Older pupils are given a holiday topic where they plan a visit to and write about another country. The guidance given by the school is excellent. This example of homework is an outstanding example of work done at home supporting learning in the classroom and helping to prepare pupils for the next stage of their education.
31. The previous report in 1996 judged that teaching was sound in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. The findings of this inspection indicate that there has been considerable improvement in the last three years and that teaching is of a consistently high standard.

36. **The curriculum and assessment**

32. The curriculum provided for pupils is very good in all key stages. Since the last inspection provision has improved for pupils in Key Stage 1 and the quality has been maintained in Key Stage 2. It is broad, covering the full range of national curriculum subjects and religious education and providing a good range of high quality opportunities for all pupils. The school's

aims promote the intellectual, physical, social and personal development for all pupils and are demonstrated in high quality educational provision in all classrooms. Teachers discuss curriculum policies on a regular basis and ensure that new teachers are familiar with the style of teaching that the school has adopted and that policies reflect classroom practice.

33. The curriculum is of a very practical nature and provides pupils with the opportunity to plan and organise their own work. As a result pupils acquire a high levels of skill by the end of Year 6 in designing and carrying out their own research and science investigations independently. An excellent example is seen in unaided projects where pupils plan a holiday of their own choice covering many subject areas including data handling, geography, mathematics and English. In providing activities of this sort the school prepares them well for transition to secondary education.
34. The curriculum for pupils under-five is very good. It fully meets the statutory requirements. It is well planned and provides a wide range of interesting activities that covers the six nationally recommended areas of learning enabling all pupils to make good progress. Good procedures are used to assess each pupil on entry to school, and parents help by providing additional supporting information. The information is very effectively used to decide where pupils will start their learning. As pupils move through the year, further assessments are made about their progress in all aspects of work. These procedures ensure that any special educational needs are identified early. The early years teacher generally teaches the pupils under-five although occasionally, when circumstances are appropriate they join the older pupils in the Key Stage 1 class. Pupils under-five have access to a wide range of experiences. They use the environment to good effect both for physical activities and for finding out more about the world around them. Opportunities are provided for pupils to be taught specific skills as well as being given a choice about which activities they would like to engage in. Adults challenge the pupils using good questioning skills and take part in role-play activities thus stimulating discussion. There was no report on pupils under-five in the last inspection.
35. The school has a detailed planning grid that shows how the curriculum will be taught over a two-year period in each class. Very good termly planning in each subject supports this. The planning identifies clearly what pupils will learn for each subject and outlines appropriate activities to ensure that they will learn successfully. Teachers are responsible for their own weekly planning. This is done conscientiously and systematically and is well supported by regular assessments of what pupils know and can do as a result of the planned activities. Evidence from teachers' planning and from a scrutiny of pupils' work shows that as pupils move through the school the curriculum builds very successfully on what they already know and can do. Schemes of work give teachers good guidance on how to move pupils from one level of skills to the next. This enables them to make consistently good progress. The quality of curriculum planning in Years 5 and 6 is outstanding. The teachers assess the work of pupils on a regular basis and this is used to extend and plan work for the follow up lessons in considerable detail, enabling most pupils to make very good progress.
36. Sufficient time is allocated to all subjects although the school allocates more time to the teaching of English than many other schools. However, this additional time gives pupils the opportunity to read and develop a love of good children's literature and to apply their very well developed skills in reading and writing to learning in other subjects. An example was seen English skills being effectively promoted in history, when pupils, studying life in Victorian times, wrote a biography of Charles Dickens. The curriculum is organised and delivered through a combination of topic work and separate subjects depending on the topic taught. For instance, science and design and technology are sometimes very appropriately linked. An example of this was seen in

the door alarms designed, tested and made by pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5. Both full time and part-time teachers with relevant expertise are deployed so that they can teach to their own particular strengths in science, music, art and information technology. This support plays an important contribution to the standards attained by the pupils.

37. The school uses a small amount of the time at its discretion for personal and social education. This is used to good effect. A good programme of personal and social education is continuous throughout the key stages. Sex and health education are included as part of the science programmes of study.
38. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy. In addition to daily lessons that are supported by detailed planning, pupils have individual targets that are monitored by the teachers and the pupils themselves. These targets, together with supportive comments on their records of achievement books assist in the raising of standards. The school is currently implementing the National Numeracy Strategy. Improving pupils' capacity to handle number mentally is a target for the school and the recent introduction of the numeracy hour is helping to address the situation. However, it is too early to judge its impact on pupils' attainment. Literacy, numeracy and information technology skills are widely used across all subjects. For example, pupils measured plastic tubing as part of their investigations in science and used the computer to write up the experiment, drawing a table to show the results.
39. Science and information technology are a very strong elements in the school's curriculum. There is a very successful emphasis on investigative and practical science that has a direct impact on the school's high standards in this subject. The work pupils undertake in designing, carrying out and reporting their experiments effectively assists them in becoming independent learners. Similarly, the school has made excellent use of staff expertise and recently installed equipment and software to provide outstanding plans and facilities to promote very effective learning in information technology. Already this provision is reflected in the pupils' very high standards in word processing and communication. It is too early for the pupils to demonstrate the same high levels in programming and controlling events but they are making very good progress in this area.
40. Provision for all pupils is good. The school provides a two-yearly learning programme for each of its three classes. This ensures that pupils have full access to the National Curriculum. Within this framework teachers make very good use of assessment to ensure that pupils are grouped for learning according to their needs and the kind of skill that each is to master. For instance, pupils are sometimes taught in separate year groups, for example, in science and information technology, where practical activities are necessary to develop skills in designing and carrying out their own experiments or to work on the Internet.
41. The provision for special educational needs meets the requirements set out in the national code of practice. Individual education plans are in place for these pupils. The policy and practice for those pupils is very good and is excellent in developing very good attitudes to school and to learning. The well-qualified member of staff responsible for this area and the support services provides very good support. Parents and pupils are involved in the regular reviews and the setting of targets. Parents are very pleased with the sensitive support that promotes self esteem and have recognised the considerable progress made by their children. For instance, one pupil who had developed fear of coming to school because of worries about difficulties in reading and writing is now happy, secure and achieving well. Specific support is provided for pupils on the register for special educational needs allowing them to make very good progress individually, in small groups or in class lessons.

42. The school offers a far wider range of after school activities than is usually available in a school of this size. All pupils in Key Stage 2 are provided with additional opportunities to further their interests in science, design and technology, music, art games and information technology. They can also join the magazine club run by the local vicar that produces a paper for the local community. Many opportunities are provided for the pupils to play a range of instruments, attend science, art, computer, French and games clubs as well as visits to youth hostels, residential visits abroad and places of interest in the locality. The school is very successful when it enters competitions such as Young Citizens Quiz and the British Association's Young Investigators Award Scheme. As part of the planned curriculum pupils visit places such as Brigsteer Wood, Levens Hall, and the Sedgwick Gunpowder Works. They support their adopted charity, The Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust.

48 The homework policy is satisfactory and most parents are pleased with the range and amount of homework provided by the school. A particular strength is the Holiday Project completed by all pupils in Years 5 and 6. This topic gives the pupils clear guidelines for completion and covers all subjects of the curriculum. Each section is marked and the finished booklets are of a very high quality. They are excellent examples of research work carried out by the pupils demonstrating a high degree of dedication. All these experiences contribute significantly to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

43. The assessment policy is very good and is consistently well implemented throughout the school. It provides clear guidance for making assessments at all levels. Information on pupils' achievements is clearly recorded and relevant examples of pupils' work are retained in teachers' folders and in pupils' personal files. Pupils are allowed to keep most of the contents of the file when they leave the primary school. Other relevant records are passed on to the receiving secondary school.

44. The school has established effective procedures that enable it to undertake the annual statutory tests for pupils aged seven and eleven years in English, mathematics and science. Additional assessments are made on a regular basis and also if a child is thought to be in need of extra support. Day to day assessments are excellent. Teachers have a good system that enables them to evaluate the learning that takes place in all subjects of the National Curriculum. Teachers write weekly comments in the pupils' record of achievement about their standard of work and behaviour. These comments are usually of a very positive nature and rarely identify any unsatisfactory attitudes to work. Targets related to attitudes and behaviour would enable teachers to act more incisively to promote consistently high standards. The quality of these records of achievement is outstanding and pupils respond to them in a very positive way. Parents are also encouraged to write comments in the books and this does much to raise the self-esteem of all pupils. However, there are instances when insufficient written comments are made in pupils' books to help them to improve their work on a regular basis. Good practice was observed in Years 5 and 6 where the teacher uses 'Post-its' to inform pupils of how they need to improve their work.

