

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **THORNHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Egremont, Cumbria

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112165

Headteacher: Mr J Mackay

Reporting inspector: Mr D J Halford  
12908

Dates of inspection: 25 – 28 June 2001.

Inspection number: 190243

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant & Junior School

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 – 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Ehen Road  
Thornhill  
Egremont  
Cumbria

Postcode: CA22 2SJ

Telephone number: 01946 820402

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr M Mossop

Date of previous inspection: 11/ 11/1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
12908	Mr D J Halford	Registered inspector	<p>English</p> <p>Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage</p> <p>Art &amp; Design</p> <p>Geography</p> <p>History</p> <p>Music</p> <p>Religious Education</p> <p>Equal Opportunities</p>	<p>What sort of school is it?</p> <p>How high are standards? The school's results and pupils' achievements.</p> <p>How well are pupils taught?</p> <p>How well is the school led and managed?</p>
9649	Mrs J Smith	Lay inspector		<p>How well does the school care for its pupils?</p> <p>How well does the school work in partnership with parents?</p>
25756	Mr D A Simpkin	Team inspector	<p>English as an Additional language</p> <p>Information and Communications Technology</p> <p>Mathematics</p> <p>Science</p> <p>Design and Technology</p> <p>Physical Education</p> <p>Special Education Needs</p>	<p>How high are standards?</p> <p>Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.</p> <p>How good are the curricular opportunities offered to pupils?</p>

The inspection contractor was:

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The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Thornhill Primary School is a smaller than average primary school, with 100 pupils on roll, maintained by the Cumbria LEA. It is situated on the Thornhill Estate, near Egremont, and serves its immediate community. Many children struggle with the challenges of growing up in an area of substantial material hardship. Children are admitted to the Reception Year at the start of the school year in which they are five. Many benefit from good quality Pre-School education which is available within the school premises. On entry, most children have below average skills for their age. Almost one quarter of the pupils are eligible for meals without charge. This is above the national average. Over thirty per cent of the pupils are on the register of special educational needs. This is above the national average. Three per cent of the pupils have statements of special educational need. This is above the national average. There is a small percentage (2%) of pupils who have English as an additional language.

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

This is an improving school with many strengths which outweigh its weaknesses. From a below average starting point, many pupils achieve well with many attaining the expected standards in English, mathematics and science by the age of eleven. Pupils enjoy coming to school and behave well. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, with many good features and the curriculum is broad, balanced and appropriately planned to meet the learning needs of the pupils. Teachers are assisted by good quality support staff, and the pupils are well known and their needs are met appropriately. The school is well led and managed and it provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Very detailed records are kept of pupils' individual progress, which is tracked very well. The records show that pupils' standards are broadly in line with those expected for their age by the time they are eleven
- The headteacher and governing body provide good leadership for the school.
- The school provides a good standard of care for its pupils and their personal development. They demonstrate good attitudes to their work, and behave well.
- The school has good links with parents and its community.
- There is good provision for information and communication technology and for pupils with special educational needs.

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

- Standards in pupils' writing.
- The consistency of teachers' marking, to show children what they need to do to improve the quality of the work.
- The quality of the presentation of pupils' work.
- Making better use of information gained from assessments to take the children's learning forward.

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

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

The school has made satisfactory improvement since it was last inspected in November 1996. Curriculum planning is now of better quality, and policies for each subject are now fully in place. A very detailed risk assessment has been undertaken and now fully conforms to the statutory requirements. The school development plan is now a useful tool

for school improvement and contains appropriately costed priorities. The pupils' standards of attainment are rising. Curriculum coordinators have detailed files containing good information to enable them to lead their subject areas appropriately. At present the monitoring and evaluation carried out by curriculum coordinators is still under developed.

### STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	E	E	E	D
mathematics	E	B	D	B
science	E	C	E	D

**Key**

well above average    A  
 above average        B  
 average                C  
 below average        D  
 well below average    E

This is a small school with very low numbers of pupils in each year group. Care must be taken in the interpretation of the statistical evidence relating to standards. Whilst the percentage of pupils gaining the expected levels of attainment by the age of eleven is well below the national average in English and Science and below the national average in mathematics, in the Year 2000 tests, the pupils generally achieve well. The very detailed statistical evidence of average scores gained by Year 6 pupils in each year since 1995 shows a continuing trend of improvement. This information is used well to identify the school's performance targets for future years. Improvement in mathematics has been consistent throughout that time. Improvement in English and in science has been more moderate and not so consistent. The percentages recorded in comparison with similar schools, of above average attainment in mathematics and below average attainment in English and science, whilst rather better than the national comparisons, must also be interpreted with care. Inspection evidence of pupils' current work in Year 6 indicates levels of attainment which are generally in line with those expected for the pupils' age in all three subjects. Pupils' reading skills are more advanced than their writing skills, which are below average throughout the school. This has a negative effect on their work in other subjects. There is a weakness in the quality of pupils' presentation of written work. The inconsistency of teachers' marking does not always encourage pupils to take sufficient pride in what they write, neither does it consistently inform pupils of what they must do in order to improve the quality and standard of their work. Pupils achieve well, however, particularly in Years 5 and 6.

Pupils enter the school in the September of the school year in which they are five years of age and many display below average skills. By the end of the Foundation Stage, whilst making good progress and achieving well, many children are still working towards the early learning goals. Standards of attainment for pupils aged up to seven years are broadly in line with those expected for their age. The school has recognised the below average standards in writing, and has been involved with a writing project with its local education authority. This has had a positive effect on the provision the school makes to improve pupils' writing, but it has been undertaken since the publication of the last results.

Pupils' standards of attainment in information and communication technology and in the foundation subjects observed during the inspection are all in line with those expected for the pupils' age.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most pupils clearly enjoy coming to school. They concentrate well in lessons and are readily able to work in pairs and in small groups when asked to do so.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is good in the classrooms and around the school. They show some exuberance when at play in the playground.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Most have a clear understanding of how their actions affect others. They are able to take responsibility and work independently when offered the opportunity to do so.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The school has no unauthorised absence and clear explanations for the authorised absence that occurs. Most pupils are punctual and lessons begin on time.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but with good features, particularly in the teaching of the older pupils. Teaching is satisfactory or better in 92 per cent of the lessons seen. It is good in 47 per cent, satisfactory in 45 per cent, and unsatisfactory in 8 per cent. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of most of the subjects they are teaching, know the children well and help them to concentrate well in their lessons.

Where teaching is good, notably in Class 4 and frequently in Class 1, pupils are managed well and resources are used effectively. Amongst the older pupils, computer work is integrated particularly well in a wide range of subjects, and teaching is effectively linked to real situations which the pupils know, understand and respond to well. This has a consistently positive impact on their learning. Clear, measured and systematic teaching of the youngest pupils is a regular feature in Class 1, and promotes secure learning for these children. In the small percentage of lessons where teaching was unsatisfactory, the attention of some pupils was not thoroughly engaged in long lessons in which some pupils were unable to sustain their interest, or what pupils were expected to learn was not sharply focused. Good assessment provision is not always used as effectively as it might be to highlight what pupils need to learn next. There is a greater weakness in the quality of pupils' presentation of work, particularly in writing. The inconsistency of some teachers' marking does not always pick up this weakness, nor take pupils' learning forward effectively.

The teaching of literacy and numeracy is effective and is having a positive impact on the pupils' learning. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, are included well in lessons. They are enabled to work regularly alongside their peers and make progress in relation to their prior learning and understanding.

In all classes, pupils show a positive interest in their work. They listen well, show good levels of concentration and a willingness to work hard.

#### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum is appropriately planned to meet the learning needs of the pupils and all statutory requirements are met.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are supported well and this enable those with special educational needs to make good gains in their learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The small number of children with English as an additional language are provided for appropriately and included effectively in the daily routines of the school and in lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. The school makes good provision for the social and moral development of the pupils. It makes good provision to promote an understanding of other cultures, but could provide more opportunities for pupils to develop a deeper understanding of their own culture. Spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school provides effective personal support for the pupils. There are very effective procedures to track the academic progress of individual pupils.

The school has a good relationship with its parents and its local community. Parents are kept well informed about the academic progress their children make and there are newsletters informing parents of school events.

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

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is well led by an experienced headteacher. He is well supported by a governing body which is active and keen to promote the school's improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They support the head and staff well in providing a clear educational direction for the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. There is a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and very detailed records kept of pupils' individual performance. The school still has further work to do to enable subject coordinators to monitor the delivery of their subjects effectively.
The strategic use of resources	The school carefully allocates its finances to the priorities it has identified. Governors are keen to get the best value they can

resources	from the finance available to them.
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Staffing is adequate and generally well deployed. Support staff are well informed and offer good support to class teachers. There is limited classroom support for the largest class in the school. Resources are good in almost all subjects, and very good provision is made for ICT. Resources are of good quality and are well used. The accommodation is spacious, kept to a high order of cleanliness and is the subject of good quality improvements, many of which are undertaken voluntarily.

