

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HOLME ST CUTHBERT**

Mawbray, Maryport

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112112

Headteacher: Mrs C France

Reporting inspector: Mrs Pat Kime  
25350

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

Inspection number: 190818

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Mawbray

Maryport

Cumbria

Postcode: CA15 6QZ

Telephone number: 01900 881242

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr R Felix

Date of previous inspection: 25/11/1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
25350	Mrs P Kime	Registered inspector	English Information and communication technology Art and Design Music Physical education Religious education Foundation Stage Equal opportunities Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9970	Mr J Acaster	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20645	Ms R Webber	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Design and technology Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well does the school care for its pupils?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This very small school serves a rural community close to the North West Cumbrian coast. The number of pupils in each year varies from two to nine. The 36 pupils currently on roll are taught in two classes, one for the four- to seven-year-olds (infants) and the other for the seven- to eleven-year-olds (juniors). There are six children in the Foundation Stage (reception). In most years, the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average. At present, there are no pupils in this category. Pupils' levels of attainment when they start school cover a wide range and vary from year to year but overall, they are broadly average for their age. The school has identified 13 pupils, a high proportion, as having special educational needs. Only three of them have significant learning difficulties and one carries a statement of special educational needs. There are no pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds or for whom English is an additional language. The school maintains close links with other small schools in the area. Since the last inspection, the headteacher has taken responsibility for teaching the junior class and a new infant teacher has been appointed.

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

Holme St Cuthbert is an effective school with many more strengths than weaknesses. Pupils achieve well in a caring and homely, family atmosphere. The teaching is good and pupils are learning well. Taken overall, standards are above average. The headteacher provides good leadership for the whole school community. The pupils develop very good, mature attitudes with high levels of self-discipline and responsibility. The school's many strengths mean that, despite high costs, it provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Pupils are now achieving well above average standards in science and above average standards in mathematics, by the time they leave the school. Standards in geography are above average in both key stages.
- Teaching is good for the seven- to eleven-year-olds and these pupils make good progress in their learning.
- The school provides a broad and rich curriculum that interests pupils and makes good links between subjects.
- The school provides very well for pupils' personal development. As a result, this aspect of their development and their behaviour and attitudes to school and learning are all very good.
- The school's very good partnership with parents makes a strong contribution to pupils' good achievement.

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

- Standards in English do not match up to the high levels attained in science and mathematics and standards in music are below average, by the time pupils are eleven years of age.
- There is not enough check on the effectiveness of the school's provision and the quality of teaching and learning.
- The curriculum the school provides for children in the reception year is not as good as that for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

- The overall improvement since the last inspection in November 1996 has been good and the school is well placed for continued improvement. Progress on the key issues for action from the last inspection has been satisfactory and other matters have also improved.
- Progress on the key issues  
Improvements have been made in standards in English and information and communication technology, the leadership and management of the school, the management and planning of the curriculum, the assessment of pupils' learning and the way the governing body fulfils its responsibilities. The older pupils are no longer underachieving. The health and safety issues have been dealt with.
- Work remains to be done to ensure that the effectiveness of the school is monitored and evaluated sufficiently rigorously and that emphasis is given to high attainment.
- Progress on other matters  
The quality of teaching has improved. Standards are higher in mathematics, science, geography and art and design. The school's partnership with parents is better and the accommodation has been improved.

## STANDARDS

Pupils' results in the 2000 Key Stages 1 and 2 National Curriculum tests (SATs) for seven- and eleven-year-olds are not given in detail because, at each key stage, less than eleven pupils took the tests. The small numbers mean the interpretation of test results requires caution.

- Eleven-year-olds are tested in English, mathematics and science. The nine pupils who took the Key Stage 2 tests in 2000 attained high standards in science and in English and mathematics their results were typical of those seen nationally. When all three subjects are taken into account, comparison with the national results shows that Holme St Cuthbert's pupils made better than average progress from seven to eleven years of age.
- Over the last five years, pupils' results in the Key Stage 2 SATs have kept pace with the national rate of improvement. However, whilst the science results have risen steadily year on year, the same pupils' English and mathematics results have fluctuated.
- The three pupils in the present Year 6 (Key Stage 2 SATs year) are attaining well above average standards in science, above average standards in mathematics and average standards in English.
- The school sets appropriate targets for pupils' attainment in the Key Stage 2 SATs. Targets are solidly based on teachers' knowledge of how the pupils are doing.
- The 2000 Key Stage 1 SATs were taken by the nine seven-year-olds. They did particularly well in mathematics and their results in reading and writing were typical of those seen nationally.
- The five pupils in the present Year 2 (Key Stage 1 SATs year) are achieving average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are average by the end of both key stages.
- The standards of work seen in religious education were above the standard expected for the pupils' age in Key Stage 1 and average in Key Stage 2.
- Standards in geography are above average in both key stages and the art and design work seen was of an above average standard.
- Standards in music meet the expectation for the pupils' age in Key Stage 1, but are below the standard expected by the end of Key Stage 2.
- In the other subjects of the National Curriculum, the work seen in both key stages was of a broadly average standard.

- Pupils make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage and the present reception children, a better than average group for the school, are achieving above the standard expected for their age in several areas of their learning.
- Holme St Cuthbert's pupils are achieving well; they all make good overall progress during their time at the school.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; pupils take their schoolwork seriously. They appreciate what the school offers them and participate keenly in school life. They have very positive attitudes to contributing to the life of the school community.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good; pupils have high levels of self-discipline and they are well-mannered, trustworthy and respectful of adults and each other.
Personal development and relationships	Very good overall; pupils are extremely responsible, they work with a very good degree of independence and they show excellent levels of initiative. Relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and adults are consistently very good.
Attendance	Good; the attendance rate is broadly in line with the national average and there is very little unauthorised absence.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

- Teaching was at least satisfactory in all the 16 lessons seen. It was satisfactory in 38 per cent of the lessons and better than satisfactory in 62 per cent, being good in 56 per cent and very good in 6 per cent.
- In most subjects, teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2, where expectations are higher and work is generally better matched to pupils' different levels of attainment. This is the picture for both English and mathematics. Religious education is taught well in Key Stage 1. In music, the teaching in Key Stage 2 is not effective enough.
- In both key stages teachers manage their pupils well so that lessons are orderly and all pupils can learn. Teachers check pupils' learning carefully day by day and they use homework effectively.
- The more effective teaching has several significant strengths. Teachers make very good use of questions to extend pupils' thinking, deepen their understanding and teach them to think for themselves. Class organisation is good, taking account of pupils' different ages and levels of attainment.
- Shortcomings within satisfactory teaching include: not giving children in the reception year enough opportunities to learn through play; not setting expectations for pupils'

attainment in English as high as they could be; not making full use of marking to help pupils improve; and a heavy reliance on workbooks and worksheets for the younger pupils.

- Pupils are making good overall progress. They bring very positive attitudes to their work and, overall, they learn at a good rate. The school meets its pupils' learning needs well.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good; for Key Stages 1 and 2 the school provides a good broad curriculum. Good links between subjects make the work meaningful to pupils. The curriculum is enriched by a very good range of educational visits and visitors and very strong links with the community. There are no out of school clubs. The planning of work for the reception pupils, though satisfactory, does not yet take full account of recent national changes. All pupils have equal access to what the school offers.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; these pupils are fully involved in school life. Plans for work to meet their needs are sound and they are supported well in lessons. They make good progress towards their learning targets.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall; spiritual, moral and cultural development are promoted very well and the provision for social development is excellent. This high quality provision underpins pupils' good learning because they develop mature attitudes.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall; good attention is paid to health and safety matters and pupils' welfare. Teachers keep good track of pupils' learning in English and mathematics but less in the other subjects. The arrangements for supporting and checking pupils' personal development and for securing good behaviour are very good.

The school's partnership with parents is very good. Parents make a very good contribution to pupils' learning.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall; the headteacher provides good leadership and satisfactory management so that everyone involved with the school works well together, puts the pupils first and has their best interests at heart.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good; governors are well informed, have a clear view of their role in developing the school and are much involved in its day-to-day life.



The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory; the tracking of pupils' rates of progress throughout the school is not sufficient to pinpoint precisely where strengths and weaknesses lie and thus to underpin planning for improvement. Not enough check is kept on what is provided and achieved in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Nevertheless, the teachers are thoughtful and are continually looking to improve their work and test results are analysed to identify what the school needs to do better and changes are made.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory; the funds available to the school are used appropriately. The substantial funds raised by parents and friends of the school are put to good use. The principles of best value are applied well.

Staffing, and the resources for teaching and learning are satisfactory in the main. The accommodation is good.

### **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>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• They think the teaching is good, their children are expected to try hard and they make good progress.</li> <li>• They think the school is helping their children become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• The school works closely with parents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

Nearly 80 per cent of the inspection questionnaires were returned and the vast majority of parents expressed a positive view of the school. The inspectors agree with the parents' views.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

##### 2000 National Curriculum test (SATs) results and trends in SATs results

1. Nine seven-year-olds and nine eleven-year-olds took the tests. Because these year groups contained fewer than eleven pupils, pupils' test results are not reported in detail.
2. Significant conclusions cannot be drawn from the test results about trends in attainment or differences between subjects or any disparity between test results and the standards the current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are attaining. This is for three reasons:
  - year groups are small;
  - there are inevitably variations in attainment levels between year groups;
  - each pupil's performance has a significant effect on the results.
3. The eleven-year-olds took the end of Key Stage 2 tests in English, mathematics and science. They attained high standards in science. In English and mathematics, their results were typical of those seen nationally.
4. Taking all three subjects together, the results attained by eleven-year-olds have kept up with the national rate of improvement over the last five years. However, there are differences between the subjects. The science results have improved steadily and have remained consistently better than the national average. The results in English and mathematics show year-by-year fluctuations.
5. The seven-year-olds took the end of Key Stage 1 tests in reading, writing and mathematics. They did particularly well in mathematics. In reading and writing, their results were typical of those seen nationally. Over the last five years, the Key Stage 1 test results in writing and mathematics have fluctuated. In reading, the results have fallen every year since 1997.
6. The school sets targets for pupils' attainment in the Key Stage 2 SATs. These are appropriate; they are based on teachers' knowledge of how well each pupil is doing.

##### The standards seen on inspection and pupils' achievements

7. Children generally start the school with broadly average levels of attainment. They make satisfactory progress in their learning in the Foundation Stage and therefore achieve suitable standards by the end of the reception year. Each year group is different and the present reception group had higher levels of attainment when they started school than is seen in most years. They are achieving beyond the standard expected for their age in personal, social and emotional development, speaking and listening, mathematical development, work with computers and physical development. In the other aspects of communication, language and literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world and in their creative development, they are set to meet the nationally accepted learning goals for the end of the reception year. These standards represent satisfactory achievement, in view of the children's starting point.

8. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress from five to seven years of age in Key Stage 1 (the infants). There are five pupils in the present Year 2. They are achieving the standards they should in most subjects. They are working at an appropriate standard for their age in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology, history, music and physical education. The work seen in this key stage in religious education, art and design and geography was of an above average standard. Pupils achieve well in these three subjects in this key stage.
9. The seven- to eleven-year-olds in Key Stage 2 (the juniors) are achieving well and making good gains overall in their learning. The three pupils in the present Year 6 are attaining broadly average standards in English and ICT. Their work in mathematics, geography and art and design is above average and in science they are attaining well above average standards. The work seen in this key stage in religious education, design and technology and physical education was of a satisfactory standard for the pupils' ages. Standards in swimming are above average. In music, pupils do not attain high enough standards by the end of this key stage because teachers do not have sufficient expertise in the subject to take the work to a high enough level.
10. In English, standards of speaking and listening are above average in Key Stage 1 and well above average by the end of Key Stage 2. There are two main reasons for this:
  - teachers have good questioning skills and they use questions effectively to help pupils explore their ideas in discussions and question and answer sessions;
  - from their earliest days at the school, pupils are taught to think for themselves, to question and to justify their opinions.
11. Literacy skills are satisfactory; reading and writing standards at the top of the school meet the national expectation for pupils at this age.
12. Pupils develop good numeracy skills. In mathematics, they are taught strategies for effective mental calculation well and they have good opportunities to use and apply their mathematical knowledge. They make good progress in this aspect of mathematics and achieve above average standards by the time they leave the school. Consequently, they attain a good level of understanding of numbers and the number system. Pupils also attain above average standards in their knowledge and understanding of shape, space and measures. Standards in data handling are average.
13. Pupils' overall achievement in English is satisfactory and in mathematics it is good.
14. In science, pupils make rapid progress in Key Stage 2 and attain high standards. This represents very good achievement. Pupils acquire a good scientific vocabulary and use it confidently and accurately. Pupils' understanding of life processes and living things develops very well because teachers make very good use of the local environment and the school grounds to teach this aspect of the subject. By the time they are eleven years of age, pupils have developed a very good knowledge of materials and their properties.
15. All pupils make equally good progress from their starting points. Pupils with special educational needs make good overall progress towards their targets, in view of their learning difficulties.

16. Since the last inspection standards have risen in mathematics, science, ICT, art and design and geography. In all the other subjects, except music, satisfactory standards have been maintained.

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

17. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are all very good and these strengths have a positive effect on pupils' learning and achievement. The school's attendance record is good.
18. Pupils very much enjoy coming to school and they appreciate what the school offers them. They like its friendliness and its interesting activities. They feel encouraged by the attitude of the teachers and they like the feeling that what they do is valued. As a result they feel confident in approaching their tasks and are keen to be involved in school life.
19. Attitudes to work are very positive. Pupils listen with interest, try hard in what they are asked to do and sustain concentration well. Pupils like having the opportunity to make their own personal contributions and observations. They very much enjoy working together with others. Frequently this is rewarding as it involves helping them.
20. Pupils behave very well in lessons and around school. They have straightforward, practical attitudes, often characterised by a clear sense of purpose. Pupils are, for instance, more keen to get involved in what they want to do rather than to ask questions of visitors. Likewise they move about the school in a practical and independent way, showing confidence rather than curiosity. Behaviour at lunch is orderly and sociable. Manners are pleasant and polite. The school does not have to exclude pupils.
21. Typical of pupils' positive, practical attitudes is the example of the playing of football at break times by the older children. This is a very popular activity in delightful surroundings. Without the direct intervention of adults, pupils organise themselves very well, observing the structures and rules of the game, even to the extent of taking corner kicks. They play vigorously, spontaneously appreciating and encouraging each others' efforts. It is fully inclusive. Many display good skills. When the bell is sounded, they bring in the equipment sensibly, at their own pace, and see that it is properly stored away. They are trusted to do so. It is a fully satisfying and enjoyable experience for all participants.
22. Pupils' personal development and relationships are thus very good. Their schoolwork causes them to think about the similarities and differences of the lives and experiences of others, currently those in Tibet. They express good empathy from this and the ability to show respect for others' viewpoints. They are themselves tolerant towards others. Because of the small size of their school, and because their opinions are taken concerning such things as school rules, pupils recognise that everyone is dependent on each other. They willingly and sensibly, for instance, team up with a partner from the other class when crossing the car park to the hall for lunch. Pupils recognise early on that they each have a personal contribution to make. Older pupils show a strong awareness of their assigned practical duty, perhaps cleaning the sinks, coupled to the expectation that they should address their individual learning targets. The school is very successful in fostering a real sense of personal responsibility, co-operation and initiative among its pupils.
23. Attendance is good. It is a little higher than the national average. There is very little unauthorised absence. Lateness is uncommon. By far the largest incidence took place

during the inspection week when, the day after the school had been closed due to a power cut following heavy snowfall, several parents' vehicles proved difficult to start!

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

24. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. This is the main reason why pupils are now achieving well and attaining above average standards in several subjects, by the time they leave the school.
25. The teaching in the 16 lessons seen was all at least satisfactory. The quality of the teaching was satisfactory in 38 per cent of the lessons observed. It was better than satisfactory in 62 per cent, being good in 56 per cent and very good in 6 per cent.
26. Most of the teaching seen for children in the Foundation Stage (reception) and pupils in Key Stage 1 was satisfactory and for pupils in Key Stage 2 most was of good quality. This holds true for most of the subjects where there was sufficient evidence to form a valid judgement on the overall quality of teaching and for the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills. In the lessons seen, the exceptions to this general pattern were art and design and religious education lessons in Key Stage 1 in which teaching was good and a Key Stage 2 music lesson by a visiting specialist in which teaching was very good. However, the unsatisfactory standard of music, by the top of the school, suggests that most music teaching in this key stage is unsatisfactory. Geography is taught well throughout the school. The teaching of science is good in Key Stage 2. The quality of pupils' learning parallels that of teaching. All pupils' learning needs are equally well met within each class and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are enabled to achieve equally well in relation to their starting points. Overall, the school meets its pupils' needs well. Pupils' good learning is aided by their very good attitudes and good behaviour.
27. Some features of teaching and learning are at least good throughout the school and mainly very good in Key Stage 2.
28. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils but still maintain good order in lessons and pupils get on with their work sensibly. By Key Stage 2, pupils have developed good working habits and they work productively, even when the teacher is fully occupied with others. This was seen very clearly in a well-organised English lesson. The teacher worked with the younger pupils whilst the older ones worked independently. They had clear written instructions provided by the teacher and they followed them well. This meant they worked productively on suitably demanding spelling and reading work, helping each other when necessary, whilst the younger pupils benefited from intensive, focused, direct teaching of new work. When their turn with the teacher came, towards the end of the lesson, they were ready to discuss what they had been reading profitably and in some depth.
29. Teachers keep a very good day-to-day check on how pupils are getting on and as a result they set the right learning targets for pupils. The pupils therefore have a clear understanding of how well they are doing because teachers tell them their targets. In Key Stage 2, pupils are very aware of where they need to improve but this is not consistent across all the subjects. The quality of marking varies. It is particularly good in English, indicating how well pupils have met the objective of the lesson and highlighting areas of strength and weakness in their work. The marking of mathematics is much less helpful to pupils.

30. Teachers use homework well to reinforce the work pupils do in class. Even the youngest children have a few words to learn and are expected to read and find things out at home. In Key Stage 2, pupils have been consulted about homework and they keep useful homework diaries. They take this work seriously and it successfully promotes their independent learning. They spend several weeks on some well-planned homework projects and produce work of high quality, such as their geography projects about the local area.
31. Throughout the school pupils develop good attitudes to learning and good skills for learning because they are taught to think for themselves and to ask relevant questions and they are expected to justify their ideas. This approach is seen in the way teachers probe and extend pupils' thinking through their skilful questioning, for example in a Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson. In this lesson challenging questions got the pupils exploring the relationships between numbers as well as practising mental calculations using the four rules of number at a demanding level.
32. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve vary. For the most part they are appropriate in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 so pupils are enabled to make sufficient progress. However, the expectations for the reception children's attainment in reading and writing are not as high as they could be in relation to what children have shown they can achieve. This hinders their progress and affects the standards they achieve by seven years of age. In science, expectations are very high in Key Stage 2. Combined with the teacher's very good knowledge of the subject, this accounts for pupils' high attainment; work is done in depth.
33. The teachers generally use the available resources effectively. For example, they make good use of the local area and the school grounds in science and geography, they use ICT well to support work in several subjects and in 'literacy hours' they use books that are selected carefully to exemplify what they want pupils to learn. In a Key Stage 2 English lesson, a book which ran a story in parallel with factual information was used very effectively to clarify in detail the key differences between fiction and non-fiction books. A book of Buddhist stories was used well in Key Stage 1 to introduce key points about the religion and to familiarise pupils with a different style of illustration. Their interest was captured by the striking illustrations and they showed a tolerant acceptance of different beliefs and cultural traditions.
34. The Key Stage 2 class spans four school years. Nevertheless, in most lessons, good class organisation and effective use of support staff and classroom helpers mean work is reasonably well matched to pupils' different attainment levels.
35. In the class for reception children and Key Stage 1 pupils there is much good use of discussion. Expectations of pupils' personal development are very high and pupils are supported well so they develop confidence. There are not enough opportunities for reception children to learn through purposeful play activities, and for reception children and pupils in Years 1 and 2, rather a lot of work is covered by pupils completing worksheets and workbooks rather than through practical activity.
36. Pupils with special educational needs usually get the support they need in class. This contributes positively to their learning and they make progress towards the learning targets in their individual education plans at a good rate.
37. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. At that time it was satisfactory overall. Since then the weaknesses in the teaching of ICT throughout the school and English in Key Stage 2 have been ironed out and the work in Key Stage 2

takes more account of pupils' different learning needs. The provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved so they are now learning at a better rate.