45. The school has set challenging targets for the national tests in the years 2000 and 2001 and has made good progress in continuing to address assessment issues since the previous inspection.

#### 50. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

46. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good. It makes a good contribution overall to the progress and attainment of the pupils. The programme for personal and social education through circle time makes a strong contribution to personal development.

47. Provision for spiritual development is good. There is a daily act of collective worship that

allows pupils to hear about Christianity and other religions. This is a church school controlled by the local education authority and as such a separate inspection is required which looks in detail at the school's provision for acts of worship and aspects of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A separate report will be published on these aspects of the school's work.

48. There is an attempt to provide a sense of occasion by lighting a candle but pupils do not enter or leave the hall quietly and the sense of occasion is not always apparent. Music is played once pupils are in the hall and they are encouraged to answer questions about the composer and the instruments played. Lives of famous people past and present are related to the pupils and they respond well to questions asked of them. Pupils do not always concentrate on what is happening in the hall and behaviour of a small minority sometimes detracts from the reverent climate teachers try hard to establish. Opportunities are provided for pupils to share their work with others and this is a time when pupils can justifiably be proud of their achievements. They share these opportunities with parents who appreciate the range of work covered by the pupils.
49. In many lessons pupils are fascinated by the discoveries that they make as, for example, cardboard boats sinking in Year 1 science and the way that sound travels in the investigative work in Year 6. Circle time during a religious education lesson provided pupils in Years 1 and 2 with an opportunity to express their personal feelings. They were also amazed by the way the mechanical roamer and the software programmes responded to their instructions. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are encouraged to show and tell their news and although they speak in some detail other pupils do not always listen in an appropriate manner. Opportunities for pupils to respond to the marvels of the world around them are not usually explicit in curriculum plans even though teachers are skilled in ensuring that they happen in the classrooms.
50. Pupils' moral development is good. The parents are pleased that the school teaches the difference between right and wrong and pupils generally accept this. However, there are times in lessons and throughout the day when a few pupils do not take other peoples' feelings fully into consideration. They often seek the specific attention of the teacher regardless of what the teacher is doing and of what other pupils need. Teachers make clear that this behaviour is not acceptable and explain how this sort of behaviour affects others but do not make enough use of praising the very good behaviour displayed by other pupils to reinforce the attitudes and values they are trying to promote. Through the setting up of the school council pupils have opportunities to discuss moral issues with other members of the group. The council is given the full support of the school staff and is responsible for many of the innovations in the school such as the Buddy System where chosen pupils act as a support to others during lunch and dinner breaks. The discussion of activities that take place help pupils to distinguish between right and wrong. Other issues discussed at the school council meetings are the tuck shop, lost property, hazards, and developing school grounds.
51. The school provides a calm, warm and welcoming environment where pupils can learn. Pupils are friendly to each other and often welcoming to other adults. Older pupils support younger pupils in many aspects of their school life. From a very young age pupils are expected and encouraged to become independent. This is particularly so when they are working in their science lessons. They work co-operatively and are able to work collaboratively when the opportunity presents itself. The school encourages pupils to take responsibility and participate fully in the community. Pupils are encouraged to collect for charity, to work together in competitive games, and take part in science and design projects, school fairs and concerts. The staff work hard to help pupils to become good citizens. They have entertained pupils from France both in their homes and taken them to places of interest.

52. Provision for the development of the pupils' understanding of their own culture and heritage is good. It is enhanced by visits to places of interest in the locality as well as to places further afield such as Levens in France. Pupils have also exchanged letters and classwork with children in their linked, french school. Visitors to the school include the local vicar, who regularly takes collective worship, theatre groups and a local mother and her baby for the study of work on Ourselves. Pupils study the work of classical authors including Shakespeare and Charles Dickens, and the work of artists and designers such as Sir George Clausen and Van Gogh. In history they compare life styles of people in past times and those of today. There is also some good provision for the development of pupils' multi-cultural understanding. African music and Aboriginal art is included in curriculum planning. The school has a good collection of books reflecting aspects of some of the world faiths but few books or artefacts of different cultures. Curriculum plans do not make explicit the many opportunities offered to pupils for this aspect of the school's work.
53. The school has maintained its high standards in these aspects of the educational provision since the last inspection. Parents agree that the values and attitudes promoted by the school have a positive effect on attainment and behaviour, particularly for those pupils on the register of special educational needs.
58. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**
54. Arrangements for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils are very good. The school meets its aim to provide a happy and welcoming environment in which children learn. Parents are satisfied that plenty of support and guidance is provided when needed and that their children like school.
55. Procedures to promote discipline and good behaviour are largely effective. The school encourages good relationships through staff who provide good role models, showing and receiving respect in the understanding that everyone is important. School rules are made clear to everyone concerned and praise alongside firm encouragement is very well used to help pupils meet the high standards expected. Teachers have sound strategies to manage the conduct of a significant minority of pupils who find difficulty in controlling their desire to monopolise the teachers' attention but do not always use them to lasting effect. However, a concerted effort at school level is needed to reduce the number of these instances.
56. Very good procedures are in place for promoting pupils' well-being which are supported by the development of very good relationships between children and adults so that pupils feel confident that they have someone to turn to if problems arise. A very good feature of this school is the council of pupils chosen to represent the views of all age groups. Regular meetings take place to consider developments which pupils and staff feel would be of particular benefit and are carefully managed and recorded to ensure the best possible results. Child protection procedures are good and based on local guidance and procedures but the school has not developed its own specific policy. Attendance is well monitored and promoted. All parents know and support the practice of giving the school information if their children are absent. A very good policy formalises the school's commitment to ensuring the health and safety of everyone using the site. Potential hazards are monitored and well responded to and an annual risk assessment is routinely carried out.
57. There are very effective formal and informal procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' progress and personal development. Assessment of pupils' skills soon after entry to the Reception class helps in establishing targets for progress and provides the basis to which teachers add their knowledge of pupils as they move through the school. As pupils meet the

targets set for them new targets are introduced. This process is a key factor in promoting a good rate of progress. Portfolios are compiled for each pupil which contain examples of their work and test results together with teachers' comments on progress. Pupils' personal development is more informally monitored through a range of information contained in Records of Achievement and annual reports. Visits to school by prospective pupils and their parents beginning in the Reception class help the pupils to settle. Professional, sporting and social links with other local primary schools as well as the secondary school to which most pupils transfer provide very good support for pupils moving on to secondary education.

58. The school continues to meet individual needs and provide the effective support and guidance reported at the previous inspection.

63.

#### **Partnership with parents and the community**

59. The school has an excellent relationship with parents and the local community.

60. Annual reports to parents give very good information about pupils' achievement and progress in all subjects. They are well received and give a clear picture of a child's strengths and development needs. They provide opportunities for parents and pupils to comment, they are clearly unique to each child and identify their individual qualities and achievements. Although they provide separate information for English, mathematics and science, no separate spaces are allocated to any other subject area. An additional space is provided for personal and social achievements and pupils and parents appreciate comments made. Reports for the under-fives are written against the areas of learning but do not always give sufficient information about how parents can support their children at home.

61. The quality of information provided for parents is very good. Parents are satisfied that the school gives them a clear understanding of what is taught and that they are well informed about their children's progress. Written reports on pupils' progress are personal to individuals and parents are confident that their children are honestly reflected. Reports contain an excellent range of information and encouragement for personal development and provide opportunities for parents and pupils to contribute their views. The school always takes these views into account when considering individual pupils' targets for academic achievement. However, they do not always include targets relating to behaviour for all the pupils whom need this support. Given the key issue on behaviour the school should consider how this excellent system might be extended to help those few pupils whose conduct sometimes fall short of the standards expected of them. The school prospectus is comprehensive and contains a high quality and range of information on day to day procedures and school aims. This document clearly shows the high value that the school places on working with parents and how partnerships are actively promoted. Parents find that staff are approachable and easily accessible so that much informal feedback is possible in addition to that received during termly open evenings. An excellent feature of this school is the practice of sending home Records of Achievement for each child weekly to which their parents may contribute.