**PARENTS’ AND CARERS’ VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most children like school and are expected to work hard</li> <li>• Many parents express confidence in the teaching and the management of the school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some parents would like more information about the progress their children make.</li> <li>• Some parents are unhappy about the amount of work pupils are expected to do at home.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agree that most children do appear to like school and many were seen to work hard in lessons. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with evidence of good teaching, particularly for the youngest and oldest pupils in school. The school is well led and managed. The inspection team feel that parents receive good quality information in school reports and newsletters. Overall, the team believe that the homework arrangements are generally satisfactory.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

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

1. This is a small school which frequently has very low numbers of pupils in each year group, sometimes as low as eleven. Consequently each individual pupil represents a higher proportion of the school's overall percentage test scores in national tests than in most schools. Care must be taken therefore in the interpretation of national statistics.
2. In the National Curriculum tests, in the year 2000, the performance of pupils aged eleven was below the national average in mathematics and well below the national average in English and science. However, when compared to schools with similar numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals, it was above average in mathematics and below average in English and science. Recognising the difficulties over the interpretation of these percentages, the school keeps detailed records of the pupils' individual performance in the national tests and collects average scores over time. These details show that that the pupils' overall performance in the tests in English, mathematics and science has shown significant improvement over the period between 1995 and 2000. In mathematics, the improvement has been continuous year on year. In English, the pupils' standards in reading are generally better than the pupils' standards of attainment in writing, and this has a negative effect on their work in other subjects. The school's targets for improvement in English were matched in 2000 and exceeded in mathematics. There is no significant variation in the overall performance of boys and girls. **The standards of work seen of pupils currently in Year 6 are generally in line with those expected for their age in all three subjects. Pupils achieve well, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Overall, the pupils' standards in writing are below average as pupils pass through the school.**
3. In the National Curriculum tests for pupils aged seven in 2000, the pupils' performance in reading was below the national average, and well below the national average in writing and in mathematics. When compared to similar schools, the test results are above average in reading, below average in writing and well below average in mathematics, although, as with the test results for eleven-year-olds, the number of pupils in the year group is again small. Teacher assessments of the pupils' performance in science show levels of attainment which are well below the national average and below the average for similar schools. Over time, the detailed records of the progress of individual pupils, kept by the school, shows continued improvement in most areas. Overall, the pupils' attainment in reading is better than their attainment in writing. The school recognises this and has been taking part in a writing project supported by its local education authority. This input has been undertaken since the production of the last published tests results. The pupils' attainment in mathematics is rather better than that suggested by the test results, although in both mathematics and writing no pupil attains the higher level in the tests. Similarly no pupils were assessed as attaining the higher level in science. **The standards of work seen from pupils currently in Year 2 are generally in line with those expected for their age in reading, mathematics and science, but below average in writing. The pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory.**

4. Children enter the reception class in the September of the year in which they are five. Most have had the benefit of good quality pre-school education, which is available in the school, but not part of the local educational authority provision. Baseline assessment, undertaken shortly after the children start school shows that their overall levels of attainment are below those expected for pupils of their age in all the areas of learning. For most pupils, their communication, language and literacy skills are below average. **At the end of the Reception year, despite teaching which is frequently good, alongside pupils aged six, and the fact that most pupils achieve well, by the end of the Foundation Stage of learning, most pupils have not yet fully attained the early learning goals expected for children of this age.**
5. The school keeps very detailed records of the individual performance of each individual pupil, makes and meets realistic targets for improvement in all aspects of English, in mathematics and in science, by the ages of seven and eleven. This statistical evidence, based on the average scores attained in each test or assessment shows that satisfactory progress is made over time.
6. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in aspects of English, but progress with writing is unsatisfactory. Pupils listen well in lessons and to each other, although their speaking skills are below average. Most communicate appropriately with each other and with adults but are not fluent speakers or eloquent in their use of wide vocabulary. This means that they rarely explore the richness of the language. Consequently much of their writing is often brief and to the point and not as advanced as their reading skills, which are often good. Many older pupils use their reading skills well when searching out information in a variety of subjects. They are skilful in their use of Information and communication technology in using the internet to find information. It is the pupils' writing skills which require the most improvement. Often work is presented badly and is untidy. It is not consistently marked and checked for errors, and in some years left unmarked for long periods of time. This does not enable pupils to take sufficient pride in their work or encourage them to improve.
7. Most pupils generally make satisfactory progress with mathematics. By the age of seven many have developed good mental agility and can cope with large number combinations and processes. They are given time to undertake mental calculations and this enables them to explain what they have done with some confidence. This good level of mental agility is not always put to sufficient use in the pupils' written calculations, which do not always provide the same level of challenge. As the pupils progress through the school they make appropriate progress and during the time they are in Class 4 they are consistently challenged and achieve well.
8. Most pupils make satisfactory progress with work in science. Pupils aged seven undertake work on animals, in which they show great interest. They follow this up well with visits, for example to Yottenfews Nature Area, where they can recognise and name a good variety of creatures from tracks left in the sand. By the age of eleven, pupils are well challenged by good investigative science, which they research well and record accurately.
9. Pupils standards in literacy and numeracy are broadly in line with those expected for their age through the school and frequent use is made of information and communication technology. For example, numeracy is well used in map work by pupils in Years 5 and 6 as they consider the position of the by-pass and its effect on

the environment. Good literacy skills are seen as pupils consider the effect of the Foot and Mouth outbreak where pupils explore the viewpoints of differing individuals in the community. Younger pupils show satisfactory spatial awareness in their art work.

10. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for. They are regularly assisted by good quality classroom assistants, who are generally well briefed and who support the pupils effectively in their lessons. Individual education plans contain appropriate targets for improvement and pupils are able to achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Support is sometime undertaken in small groups, where pupils with special educational needs work alongside a small group of their peers, at a task which is related to the work being undertaken in their classroom. The overall provision is good, and the pupils concerned make good progress with their learning.
11. The small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language are also accommodated appropriately. They are included in all lessons, work alongside their peers well, and in Class 3 can be seen initiating conversations in group work. They make satisfactory gains in their learning.
12. By the age of eleven, pupils reach standards of attainment in information and communications technology which are broadly in line with those expected for their age. The school makes good provision for ICT and the subject is integrated well into the delivery of a wide range of subjects. This is particularly so for older pupils where the teacher has good levels of expertise, confidence and interest in the subject and enables pupils to work with confidence. Here the pupils' attainment is consistently good. The whole of the ICT curriculum is fully covered and this is an improvement on the position reported when the school was last inspected.
13. In all the foundation subjects inspected the pupils' standards of attainment were broadly in line with those expected for their age throughout the school, although the pupils below average skills in writing has a negative effect on the work produced in a wide range of subjects.

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

14. The pupil's attitudes, values and personal development are good. Children of all ages listen well in lessons and respond enthusiastically. Their behaviour is good when they arrive at school in the morning, at playtimes and at lunchtimes where play shows elements of exuberance. In lessons children answer questions with enthusiasm, work quietly on independent tasks and cooperate well when the tasks demand it.
15. Behaviour around the school is good. There are no recent exclusions. Teachers know the pupils very well and this gives the children confidence to approach teachers for help when it is necessary. There are very few incidences of bullying. Good provision is made at break times when older and younger children play happily together. A quiet courtyard is provided for pupils who wish to enjoy a less active break time. Good behaviour was seen when children had to stay in at wet playtimes during inspection week. The pupils respond well by using computers, listening to stories and watching videos. There is a real sense that children are trusted and as a result children treat each other with due respect and courtesy.

16. The registration period in the morning is a positive calming experience with registers marked quickly and accurately. Most pupils arrive on time and enjoy the short period of time before the register is called. This good school organisation allows teachers and pupils to start the day positively. Attendance is satisfactory. Recent figures show attendance to be well below the national average however this is in contrast to the two previous years when attendance rates have been well above the national average. Unauthorised absence is well below the national average. The school has effective procedures to monitor attendance.
17. Older pupils are given responsibility around the classroom. They are involved with annual visits to either York or Ennerdale. These visits allow children to grow personally by meeting other children, linking with pen friends and experiencing a wide range of outdoor activities. Pupils have a very positive experience of school visits and recount with enthusiasm trips from throughout their school life.

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

18. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. It is good in 47 per cent of lessons; satisfactory in 45 per cent and unsatisfactory in 8 per cent. This represents an improvement on the position recorded when the school was last inspected, particularly in the smaller percentage of unsatisfactory teaching. As was the case in the last inspection, almost half the teaching is good, and this is notably to be seen in the class containing the older pupils, where teaching is consistently good. It is also often good in Class 1. The good teaching has a significant impact on the pupils learning and achievement in a wide range of subject, particularly in the manner in which information and communication technology is used in Class 4.
19. The teaching of children under five, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory overall, but often good. Pupils are managed well and resources are used well. The teacher has a good knowledge and understanding of the learning needs of young children. Clear, measured and systematic teaching is a feature of many lessons in Class 1 and this helps significantly in the promotion of secure learning by these children. Many enter the school with below average skills in most of the areas of learning, but particularly in the area of communication, language and literacy, and personal, social and emotional development. They are provided with a secure foundation to their learning, although the school lacks the facility for these pupils to engage in regular outdoor play.
20. Class 1 also contains the pupils aged six and they benefit equally well from the carefully structured lessons which are well planned and effectively delivered. In many of these lessons pupils are managed well and resources are effectively used. A glove puppet is used to hold the pupils attention effectively during literacy lessons and the pupils respond well to the activities planned. The pupils in Year 2 are taught as a discreet class group. The teaching is satisfactory and the pupils are frequently well supported – as is also the case in Class 1 – by good quality classroom assistants who ask challenging questions which have a positive impact on the pupils' learning. In Class 2, the pupils show high levels of mental agility in numeracy work, and the teacher – who has a good relationship with the pupils – skilfully gives them ample time to order their thoughts to enable them to answer questions with confidence and give good explanations of how they arrive at their answers. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are included well in lessons. They are taught well and make good gains in their learning.