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

### **The curriculum: the learning opportunities the school provides**

38. The school provides a good curriculum that meets statutory requirements, by covering all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, and provides pupils with a broad range of opportunities for learning. Pupils are offered a relevant curriculum in which effective links are made between subjects and the resources of the local community benefit pupils' learning.
39. The school places considerable emphasis on enriching the curriculum by:
- inviting a very good range of visitors to the school to talk to pupils and work with them;
  - providing a very good range of well-planned educational visits, many in the local area.
- These visits and visitors are an integral part of work in most subjects and they have a significant, positive effect on pupils' learning and the standards they achieve, notably in science and geography.
40. The school places a strong emphasis on equal opportunities and all pupils have equal access to the curriculum and an equal chance to learn and make progress. Teachers know their pupils well and generally match work to their needs. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from good support in lessons and there are suitable individual education plans to guide teachers and support staff in providing for these pupils.
41. The curriculum provided for children in the Foundation Stage (reception) is satisfactory. These children undertake suitable activities in the six areas of learning recommended for children their age and they join in the literacy and numeracy hours gradually. They derive some benefit from being included in activities with the five- to seven-year-olds but they have too few opportunities to learn from planned, purposeful, structured play activities. The planning of their activities does not yet take full account of the stepping stones towards the Early Learning Goals contained in the recently issued national guidance for this stage of education, the 'Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage'.
42. The planning of work for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 has improved since the last inspection. At that time, the curricular planning was under developed, lacked detail and did not sufficiently identify progression in learning from one year to the next. The school has made satisfactory progress in dealing with these weaknesses.
43. Teachers have adopted the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and are implementing them effectively, though to date, the Numeracy Strategy has had a more marked impact on standards. Pupils have many opportunities to use their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. For example, in both science and geography, mathematical skills are promoted well when pupils are encouraged to collect data and present their findings in various types of graphs. Literacy skills are well developed through geography when the Key Stage 2 pupils carry out personal research about various countries. However, such work is not yet planned as systematically as it could

be. Planning in science is now sufficiently detailed and it is based on a clear identification of what pupils should learn.

44. In the other subjects of the National Curriculum, the school now bases its curricular planning on nationally recognised whole-school plans for work. This ensures that all aspects of each subject are covered but work remains to be done to tailor the plans to meet the school's needs. This would make sure that pupils undertake sufficiently harder work as they move up the school and that the key concepts and skills in each subject are taught progressively. At present, for example, work for the seven- to eleven-year-olds is planned on a two-year cycle. This does not sufficiently identify the work for each year group. As a result, pupils in different years sometimes undertake the same work and at times this restricts pupils' overall rate of progress. In design and technology, the school still does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to develop designing skills to an appropriately high level in Key Stage 2.
45. Good, meaningful links are made between work in different subjects, such as those between design and technology and geography and information and communication technology (ICT). For instance, Year 1 and 2 pupils use computers to generate designs of model vehicles and a map of an imaginary village. Such links make the work relevant and therefore interesting to pupils.
46. There are no opportunities for pupils to attend after school clubs, therefore the provision made by the school for extra-curricular activities is unsatisfactory.

#### **Links with the community**

47. The school has established very good links with the community and it successfully draws support from a number of local businesses and skilled people in the area. These strong links enhance the curriculum and make a positive contribution to pupils' learning in several subjects. For example, in art and design, a local artist and sculptor helped pupils to create outdoor sculptures using natural materials. In religious education pupils gain a better understanding of different world faiths when a Buddhist monk talks to them about Buddhist philosophy and traditions. Visits to a local farm support pupils' learning in science well. Good links, such as teacher and pupils' visits, have been forged with the main receiving secondary school and this effectively smooths pupils' transition to the next stage of their education.

#### **The provision for pupils' personal – including spiritual, moral, social and cultural – development**

48. The school provides very well for pupils' personal development. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is very good and for their social development it is excellent. All these aspects of the school's provision have improved since the last inspection. Pupils have very good opportunities to learn about citizenship by being fully involved in the life of the school as a community. The school's high quality provision contributes significantly to their development of mature attitudes and thus underpins their learning.
49. The school now nurtures the human spirit very effectively. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate nature and the natural beauty that surrounds them and the school provides excellent opportunities for them to do so. For example, pupils regularly visit a local beach on the Solway Firth to study wildlife and the natural features and to appreciate the view of the mountain range beyond. All pupils learn about the wonders of the natural world as they plant bulbs and tend the plants in the school garden and greenhouse. The school grounds have been designed to provide very good settings for



quiet reflection. The school has strong links with the local church and pupils gain an insight and develop further their knowledge and understanding of Christian beliefs and traditions by visiting the church. The reception children and Key Stage 1 pupils take part in a mock wedding and christening at the church in a neighbouring village where they have links with the school. The promotion of spiritual development through acts of collective worship is satisfactory but more could be done to provide opportunities for prayer and reflection in assemblies. Through religious education, pupils gain a very good understanding of other world faiths as they study Buddhism and Judaism. Religious tolerance is promoted well, for example, pupils are invited, but not required, to pray or meditate. Although very good opportunities exist for pupils' spiritual development in science and geography, in other subjects, such as art and design and music, such opportunities are less systematically planned.

50. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Staff build on the good behaviour and attitudes that pupils bring from home. From an early age pupils are encouraged to consider moral issues and make moral choices through effective questioning across the curriculum. For example, in a philosophy lesson, pupils in the infant class debated whether or not an attractive view could be owned. This prompted some deep thinking and helped the pupils to begin to appreciate that people have different points of view and opinions. The Key Stage 2 pupils debate controversial subjects, such as foxhunting. Very good relationships are established throughout the school because teachers set a very good example and make pupils feel valued. They include them in appropriate decision making. For example, teachers and pupils worked effectively together to formulate the school's behaviour and bullying policies. This approach has ensured a strong sense of community in which both pupils and adults are respected equally by all concerned and has given pupils an understanding of what it means to be a citizen. The behaviour policy is applied consistently by all the adults and pupils have a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Staff also appropriately reward good work, effort and behaviour and this positively supports pupils' moral development.
51. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills, such as independence, initiative, responsibility, co-operation and collaboration. For example, they produce newsletters for parents, organise charitable and fundraising events such as the church quiz and welcome visitors to the school. Pupils are given many opportunities to accept responsibilities that contribute to the life of the school. For example, pupils of all ages take attendance registers to the office and they turn on computers ready for lessons. Groups of pupils carry responsibility for looking after sections of the school garden. Older pupils read stories with younger ones and help and care for them at lunchtimes. From an early age pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and by the time they are eleven pupils have developed a very mature attitude to learning, for example they organise and carry out personal research projects very effectively. Visits to various places of interest both locally and further afield contribute significantly to pupils' social development. Staff make great efforts to provide opportunities for pupils to mix with those from other schools so they are not disadvantaged by having few classmates of their own age.
52. The provision for pupils' cultural development has improved since the last inspection and is now very good. The very good range of educational visits and visitors make a strong contribution to this provision. For example, pupils visit places of historical interest such as Carlisle Castle and the Florence Mine at Egremont and artists, sculptors, storytellers, musicians and historical theatre groups visit the school and effectively promote the pupils' appreciation of their own cultural heritage and that of others. Pupils have good opportunities, for example in religious education and geography, to learn about other cultures, such as life in Tibet.

53. The provision for the health education aspects of pupils' personal development is sound with appropriate attention being given to sex education and education about the dangers of drug abuse.

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

54. The school has good arrangements for ensuring pupils' welfare, staff have a high level of concern for the pupils' welfare, the school provides a safe environment and a standard of care which is never less than good. The support provided for pupils' personal development is very good and this underpins their good learning.
55. Proper attention is paid to health and safety matters. All the less satisfactory features mentioned in the previous inspection report have been attended to. Staff, pupils and governors have good levels of awareness of health and safety. The governing body now keeps a good check on health and safety matters and ensures that risk assessments are carried out regularly. The arrangements for child protection follow local guidelines; there is now a designated teacher and staff have received appropriate training. Staff are trained in emergency aid.
56. The school believes in the importance of promoting a strong sense of community among its members. This embraces all aspects of its care for pupils' welfare. Dealing with small numbers, teachers know pupils very well as individuals and often their families as well. This helps them to address pupils' needs sensitively and quickly and to provide an environment in which pupils feel they belong. Teachers keep very good records of pupils' personal development and all pupils are fully included in school life, those with special educational needs are supported well.
57. The school promotes good behaviour very well. All the adults share high expectations of pupils' behaviour and they are concerned for pupils' best interests. Pupils are involved in determining the school rules and in resolving any problems that arise. They are therefore committed to following the rules making them work. Pupils are expected to behave sensibly and responsibly and they do so. For instance, they come in off the playing field and put away and lock up the equipment in the storage shed, without any fuss or the need for close supervision. Staff are skilled at channelling pupils' interests and energies constructively. The school's approach is very effective in promoting pupils' sense of self-worth, independence and maturity and thus makes a strong contribution to creating an orderly and purposeful environment in which all pupils can learn.
58. Pupils' attendance is monitored well and the services of the education welfare officer are obtained when appropriate. Parents are reminded regularly of the importance of pupils' school attendance.
59. The school's arrangements for keeping check on pupils' academic performance are good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when there was a key issue for action to improve assessment arrangements and the use of assessment information in the planning of work.
60. There are now several strengths in this aspect of the school's work.
- Pupils' results in the SATs and other tests are analysed carefully to identify areas of weakness in English, mathematics and science. The information gained from these tests is used effectively to plan future development in these subjects. For

- example, after close analysis of last year's SATs results in English, writing was identified as an area for improvement. At least adequate assessment arrangements are now in place in most other subjects.
- Pupils are set individual learning targets. Pupils are consulted and effectively involved in their own target setting and parents are informed of their children's targets. This contributes significantly to pupils' knowledge of their own learning, because they are made aware of what they need to do in order to make progress.
  - In English and mathematics pupils' attainment and their rate of progress are checked well and efficiently against the levels of the National Curriculum.
  - Teachers keep a very good check on pupils' day-to-day progress and they record and evaluate significant academic and personal milestones in their Daily Record Books. Teachers use this system very effectively to guide them in planning future work. The system is used particularly well for recording pupils' personal development in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.
61. There is, nevertheless, scope to improve some aspects of the assessment of pupils' attainment and the rate at which they make progress. In subjects other than English and mathematics, teachers do not use the descriptions of each level of the National Curriculum well enough as a reference in order to judge pupils' attainment and track their progress. In information and communication technology (ICT), music and religious education there is not enough systematic checking of what pupils have learned and their rate of progress. For children in the Foundation Stage, little use is made of the stepping stones towards the nationally recognised Early Learning Goals.
62. The arrangements for assessing the progress made by pupils with special educational needs towards their learning targets are satisfactory overall. This is an improvement since the last inspection when there was a key issue for action to improve the records for pupils with special educational needs. Proper reviews are undertaken and teachers keep good records of the progress made by pupils who have significant learning difficulties. However, at Key Stage 1, the outcomes of progress reviews are not always noted, although they lead to changes in the pupils' individual education plans.
63. Taken overall, the educational and personal support given to pupils and the monitoring of their learning make a strong contribution to their good achievement.

