

# INSPECTION REPORT

**FLIMBY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

FLIMBY, MARYPORT

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112421

Headteacher: Mr M Cunningham

Reporting inspector: Mrs Pauline Simpson  
1515

Dates of inspection: 10 – 14 April 2000

Inspection number: 191616

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

© Crown copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Ryehill Road Flimby Maryport Cumbria
Postcode:	CA15 8PJ
Telephone number:	01900 812264
Fax number:	01900 816778
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Nelson
Date of previous inspection:	3 February 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs Pauline A Simpson	Registered inspector	Information technology Art Design and technology Physical education	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve further? The school's results and achievement How well is the school led and managed?
Mrs E Ann Longfield	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities English as an additional language	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr James Stirrup	Team inspector	English Religious education	How well are pupils taught?
Mr Tom Handforth	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Geography History Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Mrs Elizabeth Raitt	Team inspector	Music Under-fives	

The inspection contractor was:

*PkR* Educational Consultants Ltd.  
6 Sherman Road  
Bromley  
Kent  
BR1 3JH

Tel.: 020 8289 1923/4/5

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>12</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>31</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Flimby Primary School is situated in and serves the village of Flimby, near Maryport. The school is smaller than many other primary schools. There are 152 full-time pupils on roll (84 girls, 68 boys) and 21 part-time children who attend the morning nursery. At the time of the inspection, 24 of the full-time children were under six years of age. The school roll is subject to fluctuations, often significantly so during the school year, due to the incoming and outgoing community migration patterns within the Flimby ward. A fifth of the pupils are eligible for a free school meal; this is broadly in line with the national average. Nearly all of the pupils are from white ethnic backgrounds; there is one pupil for whom English is an additional language. There are 22 pupils on the special educational needs register; four of these pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Attainment on entry to the nursery is below what would be expected for children aged three. The most recent baseline assessment conducted in 1999, when the children enter compulsory schooling, shows that attainment was below expectation in speaking, but broadly average in reading and writing. Children's physical development, independence, relationships and mathematical skills for this year group exceeded the average results of other schools in the Durham baseline assessment pool.

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

This is an improving school which has a number of strengths and some areas which need to be developed. The good under-fives' provision produces a firm foundation for children's compulsory schooling. The leadership of the headteacher actively supported by the governing body is very effective. In the most recent National Curriculum assessments, 11-year-olds attained above the national average in English and mathematics. The value for money provided by the school is good.

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

- The leadership and management of the school are effective.
- The good quality of teaching which makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning.
- By the age of 11, in the most recent National Curriculum tests, pupils' results were above the national average in English and mathematics in comparison with all schools.
- The quality of the education provided for the under-fives provides a firm foundation for the next stage of their education.
- There are well-established relationships with parents and the wider community.
- The school gives a significant amount of attention to improving the accommodation and, as a result, enriches the climate for learning and teaching.

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

- Longer-term school development planning.
- Full implementation of the National Curriculum for information technology in both key stages.
- Subject schemes of work, short-term lesson planning and the monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum and teaching so as to secure further improvements.
- The arrangements for formally assessing pupils' academic performance and personal development and the quality and use of ongoing assessment.

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

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

Since the last inspection in February 1997, most of the issues have been tackled appropriately. Where actions have not been completed fully, they are now absorbed into the current school development plan. The last inspection found that the standards achieved in English, mathematics, science and design and technology required some improvement in both key stages. The inspection findings show that most pupils are attaining the levels expected for 11-year-olds in English, mathematics and science. In 1999, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 or above in the

National Curriculum tests was above the national average in English and science and well above the national average in mathematics. Standards also show an improvement in Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics. In 1998, pupils' results were higher than the national average in comparison with all schools in their reading, writing and mathematics. The inspection findings show that, by the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils are on target to meet the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics. The school has not formulated a policy for higher-attaining pupils. However, in order to extend higher-attaining and lower-attaining pupils, small-group withdrawal sessions are now timetabled in English and mathematics. Extra-curricular booster classes provided for all pupils in Year 6 in English and mathematics have been well attended. These initiatives have made a good contribution to the progress made by these pupils based on their prior attainment.

The overall response to improving the unsatisfactory teaching has been good. A comprehensive teaching and learning policy which is aligned to performance management has been implemented and formally monitored by the headteacher and governing body. Training and practical support for teachers have made a significant contribution to the overall quality of teaching, including English, mathematics and science. The headteacher has formally monitored the teaching of the literacy hour, and some of the linked-subject governors have made formal visits to classes. Some teachers are still insecure in their knowledge and understanding of design and technology and in their information technology capability. The quality of the leadership and management by the headteacher and key staff is significantly better than that reported in 1997. The positive contribution of the headteacher and the governing body to improvement is a strength of the school's work. A senior management team is now in place and all subjects have a designated co-ordinator. There has been considered attention given to extending and improving the accommodation; health and safety matters are formally documented. Information technology is used as a means of recording attendance more efficiently. The school has maintained its good climate for teaching and learning.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	D	C	B	B
mathematics	D	A	B	B
science	E	A	C	D

**Key**

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

By the age of 11, in the latest reporting year 1999, standards were above average in English and mathematics when compared with all schools, and in science they were average. In comparison with similar schools, standards were above average in English and mathematics and below average in science. At the age of seven, the percentage of pupils was close to the expected level in reading and writing and below the expected level in mathematics in 1999. However, in 1998 the mathematics results at the end of Key Stage 1 were in the highest five per cent nationally. The changing pattern from year to year in both key stages is influenced by the number of pupils on the special educational needs register and the fluctuations that occur in the school roll within the respective year groups. Taking the last four years together, results at age seven exceeded the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The trend in the school's Key Stage 2 test results over recent years for all core subjects was above the national trend. The school has set realistic and challenging targets in English and mathematics for the Year 2000 and 2001. It is on target to meet these. Inspection evidence shows that most pupils are on target to meet or exceed the expected standards in English, mathematics and science. The standards achieved in information technology by the end of each key stage are satisfactory in regard to handling and communicating information and in elements of control work, but there are gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding of aspects of modelling and



the monitoring of external events using information technology equipment and software in Key Stage 2. Making skills are better in design and technology than those of designing. Subject vocabulary is not sufficiently well used in both key stages in design and technology.