21. The quality of teaching of pupils between the ages of seven to eleven, whilst satisfactory overall, is consistently good for the older pupils in Class 4. Here lessons are well prepared and effectively delivered. They are frequently related to the pupils own experience, for example, in literacy, where different letters are considered in detail about differing reactions of people to the current 'Foot and Mouth Disease' outbreak, which has had a devastating effect on much of the immediate area. The views of a farmer, a hotel keeper and a shop-keeper are all considered and treated very thoughtfully by the pupils. Computer work is also integrated very effectively into a wide range of lessons and pupils are confident in its use. Again pupils with special educational needs are taught well and make good progress. The small number of pupils who have English as an additional language are included in all lessons.
22. In the small number of lessons where teaching has unsatisfactory features, these are related to long lessons, where pupils concentration is hard to sustain effectively, and in a small number of lessons where pupils' attention was not sharply focussed on what they were expected to learn. In the vast majority of lessons learning objectives were clearly stated. The school collects and maintains very detailed records of the progress of individual pupils. Throughout the school these are not used as effectively as they might be in teachers' day-to-day planning to inform what pupils should learn next, particularly for pupils beyond the Foundation Stage of learning. There is also a weakness in the presentation of pupils written work which is often unsatisfactory. This is also adversely affected by the inconsistency of teachers' marking, which does not encourage pupils to take pride in their work, neither does it help them to take their learning forward effectively.
23. The quality of pupils' learning is satisfactory overall, but with some notably good features. The overall quality of teaching has improved substantially since the school was last inspected and this is having a positive impact on the pupils learning. The school itself feels that the introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies have had a beneficial effect. Teaching of literacy and numeracy is often good. Pupils show good levels of interest in their lessons and they concentrate well on the work they are asked to do. The clear structures available in the lessons for the younger children, the good relationships promoting confidence amongst the seven-year-olds and the consistent level of good teaching motivating the older pupils ensures that they learn well in many lessons across a wide range of the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning and make good gains in relation to their prior learning. Pupils with English as an additional language are catered for satisfactorily and make appropriate gains in their learning.

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

24. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for its pupils. All statutory requirements are now met. This is an improvement from the last inspection when some areas of the National Curriculum were not covered. A combination of school policies and national schemes ensure appropriate coverage for all children. In the foundation stage of learning the teachers and support staff create a secure and effective learning environment with clear, systematic and measured teaching. For pupils aged 5 to 11 the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are being



implemented. This is beginning to have an impact in the classroom leading to steady improvement in standards in English and mathematics. The school has made good progress with provision for ICT, particularly in upper Key Stage 2.

25. The school ensures that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. There is satisfactory provision for the promotion of appropriate personal, social and health education, including sex education and drugs education. There are good systems and procedures in place to support pupils with special educational needs and as a result they make good progress in their learning. The procedures for evaluating the progress made by these pupils towards their learning targets are good. Reviews are thorough with the progress made on individual targets carefully measured. Pupils with statements of special educational need are supported well both by class teachers and support staff who break down the learning into steps appropriate for these pupils. Pupils who have English as an additional language are provided for appropriately and included effectively in the daily routines of the school. Classroom assistants play an important role in supporting pupils and enabling them to have full access to the curriculum. As yet the school makes no specific provision for gifted and talented pupils.
26. The provision for extra curricular activities is satisfactory with pupils having opportunities to take part in after school clubs. They enjoy sports matches against local teams and have the opportunity to take part in a display of country dancing at the local festival. The school also gives pupils opportunity to take part in a wide range of educational visits that enrich the curriculum and provide further significant learning experiences. These visits consist of walks around the village, visits to the local beach and to the Yottenfews centre at Sellafeld. These visits have enabled the pupils to learn about habits for animals and observe animal prints made in the sand. Older pupils have made visits to the Buddhist centre at Eskdalemuir and a Roman Army museum. Residential visits to York and Ennerdale scout centre are also included for pupils in Class 4. These visits have a very positive impact on the pupils' learning as they talk with enthusiasm about their visits describing both personal skills and knowledge they have developed.
27. There are good links with the community that make an effective contribution to the pupils' learning. The school is developing links with the tenants and Residents Association and the local parish council. Extra funds are raised by the "Friends of School" who put on a variety of activities for all ages. Local ministers visit school on a regular basis and at Christmas children present a Nativity Tableau and take part in a Christingle service. A pre-school operates in the school building with many children moving into the school at the appropriate age. An important development has been the building of the library at the front entrance of school. This is a public library but it plays a significant role in developing positive attitudes towards reading. The school continues to make positive links with the local secondary school, through use of the swimming pool, a sports coordinator programme and the development of a project to help pupils with the transition to secondary school.
28. The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.
29. The school provides an appropriate environment for spiritual development. There is satisfactory provision through the curriculum and the daily acts of collective worship. A good atmosphere is regularly created by taped singing as the children enter the hall, and many join in quietly with the song. More opportunities may be taken to

encourage the children to reflect in prayer, and this would add to the spiritual provision in collective worship.

30. The school's provision for moral development is good. Throughout school staff provide very good role models for the children. Children clearly know the difference between right and wrong. Pupils know each other well and show respect for each other when working and playing.
31. The provision for children's social development is good. Many children enter school with poor social skills and the school works hard to improve this aspect so that effective learning can take place. The children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions and to play and work together with respect and tolerance. Children were consistently polite during the inspection week and took pride in explaining activities and displays of their work. A regular feature of many lessons is the opportunity for children to offer ideas, listen to others or have a brief discussion about the lesson. They respond well to this. Children are encouraged to work collaboratively in the classroom on mathematical and linguistic activities. Social development is well supported by group activities in physical education and all aspects of technology. School trips and the opportunity for older pupils to take part in residential visits effectively support their social development.
32. The provision for children's cultural development is satisfactory overall. The school makes good provision to promote an understanding of other cultures, with a wide range of opportunities for understanding created through pen-friend links with other countries, well chosen texts for literacy in Class 3 and a wide range of faiths being considered by pupils in Year 5 and 6. However, the school could provide more opportunities to develop a deeper understanding of children's own culture, for example through more use of poetry, in literacy, and a wider range of creativity in artwork.

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

33. The school provides good care for children. Staff know children well and work together to provide a secure, calm and happy learning environment in which children grow in confidence as they progress through school. Parents express confidence in the good care that is provided. The effective work of the support staff is a significant element in the school's good provision of care.
34. Parents confirm that the school helps their children to settle happily in the reception class. The presence of the playgroup in the school eases the children's transition to the reception class. Lunch-time supervisors provide good care in the playground and the school is considerate of the needs of children who want to talk quietly, allowing them to sit in the pleasant central courtyard. There are good procedures for dealing with playground accidents. In addition to the staff who have full first aid qualifications all staff have undertaken some first aid training. The school has created a cosy sick bay close to the secretary's office where children who feel unwell can lie down while awaiting collection by their parents.
35. The school has effective child protection procedures and all staff are fully aware of child protection issues. The headteacher is the designated person for child protection and he liaises well with local agencies. The school has good procedures for ensuring children's health and safety. Since the last inspection the school has undertaken careful risk assessments of relevant aspects of school life. The

caretaker who is also a school governor has had considerable experience in health and safety matters and keeps exceptionally meticulous records of risk assessments of the premises and equipment. The headteacher has ensured that the school is appropriately involved in British Nuclear Fuel's emergency procedures.

36. The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. There are high expectations of good behaviour and children respond well to teachers' calm and skilful management of behaviour. The generous use of praise and encouragement motivates children to behave well. The school has recently drawn up a home school behaviour policy with the involvement of staff, governors and parents; this includes appropriate sanctions and rewards. However, the emphasis given in the policy to acceptable reprimands does not accurately reflect the far more positive and constructive ethos which underlies the children's good behaviour. There are good procedures for dealing with any oppressive behaviour. Staff regularly reinforce the importance of care and consideration for others and children are aware that bullying is not acceptable.
37. There are good procedures for monitoring attendance and for following up any unexplained absence. The education welfare officer provides appropriate help if needed. Registration is done efficiently and the registration period provides a calm start to the school day. The school's good links with parents enable it to work effectively to improve the punctuality of a few families who sometimes bring their children to school late.
38. Procedures for assessing children's attainment and progress are very good. Progress of individual children is carefully tracked, beginning in the Reception and Year 1 class where good ongoing records of progress are kept. The headteacher tracks children by making predictions based on their baseline assessments and then following these up by careful and thorough analysis of statutory and non-statutory test results. A writing project organised by the local education authority has provided the school with a useful collection of samples of children's work matched to National Curriculum attainment levels; this provides teachers with a useful framework for the assessment of children's writing in Key Stage 1.
39. Although monitoring of children's progress over time is very good, day to day assessment and the use of it to inform planning is unsatisfactory. Teachers do not keep records of strengths and weaknesses of children's learning in individual lessons which would enable them to adapt their curricular planning accordingly. Some targets are set but these are not always precise and are not consistently followed up. With a few exceptions marking is unsatisfactory and is not linked effectively to children's targets.
40. Good support and guidance help to promote the children's personal and academic development and this is having a positive impact on their achievement. The school works effectively to motivate children through regular praise, good work assemblies and special awards. Teachers use opportunities in assemblies and lessons to provide children with appropriate guidance and good use is made of visitors from the community such as the police, the health visitor and the chairman of the residents association to talk to children about matters such as personal safety and hygiene and problems of vandalism and litter. Children with special educational needs are well cared for and their progress is closely monitored so that the work they are given effectively matches their needs. Parents agree that the school prepares children well for their move to secondary school. The school is at present

embarking on a “Bridge Building Project” involving local primary schools and the secondary school. The aim of the project is to help a number of pupils by teaching life skills and coping strategies.