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

64. The school greatly values its parents and welcomes their involvement in its life and work. It maintains very good links with parents and communicates very effectively with them. The resulting quality of partnership between home and school is very high, and makes a strong contribution to pupils' good achievement. There has been a very good improvement in this aspect of the school's work since the last inspection and parents recognise this, not least because improvements to the building have made the school secretary more accessible.
65. Parents have very positive views of the school. They report that their children love coming to school. They like the school's friendliness and approachability. They think the teaching is good, teachers expect their children to work hard and they make good progress. They think pupils' growing sense of responsibility and maturity is promoted very well. Parents support the direction the headteacher sets for the school. Parents express significant dissatisfaction with only one aspect of the school; the fact that it does not provide out of school clubs. The inspectors agree with all these parental opinions.

66. The quality and range of information provided for parents in formal and everyday documents is very good and it is well presented and therefore easy to read and useful. This is exemplified by the school prospectus which is a model of its kind. It contains all the information required by the law and combines it with many individualistic, imaginative and helpful touches. It starts with signed self-portraits of all pupils in the school. It frequently lists examples, such as ways in which parents and members of the community might help the school, and how the school sets about developing independent, responsible and caring attitudes among pupils. Illustrations are provided of some subjects and homework. It ends with a 'jargon buster' page to explain in ordinary language the common technical terms used. The governing body's annual report to parents is similar, including sections contributed by various governors.
67. Parents are provided with a useful folder in which to keep the documents they receive from school and various school policies. The tone is set with the helpful booklet about starting school. A steady flow of useful information continues, for example the well-presented and lively fortnightly newsletters, and parents receive very good information about the work their children undertake and how the National Curriculum will be taught. Through this thorough and stimulating diet parents are very well prepared for supporting their children in their day-to-day school life.
68. A very good level of informal day-to-day contact is maintained between teachers and parents. This helps keep parents abreast of their children's progress. This is supported by more systematic arrangements, such as very good liaison over homework and by informing parents of their children's learning targets. Parents comment that by the time the annual summer report comes round there are no surprises. The annual reports are of good quality. They state clearly what pupils have achieved and give pointers to what they should do to improve. Pupils and parents are invited to make written comments. Pupils easily surpass their parents in this exercise!
69. The school's commitment to parental involvement is a significant strength and it leads to a high level of parental support and involvement so parents make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils benefit from parent helpers in the classrooms on most days. Many parents accept the invitation to read with their children in the infant class for the first ten minutes of the school day. A notice board is provided for parents' use in addition to the information, such as minutes of meetings of the governing body, that is displayed for parents by the staff. The notice boards are kept lively and attractive. The school actively seeks parents' views on a wide range of school matters. For example, parents were consulted about the behaviour policy and they are consulted about what projects might appeal to their children. Parents' needs are kept under review through the termly meetings of the Parents' Information Group, which considers strategies for assisting communication between the school and parents. The parents involved like the teamwork and the feeling of common purpose between them for the good of the school and their ideas are used. One, a structured 'jungle telegraph' system, worked very well to inform parents quickly that the school was closed one day during the inspection because severe weather had resulted in a power cut. Parents are very supportive of the school's attitudes and behaviour policy and they contribute a great deal to the very pleasant and co-operative community atmosphere.
70. Parents promote the school very successfully in the local community. For instance the '100 Club', one of several fund-raising ventures, has more than 100 members. Parents also raise substantial funds that are used to improve the school's facilities and the resources for teaching and learning. For example, parents contributed half the cost of the new library and office extension. Much support for the school's excellent environmental work is provided by parents and the community.

71. Overall, the school evokes very positive regard and support from parents and the community and harnesses this well for the benefit of the pupils.

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

72. The leadership and management of the school, taken overall, are satisfactory. There are strengths in the headteacher's sensitive and enthusiastic leadership, the work of the governing body and the application of the principles of best value. There are weaknesses in the monitoring and evaluation of the school's work.

### **The contributions of the headteacher, staff and the governing body**

73. The last inspection report identified several weaknesses in the school's leadership and management. These led to two key issues for action that have both been addressed, for the most part, satisfactorily. For instance, the headteacher now has sufficient time without a class teaching commitment, the management of the curriculum has improved, the chain of command has been clarified and resources are now properly audited. Work remains to be done to ensure there is a consistent emphasis on high attainment and to sharpen up the procedures for monitoring and evaluating the school's work.
74. The headteacher leads the school well. She is clear what sort of school she wants Holme St Cuthbert to be; one that provides a broad and rich curriculum and gives high priority to promoting pupils' personal development, is founded on positive relationships, works closely with parents and is an essential part of the community. This vision is shared by governors and staff and supported by parents, so everyone involved with the school is working together and they want the best for the pupils. The headteacher embodies the school's ethos of care and concern for each pupil and she provides a good role model for staff and pupils. As a result, Holme St Cuthbert is a happy, caring school where relationships are very good and pupils feel they are valued members of the school community and the school provides an orderly environment for pupils to learn in and a purposeful atmosphere.
75. The two teachers work closely together and they are thoughtful about their teaching and what the school offers its pupils. They want their pupils to achieve as well as they can but, as yet, in most subjects, the school's procedures for evaluating its performance and checking on the quality of teaching are not sufficiently rigorous. Some monitoring of teaching occurs and teachers' planning is checked. However, although the headteacher has a broad overview of the provision for children in the Foundation Stage and pupils in Key Stage 1, she does not know enough about what they are doing and how well they are achieving to pinpoint what works well and where improvement is needed. The weaknesses in monitoring and evaluating the school's performance mean that planning for the school's future development is not as firmly underpinned as it could be by a precise picture of the present position in all aspects of the school's work. Furthermore, although pupils' achievement is not consistent all through the school or in all subjects, plans for staff training do not fully reflect this.
76. The management of the school is satisfactory and is improving. The headteacher is benefiting from management training which includes effective support from a manager at British Nuclear Fuels (BNFL). Sufficient time is now allocated to allow the headteacher to fulfil her leadership and management responsibilities and the school's administrative procedures are much improved. The time is now ripe to build on what the school has achieved and on pupils' positive attitudes, by putting greater stress on

raising standards of attainment. The improvements in information and communication technology (ICT) and science show the staff have the capacity to do this.

77. The governing body makes a good contribution to the school. Its members are committed to the school, they provide good support and they fulfil their responsibilities effectively. Governors have a keen awareness of their accountability to parents. They know the school well because the headteacher keeps them well informed and several are closely involved in its day-to-day life and work. The governing body is fully involved in the process of determining the plans for the school's future development. It is strongly placed to support the school in its efforts to improve further.

### **The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

#### Staffing

78. The school is generously staffed with teachers and there are sufficient support staff for the number of pupils. All are suitably qualified and experienced. Teachers take up opportunities for further training to keep them up-to-date. However, there are some limitations in the teachers' knowledge of the subjects they teach. For instance, they lack sufficient expertise in music to teach it to the level expected in Key Stage 2. The arrangements to familiarise new staff with the school and help them settle in have been improved since the last inspection.

#### Accommodation

79. The accommodation is good. It has been considerably improved since the last inspection. For instance, an extension now houses a library, an office and an attractive entrance hall. Provision of the library has resulted in an improvement in pupils' research skills. The accommodation is now more than adequate to allow most of the National Curriculum subjects and religious education to be taught effectively and it is well maintained. However, there are two shortcomings. Firstly, the classroom in which children in the Foundation Stage and pupils in Key Stage 1 are accommodated is rather small and this restricts the provision of opportunities for active learning and suitable play activities for the reception children. Secondly, the indoor accommodation for physical education is too small to allow all members of a class to work safely at the same time. This slows pupils' learning in gymnastics. The outdoor accommodation is of a very good standard and the development and use of the grounds to support pupils' learning is excellent.

#### Resources

80. Resources in most areas of the curriculum are satisfactory. In mathematics, science, ICT and geography they are good. Resources for physical education are unsatisfactory because there is insufficient suitable gymnastic apparatus for pupils in Key Stage 2 and this has a detrimental effect on pupils' rate of progress.

### **The school's use of its resources**

81. The school makes satisfactory use of its resources to promote effective teaching and learning. Day-to-day administration and financial control are good. This supports the smooth running of the school.
82. The available funds are targeted to the areas identified for development and grants for specific purposes, such as special educational needs, are used properly. Parents raise substantial funds and these are spent wisely. They have contributed to improvements

to the accommodation, such as the library and the new office, and are also used to enhance the resources for teaching and learning.

83. The deployment of support staff leaves the class for children in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 without support for a considerable part of the teaching week. This has an adverse effect on the provision of opportunities for them to learn through suitable play activities.
84. The school makes good use of ICT, for example, in lessons and for producing attractive newsletters for parents.
85. The local area is used very effectively as a resource for teaching and learning, particularly in science and geography and this contributes to pupils' good progress.
86. The principles of best value are applied well. For example, all parties are consulted very well about school life and any proposed changes and governors secure good value in major spending decisions.

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

87. In order to raise standards further and improve the quality of education, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1)\* Raise standards in English, by the time pupils leave the school, to match the standards achieved in mathematics and science and raise standards in music in Key Stage 2 by:

#### **In English**

- raising teachers' expectations of what pupils should achieve in the reception year and in Key Stage 1;
- refining the monitoring of pupils' rate of progress in writing to ensure that staff know precisely what pupils need to learn next;
- more systematic planning of opportunities for pupils to develop and use their reading and writing skills in other subjects.

(Paragraph nos: 9, 32, 91, 95, 98, 104, 112, 113)

#### **In music**

- improving teachers' knowledge of the subject so that they are able to take the work to a high enough level;
- matching work better to pupils' different levels of attainment as they move up the school.

(Paragraph nos: 9, 165)

- (2)\* Improve the arrangements by which the headteacher monitors the school's performance and checks on the effectiveness of teaching and learning all through the school so she is clear precisely where improvements are needed. (Paragraph nos: 75, 141, 147, 152, 158, 163, 172, 179, 184)

- (3) Improve the provision for children in the Foundation Stage (reception year) by:
- providing more opportunities for these children to learn through purposeful, planned and organised play activities;
  - making better use of the nationally recognised 'Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage', the stepping stones to the Early Learning Goals in planning the work.
- (Paragraph nos: 35, 41, 61, 79, 91, 103)

In addition to these key issues for action, the following less significant weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- finding ways of providing extra-curricular activities\* (paragraph no: 46);
- improving the arrangements for checking pupils' progress in the foundation subjects, against the National Curriculum levels (paragraph nos: 61, 141, 163, 172);
- tailoring the whole-school plans of work for the foundation subjects to meet the needs of mixed-age classes (paragraph nos: 43, 44);
- improving the resources for physical education (paragraph nos: 80, 178).