There is a commitment throughout the school to maintaining and raising standards.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils display positive attitudes towards their work and school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The behaviour policy is having a positive impact throughout the school.
Personal development and relationships	Good throughout the school. Pupils readily talk to one another and to adults. There is an obvious pride in being at this school.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

Pupils are eager to come to school. They show pride in the school, the cloakrooms are very tidy and there is a noticeable absence of litter. Staff work hard to ensure the positive behaviour policy is implemented and this is working well. There have been no exclusions in the last five years. Attendance rates are broadly average and have remained stable for the last three years. The rate of unauthorised absence is well below the national average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of the teaching is good overall and this is an improvement on that reported in the previous inspection. Children under five are taught well in a stimulating and supportive learning environment. This provides a secure foundation for the next stage of their schooling. Of the lessons observed, 96 per cent were satisfactory or better, 13 per cent were very good or better and four per cent were unsatisfactory. The overall quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good in both key stages. The skills of literacy and numeracy are mostly effectively taught based on the national strategies. Monitoring and evaluation of literacy and numeracy teaching have enabled the school to share good practice and refine elements of this work where there are inconsistencies in the provision. Notable features of the teaching are the good focus on basic skills development, the positive management of pupils and the effective use of support staff and resources. This enables productive learning to take place. There is inconsistency in the content and presentation of daily lesson plans and the use of ongoing assessment in both key stages. Most pupils write in pencil rather than pen, and older Key Stage 2 pupils do not always join up their writing. The presentation of finished topic work varies between classes and year groups.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory, with the exception of information technology where the full programmes of study, although planned for, are not fully provided.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good overall. Support staff and teachers jointly set clear and detailed targets for pupils within individual education plans.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Staff are good role models for clear and engaging speech.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall, but the provision is good for moral and social development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures are good in regard to child protection and promoting pupils' well-being. Assessment arrangements are not sufficiently formalised or used.

There were some weaknesses in the curricular provision in the last inspection. Curriculum co-ordinators are now in place for all subjects. The governing body has an active curriculum monitoring committee. The overall picture of curriculum continuity and progression in learning has significantly improved since the last inspection. There are still uncompleted areas of action planning including devising schemes of work that are appropriate to the school's circumstances. All of the outstanding actions have been assimilated appropriately into the latest school development plan. The school offers a broad programme for the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, with the exception of information technology where all of the strands are not fully provided for. Assessment and monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development is not formalised and the use of assessment to inform future planning varies between classes. There is insufficient detail in the school prospectus and the latest Governors' annual report to parents about the policy and assessment of pupils with special educational needs.

The school has a variety of extra-curricular activities including sport and music, but these only cater for older pupils. The school has established a good climate for learning. The school has a number of well-established links with the local community and with the children's families. Relationships with parents are good; ninety-nine per cent of parents and pupils have signed up to the home-school agreement.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides a clear and positive educational direction for the work of the school, ably supported by the senior staff. Staff work together well as a team. Delegation is now a part of school life.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. They are well informed about their duties through training and the good relationships that exist with staff.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory overall. The school is aware that it is not as far ahead in this area of its work as it would like to be. There is no longer-term development plan.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Finances are kept in good order. The school's spending decisions related to priorities for improvement in the longer term are not formally documented.

The leadership and management of the school have improved significantly since the last inspection in 1997. Management tasks are now delegated according to the roles and responsibilities of key teaching and non-teaching staff. There is an obvious commitment by staff and the governing body to school improvement. A series of in-house training sessions is planned for the governing body this year. The headteacher leads by example in the promotion of high academic standards and behaviour. Half of the teaching staff are new to the school since the last inspection. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are adequate for the curriculum provided. Classroom

assistants are deployed well and make a good contribution to the rate of progress made by pupils. The principles of best value are applied efficiently, for example, in obtaining tenders for services or goods.