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

41. Parents strongly support the school. The parents’ questionnaire reveals the confidence which parents have in the school’s work. Parents particularly appreciate the ease with which they can approach the school. They agree that their children like school and are expected to work hard and they express confidence in the teaching and in the leadership and management of the school. The inspection team endorses these views. Parents also greatly value the way in which the school supports the community. The newly located County library at the front entrance to the school is very well used both by the community and by children outside school hours. Currently a new stage is being built in the hall which will benefit both children and the community.
42. A significant minority of parents have concerns about homework and also consider that they are not kept sufficiently well informed about their children’s progress. Inspection evidence does not support these concerns. The school has a clear homework policy and appropriate homework is set. Two parents’ evenings are held each year and are well attended. Teachers also readily make themselves available if parents have concerns about their child’s progress. Good annual school reports provide parents with a clear picture of their children’s progress. They include perceptive comments based on teachers’ good knowledge of children and they generally contain useful targets. Reports for the oldest children contain systematic information on attainment, effort and presentation for all subjects and give particularly precise and useful targets for improvement in mathematics and English.
43. The school’s good links with parents help the pupils’ learning. Communication between home and school is good. In addition to the good annual reports the school provides parents with a range of good quality information including an informative prospectus and regular newsletters. Information for parents including a folder containing newsletters is well displayed in the foyer. Parents are invited to meetings about the numeracy and literacy strategies and also to meetings to explain changes in class organisation. The school consults parents over matters which are of mutual concern. For example, the school invited parents and governors to help draw up the new home school behaviour policy.
44. The large majority of parents support their children’s work at home, for example by listening to them read or by helping with homework such as spellings and tables. However a minority of parents are unsupportive. The school encourages parent involvement through the provision of reading logs and by suggesting ways they can support their children’s work at a meeting held before children join the school. After the baseline assessment the reception teacher meets parents to explain its findings and to suggest ways they can help their children such as by playing simple games with them. Parents provide the school with valuable help in a number of ways. A small number of parent helpers provide useful and regular help in Key Stage 1 classes. Parents and other volunteers also help the school by undertaking small projects such as decorating jobs. The school greatly values the work of the Friends of the School who hold social events for the community and raise useful funds which enable the school to buy extra resources.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. The leadership and management of the school are good and improved from when the school had its last inspection. The headteacher provides clear direction for the school and he is well supported by the governors and school staff. Significant improvement can be seen in the curriculum, where policies are now in place for all subjects. This was a development issue from the last inspection. Aspects of the school's monitoring have also improved. Very detailed records of the pupils' individual progress over time have been compiled and are carefully maintained. They provide very useful information in assisting the school to measure its overall progress accurately as well as developing individual profiles for the pupils. This detailed information is not always used as effectively as it might be in the day-to-day assessment of the pupils' progress in lessons, where it does not accurately inform teachers of what pupils need to do next to take their learning forward.
46. The school has a relatively small number of teachers, some of whom carry the coordinating responsibility for many subjects; for example one member of the teaching staff is responsible for coordinating mathematics, science, information and communications technology together with some foundation subjects. This is a heavy responsibility, which is managed effectively, but with some weakness in aspects of monitoring and evaluating the delivery of teaching and learning in these subjects throughout the school. However, there is evidence of improvement on the position reported when the school was last inspected as subject coordinators now have a clearer perception of their roles.
47. The governors have a clear understanding of their role in shaping the direction of the school. They have confidence in the headteacher and are keen to promote the school as an important focal point of the community it serves. They are successful in this and have made a number of impressive decisions to promote this aspect of their work. Effective strategic planning has enabled new public library provision to have been established in the school, as result of a joint financial venture with the local education authority. The school and the community now have increased use of this facility, from which the school derives a rental income. At the time of the inspection a new stage was in process of completion, which will ultimately also provide a good facility for school and community use. School development planning has also improved significantly. The development plan is now clearly costed and provides a good working document for school improvement. The governors have a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and although there is still room for improvement in aspects of monitoring, there is a clear perception that the school is improving. The governors have a detailed knowledge of the pupils' performance over time and are aware that standards are rising.
48. The school is supported by a dedicated staff, many of whom have a long association with the school and its immediate community. The teachers are well supported by good quality classroom assistants who question pupils perceptively and support the pupils well – especially those on the special educational needs register and the small number of pupils who have English as an additional language. The school is maintained to a high order of cleanliness by the cleaning staff and has been the subject much improvement by willing volunteers. Examples of this include the provision of good quality lockers for pupils to house their belongings – and which have been the subject of some design work by the pupils

themselves – and in the up-grading of the school quadrangle, which is now used to provide a quiet area for pupils who wish to enjoy a less energetic breaktime than some of their peers, and for outside lunch provision, when the weather allows.

49. The administrative staff are effective. Financial planning is good and the governors are keen to ensure that they obtain the best value for the decisions they make. The day to day financial arrangements are secure and are monitored effectively by the school administrator, who is also a member of the governing body.
50. The management and administration of special educational needs are good. Effective records are kept and the needs of the pupils involved are well known. This good provision enables the pupils to make good gains in their learning.
51. Staffing levels are satisfactory for a school of this size. The deployment of staff is also satisfactory, although the largest class group – in Year 3 – is accommodated in a relatively small room for the numbers of pupils involved and receives a smaller percentage of classroom support than either class containing smaller numbers of younger pupils. This has a negative effect on aspects of the pupils' learning. The overall accommodation is spacious and used well. Much time and thought has been given to adaptations of the original buildings over time. The school is well resourced, particularly in its provision of computers and musical instruments. In general the quality of the resources purchased for the school is good.

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

52. In order to continue to develop this improving school, the Headteacher, governors and staff should:-
  - (1) Raise standards in pupils' writing.  
[Ref: para 2, 3, 6, 13, 62, 63, 66]
  - (2) Improve the consistency of teachers' marking, to show children what they need to do to improve the quality of the work.  
[Ref: para 6, 22, 39, 66, 67, 77]
  - (3) Improve the quality of the presentation of pupils' work.  
[Ref: para 6, 22, 66, 67]
  - (4) Make better use of information gained from assessments to take the children's learning forward.  
[Ref: para 22, 39, 67, 77, 83]

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	40
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	17

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0%	0%	47%	45%	8%	0%	0%

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	100
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A	17

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	31

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	93.4%
National comparative data	94.4%

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0%
National comparative data	0.5%

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	10	10	20

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	7	9
	Girls	7	6	7
	Total	16	13	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (77)	65 (54)	80 (62)
	National	83(82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	6	9
	Girls	6	3	6
	Total	14	9	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70 (46)	45 (77)	75 (77)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	7	7	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	3	5	5
	Girls	5	6	6
	Total	8	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	57 (55)	79 (64)	79 (82)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	2	5	5
	Girls	5	6	6
	Total	7	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	50 (73)	79 (64)	79 (82)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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



### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	0
White	86
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

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

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	25

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

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	73

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/A
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A

Total number of education support staff	N/A
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/A

Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/A
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	257 392
Total expenditure	252 014
Expenditure per pupil	2 496
Balance brought forward from previous year	16 481
Balance carried forward to next year	21 859

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

30%

Number of questionnaires sent out	100
Number of questionnaires returned	30

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	73	20	3	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	60	30	7	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	50	7	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	47	13	7	0
The teaching is good.	67	30	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	67	27	10	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	17	3	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	27	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	70	23	3	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	73	23	0	3	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	23	3	7	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	63	17	7	0	10

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

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

53. Children enter the school in the September of the school year in which they are five years of age. Many have attended the good pre-school facility which operates within the school building, but which is not a provision maintained by the Local Education Authority. Children in the Foundation Stage of learning are currently accommodated in the same class as pupils in Year 1. At the time of the inspection only one child was below five years of age. When they start school, many of the children have levels of attainment which are below average and particularly in aspects of personal, social and emotional development and in aspects of communication, language and literacy. By the end of the Reception Year many of the children have made considerable progress, but their attainment is still below that expected for their age and many have not yet reached all the Early Learning Goals expected by the start of Year 1.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development:**

54. When they start school, below average personal and social skills inhibit the progress of many children in all areas of learning. While many have had the opportunity of pre-school learning experiences, many still experience difficulty in sharing and taking turns. The staff work hard to provide a caring and interesting environment for the children. The teacher provides carefully structured experiences which systematically take the children's learning forward. Children like to join in and show increasing enthusiasm for their learning and a developing awareness of the needs of each other. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but often good. Classroom assistants offer sensitive and good quality support and the children grow in confidence. Although the children achieve well, many have not yet fully attained the goals expected for them in this area of learning by the time they start Year 1.