62. Parents are fully involved in the life of the school and are well involved with their children's work through homework. Parents are satisfied with what is set and appreciate the opportunities provided to agree this generally with teachers. The school uses the Record of Achievement very effectively to share with parents the short term targets for individual pupils. Parents find this very useful. All pupils take home reading books which are accompanied by comments from teachers. Parents feel welcome to work in school and support excursions and projects. They are happy that their contributions are very well used. Teachers' planning takes account of offers of voluntary help and they are flexible about the range of jobs allocated to parents. There is a very

supportive Parent Teacher Association which works very hard to raise extra resources and provide social events for the school and local community. An extremely effective drive to raise funds for building developments has provided the school with substantial, high quality indoor workspace.

63. Links with the local community are excellent. The school makes full use of local community and overseas links with a wide range of individuals and organisations to enrich pupils' learning. There are close links with the parish church through shared worship and regular visits from the vicar who also runs a magazine club after school. This paper reaches many people in the locality and has a direct benefit on pupils' academic learning and personal development. The school is the base for an adult learning initiative that provides additional information technology equipment for use by pupils. Two of the school's teachers provide tuition to parents and colleagues and are successful in raising information technology skills in the community. Pupils are involved in charity fund raising and in raising extra resources for their own school through projects and special events. The school makes use of visitors such as entertainers and artists who provide an extra dimension to teachers' work. For example, theatre groups present subjects, such as bullying, and develop skills for pupils to consider in their relationships with one another. Pupils are involved in a very wide range of sporting activities with other schools and frequently take part in musical concerts in the area. Very good use is made of the local area to support the curriculum and pupils take trips to places of interest in this country and abroad.
64. The previous inspection found that the school is successful in its efforts to establish partnerships with parents and the community and these links continue to make a significant contribution to pupils' progress and personal development.

## 69. **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

### 69. **Leadership and management**

65. The school is very well led and managed. The school benefits from the very effective professional example of the headteacher. A determination, shared by all the teachers, that pupils will attain high standards and enjoy their time at school provides the driving force behind everything the school aims for and achieves. The school governors have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and needs and they provide active, strong support to the headteacher and the staff.
66. The headteacher is very effective in providing clear educational direction for the school. All those who work in the school and the governors have a shared view of the principles that should guide educational and pastoral provision. Excellent systems have been put in place by the headteacher for planning and developing the curriculum and for tracking and promoting pupils' progress and personal development. A very good example of this is seen in the consistently outstanding quality of pupils' Records of Achievement and target books. Through effective delegation, training and support, all teachers are able to provide successful leadership in the several subjects for which each is responsible. For instance, the co-ordinator for information technology has raised the level of expertise and confidence of her colleagues through training and support in the classrooms. Similarly, the co-ordinator for science has successfully promoted the school's practical and investigative approach through team planning and by example. In both these examples the co-ordinators leadership has contributed to pupils' good progress and higher standards of attainment. A major strength in the school is the way in which the enthusiasm and expertise of all those with management roles are brought together through teamwork to pursue the school's goals.

67. Although the headteacher, subject co-ordinators and governors are regular visitors to classrooms, the quality of teaching and pupils' response to it are not formally monitored except as part of the appraisal process. As a result the unsatisfactory behaviour of a few pupils in every class has not been identified as an issue across the whole school. Therefore, action has not been taken to improve teachers' strategies so that they can handle this problem successfully. It is important that senior managers in the school assess the nature and extent of problem and, develop effective, agreed procedures and support for teachers in bringing about a permanent solution. The governors are well aware of how little time the headteacher has to carry out this aspect of his role. They have identified increasing time for this work as an important priority.
68. The governors are closely involved in drawing up the school's long-term plans for improving the school over the next three years and for the detailed plans through which the school addresses its development priorities for the current year. Many governors visit the school regularly and give valuable help in the classrooms and provide some extra-curricular activities. Recently governors have observed literacy, mathematics and information technology lessons and have reported back to the governing body. They have taken a major role in initiatives such as the recent building extension and in setting up the information technology Credit Centre. This is a facility managed by and based in the school for promoting skills in information technology in the community. Governors are most conscientious in carrying out their responsibilities and all statutory requirements are met. Through their involvement in planning for school improvement and in the daily life of the school they are very well placed to ask rigorous questions that help the school give a full account of its activities and achievements.
69. The school's aims are published in the school prospectus. The school sets out clearly how its aims, values and attitudes will be met through all its policies and curriculum plans. Teachers demonstrate that these are very well implemented in the classrooms through the way they teach and in the example that they set for pupils to follow.
70. The school has a capacity for rigorous but constructive self-review. For instance, it analyses its standardised assessment results, setting challenging targets to improve on these and amends the teaching and curriculum to ensure that targets are met. It has maintained the high standards in leadership and management identified in the last inspection report and is well placed to improve even further.
71. The strengths in leadership and management identified in the previous inspection report have been maintained and have a major impact on the high levels of attainment and good rate of progress made by pupils.
76. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**
72. The number, qualifications and experience of the teaching staff meet the demands of the curriculum. The pupil/teacher ratio is generous and above that typically found nationally. The teaching staff are very well qualified and experienced and some have additional qualifications, for example, in knowledge and understanding of aspects of special educational needs and in gaining specific skills in information technology. These have enhanced the learning opportunities for the pupils. The support for pupils with special education needs is excellent. Pupils make very good progress as a result of this and parents are very pleased. Non-teaching staff provide effective support. Cleaning and caretaking staff provide a well maintained, clean environment and there is no evidence of litter, vandalism or graffiti around the school.
73. Arrangements for the professional development of staff are very good, with school priorities for literacy, numeracy and information technology being met by a range of planned courses. There

is a good staff development policy that sets out the priorities for development. There are very supportive procedures in place for any new teacher and governors. Time is spent in discussing the ethos of the school and how the aims, policies and values are translated into practice. An effective system for appraisal is in place, arrangements are continuous and include planned and focussed observations of teaching in the classrooms. Teachers find the appraisal arrangements very helpful. The school accepts placements for a small number of students on initial teacher training.

74. The accommodation is excellent. The recent addition of a staff room, cloakroom, information technology suite, classroom and office has enabled the teaching staff to enhance the learning opportunities for the pupils. There is suitable accommodation for the youngest pupils and this leads directly into a safe play area. The community playing fields adjacent to the school provide an appropriate playing area both for the youngest pupils and for competitive sports and games. There is also a separate dining room that provides space for pupils to eat their meals without interruption. The classrooms are bright and cheerful and a wide range of work undertaken by the pupils is on display. The school is sensibly carpeted and the gallery is due to be completed in the very near future providing a cosy place for the younger pupils to listen to and share stories. Storage spaces are tidy and well labelled enabling pupils to have easy access to books and materials. There is also a small library where pupils can research information from books and the CD-ROM. The new building has enhanced the environment for the pupils and there has been considerable improvement since the previous inspection.
75. Resources are good. Resources for information and communications technology are excellent. The school has taken every advantage of grants available to it. It has worked with the local education authority and the business community to improve the quality of provision. Members of the parents' group and the community work untiringly to raise funds to buy up to date, suitable equipment and resources for the pupils. The school has spent the additional funding from the government very wisely in order to improve the quality and range of books.
76. Overall, staffing, accommodation and resources make a very good contribution to pupils' learning and each aspect has improved since the last inspection.
81. **The efficiency of the school**
77. The school manages its finances very well. The annual budget is set by the governors and headteacher after they have carried an audit to decide the school's priorities. All aspects of the school's development plan have finances allocated to them. There is little funding left after the fixed costs are met because the school has decided to commit so much of its funding to providing a fourth teacher for the under-fives. Two part-time teachers who provide the headteacher with his limited non-contact time are well deployed to make best use of their teaching strengths. The expertise they bring to the school help to promote high standards in music and art. The amount for developing each subject is estimated initially by the subject co-ordinators in discussion with the headteacher before it is agreed with the governing body. The governors are very aware of the constraints on the budget and they work hard to find best value for money in a systematic and consistent way. The governors' long term priorities are to reduce the headteacher's teaching commitment so that he has sufficient time to monitor and support teaching and learning in the classrooms and to continue the employment of a fourth teacher for pupils under-five. The sum carried forward from last year's budget is targetted to funding these priorities. The governing body correctly accounts for all income and keeps a close track of expenditure. Its management of finances for the Credit Centre and the school's recent building extension is excellent.
78. Although criteria for judging the effectiveness of financial decisions are not formally written

down, the informal procedures for evaluating cost-effectiveness are very secure. For instance, the governors rightly rely on the advice of an experienced and knowledgeable staff to inform their decisions on buying books and materials for the National Literacy Strategy. Similarly, they know from their own regular visits to classrooms and from detailed reports from the headteacher that their decision to appoint a teacher for pupils under-five has resulted in very high quality provision. However, their evaluation of the cost effectiveness of spending decision could be improved further by setting success criteria that are more closely related to their impact on pupils' attainment and progress. The governors are keenly aware of what is happening in the school and are rigorous in reviewing the impact of their spending decisions. They are very well able to help the school through acting as critical friends.