## **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>• Children like school.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• High teacher expectations of pupils.</li> <li>• The good quality of teaching.</li> <li>• Children are helped to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better information about children's progress and more detailed explanation about the National Curriculum expected performance levels for each age group.</li> <li>• The amount of homework.</li> <li>• The range of activities outside of lessons.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views. The school is in the process of reviewing the format of the pupils' annual report to parents. Information technology and design and technology are not reported on separately at present. Of the two formal meetings for parents, only one has scheduled times for parents to discuss their children's progress and personal development. There is, however, opportunity for parents to make formal appointments to discuss pupils' progress outside of the parents' meeting arrangements. The school is happy to act on suggestions made by parents and consultation will take place on how best to make explicit to all parents the standards expected in the National Curriculum. The homework policy and provision are not informed by the national guidance. The school does provide some extra-curricular activities, including sport, but there is no provision made outside of lessons for younger pupils.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. In the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in reading and writing in 1999, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 was close to the national average. The percentage reaching Level 3 was above the national average in reading and close to the national average in writing. In the mathematics tests, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or above was below the national average. The teachers' assessments in reading, writing and mathematics reveal a similar pattern of attainment. In science, the teacher assessments for seven-year-olds show pupils' results were, overall, above average for Level 2 or above, and a third of the year group attained Level 3.
2. Attainment in the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests in reading and writing was broadly in line with the national average when compared with all schools and the pupils' results in comparison with similar schools were average. The mathematics results were below average in comparison with all schools and similar schools. The school's yearly results show some fluctuations. They are much influenced by the migratory population into and out of Flimby. Analysis of the end of Key Stage 1 results, over the four years 1996 to 1999, show that pupils' overall performance in all three subjects was above the national average. Over this same period of time, the overall performance of girls was higher than that of boys. Boys were close to the national average in writing and mathematics but their progress was slower in reading.
3. The pupils' 1999 test results and teacher assessments for 11-year-olds were above the national average for Level 4 or above in English and science and they were well above the national average in mathematics. The percentage of pupils attaining higher than expected levels was close to the national average in English and mathematics and lower than the national average in science. Teacher assessments for the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 in all three subjects were very similar to the test results.
4. Attainment in the 1999 end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests in English and mathematics was high; pupils' results in comparison with all schools were above the national average, and above average when compared with similar schools. In science, the 1999 results show that, when compared with all schools, they were broadly in line with the national average, and below the average in comparison with similar schools.
5. The overall trend for the last four years, based on the school's attainment figures for the end of Key Stage 2, is above the national trend. Over this same period, girls' progress was close to the national average in English and mathematics; the progress made by boys in English was less than that made by the girls and reflects the national picture.
6. Standards have improved in English since the previous inspection in 1997. There has been an ongoing trend of improvement by the end of both key stages since the last inspection report. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils are attaining the national average or above for this age. The school has implemented the Literacy Strategy effectively and provides extra time to support reading and writing outside the literacy

hour as well as providing 'booster' classes for Year 6. In mathematics, there has been a marked improvement in the overall attainment of pupils by the end of the key stages since the last inspection. Attainment was judged as being unsatisfactory overall in 1997. The majority of pupils aged 11 were reported as attaining levels below average in mathematics. The end of 1999 National Curriculum test results were well above average for Level 4 or above. The inspection findings show that most pupils are attaining the expected levels for their ages and that the school is well placed to meet the targets set for 11-year-olds in the Year 2000 in National Curriculum tests. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in science has varied over the intervening years following the last inspection. There has been a trend towards improvement and, by the age of 11, most pupils attain the expected level for this age. In 1999, few pupils attained higher than expected levels by the age of 11. The inspection findings show that most pupils are reaching the expected level by the end of Key Stage 2 in science. In the other subjects of the National Curriculum and in religious education, standards are as would be expected by the age of seven in information technology with the exception of the strand of modelling and in the foundation subjects of design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. In art, they are higher than expected. By the age of 11 years, standards are as would be expected in handling and communicating information using computers, in religious education and in the other foundation subjects of the National Curriculum, with the exception of art, where they are higher overall.

7. By the time they are five, children have made substantial progress in regard to the nationally-defined desirable learning outcomes, and they are achieving at least the standard expected in their literacy and language, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. Standards are higher than would be expected in basic mathematical skills, physical development and personal and social development. Good provision in the under-fives, with the high ratio of adults to children, enables all children, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, to make good overall progress related to their prior attainments.
8. The quality and range of opportunities for learning enable pupils of all ages to make at least satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainments. In both key stages, the quality of learning is good in English, mathematics and science. The rate of progress is consistently good in both key stages in art and physical education. Pupils are better at making products than they are at communicating their ideas through designing, in particular older pupils in Key Stage 2. At all ages, pupils' design and technology subject vocabulary is insufficiently developed. In both key stages, pupils' knowledge and understanding in regard to using models and simulations to explore patterns and relationships using information technology is not as well advanced as it is in communicating and handling information through the use of text, tables and graphics. Pupils with special educational needs make good overall progress towards the targets set in their individual educational programmes and their other prior attainments. This is due to the quality of support they receive in lessons and when they are withdrawn from lessons for individual support related to targets set in their individual programmes of work.
9. The school has given good attention to the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and to monitoring and evaluating the impact of these on standards of achievement and teaching at senior management levels. The targets set for the end of Key Stage 2 for the Years 2000 and 2001 are realistic and appropriately challenging for the respective year groups. The school is on target to meet them in the current year. However, changes in the school roll can have a significant impact on

the outcomes. The school sets targets for a particular year group only to find that the school roll changes by a significant number due to the migration patterns in the area and the shorter-term housing solutions that are available in the locality.