#### **Communication, Language and Literacy:**

55. A good emphasis is placed on developing the children's skills in language and communication in the Reception Year. Many children are able to listen for increasingly long periods of time, although some still find this difficult. Many can recognise most vowel sounds. Some show increasing confidence in distinguishing initial phonic sounds, and the teacher uses a glove puppet well to hold the pupils attention and help them practice the sounds, such as the long 'o' sound in words like 'boat' and 'coat'. One child is pleased to recognise the letters and the sound and to share with the group his knowledge of 'moat' as being part of a castle! A good number show increasing confidence in speaking audibly to the class or in a group, but some children still find this difficult. Some are confident to speak with visitors and try hard to explain what they are doing, but, through limited vocabulary or shyness they are not in the majority. Most children gain an increasing understanding that words carry meaning and that reading is undertaken from left to right. They enjoy stories and many can recall the events of a story in the correct sequence. In general, the children's reading skills are better than their writing skills. Most children hold pencils correctly and can write their names and write or copy simple sentences. The teaching is thoughtful and systematic. It is frequently good and it helps most children to achieve well. Classroom support assistance is good, and children are well supported in group and individual activities. Whilst good

overall progress is made, not all the children confidently achieve the expected goals by the time they begin Year 1.

### **Mathematical Development:**

56. Baseline assessment information indicates that most children's overall mathematical skills are below average when they enter the Reception Year. Boys show better levels of mathematical skills than girls in this particular year group – although the number of boys far exceeds the number of girls. As with literacy lessons, numeracy lessons are skilfully and systematically delivered at a pace which helps to clarify the children's understanding. Numbers are well displayed around the room and there are good opportunities for counting, sorting, matching, adding and subtracting. Counting aloud and songs with numbers – 5 Little Ducks and 10 Sizzly Sausages - show that most children can count reliably to ten and some can go beyond. Many children can recognise and name the shape of the numbers and are able to count on one and use the phrases such as 'more than' or 'less than' with an increasing degree of accuracy. There is an understanding that objects can be lighter or heavier. Again most children show good progress in their learning, but some find greater difficulty in applying their increasing understanding to practical problems. However, more children are nearer to achieving the goals expected for them by the time they begin Year 1.

### **Knowledge and Understanding of the World:**

57. Children experience a wide range of activities to stimulate their interest in the world around them. They have regular access to computers with suitable programmes and are able to use the mouse and position the arrow with a good degree of accuracy. All the children were involved in some close observation of mini-beasts which had been collected from the school grounds. The remains of a dead fly were also closely observed. A child initiated a discussion about eyes, which was followed up skilfully by the teacher, introducing the concept of 'compound eyes' on the fly, and a comparison with the use of a snail's 'feelers', whose constant movement held the children's attention well. Why does the snail have a shell? Why is it shaped like a spiral? These questions stimulated the children well and encouraged them to think. Good links were made with other areas of learning, for example, in the link with shape and space in mathematical development. Children used a good selection of books well to find pictures of the creatures they were observing. Effective teaching and good classroom support is again a strong feature, taking children's learning forward well. The children achieve well, have an increasingly good knowledge of the natural world and are clearly meeting the Early Learning Goals.

### **Physical Development:**

58. When children enter the Reception Year, most do have appropriate physical skills. They can run and skip around and between objects and are able to catch a large ball with a reasonable degree of success. There are ample opportunities for them to use pencils, scissors and brushes to increase their manipulative skills. They can thread beads in a regular pattern using colours and many can complete jigsaw puzzles effectively. The children have access to physical education lessons in the school hall and are able to develop an awareness of space and balance. There is however, no outdoor play facility where children can use large equipment to develop their gross motor skills. Equally, classroom space is rather limited for the use of

large construction equipment, although the children do have access to this, and the opportunity to use it in a near-by resource area. Despite some limitations in the accommodation children again make good progress in this area of learning, generally achieve well and most reach the Early Learning Goals by the start of Year 1.

### **Creative Development:**

59. The children work well with a wide variety of creative media and materials. Painting with bright, bold colours, and a collage display of shells and pebbles following a visit to the seaside at St Bees are examples of work currently on display. Children can recognise repeated patterns, as in the different colours used in the quilted pattern displayed in the classroom. Whilst space is limited in the classroom there is an appropriate art corner where children can paint freely. There is a music table where children can recognise a moderate range of tuned and untuned instruments. Singing is used regularly, in a wide range of lessons, to assist children recognise recurring patterns of shape and sound. There is a role play area and a Class 1 Food Shop for imaginative play and links to mathematical, linguistic and social development. The children have a wide range of opportunities to exercise their creative development and many achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning by the time they move into Year 1.

### **Teaching:**

60. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but often good. The teacher has a good knowledge of the needs of young children. She provides them with clearly structured activities which are systematically delivered, at a pace which is good for the children. All activities are based effectively and appropriately on the early learning goals, using the stepping stones as a framework for good planning. This is clearly an improvement on the position reported when the school was last inspected and planning was considered to have short-comings. Children are managed well and support staff are used well to support the children in the learning. Children with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress in their learning. There are no children for whom English is an additional language in this class. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen in this class during the inspection.
61. As a result of this consistent teaching, which is frequently good, the children make satisfactory gains in their learning. Many show good levels of concentration and a great interest in their work. They respond well to the puppet in literacy lessons and observe the mini-beasts with real enthusiasm. In all the areas of learning the children achieve well and make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals.

### **ENGLISH**

62. The performance of the pupils aged 11 in the English National Curriculum tests in 2000 was well below that of all schools and below that of schools with a similar percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals. The percentage of pupils gaining the higher levels in the tests was also well below the national average but broadly in line with the average for similar schools. There were, however, only a small number of pupils in the year group and this creates an inaccurate statistical picture of the pupils' overall levels of attainment since each individual pupil carries a high percentage of the overall results. The school achieved its target for pupils

gaining the expected level in English in the 2000 tests. The school maintains detailed records of the performance of individual pupils over time. These show a substantial improvement in the pupils' average total scores between 1995 and 2000. With the exception of 1996, when a greater level of improvement was seen, falling back a little in 1997, there has been almost continual improvement. **Pupils currently aged 11 show standards of attainment in English which are broadly in line with those expected for their age.** This represents a similar position to that reported when the school was last inspected. Between the ages of 7 to 11 years the pupils' standards of reading are higher than their standards of attainment in writing, although pupils in Class 4, aged between 10 and 11 years make particularly good progress in their work in English.

63. In the National Curriculum tests in 2000 for pupils aged 7, the school's performance in reading was below the national average, and the performance in writing was well below the national average. When compared to schools with similar percentages of pupils entitled to free school meals, standards in reading were above average, but below average in writing. The percentage of pupils gaining the higher levels was below the national average in reading, and well below the national average in writing. No pupils gained the higher level in writing. Again, the small number of pupils in the year group has a similar effect on the statistical evidence as for the older pupils. **Inspection evidence indicates that pupils currently aged 7 are attaining standards in English which are broadly in line with those expected for their age.** Early indications show that predicted test scores for 2001 are likely to show improvement on the 2000 results. As with the older pupils, standards of attainment in reading are better than standards in writing, where few pupils appear to demonstrate higher levels of writing skill.
64. When the pupils enter Year 1, many have standards of attainment which are below those expected for their age. Most children achieve well in the Reception Year and work alongside pupils in Year 1. They benefit from the continuity of this provision and the class teacher knows their individual needs well. They are used to the class routines and are confident with the adults who are supporting their learning. They listen carefully to their teacher and other adults. As they progress through the key stage most pupils develop greater confidence in expressing their own views and they learn to respond appropriately to others. The class teacher in Year 2 offers good opportunities for pupils to develop the confidence to take time to think and to express themselves carefully. The pupils listening skills are developed effectively as they move through the school. Well chosen literacy texts in Class 3 hold the pupils attention and the pupils show an ability to ask appropriate questions about the life-style of Mexican Indians. The teacher selects good quality vocabulary, for example 'huddled' for 'sitting' and she adds interest to the sentences by including descriptive phrases such as, 'trying to find some shade'. Pupils respond well, concentrating effectively and contributing to the discussion. In Class 4, older pupils are consistently offered discussion topics which are of current interest to them. A discussion of the different points of view individuals who are affected in different ways by the current Foot and Mouth outbreak stimulates the pupils well are they respond effectively. They show a willingness to be actively involved and many demonstrate a mature attitude in their spoken responses.
65. Pupils generally achieve well in reading. The structure of the National Literacy strategy is having a positive impact on the development of the pupils' reading. Younger pupils gain confidence from reading together and they begin to develop a degree of expression as they read. The teacher helps them gain confidence in the

phonic elements of words and the pupils are also able to distinguish vowel sounds well, for example, the differing long sounds in the words 'tea' and 'tie'. As pupils progress to Year 2 they develop a fluency in their reading. Good emphasis is placed upon predicting skills and identifying patterns in spellings and rhyming words. Reading is regularly undertaken with adults, and many parents feel that most pupils make appropriate progress with their reading. Throughout Key Stage 2, the pupils read a wider variety of texts and use books well for gathering information. Throughout the school, but particularly amongst the older pupils, information and communications technology is integrated very well in many aspects of work in English. In Classes 3 and 4, pupils regularly use the internet to gather information and older pupils use this very effectively to word process and handle data and information in a wide variety of forms. All these activities promote the pupils' reading skills well and the standards of attainment are clearly in line with those expected for their age. The community library has recently been remodelled and is now housed close to the entrance of the school. Pupils have access to this facility and have a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts available for their use. This is a relatively new feature and one of increasing usefulness to the school in promoting good attitudes to reading.