79. The headteacher and the secretary carry out the day to day administration of finances effectively. Their efficiency allows the school to concentrate on its major tasks of providing a very good education for its pupils. Procedures for ordering, receiving and paying for goods and services are clearly documented and the single recommendation of the most recent audit of the school has been met.
80. The school makes very good use of a committed, talented and highly professional staff, including non-teaching staff. Teachers overcome the difficulties presented in a small school of mixed age classes through careful planning and skilful lesson management. Under the leadership of the headteacher the total resources of staff expertise and enthusiasm are harnessed through effective teamwork to provide a very high standards of educational provision and to pursue the school's aims.
81. Excellent use is made of the generous accommodation. For example, the timetable allows pupils in their Reception year to enjoy the space in the hall for boisterous play and practical activities like cookery and art. This arrangement also enables other pupils in the class in Years 1 and 2 to concentrate on more structured lessons in literacy and mathematics.
82. The school receives an income per pupil that is above the national average but is in line with that received by schools of a similar size. However, it provides a very good quality of education for its pupils with high quality teaching and the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school to reach standards that are above those found nationally overall and that are well above the national expectation in English and science. They are making very good progress in information technology. Overall, the school gives very good value for money.

87. **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

87. **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

83. At the time of the inspection there were ten pupils under-five who are usually taught as a group. They are sometimes taught as part of the Key Stage 1 class. Of these pupils only two had reached the age of five. Most pupils had taken part in some form of preschool education before joining the school. All pupils are given the opportunity to start school at the beginning of the year in which they reach their fifth birthday. The option of part-time education until the term after their fifth birthday is made clear to parents. Before the pupils start their full time education, they have the opportunity to visit the school.
84. Overall the provision for the under-fives is very good. They are for the most part of the week taught by a specialist teacher who has a very good knowledge and understanding of the educational and emotional needs of young children.
85. There is a good policy for early years which clearly sets out the expectations for the teaching and learning programmes. The school follows the national guidance for teaching the under-fives and the termly planning for this age group is very good.
86. Statutory testing of all pupils had taken place during their first few weeks in school. Parents also fill in a record of pupil's attainments in the six areas of learning prior to their children joining school. This record is a very clear indicator of what pupils can do and teachers use it to decide pupils' starting point in the classroom. Records of work are kept and assessments of what pupils can do as a result of the teaching are maintained as the pupils move through the school. Examples of their work are also retained and help to form a record of progress across all the areas of learning.
87. With such a small and varying intake it is difficult to make any meaningful comparisons with the standards typically found nationally. However the present group of pupils have already attained standards in some areas that are above those that would normally be expected. By the time they reach compulsory school age most pupils attain standards that are above those found nationally, particularly in their speaking skills and knowledge of the world around them.
88. Overall the quality of teaching observed in all lessons observed was very good. Most lessons that were observed were when the under-fives were taught as a separate group. Where teaching was very good the planning was used to good effect. Expectations were very high and pupils were given opportunities to learn independently. Skilled questioning and close observation was used to ensure that pupils learned effectively. Children's contributions were valued and they were helped to clarify their ideas through discussion. Very good examples were seen- when pupils were working on the computer using animated programmes and when given opportunities to develop their own writing skills.
93. *Personal and social development*
89. The personal and social development of the pupils is good. They are provided with many opportunities for working and playing independently of the teacher and they work very well together in small groups. For example, they happily work together in the creative play area that served as a post office during the inspection. There were no arguments or disagreements, they shared the equipment sensibly and their conversations showed that they could listen effectively to what was said and they were able to make sensible responses. Their attention span is good. When role-playing outside they are able to share equipment and received very good support from

the adult helper. Most pupils have not yet reached the age of five and are learning how to wait their turn in a larger group. They nearly always respond well to the teacher but occasionally they call out and do not readily listen to the contributions of others. Their behaviour is usually very good, particularly when they are stimulated. Pupils are taught how to respond to others and they relate well to each other and to older pupils and adults in and around the school.

94. *Language and literacy*

90. Speaking skills are very good. They can answer questions fully and have very interesting conversations amongst themselves when playing in the creative play area. During the time of the inspection this area was used as a post office following a class visit to the village and local town post offices. Pupils have a good range of vocabulary and are able to answer questions clearly and with expression. They speak confidently to adults about their experiences. Most pupils know some letter sounds and some of the oldest pupils know them all. Some pupils are able to read three letter words by using the sounds and by their knowledge of rhymes. Pupils enjoy sharing books, both in school and at home with their parents. They handle books carefully and know that print has meaning. They listen enthusiastically to stories read to them by the teacher and other adults. Pupils are developing sound writing skills. They are given many opportunities to write for themselves and letters are beginning to appear in their work. For example, on their paintings to Father Christmas they have written messages. By the end of their first year in school, they have good letter formation and are able to write recognisable sentences. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their writing skills. This, together with the teaching of letter formation, enables all pupils to make good progress. For example, pupils followed a treasure hunt round the playground and found messages from the birds. As a result of this the children were asked to respond by replying to the messages in the form of a letter which they put in envelopes and posted to the birds. The teaching in this session was judged to be very good.

95. *Mathematics*

91. Evidence gathered during the inspection suggests that in general by the end of their Reception year in school, pupils' understanding of mathematics is similar to that typically found in this age group. Many pupils already recognise and name two-dimensional shapes such as circle, square and rectangle and know the meaning of words such as higher, lower, up, down, over and under. This positional language is reinforced during their physical education lessons. They can complete and continue simple patterns using colour and shapes. Many pupils can recognise numbers to five and some numbers to ten. They use the coins in the post office and understand the concept of shopping. The older pupils are able to complete more complex patterns and with the help of a number line count up to 100. The oldest pupils are able to add and take away numbers up to four without counting. Pupils generally make satisfactory progress during their first year in school. No teaching was observed in this subject.

96. *Knowledge and understanding of the world*

92. When they enter school, most pupils have had a range of experiences that have enabled them to broaden their understanding of the world that they live in and their knowledge and understanding of the world is frequently greater than is usually seen. The school builds effectively on this good start through visits to place of interest, such as the post office, and through walks around the school grounds and environment. On their walks around the area they collect leaves, twigs and berries and talk about the bark of trees, the texture and the smells. They have daily opportunities to use the outside areas, which enable them to have range of experiences to talk about. Pupils are able to use the computer and most are skilled in using the mouse to move images on the

screen. They can use software to create pictures, select colours and draw lines. They match numbers up to ten on the computer correctly and use correct positional language such as down and along to link the two. Pupils have high levels of independence as a result of the effective teaching. Teaching in the lesson observed was judged to be very good.

97. *Physical development*

93. No lessons were observed where the pupils were specifically involved in a physical education lesson. However, from observing the pupils in lessons and in the playground, looking at photographs, as well as recognising the many opportunities for outdoor education, progress in this area of development is judged to be at least satisfactory. Pupils play well together in the playground and in the creative play areas. They have good co-ordination and manipulate simple tools like scissors, glue and writing implements with confidence. They show secure control in handling large wheeled toys and construction kits.

98. *Creative development*

94. Only one part lesson was observed where pupils were painting and this was as a result of a story being read to the pupils. All pupils were asked to paint a picture of the teddy in the story. They did this willingly and used the brush and paints well. Other work, using a variety of media was evident on the walls and in teacher's planning. Music and dance lessons are timetabled. Progress in creative development is at least satisfactory.