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

10. Pupils consistently display positive attitudes towards their work and school. They are eager to come to school. At the judging of the Easter Bonnets within the whole-school assembly, there was a sense of celebration by the whole community. Pupils show an interest in their work and are capable of sustained concentration. The Year 2 pupils found their science lesson about 'Life Cycles' very interesting when they had the opportunity to observe the behaviour of live chicks. When the pupils are not challenged enough, they adopt a passive approach to their lessons. Children under the age of five develop confidence through the activities that they undertake. They behave well and are familiar with school routines.
11. The behaviour in the school is good during lessons and at lunchtime, both in the dining hall and the playground. The pupils move around the school in an orderly manner. There have been no exclusions and staff work hard to ensure the behaviour policy has a positive impact throughout the school.
12. There are good relationships throughout the school. The pupils react very well with one another, with teachers and with other adults in the school. They are willing to help one another to clear up after messy activities, as in the Year 3 art class after making the Easter Bonnets. The pupils talk readily to visitors and are courteous and very polite. The tidy cloakrooms and absence of litter are evidence that the pupils are proud of their school.
13. The Year 6 pupils take the opportunities given to them to show initiative and responsibility seriously. The pupils know that any incidences of bullying will be quickly dealt with. The ethos of the school is to value and care for one another.
14. The level of attendance remains stable and is in line with other primary schools. An accurate record of absence is maintained and the computerised marking of registers meets statutory requirements. Registration periods provide a structured start to the day. Lessons start and finish on time.

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

15. The overall quality of teaching as observed during the period of the inspection was satisfactory or better in 96 per cent of lessons and good and better in over half of lessons. The teaching was very good or better in 13 per cent, and in four per cent it was unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching in the under-fives is generally good. In Key Stage 1, teaching is at least satisfactory in all lessons, and good and better in nearly 70 per cent of lessons. In Key Stage 2, teaching is satisfactory or better in 93 per cent of lessons and good and better in half of the lessons. Seven per cent of the lessons observed in Key Stage 2 were unsatisfactory.
16. This is a significant improvement on the last inspection report when twenty per cent of the teaching in Key Stage 1 was judged as unsatisfactory, and a third of lessons observed were judged to be unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2.

17. A number of planned and unplanned actions have contributed to the raising of the standards of teaching in the school. The first is that over half of the staff are new to the school since the last inspection. The headteacher has also moved a number of teachers to different classes in the school in order to make best use of their expertise. This has shown immediate benefits in terms of its positive impact on pupils' learning.
18. Staff have received in-service training to support their teaching, particularly in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. In contrast to the previous report, there are now no more cross-phase classes, with literacy and numeracy now being taught in discrete year groups. These arrangements are working well.
19. The teaching of children in the under-fives is generally good. Lessons are well planned, with the teacher and classroom assistants working in a close and co-ordinated manner. Routines are well established, with adults providing a secure and safe environment in which pupils work towards the nationally-defined desirable learning outcomes. Activities are well focused, with the children receiving good support from the teacher and classroom assistants. The relaxed yet good working relationship between all adults and the under-fives makes a valuable contribution to the rate of progress made.
20. The overall quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 1. Teachers have introduced the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies in an effective manner, and provide pupils with good opportunities to make progress in these all-important skills. Lessons are well planned, with clear learning objectives. Appropriate emphasis is placed on the development of key skills such as mental maths and English language skills. Group activities are planned to match the abilities of groups of pupils, and plenary sessions are used in an effective manner to celebrate pupils' achievement and assess their understanding. Science is well taught in the key stage, with planned activities matching the interests and abilities of pupils. This was observed in a very good lesson on young chicks, as pupils considered their birth and body structure. Lessons are well paced, with resources being used in an effective manner in order to promote good learning.
21. In Key Stage 1, good teaching takes place in music. Pupils are provided with the opportunity to develop appropriate compositional skills and simple graphic notation. Previous learning is referred to and knowledge of past knowledge is consolidated before moving on to the current activity. The challenging activities provided promote good learning, with pupils taking great pride in the completed musical pieces.
22. Progress in physical education in Key Stage 1 is much influenced by the good working relationship that pupils have with their teacher. Notable features of the teaching observed in physical education were good organisational and managerial skills used so as to ensure that all pupils fully understood the activities to be carried out. Planning for the lesson was linked well to programmes of study for the subject, with good demonstration skills built in to enhance pupils' knowledge and learning.
23. Teachers provide pupils with the opportunity to work in a cross-curricular manner with many of the activities observed during the period of the inspection being linked to the theme of Easter. This provided opportunities for pupils to transfer knowledge gained in one activity to a second activity. This was observed in religious education and art, where following on from teachers providing pupils with a simple knowledge of the Easter story and its associated symbols, eggs, chicks and crosses, they were able to make Easter hats and bonnets encompassing these symbols.

24. In a Key Stage 1 history lesson, good questioning skills were utilised so as to ensure that all pupils made an active contribution to the lesson. When following on from a visit to a museum, pupils discussed those elements required in a questionnaire for their parents and grandparents about the toys they played with when they were young.
25. Teachers provide pupils with the opportunity to develop appropriate information technology relative to their age, for example, with pupils working with a programmable toy as a means of developing control skills. As with the majority of lessons in Key Stage 1, the teacher ensured that activities were carried out in a brisk manner, with a clear sense of purpose and direction. There are areas for development in Key Stage 1 teaching, in particular lesson planning and the use of assessment and recording procedures. Teachers are generally secure in all aspects of the National Curriculum.
26. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is good overall.
27. The quality of Key Stage 2 teaching in English is predominantly good. Most teachers have a secure understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and apply it in a consistent way. At its best, teachers provide pupils with the opportunity to explore a given text in an imaginative manner, provide group activities which really challenge pupils and use the plenary session to extend, celebrate and assess pupils' learning. Where, on occasions, the teaching was less than satisfactory, pupils made little progress due to the lack of pace and the undemanding activities provided, usually on worksheets which lacked any real challenge, for pupils of all levels of attainment. Some teachers in Key Stage 2 do not use assessment practices sufficiently in order to ensure that they are fully aware of the level of work that individual pupils are achieving.
28. The Numeracy Strategy has been introduced well by teachers, with the overall quality of teaching in mathematics being good in Key Stage 2. Lessons are well planned, with clear learning objectives linked to the programmes of study. Lessons are well paced, challenging, and with opportunities for pupils to work in an independent manner. Good relationships exist between teachers and pupils, with an active working atmosphere existing throughout the lessons. All this accounts for the satisfactory and often good progress made.
29. Science is likewise taught in an appropriate manner in Key Stage 2, with a good balance between teacher input and practical activities for pupils. Teachers ensure that lessons move at a brisk pace and that pupils stay on task. Whilst teachers have a good knowledge of the pupils they work with, assessment procedures do not inform future planning.
30. The quality of teaching in the foundation subjects in Key Stage 2 is always at least satisfactory and often good. In music, teachers provide pupils with the opportunity to develop satisfactory singing skills. Lessons are well planned and organised, with appropriate emphasis on posture and breathing techniques. There is an over-reliance by some teachers on the use of published commercial tapes, with the result that pupils have too few chances to improve and refine their singing skills and to appraise their own performance. Teachers in physical education provide pupils with a challenging range of activities in dance. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, give clear instructions and good demonstrations of the work to be carried out. Teachers place appropriate emphasis on health and safety issues. Lessons are brisk, with teachers ensuring that all pupils, including boys, make an equal contribution to the lesson.