66. The pupils' writing skills are not so advanced as their reading skills, and standards are below those expected for the age of the pupils. The school collects very good statistical evidence of the performance of individual pupils over time, and this has highlighted the weakness in writing. Over the last year the school has been involved in a project to promote improved writing skills for pupils aged 6 and 7, and this is thought to have had a beneficial effect, although it is, at present, too early to see significant improvement from the work. By the age of 7, pupils are showing a growing competence in writing sentences with capital letters and full stops. As pupils progress through Key Stage 2, they have the opportunity to write for an increasingly wide variety of purposes and audiences, and computer work again figures prominently in their writing development. Pupils in Class 4 receive a good boost with their written work as they are required to write about subjects which stimulate them. They make particularly good progress, but, overall, standards in writing are still too low. The pupils' work is hampered through the school by poor quality presentation, which does not encourage pupils to take sufficient pride in what they write and the quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent which also contributes to the lack of progress.
67. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. It is often good for the youngest pupils, sometimes good for pupils in Class 3 and consistently good for the oldest pupils. No unsatisfactory teaching of English was seen during the inspection. This represents an overall improvement on the position reported when the school was last inspected. The National Literacy Strategy is used effectively and is felt to be having a positive impact on the quality of the pupils' learning. Lessons are planned satisfactorily and pupils are generally well managed well. Resources are used well – particularly computers in Key Stage 2 – and pupils are well supported in their learning by classroom assistants who are well briefed and used effectively. In Year 2, the classroom assistant was frequently seen to be questioning pupils very astutely to elicit thoughtful answers from the pupils and therefore promote effective learning. Support is particularly strong for pupils with special educational needs, who make good progress in their learning. The small number of pupils who have English as an additional language make satisfactory progress in their learning. They are included well in all the activities undertaken in literacy lessons. There are,

however, some unsatisfactory elements to the teaching. The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent and this contributes to some lack of progress. In some areas, notably Class 3, pupils' written work is unmarked over considerable periods of time and this does not encourage the pupils to make efforts to improve, neither does it inform them of what to do next to improve the quality of their writing to enable their standards to rise. In some classes, however, pupils do have specific targets for improvement and in Class 4, pupils work is effectively marked in the lead up to national tests. These are examples of good practice which need to be extended through the school.

68. The subject is led and managed by an experienced teacher and there have been improvements on the position reported when the school was last inspected. There are, however, some weaknesses in leadership and coordination. There is an awareness that pupils' standards in writing are less secure than the rest of the English programme and the school is currently working with the LEA to promote improvement. Careful tracking of the progress of individual pupils throughout their school career is good and gives the school a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses of individual pupils. An appropriate policy supports the National Literacy Strategy in school and the quality of teachers' planning has improved. However, short-term day to day assessments are still unsatisfactory and do not give sufficient information for teachers to sharply focus on what it is that pupils need to learn next. The role of the coordinator, whilst showing significant overall improvement, is still not sufficiently developed. Aspects of monitoring are not yet effective enough to highlight the weakness in the pupils' presentation of written work, nor the inconsistency of teachers' marking, which would both have a positive impact on the quality of pupils' writing. Resources for the delivery of the English curriculum are good and are generally of good quality.

## MATHEMATICS

69. In the national tests in mathematics for 11-year olds in the year 2000, the results were below the national average but above average when compared to similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving higher grades is close to the national average and above average when compared to similar schools. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls and in the year 2000 tests the school exceeded its target for the percentage of pupils gaining the expected level. Over the last three years at the end of Key Stage 2 attainment has moved from well below the national average, rising to above average, then falling to the current position of being slightly below the national average. The small year group sizes at the school significantly affect these results, making an overall trend difficult to establish. However the school keeps detailed records to show that both raw test scores and the number of children who reach the expected levels have improved each year for the past four years. **Pupils currently in Year 6 achieve well and attain standards which are broadly in line with those expected for their age.**
70. Pupils enter the school with limited mathematical skills. The majority of pupils achieve satisfactorily and make steady progress during the Foundation stage and Key Stage One, particularly in number work where the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is having a positive impact. Teachers use songs and provide the pupils with regular opportunities to practise and learn new skills such as doubling and halving. Many pupils do not make sufficient progress with developing an understanding of measures or their ability to handle calculations in subtraction,



**but overall, the pupils aged 7 attain standards which are broadly in line with those expected for their age.**

71. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. Teachers make good use of committed and knowledgeable support staff in making progress towards identified targets. Clear planning and appropriate resources allow pupils with special educational needs to play a full and active part in all mathematical activities. The small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language are included well in these lessons and make satisfactory progress.
72. The quality of teaching in all mathematics lessons is satisfactory with many lessons showing features of good teaching. Teachers are familiar with the National Numeracy Strategy which, in the main, they apply effectively. This has allowed children to gain confidence particularly with their mental skills and the strategies that they use in calculating word and numeric problems.
73. Teaching is good when lessons proceed at a brisk pace and learning objectives are clear and shared with all the pupils. In Key Stage 1, familiar counting action rhymes capture the initial interest of the children whilst improving counting skills and developing ideas about addition and subtraction. Good mathematics teaching allowed younger children to gain an understanding of time by tying shoelaces, threading beads and writing their own name repeatedly in one minute. In another class children were successfully encouraged to tackle word problems. Sensitive encouragement and a willingness to value and share strategies gave children confidence to develop mathematical thinking. In Key Stage 2 teachers extended the pupils' knowledge by building upon known strategies. In one class a brisk start to the lesson helped children develop ideas about angles. The faster pace, good use of space and careful preparation held the attention of the children. Older children who were learning about symmetry were able to learn independently using computers. This consistent and systematic use of information and communications technology (ICT), with the older children supported the learning very well allowing children to take some control over their own learning.
74. Where teaching is unsatisfactory the pace of lessons is slower and some pupils become restless. This was particularly evident in the opening part of one lesson when the slow pace didn't allow children to be involved with enough maths. On occasions there is also a lack of clarity in explaining the task to children, which leads to confusion in mathematical learning.
75. Pupils' attitudes to mathematics are good. They enjoy mathematics and are keen to learn. They respond well to the range of activities set by the teachers and have confidence in explaining ideas. They cooperate well with each other and can use apparatus well to support their learning. Children using computers always showed a very good attitude to their work.
76. The school's use of ICT to support teaching and learning in mathematics is developing well. Some children choose to use mathematical programmes as they come into school in the morning. The older children regularly use ICT in mathematics lessons to support their learning. This has a very effective impact. This good practice is not yet a feature throughout school. Teachers are improving their ICT skills. This is beginning to have an impact on the teaching of mathematics.

77. The quality of assessment is satisfactory overall. The school has established good procedures to track the progress of individual children, particularly with end of year assessments. This information is beginning to inform some teachers about areas for improvement. The quality of marking does not have a sufficient impact on pupils' learning. Whilst work is marked, often with ticks and some supportive comments there is little evidence to suggest that children are given information on what they have to do next to improve. Children are not given enough opportunities to use number lines or to develop both informal and formal written techniques in number calculation.
78. The subject is well led and managed and is showing improvement from the last inspection report. The school has a clear policy and uses the National Numeracy Strategy as an appropriate planning tool. The coordinator has a clear knowledge of the subject and has been able to undertake some monitoring of teaching and learning with the support of the LEA. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching is currently underdeveloped. The coordinator has a clear view of strengths and weaknesses and has highlighted appropriately the need to develop work with measures and subtraction. Sensible spending has allowed the school to develop a good range of resources to support the teaching of mathematics.

## SCIENCE

79. In the national tests in science for 11-year olds in the year 2000, standards were well below the national average but below average when compared to similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving higher grades was below the national average and below average in comparison to similar schools. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. The school has collected data to show that over the last three years the number of pupils reaching the expected levels has increased significantly. **Pupils currently in Year 6 achieve well and attain standards which are broadly in line with those expected for their age.**
80. By the age of 7 the pupils' standard of attainment in the teacher assessments for science for 2000 was well below the national average with no children assessed as achieving the higher levels. A very low proportion of children gained the expected levels in experimental and investigative science. Evidence during the inspection indicates that this does not reflect the current attainment of the pupils. **Pupils aged 7 attain standards which are broadly in line with those expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress.**
81. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in science, including those with special educational needs who make good progress. In Key Stage 1, pupils are developing a good understanding of animals. Many can describe some of the features of habitats in which animals live. Visits to nearby environments have a very positive impact allowing pupils to have first hand experiences of science. The creation of a seashore, farmyard and wildlife centre has also had a positive impact on the pupils' learning in science. These well-planned opportunities enable children to ask questions and gain real understanding. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop investigational skills by carrying out a range of experiments. They can make electrical circuits with motors, buzzers and bulbs and know how to test an elastic band by stretching. Pupils effectively use a forcemeter to investigate friction and heat and filters to try to clean muddy water.