95. There was no report of the under-fives in the previous inspection.

100. **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

100. **English**

96. The results of the statutory tests at the age of seven and eleven years of age have limited value and need to be treated with caution because of the small number of pupils in each year group and therefore, performance in the tests can vary from year to year. However, attainment in English at the end of Key Stage 1 is above that usually seen and reflects the trend indicated by the results of the statutory assessment tests for the last three years. The standard of work in pupils' books is higher than that indicated by the results of the tests for 1999 with more pupils on course to achieve the higher National Curriculum Level 3. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is well above that found nationally and is consistent with the trend demonstrated in the statutory tests since 1996. The number of pupils achieving beyond the national expectation to reach the National Curriculum Level 5 is very high when compared with the national figure and is above the average for similar schools. The school has maintained the high standards identified in the last inspection report. Pupils make good progress in English at Key Stage 1 and at Key Stage 2 progress is very good. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress throughout the school. The excellent systems for tracking and promoting progress through individual target setting have had a very positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress.

*Speaking and listening*

97. All pupils make very good progress in speaking and listening. In both key stages standards are very high and teachers build successfully on the high level of spoken language that most pupils bring with them to school. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to work in pairs or in

groups and their skilled questioning helps them to clarify their thinking and explain their ideas in a very articulate way. From their earliest days in school pupils are confident in expressing their ideas, news and opinions. Occasionally, in whole class sessions, the eagerness of some pupils to answer and contribute leads to them to try and dominate other pupils. Teachers have to manage these sessions very firmly. When pupils work in groups or in pairs they use their considerable skills as effective speakers and listeners to very good effect and co-operate extremely well. They often listen courteously to what others have to say and build constructively on the ideas and suggestions offered by other pupils. A good example of this was seen when pupils in Years 3 and 4 worked in twos to compose a play script based on the story of *Little Red Riding Hood*. Older pupils collaborate very effectively when working in the Credit Centre.

102. *Reading*

98. In both key stages pupils make very good progress and standards are high. Pupils make a very good start by developing a love of books and they enjoy reading. This is a direct result of the enthusiasm communicated to them by the teachers. Higher up the school the teachers take great care to introduce pupils to books of different kinds such as mysteries, adventure and story books and to different authors. They also nurture a confidence and willingness to read non-fiction texts. In Key Stage 1 they build successfully on what they learned in their Reception year. They are building up a good sight vocabulary and are steadily acquiring good word building skills. By the end of the key stage many are able to read accurately from text like *Can't You Sleep Little Bear?* and show that they understand much more than is made explicit in the text. They can retell stories correctly, listing the main events in sequence and they make sensible prediction about what will happen next. They know how punctuation, like question and exclamation marks, needs to be interpreted by the reader and use this knowledge to read expressively. By the age of eleven standards in reading are well above those found nationally. Pupils talk about the books they have read such as the *Harry Potter* series and *The Weirdstone of Brisingamen* with the liveliest enthusiasm. They have read a wide range of high quality children's literature. The most advanced can discuss their favourite characters in a very sophisticated way. A good example was given drawn from *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. The oldest pupils are given excellence guidance how to research a topic independently. As a result their research skills are well developed and they can locate and paraphrase information very efficiently. They use these skills very successfully to help them learn in other subjects, particularly in history, geography and religious education.

103. *Writing*

99. Standards are high in Key Stage 1 and are very high at Key Stage 2 and pupils make very good progress throughout the school. Teachers successfully motivate pupils with interesting tasks and lively direct teaching. The range, quantity and quality of work in pupils' books across the curriculum are very good. Pupils in both key stages have well developed skills above those typical for their age in word processing and use these effectively to compose, redraft and edit their own work. Pupils in Year 2 write coherent stories, with correct simple punctuation and using dictionaries and wordbooks to help them with their spelling. They know how to write simple factual reports to share what they learned in history and science. By the age of eleven pupils can write in a wide range of styles taking care to consider the purpose and audience for whom they are writing. Good examples of this were seen in their self portraits sent to their twinned school in France, their fact files on health and disease in Victorian England and particularly in their written records and evaluation of their science experiments. They can paraphrase effectively as they did when rewriting extracts from a diary into a first person account. In their creative and story writing they are learning how to organise their ideas well and use sophisticated sentence structures, direct speech and a lively vocabulary to engage the interest

of the reader. Standards of handwriting and presentation are good throughout the school.

100. Overall the teaching of English is very good and this is a key factor in the high rate of progress pupils make and the high standards they attain. Teachers' assessment is of the highest quality and they use this and the school systems for setting and tracking individual targets to very good effect. Teachers communicate to their pupils a love of literature and a commitment to high standards. Planning is consistently very good and it is outstanding in the class for the oldest pupils. Activities are exciting and varied and are carefully tailored to meet the needs of all pupils in the class. Pupils respond with very positive attitudes and take a pride in their work. A small number of pupils have not yet learned how to channel their enthusiasm in a way that contributes successfully in class discussions
101. The National Literacy Strategy has been very successfully implemented and the school has tailored it carefully to meet the needs of its pupils. Targets for raising standards are realistic because they take account of the varying numbers and range of learning needs in each yearly cohort in this small school. Nevertheless, they are challenging in seeking to raise the percentage of pupils achieving the National Curriculum Level 3 by the age of seven years (Year 2) and Level 5 by the end of Year 6.
106. **Mathematics**
102. Overall standards in mathematics are average in Key Stage 1 and high in Key Stage 2
103. The number of pupils involved in the 1998 and 1999 Key Stage 1 national tests and teacher assessments were relatively small. With such small numbers to make comparisons of the school's results with national data for any single year is of limited value. In the 1998 Key Stage 1 national tests, results were very high compared with the national average at the nationally expected Level 2 but below the national average at the higher Level 3. On the basis of the teacher assessments results were very high at the expected level and at the higher level. In the 1999 tests and teacher assessments most pupils attained the expected level. However, evidence from pupils' current work leads to a judgement that attainment throughout the school is higher than that indicated by the test results. The small cohort of older pupils have covered the full range of aspects of mathematics and many are attaining standards than would normally be expected for eleven-year-olds
104. Teachers have set challenging targets for the years 2000 and 2001 and have identified mental calculation as a target in the school development plan. The school has begun to implement the national strategy for numeracy and there are already signs that this is having an effect on progress. With the introduction of the numeracy hour the pupils' capacity to handle mental arithmetic is beginning to increase. Standards in numeracy are average in both key stages. Pupils are able to use their numeracy skills in a range of subjects. For example, they use simple co-ordinates in geography and weigh out ingredients when making cakes.
105. In lessons and from a scrutiny of pupils' work, inspectors' judgements support the view that the great majority of pupils in both key stages are on course to attain at least the expected levels. The percentage of pupils likely to attain the higher levels varies from year to year in this small school but overall the percentage is higher than is typical by the age of eleven. For example, the present pupils in Year 2 can identify odd and even numbers and can read from a number chart to 100. They understand place value in tens and units and have a clear concept of how a practical display of cubes representing units on a block graph can be translated on to paper. They can name two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes and understand vertices, edges and faces.

They can use a roamer to draw squares and triangles. They understand simple fractions. However, there is little evidence of recording the results of practical investigations. Present Year 6 pupils can understand simple co-ordinates, mixed numbers and fractions. They can express decimal figures as fractions and work out percentages of £5. All pupils understand highest common factor and lowest common multiple and they can work out the area and perimeter of simple shapes. Some pupils are able to recall number facts easily whilst a small minority are able to work out answers using a range of different mental strategies.