- Teachers are secure in their knowledge of this aspect of physical education.
31. Teachers provide pupils with a satisfactory range of art and design technology activities, with most of these activities during the period of the inspection being linked to the creation of Easter bonnets and hats. Activities are well planned and organised, with learning objectives for the lesson often being written up on the board. Teachers ensure that lessons are brisk. Whilst opportunities are provided to reflect on the activities they have been involved in, they do not always provide pupils with the opportunity to talk about their own work. In history, teachers provide pupils with the opportunity to develop sound research and reference skills, and take some control of their own learning as pupils put together their own brochures on the Great Exhibition of 1851. As with many lessons throughout Key Stage 2, teachers provide good support for individual pupils, and raise their self-esteem by praising their efforts.
  32. Teachers utilise good questioning skills to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding in a number of subjects in the key stage. This was observed in religious education as a teacher utilised good open-ended questioning to enable pupils to think in greater depth about the symbolic nature of Easter, and the concepts of death and rebirth.
  33. Teachers and classroom assistants provide pupils with special educational needs with good support, and provide equality of access to all areas of the curriculum provided. In information technology, the teaching of the strands of communication and information handling using information technology is at least satisfactory when taught discretely or as a part of the other subjects of the curriculum. Insufficient opportunities are provided in the other strands of information technology, in particular with regard to modelling and monitoring (in Key Stage 2).
  34. Whilst teachers have a clear knowledge of the pupils in their class, assessment procedures are somewhat informal in the majority of subjects. The majority of lessons in all areas of the curriculum are predominantly teacher-directed, with too few opportunities for pupils to develop independent learning skills and to take some control over their learning. Short-term lesson plans are inconsistent in their content and presentation. When homework is set, usually for English and mathematics, it reinforces and extends appropriately the skills of literacy and numeracy. There are some inconsistencies in the homework provision, a view expressed by some parents who would like to be better informed about how much and of what sort is to be set for pupils of different ages.

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

35. At the time of the previous inspection, the curriculum met statutory requirements. It was broad but depth varied from class to class and this particularly affected the core subjects of mathematics, English and science. The amount of time for science was insufficient and inconsistent in other subject areas; design technology was under-developed and in music, composition was not given enough time. There were no policies for drugs education or health education and there was no timetable allocation for personal and social education.
36. A key issue of the report was the improvement of subject co-ordination and evaluation of the curriculum and the provision of training to develop teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics, science, design technology and English. The newly-appointed headteacher recognised these weaknesses and drew up an appropriate action plan to

- deal with them. At the time of the present inspection, the situation is much improved.
37. The school has restructured its senior management team. It now has three members who work together well, led effectively by the headteacher. Curriculum co-ordinators have been appointed for each subject area. Whilst they do not yet have regular timetabled opportunities to monitor teaching or as yet sufficient training in the management role of the subject co-ordinator, the overall picture of curriculum continuity and progression in learning is significantly improved from the time of the last inspection. Weekly plans are monitored by senior staff as a means of ensuring that the curriculum systematically builds upon pupils' existing knowledge, understanding and skills.
  38. There are still areas of action planning which are ongoing from the previous inspection and these have been assimilated into the current school development plan but the bulk of the requirements in this area have been completed appropriately.
  39. The school offers a broad programme for the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The curriculum meets statutory requirements, with the exception of some of the components of the programme of study in information technology, including modelling in both key stages and monitoring in Key Stage 2. Religious education is taught according to the Locally Agreed Syllabus.
  40. The planning and staff training for literacy and numeracy have ensured efficient implementation of these National Strategies. Provision has been made for booster classes to raise attainment of targeted pupils in English and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2 and for additional tuition which gives higher-attaining pupils an extended and more challenging curriculum in mathematics and English. These initiatives are well organised and promote higher standards of achievement for the pupils concerned. All subjects have policies and either subject guidelines or schemes of work. English and mathematics are supported by the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy and their associated guidance. Commercial schemes of work have been adopted in, for example, science and history, and it is planned to extend this strategy to the other curriculum areas in regard to the latest national guidelines. The school is aware of the outstanding actions following the last inspection in regard to devising schemes of work that are appropriate to its own circumstances. These are planned for within the context of the changes to the (Year 2000) National Curriculum. Teachers' own personal interests also contribute strongly to all curricular areas. The school has not devised a strategy for ensuring that topic work is presented in a standardised format. As a result, there are variations in the quality of the presentation of pupils' completed work.
  41. The school is effective in fostering pupils' intellectual and physical development and prepares them well for transfer to the local high school. Very good links have been established with this school and these ensure smooth transition between the stages.
  42. Strategies to ensure that all the pupils have equality of access to the planned curriculum are securely in place. The provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is good. The school meets the requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs, with two minor exceptions. In the prospectus for parents, there is insufficient detail about the special educational needs policy, and also in the Governors' annual report to parents, there are some SEN information omissions. Individual education plans are well written for pupils with SEN and the targets inform teaching and support, whether in the classroom or during individual or small group tuition, very well. Overall, the organisation of SEN within the school is very