\* The school has already recognised the need to tackle these weaknesses.



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	16
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	14

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6	56	38	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	36
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	13

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	5	4	9

The test results are not reported in detail because fewer than 11 pupils took the tests. The pupils did particularly well in the mathematics test. In reading and writing their results were typical of those seen nationally.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	5	4	9

As at Key Stage 1, the test results are not reported in detail because fewer than 11 pupils took the tests. The pupils did particularly well in the science test. In English and mathematics their results were typical of those seen nationally.

### Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	30
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)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18
Average class size	18

#### Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	20

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	100851
Total expenditure	101041
Expenditure per pupil	2591
Balance brought forward from previous year	2702
Balance carried forward to next year	2512

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	36
Number of questionnaires returned	28

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	36	0	0	7
My child is making good progress in school.	57	39	0	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	57	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	57	14	0	0
The teaching is good.	50	46	4	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	61	25	14	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	25	11	0	7
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	43	4	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	46	50	4	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	61	29	11	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	39	7	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	29	11	14	14

## **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**

88. The Foundation Stage covers education from three years of age to the end of the reception year. At Holme St Cuthbert, children start school at the beginning of the school year in which they become five, the reception year. At the time of the inspection there were six reception children who were taught in a class with the five- to seven-year-olds in Key Stage 1.
89. When children start school, most have experience of pre-school education at nursery or playgroup. Their level of attainment on entry varies considerably from year to year but, taken over several years, it is broadly average. However, the attainment level of this year's reception children, taken together, was above average; they are a good group for the school.
90. The children's achievement in the reception year is satisfactory and by the end of the year, children are ready to move on to work on the National Curriculum and to benefit from it. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and all children, including those with special educational needs, make steady gains overall in their learning. As a result, the present reception children are set to exceed the expected standards (the Early Learning Goals) in several areas of learning, by the end of the reception year.
91. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in most areas of learning. It is good for personal, social and emotional development, mathematics, early information and communication technology (ICT) skills and developing children's knowledge and understanding of religions. In these aspects of learning, expectations are high and good foundations are laid for future work. In early reading and writing skills, expectations are not as high as they could be, so children are not taken as far as they could go in this area. The children benefit in several ways by being in a class with older pupils, not least in gaining confidence and developing independence. However, there are disadvantages that have not been overcome, notably in the small classroom and the limited amount of support staff time allocated to the class. Consequently, although a sufficient range of play activities is provided, staff do not do as much as they could to help children learn through purposeful, organised play activities and they rarely participate in children's play to move their learning forward.

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

92. The provision for this area of learning is good and children achieve above average standards by the end of the reception year. Staff are sensitive to them as individuals and keep very good records of their personal development.
93. The children are encouraged to work together co-operatively, to develop independence and to think for themselves; they respond well to this. For example, they include everyone in group activities and ask each other questions. They seek help when they really need it, knowing staff will support them but still expect them to use their initiative and do as much as possible for themselves. For instance, children ask the teacher to help fasten zips but know she expects them to do buttons themselves. The classroom is organised so children can easily get the things they need for their work and they do so with a good degree of initiative and independence and without any fuss. They concentrate well, for example when they experimented on printing with a range of objects and materials, to select the best ones and improve their skills before printing on silk.

94. Staff help the children to form constructive relationships and to develop a good awareness of others, tolerance, an understanding of the difference between right and wrong and the ability to apply this thoughtfully. For example, after hearing the Buddhist story of Siddhartha and Devadatta and the injured swan they said which of the boys they thought should be given custody of the swan. They gave reasons for their judgements, such as that Devadatta should not get the swan because he might hurt it again. Staff and voluntary helpers set a very good example for children to follow in their relationships and in their sensitivity to individuals. As a result, children co-operate well and respect each other.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

95. The children's achievement is satisfactory overall. They make good progress in developing speaking and listening skills and satisfactory progress in early reading but their rate of progress in writing is unsatisfactory. By the end of the reception year, their attainment in speaking and listening exceeds the Early Learning Goals; in reading they meet the goals but in writing few of the present reception children are on course to attain the goals.
96. The children take turns in discussions and listen to each other and adults. Their contributions are often quite sophisticated for their age and they are able to speculate, using words and phrases like, 'if', 'maybe', 'I think that .....because'. The children enjoy stories and listen to them well. Their progress in speaking and listening is aided by the way staff encourage them to express themselves and to listen carefully and ask questions.
97. The children develop a positive attitude to books and reading. This is supported well by a good home-school reading partnership; most of the children read at home several times a week and parents and teacher communicate well about how the children are getting on. The children enjoy their simple storybooks and they read the repetitive captions in picture books and understand the stories. They recognise some words on sight. They know the sound some letters make but rarely use this knowledge to work out new words, unless helped by an adult. The children's development of reading skills benefits from their involvement in parts of the literacy hour with older pupils in the class. They learn some things not normally taught to children their age. For instance, they joined in with a lesson about how non-fiction books are organised. Later, when reading aloud, one of the children showed the contents page to explain that, 'I've got three stories in here'.
98. The children develop confidence in themselves as writers but do not attain the standards they should. They draw shapes like letters independently to communicate meaning in stories and to record information and some write a few recognisable words. They copy their teacher's writing but form many of their letters incorrectly. Not enough attention is paid to teaching this aspect of writing effectively. The children write their own names correctly but none are yet able to work out how to spell simple unknown words and they are not able to write simple sentences independently.

### **Mathematical development**

99. The children achieve well in this area of learning. They make good gains in their learning and they are attaining above average standards. Most have already achieved the standard expected by the end of the reception year. They have a good understanding of the value of numbers up to ten. They match numerals correctly to sets of objects. Several count accurately well beyond ten. Most understand the idea of

addition and add one to a given number reliably. The higher attaining children undertake simple addition sums and they calculate accurately with the aid of pictures. They name shapes, such as squares and rectangles, correctly and, in construction play, they select shapes to fit spaces with a fair degree of accuracy.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

100. This area of learning helps children to make sense of the world around them and lays the foundations for later study of science, design and technology, geography, history and information and communication technology (ICT). It was not possible to gather sufficient evidence to form a valid judgement on all aspects of this area of learning. Nevertheless, the evidence available suggests that children's attainment, taken overall, meets the expectations for their age.
101. The children take a lively interest in the world around them and they learn about the natural world from observing the seasonal changes in the school garden and about animals by visiting a farm. They classify things like cups and saucers and trees, according to whether they are alive or not, with a reasonable degree of accuracy. They match pictures of animals and their young correctly, such as a cow and a calf. They are aware of the use of electricity to power everyday items like kitchen appliances. The children have good opportunities to use computers and they develop good ICT skills for their age. They are familiar with the keyboard and use the mouse confidently. For example, they use a program to reinforce early reading skills well. They move confidently through the program by clicking on different icons. They are interested in customs and cultures of other people in other countries and those with different beliefs. For example, they were fascinated by the display of Buddhist artefacts. They have good knowledge and understanding of different cultures and beliefs. For instance, they are learning about Buddhism alongside the older pupils in the class. They know that Buddhists respect statues and pictures of the Buddha and that they meditate.

### **Physical development**

102. The children's physical development is above average, by the end of the reception year. They move confidently with a good degree of control on the gymnastic apparatus and they find several ways of travelling on the floor. They know about the importance of exercise and a balanced diet to keep their bodies healthy. They use a good range of small equipment, such as paintbrushes and glue spreaders with good control.

### **Creative development**

103. The children achieve average overall standards for their age in this area of learning. They enjoy art and craft activities and they work with a sufficiently wide range of media. They take care with their work and experiment purposefully. For instance, they printed on silk after looking at Tibetan crafts. Under the good guidance of a parent helper, they experimented with a range of tools to get the effects they wanted. Children play co-operatively, taking on roles in the domestic play area but, for the most part, the educational opportunities of imaginative play are not sufficiently utilised. The children join in singing familiar songs and practise their favourites enthusiastically. They experiment with sounds. For example, they compare the sounds made by Tibetan chime bells and the larger dorge bell, that is used in ceremonies.

## ENGLISH

104. Pupils achieve satisfactory standards by the end of Key Stage 2. The present Year 6 pupils are attaining standards in reading and writing that are in line with the national expectation for pupils of their age. Their speaking and listening skills are well above average. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are now achieving well overall. In Key Stage 1 (the infants) they make satisfactory progress and in Key Stage 2 (the juniors) they are now gaining ground at a good rate; this is an improvement that reflects the effective implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and the good teaching. In Key Stage 2 reading and writing standards are generally a bit above average earlier in the key stage. Nevertheless, standards could be higher; pupils do not achieve such high standards in English as they do in mathematics and science.
105. The previous inspection found that, although pupils' attainment was generally satisfactory, those in Years 5 and 6 were not doing well enough at reading and writing. This underachievement has now been overcome because work is better matched to pupils' different levels of attainment.
106. Each year there are only a few pupils taking the National Curriculum tests so each pupil's performance makes a significant difference to the overall results. For this reason, it is not possible to draw valid conclusions from a comparison between the results obtained by eleven-year-olds at Holme St Cuthbert and the national average. However, the pupils' results can be compared with those achieved by others, across the country, who achieved similar results when they were seven-year-olds at the end of Key Stage 1. This comparison shows that last year's leavers made satisfactory progress in English during their time in Key Stage 2. Their results in the end of Key Stage 2 tests were typical of those seen nationally, as were those achieved by the seven-year-olds in the end of Key Stage 1 tests.
107. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in speaking and listening because this aspect of English is taught well. Pupils are taught to think for themselves, to make considered and thoughtful contributions in discussions and to explain and justify their opinions and their contributions are respected. Teachers fully include pupils who find it hard to express themselves, encouraging them to contribute. Pupils attain above average standards in this aspect of English in Key Stage 1. In philosophy lessons, they thoughtfully discuss difficult concepts, such as whether anyone can, or indeed should, own a view or a smell. In religious education, they express their own views on the moral issues raised in religious stories. They listen attentively to each other and they make confident and relevant contributions to the discussion. Year 2 pupils are beginning to develop their ideas orally.
108. Pupils build well on this good start and they continue to make good progress in Key Stage 2. They have good opportunities for purposeful talk. For example, they debate controversial issues such as fox-hunting, and they are expected to contribute constructively in meetings to organise school events. This work also makes a good contribution to pupils' moral and social development. Teachers have good questioning skills and they always expect pupils to answer fully, to explain their work, ideas and opinions clearly and to keep to the point. For example, when a Year 4 pupil suggested that layout is important in a non-fiction book, the teacher followed up with, 'tell me what you mean by that'. The pupil then went on to give a much more precise explanation. As a result of this good provision, pupils attain high standards in speaking and listening, by the top of the school. The Year 6 pupils converse maturely with adults. Their contributions to discussions are well considered. They put their views and ideas

forward confidently and express them well in a wide range of situations and they show sensitivity to the views of others.