106. In Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory progress overall. They make gains in number confidence during the first part of the lesson but occasionally progress is hampered in the main part of the lesson by the fact that pupils take a longer time than necessary to settle down to their work. They develop an understanding of all aspects of the programmes of work although their skills in mental calculations and practical investigations are not as good as other aspects, such as data handling and shape and space.
107. In Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress overall. The higher attaining pupils are able to solve problems with increasing speed and are able to work out number patterns. For example, they are able to complete complicated number series, and investigate triangular numbers. They are able to present data in a variety of ways and use their skills in information technology to present their work. In Years 3 and 4 pupils become more confident and accurate when explaining their mental calculations to the class. They are able to recognise pattern in number when counting in tens from different starting points. In Year 6, pupils consolidate their understanding of number facts using Venn diagrams at differing levels depending on their understanding of number facts.
108. The quality of teaching observed ranged from satisfactory to very good and was good overall. In Key Stage 1, only one lesson was observed and this was judged to be very good. The teacher quickly sorted out the low level of disruption by a minority of pupils, making clear that that kind of behaviour was unacceptable. Her demonstrations and explanations were very explicit and she was very quick to realise and intervene when pupils lacked understanding. Her subject knowledge is very good and she used all the elements of the numeracy hour well. Her support of pupils with special educational needs is very good. Across the school, the qualities of the best teaching were high expectations, both of the level of work produced and its presentation. Teachers' planning is very good. It identifies clear learning outcomes for the pupils and enables most pupils to make progress at their own level of understanding. Firm discipline has a direct impact of pupils' attainment and as a result pupils work with a greater sense of purpose and make good progress. Lessons are well prepared and the activities planned for pupils are challenging at all levels. Support is provided for pupils when required and effective direct teaching enabled pupils to make good progress. Support provided by parent help enables pupils to make good progress. In lessons seen, teachers made very effective use of information technology to support and reinforce pupils learning especially in data handling in Year 6, understanding a variety of graphs in Year 4 and in demonstrating  $\frac{1}{4}$  turns when using the roamer in Year 2. Where teaching was less than good the teacher was less confident in handling the mental mathematics session and moving on at a sufficiently brisk pace. Nevertheless, the lessons were still soundly taught and pupils made satisfactory progress.
109. Pupils respond well in mathematics lessons. They enjoy the challenging work provided for them and persevere until they have completed their work. They enjoy the opportunity to give quick answers when using dice and other games provided to give encouragement and enjoyment. They use their initiative when asked to plan their own investigations. For example, after completing the Venn diagrams that were set by the teacher in Year 6, pupils planned their own for their friends to complete. However, there are times in lessons when pupils, in both key stages, do not concentrate sufficiently, either on the teacher or each other. This causes some low levels of

disruption and does not allow the lesson to progress at an appropriate rate. Some pupils do not have sufficient self-discipline and try too often to seek the attention of the teacher or other pupils.

110. Pupils on the register of special educational needs are well supported either through support from the teacher or other help within the classroom. They make good progress.
111. Overall the judgements reported from this inspection are similar to those reported following the last inspection. In view of the targets set for the improvement of mental calculation across the school and the implementation of the numeracy hour the school is well placed to improve standards even further.
116. **Science**
112. The numbers of pupils involved in the national assessments are small and with such small numbers to make comparisons of the school's data with national data for any single year are of limited value. However the trend over the last three years shown by teacher assessments in Key Stage 1 and of the statutory tests at the end of Key Stage 2 indicates that standards are well above those seen nationally. By the age of seven almost all pupils achieve the expected level and more than usual achieve the higher National Curriculum Level 3 in the statutory teacher assessments. By the age of eleven many more pupils than usual attain the expected level and more than usual achieve beyond this to attain National Curriculum Level 5. Evidence in lessons; discussions with pupils; scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning, confirms that standards are very high. The pupils' skills of designing, carrying out and reporting their investigations are outstanding. The school has set demanding targets for half of the pupils to achieve above the nationally expected levels for the year 2000. This provides a good example of the school's determination to raise high standards even further.
113. Throughout the school all pupils make very good progress as a result of effective teaching and excellent assessment. Together these ensure that the work provided for each pupil matches their needs, captures their interest and motivates them to succeed. Pupils on the register for special educational needs make very good progress as a result of the nature of the work, the small groups of pupils involved in any one lesson and the challenge that the work provides. Progress in Key Stage 1 has improved since the last inspection and more pupils in both key stages are attaining higher standards.
114. Pupils in Key Stage 1 carry out their own investigations and suggest reasons for their findings. For example, when pupils in Year 1 were investigating forces, following very good questioning by the teacher they were able to suggest that wind might move the sails of a boat. Later when their cardboard boats sank they were able to suggest the use of foil to keep them afloat. As pupils move through the school they become more confident and competent when setting up investigations. They learn to organise their own work, collect their own resources and decide how to record what they have done.
115. Attainment in investigative science in Key Stage 2 is very high and this is carefully planned into all other aspects of the programmes of study. For example, pupils in Year 6 were asked to plan their own investigations around their study of sound. Their knowledge of a range of equipment and materials enabled them to plan and resource their investigations. They can explain how to set up an experiment, talk about the resources necessary, and have a good understanding of fair testing. As a result of the work that they do either singly or with the help of a partner, they are able to draw conclusions and make suggestions for improvement. Older pupils can use scientific terminology to explain processes used. They know about the major organs of the body and can

explain about gravity and forces. They talk with confidence about the properties of materials. In Year 6, where the pupils are taught as a small group, they are able to speak very confidently about their work and offer sound explanations for their findings.

116. Pupils use information technology effectively to support learning in science in both key stages. For instance, pupils store and access data that they have collected from various investigations, such as how sound travels. They also use control mechanisms to build working models such as lighthouses and lighting up a Christmas tree using twelve bulbs and three parallel circuits.
117. All pupils enjoy the practical nature of their science lessons. They find the work exciting and very stimulating. They persevere to complete practical tasks and respond with a sense of pride when the teachers praise the results of their work. They co-operate and collaborate very effectively and enjoy discussing their work with others. Science contributes significantly to pupils' independence and decision making.
118. Only one lesson was observed in each key stage. In both lessons the teaching was judged to be very good. Teachers have a very secure knowledge base and firmly believe that science should be a practical subject. They plan very effectively so that throughout the school there is continuity and pupils build on previous learning. Teachers' questioning skills are very good and their expectations for all pupils, including those on the register for special educational needs, are very high. For example, in the lesson where the Year 1 pupils were working on forces, the very good standard of the questioning by the teacher and the practical work that was planned enabled the pupils to answer challenging questions and to consolidate their learning.
119. Curriculum plans for science are very good and provide a sound framework for teaching. The timetable arrangements for science enable smaller numbers of pupils to be taught within their own year group. This has a direct, positive impact on the high quality of learning for all pupils. Outstanding day to day assessment is used very effectively in the planning of further work and in assessing progress made. Included in the science teaching are sex education and the misuse of drugs.
120. The school provides a range of extra curricular work in science. There is an after school science club and pupils take part in the British Association for the Advancement of Science's Young Investigators Award Scheme in which they have been very successful in achieving national awards. They also include aspects of science in most of their school visits such as those to Brigsteer Wood and to Sizergh Castle and in the visit to the school of the Life Education Centre team.
121. The very effective leadership of the subject co-ordinator has had a considerable influence on the quality of provision and the very high standards achieved. The policy for science is very helpful to teaching staff. Through successful teamwork the school is very successful in putting this policy into place and implementing the approach and the attitudes that the school wants to foster. Teachers review practice together on a regular basis in order to ensure that the pupils are provided with scientific experiences that can be directly applied to real situations.
122. The school has made good progress in science since the last inspection.
127. **Information technology**
123. Overall the standards in information technology in Key Stage 1 are average with a small number of pupils attaining higher standards in word processing skills. Standards in Key Stage 2 are high with a number of pupils attaining very high standards in word processing and data handling.

The school is well placed to attain even higher standards now that pupils have access to a networked computer suite and are able to benefit from very skilled teaching.

124. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils attain average standards. They are able to use a range of software to support their learning in other subjects. For example, they are able to use a roamer to draw a square and a triangle and can write a Christmas list using word processing software. They are able to load and run the software and use the mouse for basic editing. They are adept when using the mouse to move symbols on the screen. Most pupils can collect and use data to make simple block graphs.
125. By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils attain good standards and a small number of pupils attain very good standards both in word processing and in handling data. Pupils use their word processing to write articles for a newspaper and can load pictures of varying sizes using Clipart. The higher attaining pupils can use a spreadsheet effectively and are able to use formula function for addition and multiplication. Most pupils can direct signals and commands in order to make working models or to light up a Christmas tree using twelve bulbs and three parallel circuits. Pupils in Year 6 have also used their skills successfully to build rafts and vehicles controlled by the computer.
126. Progress throughout both key stages is good with the higher attaining pupils demonstrating very good progress in lessons. For example, when shown how to adjust or edit their work pupils are able to correct their mistakes through their understanding of the programme in use. Pupils in Year 2 made very good progress by being able to recognise where they had made a mistake and able to correct it. Pupils in Year 4 were able to decide which graph to print following discussions with their teacher about the information that they want to obtain from the data. The knowledge that pupils in Year 6 have of percentages allowed them to adjust the quantity of food planned for a party when an additional four pupils were invited. Pupils with special educational needs in both key stages make good progress as a result of the teaching in small teaching groups.
127. All pupils enjoy using computer technology and this was obvious when Year 2 pupils watched with amazement when the roamer obeyed their instructions. The same level of enjoyment was displayed when Year 4 pupils were able to print graphs of their work as a result of collecting data about favourite animals and football teams from their mathematics homework. Occasionally there was evidence of impatience when a small minority of pupils wanted the attention of the teacher at the same time. The teacher dealt this with very effectively in Year 6 pupils when she asked them to wait quietly until she was able to respond to them.
128. Three lessons were observed in total, although pupils were often observed using the computer throughout the inspection, either entering data or using word processing skills. One lesson was observed in Key Stage 1. This was judged to be very good. Although there were only ten pupils in the group, all were given very clear instructions and the teacher continually challenged them through appropriate questioning. She gave them the opportunity to question what they were doing and to work out the answers for themselves. Two lessons were observed in Key Stage 2. Both were judged to be very good. In both lessons, the teachers gave very clear guidance to the pupils about how to use the software in question. The younger group of pupils was learning how to use the most appropriate methods of displaying the data that they had gathered. Individual support was given to pupils having difficulty and very good questioning enabled the pupils to select the appropriate methods. In the Year 6 lesson, the teacher provided a very good problem solving activity which allowed all pupils to be challenged and to work at their own pace. Expectations of both work and behaviour are very high.

129. The policy for information and communications technology has recently been updated to include the changes made nationally and because of the additional hardware purchased. Planning is very good and most units of work have cross-curricular links to provide a worthwhile context for learning. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are expected to use a computer to assist them in their holiday projects. The school has made excellent use of the additional matched funding available in that it has a fully equipped computer suite as well as two computers in each classroom. Resources are now excellent. Additional qualified teaching support, together with the class teachers; plan and prepare their work very well; enabling pupils to succeed across all aspects of the programmes of work. Teachers, through their formal and informal discussions about curriculum planning, ensure that most pupils make good progress as they move through the school. The co-ordinator who is highly skilled in this subject provides very good leadership and training to colleagues. The school has used a matching grant in order to provide a well resourced computer suite. This additional facility is new to the school and has greatly assisted in raising standards of information technology, both for the pupils and member of the community who use it on a regular basis.

130. The school has made very good progress since the previous inspection.

135. **Religious education**

131. Pupils make good progress overall in religious education and achieve standards that are above those set out in the Cumbria Agreed Syllabus. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have a very sound knowledge of Old and New Testament stories. They have become familiar with many aspects of Christianity, for instance, the Bible, church buildings and ceremonies like baptism. They have explored themes of what is precious, giving and sacrifice through their studies of Christmas and Easter. For instance, pupils in Years 1 and 2 not only have a very good factual knowledge about the story of the first Christmas but also understand why this festival is important to Christians. By the age of seven most pupils can draw comparisons between Christianity and Judaism in terms of holy books, religious buildings and festivals. Older pupils build successfully on the knowledge of the New Testament and of Judaism gained at Key Stage 1. For example, in Key Stage 2 they can compare two versions of the gospels and know that the life and ministry of Jesus were viewed differently by his disciples, Jewish leaders and the people around him. Older pupils have good knowledge of Christianity, Judaism and Buddhism by the time they leave the school. They have a good understanding of the similarities between these faiths in terms of values, rites, festivals and religious symbolism in art, artefacts and buildings. The more difficult skills of reflecting on their own experience and exploring how different faiths are expressed by believers are particularly well taught.

132. Only two lessons in religious education were seen during the inspection, both taught to pupils in Class 1. Overall the teaching was good, based on very sound planning and preparation. Through the teacher's skills in leading the discussion pupils made good progress in learning to understand that Christmas is important to Christians because it is a time to celebrate the birth of God's Son whom he gave as a most precious gift to the world. Although these two lessons do not provide sufficient evidence to reach secure judgements about the quality of teaching overall, they provide a very good example of how effectively the school promotes pupils' understanding of how people's behaviour is shaped by their religious beliefs

133. Curriculum plans are securely based on the Cumbria's Agreed Syllabus for religious education and are of a consistently high standard. The school has a clear understanding of the spiritual and social values it aims to promote and these are embedded in the policy and planning for religious

education.

134. Religious education makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual and social development. These are promoted effectively through the emphasis given to opportunities for pupils to share and to reflect on their own experiences. Therefore, pupils are able to gain insights into the beliefs and values of others and to explore the significance and symbolism of religious celebrations and ceremonies.

139. **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

139. **Art**

135. The provision for art is very good and all pupils make good progress in every class. In the three lessons that were seen the quality of teaching was always good and in the one lesson taught to pupils in Class 3 the teaching was very good. Teaching is consistently distinguished by high expectations of what pupils will achieve. Teachers give good presentations of the skills and techniques pupils need to master to attain a high standard. Pupils respond with interest and strive hard to produce good quality pieces of work. In these lessons pupils worked well in partnership with their teachers and alongside each other. This helped them to make very good progress in a given time. For example, the oldest pupils moved very efficiently through all the steps of designing, printing on fabric, quilting, embroidery and mounting to produce very attractive facsimiles of Victorian Christmas cards.
136. Evidence from pupils' work, curriculum plans, teachers' assessments and displays around the school indicate that pupils make good progress in handling a wide variety of materials and techniques. These include using pastels, charcoal and crayons as well as modelling with clay and salt dough. Pupils are involved in large-scale art projects such as creating a collective mural from individual tiles and are actively involved in mounting and presenting their work. At Key Stage 1 they make good progress in mixing and applying paint and in developing their observational skills to improve their drawing. Very good examples were seen in their artwork on shells and on autumn berries and leaves. When designing collages they experiment with the composition of different elements to obtain the best results and show a capacity to evaluate their work thoughtfully. They can cut and glue with careful control and enjoy choosing a range of media to decorate their work. oldest pupils have produced some very high quality pieces of contemporary weaving and printing showing a sophisticated use of colour and texture. There are also examples of high quality work produced by junior pupils
137. Teaching and learning are soundly based on good quality curriculum plans. Activities and targets for learning are closely linked to the National Curriculum programmes of study. These are delivered through a two-yearly cycle that is followed in each of the three classes. Pupils are introduced to the work of a good range of artists and they learn from their studies how to use some of the techniques to improve their own work without losing their own creativity.
138. Art makes a good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to work in pairs and in groups and they learn to co-operate well. Pupils are able to learn about western art through studying the work of artists such as William Morris, Lowry and Seurat. They have opportunities to visit museums where they can learn about the art traditions of their own locality like the Quaker Tapestry in Kendal. They are able to learn about the art traditions of other cultures such as Aboriginal art but there is less evidence

of this in the curriculum plans.

**143. Design and technology**

139. At the time of the inspection there were no specific design and technology lessons seen. However, there were aspects of the subject in other lessons observed. For example, pupils in Key Stage 1 made six-pointed stars following written instructions; they made cakes following a recipe and were involved in designing a route for the roamer. Evidence in pupil's books showed that they had designed and made spectacles, planned and made collage using their own materials and taken part in evaluating their own finished work.
140. Pupils in Key Stage 2 used computer aided technology to plan, draw and make working models; they followed instructions and then used their own ideas to make mobiles of Father Christmas, a snowman or a bird. A very good example of their skills was seen in the work of junior pupils in designing and making passports and flight bags as art of their holiday topic. They can describe how to make a model with moving parts and evaluate their own work suggesting improvements. They have also designed and made woven wall hangings. Pupils in Year 4 designed, planned and made door alarms as part of their science topic.
141. The limited evidence available indicates that the majority of pupils are making at least sound progress.