effective. The good qualities of the overall management of the area and the quality teaching from teachers and support staff all result in the good progress made by all pupils with SEN. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are also supported very well and make good progress.

43. The school provides a variety of extra-curricular activities, though these cater only for pupils in Key Stage 2. They contribute to enhanced achievements in many subject areas, for example, the choir and recorder group to music and the variety of team games to physical education. Pupils also take part in inter-school matches and competitions such as swimming events. Some parents expressed the view that they would like to see the extra-curricular provision outside of the school day extended into Key Stage 1.
44. The school makes generous use of off-site visits, ranging from the local area and Cockermouth Toy Museum with the Key Stage 1 pupils to Newcastle Museum and a residential visit to the Lake District for Key Stage 2 pupils. Many visitors also enrich the curricular areas and contribute well to pupils' understanding of life and work outside school, for example, the vicar of St. Nicholas Church, the Northern Inter-Schools Christian Union, grandparents who speak about life when they were at school, and members of an environmental project,
45. The overall provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. The school's provision for moral and social development is good and it is sound for spiritual and cultural.
46. The school has a good ethos in which all pupils are seen as individuals and positively valued. It fulfils all the requirements for a daily act of worship focusing on a broadly Christian foundation. The assembly themes, which incorporate pupils' contributions through singing, other musical activities and answering the headteacher's questions, provide sound spiritual awareness. They recite the Lord's Prayer in assemblies, and in religious education lessons they have opportunities to reflect on the life themes associated with Easter. With the exception of religious education, there are few planned opportunities for spiritual development in other curriculum areas. When it does occur as, for example, in a Year 2 science lesson dealing with the life cycle of the hen, the interest and wonder at the live chickens and the questions about their birth are explored sensitively.
47. A strong sense of morality underpins the aims and ethos of the school. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong. They are well aware of the responsibility they have for their own actions and show a concern for the well being of others. This is part of the rules, which all classes have, and in the rewards and sanctions systems used. Opportunities are provided in many subject areas to explore moral issues, for example, in the environmental studies undertaken in science, together with the preparations for Coastline 2000 or in history when considering the life of a Victorian servant. There is a good understanding of the meaning of loyalty and care for the environment.
48. Pupils develop good social skills as they move through the school. All staff members provide good role models for pupils who, in turn, recognise the high expectations made on them in terms of behaviour and respond in a positive manner. Their understanding of citizenship is well developed by fund-raising activities for charities, both local as in distribution to senior citizens after the harvest service and internationally when contributions are made to overseas charities, for example, Operation Christmas Child. Group and team activities in lessons and as a part of the

- extra-curricular activities promote pupils' personal and social development well.
49. The quality of provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Most pupils share a common cultural background and are given opportunities to appreciate their local heritage through an exploration of the area in which they live. Geography allows pupils to consider alternative lifestyles and cultures; history allows them to examine the changing nature of their own culture as well as that of other societies, such as that of the Romans and Ancient Greeks. Other opportunities are presented in art, music and religious education. Whilst pupils acquire an understanding of a range of countries and cultures, there is only limited provision to develop an understanding of the ethnic diversity of society, for example, through the study of non-Western artists within art.
  50. There are very strong links with the local community. Many local organisations, such as the Cubs and line dancers, use the school hall. The creation of the Cumbria Regeneration through Education Information Technology Skills (CREDITS) area, with its excellent IT facilities, provides a flagship of opportunities for local people to acquire credits for the development of their IT skills. Children take part in the local carnival and discos. They go carol singing at Christmas and have many other links with St. Nicholas' Church.
  51. Business and industrial links are also strongly developed and make a positive contribution to the school's work. Every other year pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 visit a local chemical factory to see its site, processes and laboratories. They are given tasks and worksheets to fill in, supported by the technicians. The company follows up with a school visit. A local post office and general stores raises funds for quite a number of school trips through promotions and the proprietor is a regular visitor to school. The local newspaper group has provided valuable advice and support for the creation of the school's own newspaper, the *Flimby Flier*. Pupils have had opportunities to visit Newspaper House in Carlisle, as well as company representatives coming into school.
  52. School governors also place their expertise at the school's disposal. They visit school regularly and all have an interest in and are linked to a particular curriculum area, which they monitor by class visits and then report formally to the curriculum committee. This activity was set up following the last inspection and has a very beneficial impact on both the governing body's knowledge of its school and in supporting the school's determination to raise standards and improve the quality provision further.