109. In reading, pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Key Stage 1. They enjoy stories and they know how non-fiction books are organised with a contents page at the front. The higher attainers understand how to use an index and know it is in alphabetical order. Most of the Year 2 pupils are attaining the standard expected for their age. They read suitable books with good expression and understanding. They make sensible comments about the plot and the characters in their books. They employ a range of strategies effectively to help them work out unfamiliar words. In this key stage, pupils' progress is supported well by a good home-school reading partnership. Most pupils read regularly at home.
110. The Year 6 pupils are attaining average standards in reading. They choose from a good range of reading material and they read for pleasure and information. They are developing their tastes in reading. They have favourite authors and they select unfamiliar fiction books by their covers, the 'blurb' and by reading the first few pages. They have a sound understanding of what they read. They appreciate humour in books and they are beginning to understand the meaning behind the words. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils have good reference skills for their age. All the Years 5 and 6 pupils understand the numerical system for classifying library books and use it efficiently. They use indexes and glossaries to locate and understand information and they use CD-Roms effectively as sources of information.
111. The standards of pupils' written work, including handwriting, spelling and punctuation, are broadly average in Year 2 and Year 6, the final year of each key stage. Pupils make steady progress in Key Stage 1. They undertake a good range of written work for a variety of purposes and they believe in themselves as writers. By Year 2, pupils write confidently and set to written tasks with a good sense of purpose. They plan stories with a clear beginning, middle and end and the higher attaining pupils have a good grasp of the style of writing used in storybooks. The lower attainers write more simple sentences and stories and do not always mark sentences with full stops. Pupils' handwriting is not as good as it could be. Pupils are taught how to form their letters but staff do not require them to apply this consistently. Consequently, pupils reinforce bad habits in their everyday writing.
112. Pupils are now making good progress in writing in Key Stage 2. The Year 6 pupils choose words carefully for effect and they develop characters in their stories. The standards in Year 6 do not yet reflect the good quality of teaching in this key stage and the improvements that have resulted from introducing the National Literacy Strategy effectively. However, this is now bearing fruit in the higher standards earlier in the key stage. In this key stage pupils have many good opportunities to use their literacy skills to write in a range of forms in other subjects. For example, their geography projects about the local area involved much research and they were written well and presented very well. Nevertheless, there is scope to plan the development and use of literacy skills across the curriculum more carefully and systematically in both key stages to ensure pupils undertake an appropriate range of reading and writing at a suitably demanding level.
113. Through its good analysis of SATs results the school has identified pupils' writing as a weakness and has begun to take steps to improve it. Extra help is targeted at selected pupils, their work is checked closely and samples are kept. Teachers know where these pupils are up to but the tracking is not sharply enough focused to enable staff to determine precisely what the pupils need to learn next to make best progress.



114. The quality of teaching and learning seen in lessons and from pupils' previous work, is good overall. It is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. The differences are seen in teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve, the way they extend pupils' skills, how effectively they hold pupils' attention in whole-class sessions and the quality of their lesson planning. Teachers use correct vocabulary precisely when they teach about language and books and pupils follow their example. For instance, Key Stage 1 pupils were learning about how simple reference books are organised and they used 'contents' and 'index' correctly. Throughout the school, teachers value pupils' contributions to lessons. One pupil in the infant class brought his encyclopaedias to school and these were used effectively in the lesson on using reference books. Homework is used well in Key Stage 1 and very well in Key Stage 2 to support the work pupils do in class.
115. The most effective teaching is rooted in teachers' very good knowledge of each pupil's strengths and weaknesses. This means tasks and questions in whole-class sessions are matched well to pupils' different learning needs so they all make sufficient progress. When teachers communicate their enjoyment of the subject and make learning appealing, pupils respond enthusiastically. For example, Years 3 and 4 pupils quickly learned about the first, second and third person by pairing up the large cards the teacher gave them to hold. In the most successful lessons, pupils' misunderstandings are used wisely to help other pupils. For instance, in a lesson in the junior class, a pupil's confusion about hard and soft 'c's led to all pupils racking their brains for words to illustrate both. The teacher skilfully used the pupils' ideas to teach a new spelling rule. Pupils' rate of progress and their good achievement reflect the teaching.
116. Teachers are implementing the National Literacy Strategy effectively and this is having a positive effect on standards. In Key Stage 2, the daily literacy hour is organised well so all pupils get sessions of intensive, direct teaching on work that is appropriate for them. Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour make a good contribution to their rate of learning because they apply themselves well for sustained periods of time with little direct supervision. This means the teacher is able to work intensively with two year groups at a time knowing that the other pupils are working productively, even on occasions, working together in the library.
117. Throughout the school, the match of work to pupils' needs is underpinned by good assessment of their progress towards each level of the National Curriculum.
118. The library is a good resource and it is well stocked. Teachers use resources effectively in lessons, for example whiteboards for each pupil to write their answers on. However, direct class teaching is sometimes inhibited by the lack of suitable resources, such as flip charts or overhead projectors.

## **MATHEMATICS**

119. Pupils are attaining above average standards by the time they leave the school. Standards, by the age of seven, are average. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 (the infants) and good in Key Stage 2 (the juniors) and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good overall progress in their learning. Standards have improved since the last inspection when they were reported to be in line with national averages by the end of both key stages. This improvement is the result of better teaching in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1 standards have been maintained. Pupils with special educational needs achieve and progress in their learning at as good a rate as most other pupils, in the light of their learning difficulties.

120. The standards seen on inspection differ from those indicated by the seven- and eleven-year-olds' results in the National Curriculum tests (SATs) in 2000. They are higher than the SATs results by the end of Key Stage 2 but not as high as the SATs results by the end of Key Stage 1. Little can be inferred from these differences because there are only a few pupils in each year so each pupil's performance makes a significant difference to the overall results and standards vary considerably from year to year. A comparison of the results obtained in the Key Stage 2 SATs by Holme St Cuthbert's pupils with those achieved by pupils across the country who achieved similar results at seven years of age, shows that last year's leavers made slower than average progress in mathematics during their time in Key Stage 2. Pupils are now gaining ground more rapidly and making good gains in their learning in this key stage and therefore achieving higher standards in relation to their age. This is because the teaching for seven- to eleven-year-olds is good. The school is implementing the National Numeracy Strategy effectively and this is having a positive effect on pupils' rate of progress.
121. Pupils achieve well in their ability to use and apply their mathematical knowledge, their understanding of number and their knowledge and understanding of shape, space and measures. In data handling, their achievement is sound and their work is of an average standard.
122. By the age of seven, pupils have acquired a sound understanding of number. They add and subtract numbers up to 20 correctly and speedily. They order and count in tens confidently to 100 and are beginning to understand the significance of the position of each digit in a number in determining its value and to apply this understanding to numbers up to 1000.
123. The seven- to eleven-year-olds in the juniors make particularly good progress in number and algebra because the teacher has high expectations and poses challenging problems for pupils to solve. Pupils are expected to explain how they work calculations out and they are encouraged to find different ways of solving problems. The development of pupils' mental agility is a strong feature of the good teaching in the numeracy hours. This ensures pupils make good progress in using and applying their mathematical knowledge and skills in a variety of ways. For example, pupils found several ways of successfully calculating to reach a specific number as the answer, using combinations of addition, subtraction and multiplication in a given amount of time. By looking at unit digits pupils recognise and explain patterns in number sequences. Pupils make good progress in understanding fractions and percentages and by the age of eleven they identify equivalent fractions and write a given fraction as a percentage and a decimal.
124. In shape, space and measures Year 1 pupils tell the time on the hour accurately. By the age of seven, most pupils recognise two- and three-dimensional shapes and know some of their properties. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2 and by Year 6 they are familiar with an appropriate range of shapes and they successfully interpret and follow co-ordinates in order to draw a parallelogram, a rhombus and a kite. They calculate the perimeters of irregular shapes accurately.
125. Pupils make satisfactory progress in learning about data handling and in both key stages they attain average standards in this aspect of mathematics. Teachers develop and promote this aspect of mathematics well in other subjects, for example when pupils are asked to collect and represent data on a range of different graphs during science lessons. Teachers also use information and communication technology (ICT) very effectively to support learning in mathematics, particularly to promote pupils' acquisition of data handling skills.

126. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in the infants and good in the juniors. When teaching is at its best group work is organised effectively in the numeracy hours. All pupils are set demanding work and they rise to the challenge with good levels of interest and perseverance. In such lessons, the teacher uses a range of teaching methods such as demonstration and questioning skilfully to teach key skills and to extend pupils' thinking. When teaching is not so successful pupils of different ages in the same class are given very similar work. This results in some groups of pupils making less progress than they could on occasions, because they are given tasks that are not sufficiently well matched to their age and ability.
127. The effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has supported and further developed planning in the subject but there are few checks on the quality of teaching. The arrangements to judge the standards pupils attain and to keep track of their progress have improved greatly. Teachers now carefully analyse both the results of SATs and other tests in order to identify strengths and weaknesses and help them plan future developments in the subject. Pupils' attainment is effectively recorded against National Curriculum levels so teachers can identify precisely what pupils know and what they can do. However, teachers do not use these tests sufficiently well to track pupils' rates of progress over time. Ongoing assessment during lessons is good and teachers use this very effectively when they plan future lessons. However, the marking of pupils' mathematics work is insufficiently evaluative and does not communicate to pupils how they might improve their work.

## **SCIENCE**

128. Pupils are attaining well above average standards by the age of eleven. Standards in the present Year 6 match the high standards achieved in the 2000 National Curriculum tests (SATs). The seven-year-olds are attaining average standards. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 (the infants) and good in Key Stage 2 (the juniors). The standards pupils reach by the top of the school have improved significantly since the last inspection when they were reported to be in line with the national average. Pupils' good overall achievement is down to consistently good teaching in Key Stage 2. Teachers use scientific enquiry and well-planned practical investigations very effectively to teach pupils about the other aspects of the subjects (life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes). This approach helps pupils to develop a good understanding of the work they cover. Pupils with special educational needs achieve and progress in their learning at as good a rate as their classmates, in relation to their learning difficulties.
129. By the age of eleven, pupils have very good skills and understanding in the area of scientific enquiry. In this aspect of the subject they are working close to the level expected of pupils two years older. They have a good understanding of what constitutes a fair scientific test. They pose questions, carry out experiments and investigations to answer them and record their observations and findings in various forms, such as charts and graphs. They are interested in the subject, they enjoy experimental work and they are keen to deepen their knowledge and understanding of science. Pupils have very good attitudes to their learning in science because teachers provide them with challenging and interesting work and well-planned tasks that enable them to find out for themselves and develop their own lines of enquiry.
130. Teachers make exceptionally good use of the local area and the school garden as learning resources and this has a significant positive effect on pupils' knowledge and understanding of life processes, living things and the natural world and their awareness of environmental issues. For example, through the planting and nurturing of

bulbs and plants pupils soon learn that there are life processes such as growth, nutrition and reproduction, common to plants and animals. Pupils in Key Stage 1 soon learn, from planting bulbs and observing their growth, that plants need water, soil and sunlight in order to grow well. The Key Stage 2 pupils have studied food chains in the school garden.