**Geography**

142. No geography lessons were observed during the three days of the inspection and therefore, judgements about the quality of teaching and pupils' responses to it cannot be made. However, when evidence from pupils' work, from displays around the school and from records of curriculum planning and assessment are taken into account, progress is good overall. Examples of this are seen in the systematic progress pupils make in mapping skills and in moving from a local to a world-wide focus. There is very little reliance on commercial worksheets and pupils' skills in communicating what they know through factual, independent writing is well developed.
143. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils can make good use of simple maps, globes, photographs and CD-ROM programmes to locate places locally and to find countries around the world. They are able to make comparisons between the housing, major landmarks and employment in their own village with that of a nearby industrial town. By the age of eleven pupils have a good understanding of physical geography and particularly of the water cycle and of how rivers shape the landscape through their study of the Lake District and the River Kent. They have detailed knowledge of specific locations as a result of their well-developed research skills.
144. The provision for geography is very good. This small school ensures that pupils have full access to their statutory entitlement through two-year cycles of topic based on the units of work recommended by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Teachers ensure that whilst pupils in the same class study the same content of work, pupils move to increasingly more complex levels of work when they are ready. For example, the work done by Year 2 pupils in Class 1 on recording the weather is more demanding than that asked of Year 1 pupils in the same class. Learning in every classroom is well supported by fieldwork. By the end of Year 2 pupils have a very sound knowledge of their school environment, their village and physical geography of the nearby estuary and coastline. The quality of planning is very good. For instance, pupils in Class 3 have the opportunity to complete an independent study of a country of their choice.

The planning and guidance that supports this are excellent and enable pupils to attain very high standards. Assessment is of very high quality. So is its use to give pupils valuable and constructive feedback on what they have done well and how to improve even further.

145. Pupils' experiences provide good opportunities for cultural development. Through exchange visits to their twin school in France and their studies of other countries around the world they are gaining a knowledge of ways of doing things that are different from their own. Through their involvement in the National Trust Guardianship Scheme they are learning to value their own cultural heritage and developing positive attitudes of lively interest and tolerance.

## **History**

146. Only one lesson taught to pupils in Key Stage 2 was observed during the inspection. Although the quality of teaching was very good and pupils responded well and made good progress, this provides insufficient evidence to reach secure judgements about the quality of teaching and learning overall.
147. However, evidence from pupils' work, from curriculum plans and from the teachers' assessments indicates that the educational provision for history is good and that pupils are making good progress. Pupils make steady progress in developing a sense of chronology. The youngest can sequence pictures showing the passing of time in their own lives and can make clear distinctions between old and new toys and houses. As they move through the school they are able to follow time lines with understanding and use correct technical language like century and decade. By Year 2 pupils have a good body of knowledge about what life was like in the past and about the lives of famous people like Louis Braille and Florence Nightingale.
148. Skills in historical enquiry are well taught. Pupils are actively encouraged to generate their own questions and to decide how to find the answers. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have a good level of skills in drawing information from reference books and from contemporary sources like Victorian school log books. They handle Victorian artefacts used in schools and in the home with respect and interest and make good deductions about how and why they were used. They are well able to compare differences and similarities between artefacts and ways of doing things now and in the past. Throughout the school the pupils produce a very substantial body of work in their books that demonstrates very well-developed skills in communicating independently what they know. Very good examples were seen in their work on different periods in history such as the Ancient Egyptians and the Tudors.
149. The school makes good use of its own collection of historical artefacts and supplements these very effectively by making good use of the local authority museum loan service. Teaching in the classroom is well supported by visits to places of historical interest and through the school involvement with the National Trust Guardianship Scheme. History makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development.

## **Music**

150. Only one lesson in music taught to all the pupils in Key Stage 2 was observed during the three days of the inspection. Although the quality of teaching was very good, this lesson on its own does not provide sufficient evidence on which to base reliable judgements about the quality of

teaching or pupils' responses overall. The class teacher was joined by a specialist music teacher and their combined enthusiasm and expertise resulted in very good teaching. This in turn led to a high level of performance in singing and playing a range of instruments.

151. Evidence from teachers' curriculum plans and the music policy shows that pupils progress to increasingly demanding levels of work as they move through the school and have access to all aspects of musical activity including appraising and composing. Pupils make very good progress. A good example of their collective compositional skills is seen and heard in the graphic score and audio tape of class 1 piece, *Train is a-coming*. Performances in assemblies and in rehearsal for the Christmas concert for parents demonstrate that pupils can sing complex pieces in unison tunefully and are able to vary the dynamics to convey moods sensitively. Those pupils with an aptitude for music have opportunities to learn to play the fife, flute, violin and recorder and they join other pupils playing pitched percussion instruments to provide a good musical accompaniment to children's singing. The arrangements for assessment in music are very good. For instance, the teachers' records of compositions created by Year 3 and 4 pupils show separate evaluations of what each group did well with comments like clear structure, good ending, remembered melodies well. Similarly, the difficulties some groups had in keeping together was noted as a starting point for further improvement.
152. This small school placed great emphasis on promoting high standards and on its musical traditions. Evidence of the pupils' participation and successes in local music festivals and concerts and from tapes of earlier classwork and performances demonstrates that music is a strength in the school. A particularly good example is shown in the musical play *The Victorians* where staff and parents helped pupils to perform a unique and varied programme of music. Music contributes very well to pupils' cultural development giving them a good range of opportunities to learn about music from English folk and western classical traditions. However, although pupils learn about music from around the world, like Australian aboriginal music through the story of *Tiddalik*, this aspect of music could enjoy a higher profile in the school.

### **Physical education**

153. The physical education programme covers the range of activities as specified in the National Curriculum. This includes games, gymnastics, dance and swimming. During the inspection only part of one games lesson was observed. As a result of this lesson and in observations made of pupils in the playground; moving round the hall; and scrutinising teachers' planning records, attainment and progress are judged to be at least satisfactory. Achievements in swimming and games are above that which would be typically expected of a small school. The pupils have attained high standards by the end of Key Stage 2 in that almost all pupils can swim twenty-five metres by the time that they leave the primary school and some are working to achieve higher silver and gold awards. Many pupils take part in a wide range of sporting activities both as part of the school curriculum and in competitive and friendly sporting events with other schools.
154. In the one lesson observed attention was given to individual effort and to all pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 working together as a team. Although the teacher had expected additional support from a parent, it was not available. Nevertheless the management of this group and the help given to individual pupils ensured high quality teaching. The planning for the session and the expectations of high standards in refining and controlling skills in throwing and catching were evident. The management of the pupils was very good and the pupils responded with enthusiasm and commitment to the lesson. They were extremely disappointed when the lesson was cut short due to inclement weather and after enjoying the sight of the rainbow they changed quickly and quietly for their next lesson.

159. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

159. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

1 The inspection was carried out by a team of three inspectors who were present in the school for the equivalent of seven days. During the three days of the inspection thirty lessons were observed. Pupils were heard reading and their mathematical, scientific and information technology knowledge and understanding were examined. Samples of work were scrutinised in all classes and, in addition, the policy documents of the school, the budget figures and the school development plan were analysed. The attendance registers, records kept on pupils and teachers' planning files were inspected. Discussions were held with pupils, parents, staff and members of the governing body. Forty parents responded to a questionnaire expressing their views on the school. Parents attended a meeting with the registered inspector prior to the inspection.

160 **DATA AND INDICATORS**

160 **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	74	2	15	4

160 **Teachers and classes**

160 **Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	19

160 **Education support staff (YR – Y6)**

Total number of education support staff:	2
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	12

Average class size:

~~Average class size:~~ 19 |

160 **Financial data**

Financial year:	1998/99
	£
Total Income	146,188
Total Expenditure	148,226
Expenditure per pupil	2,430
Balance brought forward from previous year	15,295

Balance carried forward to next year

13,257

160 **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out: 74  
 Number of questionnaires returned: 40

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	67.5	30.0	2.5	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	75.0	25.0	0	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	45.7	51.4	2.9	0	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	42.5	47.5	7.5	2.5	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	60.0	30.0	7.5	2.5	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	50.0	45.0	2.5	2.5	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	67.5	30.0	2.5	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	42.5	45.0	5.0	5.0	2.5
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	56.4	33.3	10.3	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	47.5	40.0	12.5	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	62.5	37.5	0	0	0