82. In both key stages pupils show a good attitude in science. They respond particularly well to the practical activities in which they are involved. A good example of this was seen with the pupils who visited the local environmental centre at Yottenfews during the inspection. Pupils are interested in ongoing experiments which improves their ability to investigate through observation and by asking questions.
83. The teaching of science is satisfactory. Where teaching is good, very clear planning and organisation with sharp learning objectives maximises the time for children to be involved with learning and investigating new scientific ideas. Knowledgeable teachers and consistent and correct application of scientific vocabulary are also features of good science teaching. In one good science lesson the teacher was continually explaining and asking the children to link micro-organisms to their everyday life. This brought science alive. Where teaching is unsatisfactory there is not a consistent focus on scientific processes and opportunities are missed for children to extend their understanding. There is also a weakness in planning and questions lack a sharp focus to move the pupils' understanding forward. A further weakness lies in assessment, where day to day assessment is not used effectively to ensure that teachers are sufficiently clear about what pupils need to learn next.
84. The science curriculum offered to the children is satisfactory, being broad and covering all the necessary areas of study. The coordinator is well informed and is pleased with the improved planning and positive attitudes of the children to science. He has a good personal scientific knowledge. There are some opportunities for children to develop their science knowledge through the use of ICT and by the age of 11 children have the confidence to use these skills in presenting their findings. The older children use a range of charts, diagrams and description to effectively to describe the research approach to their scientific enquiry. The subject is well resourced with materials of good quality. Overall the current provision is similar to that reported when the school was last inspected.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

85. The pupils' standards of attainment in art and design are broadly in line with those expected for their age across the school. This is similar to the position reported when the school was last inspected.
86. Between the ages of 5 to 7 years pupils learn to control drawing tools such as pencils, crayons and pastels and develop skills using line, tone and shading when creating their pictures. Pupils in Year 2, for example, are able to use a good range of drawing pencils and they know which pencils create darker and lighter lines. They make good use of these pencils and produce sketching of good quality. The shading of a dragonfly was undertaken very well.
87. Pupils aged 8 to 11 years are also presented with a suitable range of activities to develop satisfactory skills to use different media. For example in Class 3, the pupils had created simple pictures and made templates. In the lesson observed they drew the stencil onto a sponge surface to print the shapes. Good use of scouring pads enabled the pupils to have two differing textures from which to create a print. An effective wall display showed work of pupils in Class 4 who had carefully drawn parts of bicycles, scanned them accurately into the computer and used a program to paint them. The results were simple but particularly effective. The work presented a well-produced display of good quality.

88. Pupils throughout the school look forward to art lessons and clearly enjoy the work. They display consistently positive attitudes to art. They are excited at the prospect of undertaking the tasks and work with enthusiasm when engaged to the lessons.
89. Over the course of the inspection it was only possible to observe two art lessons, and therefore it is not possible to reach an overall conclusion about the quality of teaching. In the two lessons observed, the teaching was satisfactory, overall. The younger pupils worked well, used the resources available to them effectively and showed good levels of understanding. The quality of learning was good, with a strong contribution from the classroom support assistant who questioned the pupils well to take their learning forward. The older pupils observed were clearly excited by a lesson many had eagerly anticipated. They were anxious to start and the teacher keen to give detailed instructions of what to do. The lesson was very long and there were only limited opportunities for independent work, with questions such as, 'Can I start?' and 'Am I allowed to use both sides?' However, many results were encouraging, and many pupils clearly enjoyed the activity.
90. The subject is satisfactorily managed and the national guidelines are being used appropriately. There is clear evidence of good links with ICT. Monitoring the standards of pupils' work and their progress over time are still area to be developed further. Standards in art have been maintained since the last inspection. Resources are adequate and are used satisfactorily.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

91. During the inspection it was possible only to see a very small number of lessons in which design technology was being taught. However it was possible to talk to pupils, look at planning and analyse work produced during the year. By the ages of seven and eleven the pupils' level of attainment is broadly in line with that expected nationally for pupils of these ages.
92. Most children make satisfactory progress including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language. There is no obvious difference between the progress of girls and boys and they happily work together in pairs and small groups designing, making and evaluating products such as slippers, packaging, and fairground rides.
93. The quality of teaching and learning in design technology is satisfactory overall. Teachers use the policy and scheme to plan work, setting clear objectives which are shared with the pupils and give clear direction to activities. In one lesson observed the teacher enabled pupils to regularly evaluate their product as a group or with the whole class. They were able to offer ideas and ask helpful questions. This improved the quality of work as appropriate design modifications were put into practice. In the same lesson the pupils were making packages to hold marbles, sweets, videos and a flask. This provided a high level of challenge which held their interest. In Class 3 pupils' drawn designs are presented with a lack clarity and explanation. The pupils show a lack of accuracy with measuring and cutting when making the package. By the age of eleven most pupils have made progress with accuracy. They can use an air brush, glue gun and a soldering iron to make metal bicycles. They are also able to use a range of construction kits to design and make fairground rides. This latter project is very successfully linked to ICT so that a short computer programme operates the ride. This has a very positive impact on the

pupils generating high levels of enthusiasm. Pupils of all ages have a very positive attitude to design technology. This is evident in lessons and with the interest shown when talking about their designs and achievements.

94. The coordinator for design technology is aware of the improvements since the last inspection. He has been able to build up a better range of resources which has enabled staff to gain confidence and deliver more appropriately challenging activities. The recent introduction of more rigorous planning should enable the school to build upon the pupils' enthusiasm and develop specific design skills.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

95. During the inspection there were few opportunities to observe geography being taught, but from the lessons seen, discussions with pupils and scrutiny of the pupils work, the standards attained throughout the school are broadly in line with those expected for the pupils' age.
96. No lessons were observed in the classes with pupils aged 5 to 7 years, but from the wall displays and pupils' work it is clear that pupils develop an understanding of their own locality and the nearby areas. Pupils in Class 1 had recently been to visit the seashore at St Bees and had recreated several seaside features in their classroom. Many remember the visit, which they enjoyed. A simple map in the resource area between the two classrooms identifies the four countries which make up the Great Britain and postcard views of different parts of the country are shown to illustrate contrasting locations. The school has a link with a school in Thailand to whom the pupils write and there is a map showing its location displayed on the corridor.
97. In the lessons seen, the pupils' attitudes to work in geography are satisfactory overall, and good amongst the older pupils. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 were engaged in a comparison of the similarities and differences between their own locality and Chembakoli in India. They are able to identify fields and mountains as areas of suitable comparison. They use text effectively to further consider differences in climate and people. Older pupils in Class 4 consider the advantages and disadvantages of the by-pass which has been constructed in the immediate vicinity of the school. They have sent out a questionnaire to adults who can remember the area before the road was constructed. They use the statistical evidence and mapping skills well. There are well selected photographs and street plans for the pupils to use. The task enables pupils to make good suggestions of less traffic passing through the village, as an improvement. However, there is now only one way out of Thornhill, when before there were five; this was interpreted as a change which was disadvantageous.
96. Whilst insufficient lessons were observed to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching, both lessons seen were well resourced. In Class 4, the teaching has pace and the pupils are encouraged to discuss in pairs and share their ideas. Teacher questioning is good and it stimulates interest. Pupils' interest in the drainage systems under the road is followed up effectively using good quality photographs. The pupils' learning is good. In Class 3, where there are a large number of pupils, it is harder to maintain the interest of all. The lesson is too long and lacking in a sharp focus. Some opportunities for taking pupils learning forward are missed. For example, where fields were identified as a similar feature in the landscape of Egremont and Chembakoli, a pupil's indication that all the fields

around Egremont were not the same, was not followed up and a challenging opportunity missed.

97. The subject is led and managed in a satisfactory manner. There is an appropriate policy and the school follows the national guidelines. As yet only a limited amount of monitoring and evaluating of pupils' work has been possible and this is an area for further development. The subject is appropriately resourced and the staff make good use of the local environment, supplemented by outside visits, to enhance the provision made in school. There is also evidence, in Class 3, that literacy texts are well selected to use aspects of geography. A text set in Mexico was used well to promote good discussion on the part of the pupils. Overall, the school has maintained the standards in geography which were reported when the school was last inspected.