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

53. There are appropriate procedures in place for child protection and promoting pupils' well-being, health and safety but some weaknesses in supporting pupils' academic and personal development. The headteacher takes the lead in setting the ethos of care, order and structure through the daily assemblies. There is a good standard of care from the teaching and non-teaching staff in their promotion of good behaviour. The support for the pupils with special educational needs is good. There is regular contact with the outside specialists. All staff are aware of the child protection policy and procedures.
54. Required health and safety measures and procedures are in place and regular risk assessments are undertaken. Teachers are conscientious in their supervision of pupils and point out relevant safety measures in class. The pupils are reminded of the 'Three R's - Road, River and Railways' - and the 'Stranger Danger' code before every

- holiday. Pupils are taught about drug abuse in science, and in Years 5 and 6 within health education sessions.
55. There are some health and safety issues which have been identified during the inspection in regard to the accommodation. These have been formally identified to the headteacher and governors, who are fully aware of them. These issues form part of the school development plan.
  56. The school promotes good behaviour successfully through its discipline policy which lists ways of behaving that will not be tolerated, including bullying. Pupils have devised the school rules and parents are appreciative of the good behaviour promoted by the school. Teachers often praise pupils for their behaviour and work, and the pupils value the team points given.
  57. Procedures to monitor pupils' attendance are sound. Attendance is now recorded using information technology. The school liaises appropriately with the Educational Welfare Officer when any pupil's attendance gives cause for concern.
  58. Procedures to assess and monitor pupils' academic performance and progress are unsatisfactory. There is no rigorous whole-school system of monitoring and evaluation. The teachers do not make sufficient use of what they know about the pupils to set individual targets and to plan the next step in pupils' learning, especially for the higher-attaining pupils. There is not sufficient use made of the early assessments of the nursery children. The individual educational plans for pupils with special educational needs have clear, detailed targets. The advice and support given to pupils in regard to their personal development are largely informal. There are no specific structures in place to inform pupils of their personal development and to assist them formally to set targets for future improvement. There is inconsistency in the presentation of topic work within and across the key stages.

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

59. The school has well-established links with parents. Most parents are satisfied with the quality of education that the school provides. Parents stated that their children receive good teaching and they are confident that any problems would be dealt with quickly. Teacher expectations of pupils are high and the school is led and managed effectively.
60. Some parents identified concerns about the lack of information about their children's progress. They would like a more formal structure to the autumn parents' meeting with the class teachers and an additional meeting in the spring term. They value the opportunity to discuss issues with staff immediately after school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed about their children's progress. The present pupils' annual reports do not meet statutory requirements in regard to information technology and design and technology and are to be redrafted before the end of the current academic year.
61. The parents are kept informed of school events through the informative, numbered newsletters. However, the prospectus and governors' annual report have omissions in regard to the information about the school's provision for children with special educational needs and its assessment.
62. The school has recently introduced the Home-School Agreement, which has been formally agreed by nearly all of the parents and their children. Some parents

- expressed concern about the inconsistent homework received by their children. The school has yet to review its existing homework policy in the light of national guidance.
63. Parents support their children's learning through the home-school reading diaries. A small number of parents and volunteers help, mainly in Key Stage 1. They also accompany pupils and staff on educational visits on a regular basis. They are well supported by the school and the staff appreciate their valuable help. The school, parents and the community are actively involved in the 'Story Sacks' initiative which has been developed to promote children's basic literacy skills.
  64. The School Association, which is made up of parents and members of the local community, is a focal point of the village and raises money for the school. At present, they are planning two Year 2000 walks, for two and 11 miles respectively. They have raised money for computers, football and netball strips, and every child receives a book from the School Association at Christmas.
  65. The accommodation is used by the community as a venue for village events, including the parent and toddler group, Cub and Scout meetings, line dancing and the CREDITS arrangements which enable joint school and community use of these new information technology facilities.

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

66. A strength of the school is the very good leadership and management of the school by the headteacher, who is ably supported by senior staff. The headteacher gives considered attention to the context of the school and there is an obvious determination to succeed. Staff now work together as a team and good delegation ensures the effective contribution of those with management responsibilities. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection in 1997.
67. The governing body is effective in fulfilling its responsibilities and the committee structure has widened considerably since the last inspection. Governors work actively alongside the headteacher and staff, giving good support to the school whilst respecting the professionalism of the teaching staff. The governing body are much better informed about the work of the school and about their role and range of responsibilities since the last inspection. This has been achieved through an ongoing systematic schedule of in-house training which includes performance management, school self-evaluation, monitoring and work scrutiny. A governor is designated to each curriculum subject and formalised classroom visits have taken place in English, religious education, geography and music. The governors also monitor the school's work appropriately through its established committees which include finance, premises and the newly-established curriculum and management monitoring committees. The management committee has looked at the roles and responsibilities of the senior staff and, following interviews with the senior staff, job shadowing is planned for as the next stage of this monitoring process. Very good attention is given to improving the environment for learning and teaching. A new classroom has recently been added through the modification of a former caretaker's house. The CREDITS community room is also made available to the school for, amongst other activities, some of its information technology sessions. The school development plan targets other accommodation areas for action. The governing body are persistent in pursuing those areas of the school that have health, safety and welfare implications.