131. In Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory progress in understanding about materials and their properties and physical process. For example, Year 2 pupils classify natural and man-made materials and they identify many everyday objects that need electricity in order to work. In Key Stage 2 pupils acquire a very good knowledge and understanding of materials and their properties, for example they classify substances accurately as solids, liquids and gases. They know how mixtures can be separated by using either a filter or a sieve. These pupils use scientific vocabulary confidently, for instance using the correct terminology well to explain scientific processes such as condensation and evaporation. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make good progress in understanding physical processes, for example by investigating which parts of a bicycle have high and low friction. By Year 6, pupils know that copper wire is a good conductor of electricity.
132. The quality of teaching is good overall, being satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and consistently of a good quality in Key Stage 2. Key strengths of the teaching in Key Stage 2 are the teacher's very good knowledge of the subject and enthusiasm for it, very good day-to-day checking of how well pupils are learning and very good use of homework to reinforce and extend pupils' learning. These strengths are behind pupils' good rate of progress, as they follow the teacher's example in using specific scientific vocabulary correctly, develop their understanding of scientific method and study scientific topics in considerable depth. Teachers explain key scientific concepts clearly and understandably. For instance, in a lesson in the Key Stage 2 class, the teacher's very good understanding of friction enabled her to correct pupils' initial misconceptions; they confused friction with air resistance and weight. Teachers question pupils very skilfully, matching their questions to pupils' different levels of attainment and ensuring that all pupils' knowledge, understanding and thinking are extended. They prepare teaching and learning resources, such as visual aids and ICT, well and use them effectively to support pupils' learning. Where there are weaknesses in teaching, key scientific concepts and vocabulary are not sufficiently reinforced or promoted during lessons.
133. The planning of work in science has improved since the last inspection. National guidelines are now used effectively to support teachers' planning and learning objectives are clearly identified and closely aligned to the National Curriculum requirements, but there are few checks on the quality of teaching. Assessment procedures have also improved. Pupils are now tested at the end of topics in order to identify what they have learned and where there are gaps and teachers use this information when planning the future lessons. The resources for teaching and learning science have increased since the last inspection and are now good.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

134. Judgements are based on the two lessons seen, an examination of pupils' work on display around the school and retained from last school year, scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussions with teachers and pupils.
135. The standard of the work seen, most of it produced by pupils in Key Stage 2, was above average for the pupils' age. This represents a good achievement on the pupils' part and an improvement in standards since the last inspection. Pupils produce good

quality work in a range of media in two and three dimensions. For example, applique wall hangings, sculptures, pictures created from natural materials and pictures using line to capture qualities of the natural world, such as the movement of water. The work retained from last year was mostly sketched portraits. These show a good standard of observational drawing. Pupils have observed detail carefully and recorded it faithfully; most use shading well.

136. Pupils with special educational needs achieve equally as well as their classmates. Indeed, in one lesson one of these pupils' work was used as an example for the others to learn from.
137. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are developing a good sense of colour. When printing, they selected colours carefully to achieve the effects they wanted. However, they do not have opportunities to mix paints.
138. In both the lessons seen, one in each key stage, the quality of teaching was good and, as a consequence, pupils made good progress in their learning. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to experiment before producing a final piece of work. Pupils respond well, working productively with good concentration and a determination to produce work of quality and they develop an understanding that art involves a personal response and creative expression. In the Key Stage 2 lesson pupils used a variety of mark-making tools to produce lines and then to use the effects created with lines to illustrate a part of their environment, such as fields or the sea. The teacher's sound subject knowledge enabled her to focus on the key elements of the work, such as line and texture. She provided a good model for pupils. Her involvement and enthusiasm motivated them and encouraged them to experiment purposefully and to try hard to communicate. Pupils' experimental work led to a good appreciation of the potential of these elements for achieving specific effects and they produced well considered pictures. All the pupils explained why they had chosen to use particular lines to obtain specific effects and the older pupils' work was relatively sophisticated.
139. Teachers make good use of the work of famous artists and other examples of art and design. For example, pupils' portraits were produced in response to a study of a range of portraits by artists, such as Rembrandt, Modigliani and Van Gogh; Key Stage 2 pupils' work was stimulated effectively by examples of aboriginal art and a range of prints are displayed in school. However, such provision is not systematically planned to ensure pupils encounter a balanced range of art from different periods and cultures.
140. The art and design curriculum is good. The whole-school planning ensures pupils undertake a good range of work and they have good opportunities to learn about crafts. For instance, they have made felt from wool. The curriculum is enriched by educational visits and by a very good contribution from local artists and crafts people. For example, pupils work with natural materials on a visit to Grasmere and a parent has helped them to produce a mosaic picture. Pupils' work is used to enhance the school environment. For instance, they have painted pictures on tiles and these adorn the entrance area. The provision for art and design makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
141. There are no systematic procedures for checking on the standards pupils attain and their rate of progress. This means that teachers cannot be sure that pupils are getting on as well as they could.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

142. It was not possible to observe any lessons during the inspection. Judgements are therefore based on the scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning and discussions with both pupils and staff.
143. Pupils learn at a satisfactory rate and they attain the standards expected for their age by the end of each key stage in most aspects of the subject. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The weakness in design skills in Key Stage 2, identified in the last inspection report, persists. However, by the time they are eleven, pupils' making skills and their ability to evaluate the products they make are appropriate for their age.
144. It is not possible to make a valid judgement on the quality of teaching. Nevertheless, since pupils make satisfactory progress in most aspects of the subject, the teaching appears to be satisfactory.
145. The five- to seven-year-olds in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress in both designing and making skills. Pupils effectively make plans of their designs, often identifying and labelling different component parts accurately before making something. However these design skills are not sufficiently built upon in Key Stage 2. Pupils make plans of their designs and list materials they intend to use, but their plans are little more than rough sketches and do not identify precise measurement or scale.
146. Across the school all pupils make satisfactory progress in making skills. From an early age pupils learn how to join materials together in different ways and begin to understand how everyday objects are assembled. For example, in science work about electricity, Year 2 pupils take apart and skilfully reassemble a torch in order to find out how it works. In Key Stage 2, pupils show an increasing knowledge and understanding of how materials must be selected, shaped and joined for a specific design specification or purpose. For example, pupils use balsa wood to make a light sturdy frame for a wind-powered vehicle and attach a piece of cotton material onto a simple wooden frame in order to make a suitable sail. Pupils measure, mark out and cut accurately in order to make different component parts on their models. They know how to make structures stronger by using supports for the angles. Pupils effectively evaluate the effectiveness of their designs and show they are able to modify their models if necessary in the light of their evaluation.
147. Since the last inspection a teacher has been designated to take on the responsibility for the subject. However, planning for the subject has not sufficiently improved since the last inspection. Teachers are beginning to use national guidelines to support their planning, but the whole-school planning still does not outline clearly what key skills are to be taught from one year to the next in order to ensure pupils undertake progressively more demanding work as they move up the school. Furthermore, there is little checking on the quality of teaching and little has been done to improve teaching. Teachers use information and communication technology particularly well to support learning in the subject. This was seen in Years 1 and 2 where pupils had effectively designed a model vehicle on the computer.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

148. Standards are above average by the end of the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are attaining above the level expected for their age. Pupils throughout the school achieve well because of the very good use teachers make of the local area in order to teach key geographical skills and concepts and this has a

significant impact on the good progress pupils make in the subject. Consequently there has been a good improvement in standards since the last inspection when standards were reported to be average by the end of both key stages.

149. Pupils across the school acquire a good knowledge and understanding of a range of places and compare their own environment very skilfully with contrasting localities in the UK and the wider world. By Year 2, pupils have a good knowledge of their local area and use proper terminology, such as beach, mountains and river when identifying several physical features within their immediate locality. They know they live in the north of England and name the countries that make up the United Kingdom. Older pupils make a detailed study of Mawbray and show a good knowledge and understanding of places when comparing the similarities of their own environment with Tibet. For example, when comparing the mountainous regions in both places pupils named Skiddaw and Criffell accurately and knew that the latter was in Scotland. Their personal research projects about various countries around the world are well organised and structured. They show that pupils have a good grasp of geographical concepts. Pupils write effectively about features such as climate, industry and population.
150. Pupils achieve well in acquiring mapping skills. This is due to good teaching which strongly promotes field work. By Year 2, pupils draw and identify many human and physical features on a simple map of their village and use appropriate symbols to represent key features such as the church. These skills are effectively built upon in the juniors as pupils begin to use and interpret maps of different scales in order to inform their studies. For example, higher attaining Year 4 pupils begin to use a compass to check direction on their map while involved in a simple orienteering exercise around the school grounds.
151. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils are enthusiastic to learn and have very good attitudes to their work. The teachers effectively place a strong emphasis on field work and the use of the local environment in order to support pupils' learning in the subject and this is why pupils make good progress and achieve well. Resources are well prepared and are used well by teachers to support learning. For example, in the infants the teacher used a range of resources such as a large floor map of the world and satellite photographs to help develop pupils' awareness that there are vast areas of land and water around the world. Pupils understand and use proper geographical terms well because teachers have good subject knowledge and ensure that key skills and concepts are effectively promoted and reinforced during lessons. Teachers make good links with other subjects, such as mathematics, and they use information and communication technology (ICT) very effectively to support learning. For example, Year 2 pupils draw good quality maps of an imaginary village on the computer and in Key Stage 2 pupils record on various types of graphs the different methods of transport people use to get to work.
152. The school uses national guidelines appropriately to support the planning of work in the subject but little check is made on the quality of teaching. Assessment procedures have improved since the last inspection and pupils are now effectively assessed at the end of each unit of work in order to ascertain what they know and can do.

## **HISTORY**

153. It was not possible to observe any history lessons. Judgements are based on an examination of pupils' work and teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and staff.