## **HISTORY**

98. Due to the fact that most history teaching is timetabled during a different term, only one lesson was observed in Year 1, where pupils looked at photographs of the seaside and compared them with a recent visit they had made to the seaside at St Bees. There is, therefore, insufficient evidence to reach a secure judgement on the standards attained or the overall quality of teaching.
99. Work previously undertaken by pupils in Class 4 indicated that pupils had considered and compared aspects of life in Victorian times. A comparison had been made between those who lived in the towns and those who lived in the country. The topic had been written about effectively through the perspective of a twelve-year-old girl working in a weaving factory. Good links with work in literacy were established and the pupils had made good use of details of the 1841 Census. An analysis of jobs according to gender had been undertaken and presented in the form of data. Here, good links with numeracy were seen.
100. Younger pupils had been considering aspects of the Romans, and had written a story about Maximus a Roman hero. Well constructed writing involving a plot with characters, a beginning, middle and end had good links with literacy, promoting aspects of good writing construction but also accurately reflected many of the major features of the Roman age.
101. Pupils are interested in their work in history and talk about it with with some enthusiasm. Pupils have a developing understanding of chronology and they have a clear picture of aspects of life for people living in the times they have considered.
102. The school meets the National Curriculum requirements and uses the national guidelines. The subject is managed appropriately, with study units linking in with topic work undertaken in the classes in Key Stage 1. There are plans to build up resources, if possible with artefacts from past times and the curriculum is supplemented by outside visits to Hadrian's Wall and Beamish, which the pupils clearly remember and enjoy. Overall the history provision is similar to that reported following the last inspection.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATINS TECHNOLOGY**

103. By the ages of seven and eleven pupils are attaining the levels expected for their age. During the inspection it was not possible to observe much direct teaching. However, it was possible to observe ICT in use in other subjects, to talk to pupils and scrutinise their work.
104. Provision has improved since the last inspection. All classes have access to at least three machines in their classroom with older children having use of seven computers. A good range of software is available to support this hardware enabling the school to offer good provision for ICT.
105. Pupils make steady progress in Key Stage 1. They show good keyboard skills and can guide a mouse with ease. Many pupils can open an application and close it down when requested. They can plug in headphones and use them appropriately in class. Pupils can use a simple art package and are able to add colour and text to create a range of images. Pupils can give instructions to make a roamer move around the floor. In the lower juniors they continue to make steady progress and can access the internet to find and retrieve information. In class 4 pupils have written e-mails, used a scanner combined with an art package to create "bike art" and are currently writing short programmes to make their fairground rides work.
106. Pupils with special educational needs and for whom English is not their first language make satisfactory progress. The use of able support staff and laptop computers has a positive impact on their learning. On arrival at school in the morning many pupils choose to work on computers that teachers have set up with suitable software until it is time for the register. A common feature of Class 4 is the regular and consistent use of computers to support literacy and numeracy lessons. This is not yet a feature of all classes. The enthusiastic coordinator is aware of this. During the inspection week Class 4 pupils used ICT to develop spatial awareness in symmetry and develop a range of vocabulary appropriate to persuasive language.
107. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The systematic use of computers with older pupils is having a very positive impact on the pupils' learning. This good practice allows them to use ICT skills in other subjects. Many pupils can use a spreadsheet to investigate the relationship between area and perimeter in mathematics. Where teaching was observed it was good and characterised by clear planning, appropriate challenge and located in an activity which motivated the pupils, so much so that a small number of them worked on their project at home. In one lesson photographs taken using a digital camera had been printed to create a discussion focus and to inspire children in their writing.
108. The management of ICT is good. Since the last inspection the school has dramatically increased the number of computers in school. This has been possible with funding and support from several sources. The coordinator is leading NOF training to improve the skills of the teachers. This is beginning to have an impact on classroom practice.

## **MUSIC**

109. Music lessons are timetabled for Friday afternoon, when a visiting teacher volunteers to take groups of pupils in a specially designated room in school. It was not possible to observe these lessons during the inspection. There was, therefore, insufficient evidence to form secure judgement on overall attainment in music or the overall quality of teaching.

110. Only one lesson was observed in Class 1, where young children were seen to be able to maintain a steady beat in an appropriate rhythm by clapping. An appropriate range of percussion instruments were used and the pupils were encouraged to guess the sounds when an instrument was played behind a screen. The pupils enjoyed the game, could recognise the sound and were able to distinguish whether the sound was loud or soft. Action songs about minibeasts rounded off the lesson which had many successful features.
111. There were a number of occasions when the pupils were heard singing. This was sometime integrated into lessons and opportunities were also created during acts of collective worship. Pupils sang particularly well as they entered the hall and joined in with an appropriately selected song, which many knew and clearly enjoyed. Singing during worship was rather more restrained. The musical accompaniment was undertaken by a tape of songs from a BBC publication. The same song was sung each day and it was sung at a pace and in a range which was suitable for the pupils' voices. The school has a set pattern of worship over the year with a different song sung each week.
112. The school has very good resources for music, including tuned and untuned percussion instruments, guitars and electronic keyboards. They are located in a specially designated music room, which is used weekly by all the pupils in Key Stage 2. The children speak very positively about their music lessons and clearly enjoy them. Items in the school prospectus highlight the pupils' success in music. The school also has a good link with the music department at a nearby secondary school through which pupils can get instrumental tuition. The level of interest varies from year to year. The school provides some tuition in recorder playing.
113. The school documentation indicates that National Curriculum coverage is appropriate and national guidelines are used. The school's resources for the delivery of the music curriculum are good.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

114. During the inspection week it was only possible to see a small number of lessons. In these lessons it was clear that standards are broadly typical for younger pupils in games whilst older pupils show above average skills in outdoor activities. It was not possible to see any dance, gymnastics or swimming. However there is a very clear and detailed scheme which teachers use to deliver PE. Swimming is given high status due to the schools locality with all pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 going swimming at the local secondary school pool. This was closed during inspection week for repairs and so a first hand judgement of pupils' standards was impossible to achieve.
115. By the age of seven, pupils show enthusiasm for physical education. They are excited when they know it is games. Known energetic warm up games gets lessons off to a good start. Younger pupils make progress in controlling their balls, initially with hands and feet before progressing to the use of bats. All pupils are included well and make clear progress including pupils with special educational needs, often as a result of appropriate support and intervention from support staff. Pupils show good control of their body, especially when moving at speed. By the age of eleven this positive attitude has continued to improve. Older pupils enjoy working as teams to complete outdoor fun activities. There was a real sense of teamwork and



enjoyment in one lesson where teams of five had to cross the yard with only three small mats. These cooperative skills helped the older pupils successfully develop map reading skills in completing an orienteering course within the school grounds.

116. In the lessons observed during the inspection teaching was always satisfactory or better. In lessons where good teaching was seen teachers gave clear explanations to often quite challenging tasks. Established routines and appropriate resources enabled pupils to acquire new skills.
117. The pupils had plenty of opportunity to watch others but this was not always used to help to improve skills. Where teaching was less successful the initial energetic pace to lessons was not maintained throughout the lesson. Not enough time was always available for pupils to focus on the development of skills. All lessons had very clear learning objectives. However more direct use of these would have encouraged pupils to focus on skill acquisition and improve individual performance.
118. The subject is well led and managed. There is an appropriate policy in place supported by a very comprehensive scheme of work, which provides a clear structure for the teachers' planning. Resources are good but current storage needs addressing. A recently completed stage in the hall means access to games equipment and gymnastic apparatus in the hall is currently difficult. The immediate school grounds offer good space for PE. Pupils are encouraged to take part in friendly inter school team matches. which they enjoy. Links with the local rugby club and the secondary school also have a positive impact on the curriculum. Older pupils have good opportunities to develop outdoor activities with a residential trip to Ennerdale. The subject clearly makes a good contribution to the children's social development allowing them to take responsibility and work together.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

119. Only one lesson in religious education was observed, but a consideration of the work undertaken by pupils, a review of work displayed on the walls and discussions with pupils leads to the judgement that the pupils standards of attainment are broadly in line with those expected for their age by the time they are eleven.
120. The school follows the Cumbria LEA agreed syllabus from which the school has produced its own scheme. It provides a broad coverage which is appropriately delivered. Past work includes an emphasis to Christianity for the younger pupils, with topics such as how Jesus gathered his disciples, his visits to the Temple, the storm on the Sea of Galilee and the Last Supper being included. Pupils develop a clear understanding of the character of Jesus and the major landmarks in his life. Older pupils look critically at the story of the labourers in the vineyard and the ungrateful servant to examine the deeper meaning of the stories. They also explore the significance of some symbols for a wide variety of religious groups. Their work includes aspects of Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Islam and Hinduism. They demonstrate an appropriate depth of understanding of the work they have undertaken. For example, they know something of the significance of the Exodus to the followers of Judaism, and they are able to make appropriate comparisons of pilgrimages to Mecca and to Lourdes.
121. Pupils show interest in their work and they speak about it positively. This was certainly the case in the lesson observed, when pupils in Class 4 were considering the importance of light as a religious symbol. The main focus was to Christians, but

the discussion ranged widely to take in some of the important symbols for Sikhs and for Buddhists. The discussion was greatly assisted by a good range of artefacts which were available in the classroom. The class teacher displayed a good subject knowledge and was confident in the good relationships which had been established in the class. The pupils listened well and made good contributions, in a lesson which was undertaken through a violent electric storm, which, although it caused some distraction, did not disturb the pupils' concentration substantially. This was a lesson where teaching and learning were good, although as it was the only lesson observed it is not possible to make an overall judgement of the quality of teaching.

122. The subject is appropriately managed and well resourced. Samples of pupils' work have been collected in recent months so that standards of work produced can be monitored. The curriculum is enhanced by visits to a local church and the Year 6 pupils visit a Buddhist monastery. Good quality wall displays provide good evidence for pupils to understand similarities and differences in the lifestyles of people whose culture is different from their own. This has a positive impact on their cultural development. For example, Buddhist artefacts and books are effectively displayed as are Muslim artefacts. The school has a link with a school in Thailand and Thai clothes are also displayed appropriately for the pupils to see. There is also some writing about the life of a Muslim. Pupils display an understanding of Allah, the Qra'an, the Mosque, the use of Prayer mats and the Fast of Ramadhan. The overall provision has improved from that reported when the school was last inspected.