154. Standards are average. Both Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are attaining in line with the levels expected for their age. Across the school pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning and standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
155. Throughout the school pupils develop a sound knowledge and understanding of important events and people from different periods in history. For example, Year 2 pupils know how the Fire of London started and recall the story of Guy Fawkes well. Their sense of chronology is not so well developed. For example, most pupils had little idea how long ago these events took place. These pupils are aware that things do change over time and know that kitchen appliances and methods of transport used today are very different than they were 100 years ago. The Year 6 pupils understand cause and effect and explain why certain things happened in history. For example, they know why Henry VIII wanted a divorce from Catherine of Aragon and why he eventually broke away from the Roman Catholic Church. In their study of World War 2, they develop a good understanding of why the role of women changed as a result of the war and why it was necessary to evacuate children to rural areas.
156. It is not possible to make a valid judgement on the quality of teaching. Nevertheless, since pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning and attain average standards, the teaching appears to be sufficiently effective.
157. A good feature of the history curriculum is the use of visitors and visits to historical places of interest. For example, pupils' understanding of Tudor life was greatly enhanced by a visitor to the school who dressed as a Tudor lady and expertly taught the pupils a traditional Tudor dance.
158. Planning for the subject is satisfactory. The school effectively uses national guidelines to support planning in the subject and this ensures that all elements of the subject are appropriately covered. There is little check on the quality and effectiveness of teaching.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

159. Pupils attain average standards by the end of each key stage. This represents a very good improvement since the last inspection when standards were low throughout the school and raising standards was a key issue for action. Pupils are now achieving well in most aspects of the subject.
160. Year 2 pupils have sound basic computing skills and they use computers confidently. They know their way around the keyboard, they use function keys, such as 'delete' and 'backspace' with assurance and they control the mouse well. They work through programs independently by clicking on icons on the screen. Their word processing skills are sound and they print their work independently.
161. The Year 6 pupils are working confidently at the level expected for their age across most of the ICT curriculum. For example, they use a desktop publishing program to produce newsletters, they produce with a graphics program and use a digital camera and they use these tools to illustrate their work. They have a good command of the language of ICT. For instance, they naturally refer to the main menu page as the 'desktop'.
162. No overall judgement has been made on the quality of teaching because it was only possible to see one lesson. This was taught satisfactorily. The teacher was clear as to what the pupils were to learn and explained the important points well. However, as the whole class was taught together, only a few had 'hands on' experience during the



lesson and some, therefore, became restless. The work seen revealed strengths in the teaching. Teachers have benefited from further training. They now have good subject knowledge and are enthusiastic about ICT. Pupils see the value and usefulness of ICT because teachers integrate it well with work in other subjects. For example, pupils produce computer-generated designs as part of design and technology projects and they produce maps on computers in geography. Word processing is used for a wide range of purposes. For instance, children in the Foundation Stage and pupils in Key Stage 1 made books for their teacher to take to children in Tibet. They experimented with different fonts to create pleasing title pages. Effective planning of lessons at a suitable level has enabled pupils to make rapid progress so standards have caught up to where they should be. Pupils are keen on the subject.

163. Since the last inspection, good leadership and management of ICT has led to many improvements. Whole-school planning for the curriculum has been put in place, the quality of teaching has improved, computers are used more and the school has obtained more resources for teaching and learning. However, it has only recently obtained sufficient resources for work on control technology. Previously pupils had limited and infrequent opportunities to undertake work in this aspect of the subject. Although standards have risen, systems have not yet been put in place to check how well pupils are doing.
164. What has been achieved in ICT shows how effectively the school can raise standards when priority is given to developing work in a subject.

## **MUSIC**

165. Standards are average by the end of Key Stage 1 but below average, overall, by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils do not make enough progress in their learning in Key Stage 2 and therefore are not achieving as well as they should, especially in performing music. This is largely because the teachers lack sufficient expertise in the subject to teach work at a demanding enough level for the older pupils. Standards at the top of the school are not as high as those reported at the time of the last inspection.
166. The standards achieved and rate of progress of pupils with special educational needs are the same as those of their classmates.
167. Pupils enjoy music making and there is a good atmosphere when they all gather together and sing favourite songs, accompanied on the piano by a voluntary helper. However, these sessions do little to improve the quality of pupils' singing, pupils have few opportunities to play instruments and the songs chosen do not challenge the older pupils.
168. The Key Stage 1 pupils sing tunefully and keep a beat reasonably accurately, taking notice of silences.
169. Taken overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 but not sufficiently effective in Key Stage 2. Nevertheless, music appreciation is taught well in Key Stage 2 and pupils undertake some worthwhile composition work. In a Key Stage 2 lesson, pupils listened to Tibetan religious music. Pupils recognised the peaceful quality of the music and responded positively to it. They listened carefully and recognised how voices and instruments blended together to create long low sounds. They described the sounds they heard appropriately, for example an instrument that sounded like 'two pieces of wood rubbed together', and the higher attaining pupils use musical vocabulary correctly.

170. During the inspection a visiting teacher gave the Key Stage 2 pupils a very good 'taster' session with woodwind instruments. The pupils were very interested in the instruments and keen to play them. The teacher, on his first visit, established good discipline quickly and pleasantly and got pupils concentrating well and trying hard. He captured their interest quickly and held it very well through a briskly paced and very enjoyable lesson in which all pupils were delighted to have the opportunity to play several instruments. Most of the pupils succeeded in getting a reasonable sound from most of the instruments they tried. The pupils quickly learned about the history of the instruments and how they are constructed.
171. Music makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development as they listen to a variety of music from different cultures and traditions. However, this is not sufficiently systematically planned.
172. The leadership and management of music are unsatisfactory because not enough has been done to improve standards or to keep a check on pupils' progress and the quality of teaching.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

173. It was only possible to see two lessons, gymnastics in Key Stage 1 and games in Key Stage 2. In these lessons, pupils worked at an average standard and this suggests that they make satisfactory progress and achieve as they should in these aspects of the physical education curriculum. The quality of teaching and learning observed was satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2.
174. The five- to seven-year-olds improved the standard of their gymnastic performance during the lesson because the teacher used demonstrations by pupils effectively and gave them further challenges to tackle as the lesson progressed. The Year 2 pupils move in a variety of imaginative ways, with satisfactory control of their bodies. The pupils put the apparatus out sensibly and safely.
175. The Key Stage 2 pupils' learning is aided by their very good attitudes to learning and their independence. They organised the equipment for their games lesson quickly and independently and, while the teacher taught a new game to one half of the class, the others practised controlling small balls with unihoc sticks purposefully and productively so no time was wasted. The Years 5 and 6 pupils use space well. Once they had been taught the rules of the game, they applied them fairly, showing good sportsmanship and team spirit. The pupils improved their skills in this lesson as a result of applying the points made by the teacher's good coaching. Pupils know they warm up before exercising to stretch their muscles and thus avoid injuries. Standards in swimming are above average; all pupils achieve the expected standard by the time they leave the school.
176. In both key stages, pupils with special educational needs do as well as their classmates.
177. Physical education makes a good contribution to pupils' moral and social development, through the opportunities to work together, to co-operate and compete and to mix with pupils from other schools.
178. The indoor accommodation and resources for physical education are limited. This slows pupils' learning in lessons because a full class cannot safely work on the apparatus at the same time. Furthermore, there is not enough suitable apparatus for gymnastics in Key Stage 2 so it is not possible to take work to a high enough level.

The staff have made considerable efforts to address the weaknesses reported at the last inspection and to provide the best physical education curriculum they can within the constraints of the available accommodation. They have taken steps to compensate for these weaknesses. For example, pupils join in activity days at the Sands Centre in Carlisle. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to participate in outdoor and adventurous activities at school and during a residential educational visit.

179. The school is joining a Sports Action Zone. This should contribute to raising standards as pupils and teachers benefit from working with specialist staff. At present, there is little check on the quality and effectiveness of teaching.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

180. It was possible to see only one religious education lesson. Judgements are based on this lesson in Key Stage 1, an examination of pupils' work and teachers' planning and discussions with staff and pupils.
181. The standards of the work seen exceeded the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Key Stage 1 and were broadly in line with expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
182. The Year 2 pupils have good knowledge and understanding of the religions they have covered and they are developing an understanding of religious concepts, such as worship and commitment. They have a sound knowledge about stories and people in the Bible and they appreciate the importance of sacred books to believers. For example, they have learned about Mary Jones and her Bible. These pupils have a good knowledge about Buddhism, the religion they were studying at the time of the inspection.
183. In Key Stage 2 pupils build on what they have already learned. They continue to learn about an appropriate range of faiths but also study religious themes, such as beliefs about God and creation and rites of passage, across religions. By the end of this key stage, they are still interested in religions. This was seen in a discussion on Buddhism that was underpinned by the teacher's very good knowledge of this religion. Pupils asked many questions, knowing they would get the answers, and they showed a good knowledge of how religious belief affects everyday life in Tibet. Pupils know about Lent and the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness. They know stories like the loaves and fishes and that these are accounts of miracles. They have a sound knowledge and understanding of Judaism and compare aspects of Judaism with Christianity.
184. As only one lesson was seen, it was not possible to form a valid overall judgement on the quality of teaching. Nevertheless the lesson seen was taught well and pupils were enabled to make good progress in their learning about Buddhism and the teaching of the Buddha in relation to making moral choices and decisions. The teacher made a very timely break in the telling of the story of Siddhartha and Devadatta and the injured swan. She asked the pupils what decision they would make if they were the judge deciding which boy should have the swan. This approach stimulated valuable discussion and a lot of serious thinking as pupils were required to justify their judgements. The pupils were still exchanging views on this as they went off for lunch after the lesson. The teachers have good knowledge and understanding of religion which underpin their teaching. However, in Key Stage 2, all pupils cover the same work, there is little check on the quality and effectiveness of teaching and there are no systematic procedures for judging pupils' attainment and their rate of progress. Consequently, teachers cannot be sure how well pupils are getting on or if the work is

matched well enough to their learning needs. Pupils use their speaking and listening skills well in religious education but less use is made of reading and writing skills and, in Key Stage 2, little is written in pupils' books.

185. Pupils follow a broad curriculum, which meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and is enriched by a good range of visits and visitors and a good supply of artefacts from the main religions they study – Christianity, Buddhism and Judaism. This good provision enables pupils to acquire a sound body of knowledge about Christianity and other world faiths and to appreciate the similarities and differences between them. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have equal access to the curriculum and achieve equally well in relation to their starting points.
186. Religious education makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development. Teachers set a very good example of religious tolerance and, because they have good knowledge of the subject, they are successful in interesting pupils in it. They provide a lot of information that fascinates pupils and they help pupils to develop good insight into the faiths they study. For example, work on Buddhism includes listening to chants and having the opportunity to meditate as well as becoming familiar with a range of Buddhist religious artefacts displayed in school.