68. The school development plan for the Year 1999/2000 is linked appropriately to the school's aims and values. It gives appropriate attention to the development of four main areas of its work, namely curriculum, environment, personnel, and parents and the community. Parents are fully informed of changes and events within the school. Parental input is highly valued and they are seen as partners in their children's education. The school development plan is structured in a format that is accessible as a working document. Budget implications, responsibilities and co-ordination of the actions and timescales are given. Although future developments are briefly referred to in the yearly plan, this does not constitute a longer-term development plan which sets out clearly the school's strategic priorities.
69. The last inspection reported a lack of clarity in the management structure and the assignment of curriculum co-ordination responsibilities. The staffing is adequate to meet the planned curriculum. Since the last inspection, half of the teaching staff are new to the school. There is now a senior management team in place and management meetings are scheduled formally. There is a designated subject manager for all subjects and the under-fives, as well as a special educational needs co-ordinator. A member of the key staff has responsibility for curriculum and assessment. All staff have agreed job descriptions. A senior classroom assistant co-ordinates efficiently the deployment and support for visiting students. The induction procedures for new staff and visiting initial teacher training students work very well. New staff settle quickly and are made to feel very much a part of the team from the outset. This is much appreciated. Systematic monitoring of weekly curriculum planning is now conducted at senior management level, and formal classroom observations of the literacy hour and some numeracy sessions have been conducted by the headteacher. The outcomes of the literacy monitoring were reported formally to the governing body and specific actions for future improvements have been put into place. The monitoring and evaluation of the teaching in the other subjects of the curriculum are less well advanced. The school's most significant priority is to have in place an effective monitoring system which highlights individual and year group needs at an early stage. Time is being created to look closely at the other subjects of the curriculum as a part of school development planning. Subject co-ordinators will be involved formally in the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning. The role and responsibility of the subject co-ordinator is not sufficiently documented in terms of the new expectations of them, and they will need training and support to carry out these new leadership tasks at co-ordinator level.
70. Teacher appraisal arrangements are in place as required. End of Key Stage 2 school targets for English and mathematics are agreed in liaison with the local education authority up to Year 2001. They are realistic and challenging, and give appropriate consideration to the migration patterns of families in and out of Flimby, as well as to the number of pupils in each year group that are on the register of special educational needs. Now that statutory baseline testing has been established for two reception year groups, the school is in a better position to begin to formally measure the progress made during the time pupils are at this school.
71. The school has given considered attention to using new technology in its day-to-day administration which now includes computerised recording of attendance. The National Grid for Learning resourcing and the CREDITS' initiative have enabled an updating of information communication technology hardware and software, providing opportunities for staff, pupils, parents and governors to work with a range of information including the Internet and electronic mail. Teachers' information technology capability varies, but the positive promotion of the use of information

technology by the experienced co-ordinator as a teaching and learning resource is improving confidence and expertise. There are software shortages in regard to control, monitoring and modelling in information technology. The school is fully aware of the omissions in its information technology provision and has documented areas for improvement in its longer-term information and communication technology plan.

72. The school is committed to improvement and for all of its pupils to succeed. This is borne out by the positive way the staff approached the 1997 action plan. Parents were informed of the inspection outcomes and the timescale for completing the identified actions. Some of the outstanding areas have now been transferred into the current school development plan, for example the formulation of schemes of work now that the new Curriculum 2000 orders are published. The documenting of a teaching and learning policy, alongside the formal monitoring of the quality of teaching by the headteacher, has led to significant improvements in the teaching since the last inspection when a fifth of the lessons observed were judged unsatisfactory. Good practice is shared and, where support is needed, careful attention is given to the providers of this in terms of training to meet individual teachers' professional development needs. In turn, this has improved the pupils' motivation to succeed and the raising of standards of attainment since the last inspection, in particular by the time pupils are aged 11. The quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, and this enables them to make good progress related to their prior attainment. Higher-attainers also benefit from the 'booster' sessions in English and mathematics in Year 6.
73. Specific grants are used appropriately for their designated purposes. The small number of recommendations identified in a recent audit is being actioned and will all be in place by June 2000. The school gives good attention to applying the principles of best value.
74. Consultation procedures are well established between parents and the local community. The principles of fair competition are applied when tenders are put out for contracted-out services. The use of resources is justified by the finance committee alongside the targets for action in the latest school development plan, and they are fully discussed by the full governing body. Comparisons are now made between the school's baseline testing and that of other schools who are in the Durham baseline scheme. The school is now a foundation school and recognises the need to compare its costs and standards against those of other schools in the local education authority. Good use is made of national data to compare the school results against all schools and similar schools and parents are informed as required about school results, national standards and major budget decisions in the Governors' Annual Report to Parents. Some parents reported that they did not have a clear enough knowledge of National Curriculum levels in the core subjects. Information technology and design and technology are not reported upon individually in the annual written reports to parents about pupils' achievements.



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

75. The specific matters which the governing body, headteacher and staff should include in the school's post-inspection action plan are listed as issues for action in order of importance as a means of developing the school further through school improvement and the raising of standards.

- Determine and document a strategic development plan which gives clear long-term school priorities and share this more widely as a part of school review and consultation with parents and the community.  
(Paragraphs 68, 71 and 169)
- Fully meet the requirements of the National Curriculum for Information and Communication Technology by:
  - reviewing the policy and assessment arrangements to meet the latest requirements for this core subject of the National Curriculum and translate into a practical plan for this school, with supporting guidance for staff, the national guidance on devising schemes of work, supported by relevant training for staff.  
(Paragraphs 6, 8, 39, 71, 141, 164 and 169)
  - including the action plan for the subject in the longer-term planning of the school and ensure the efficient and effective use of this technology throughout the school by involving the IT subject co-ordinator in formally monitoring the curriculum, and teaching of information and communication technology supported by the other subject co-ordinators in relation to the use of information and communication technology in their subject areas.  
(Paragraphs 6, 8, 39, 69, 100, 153, 165, 168 and 174)
- Formally determine schemes of work, where outstanding, including for the foundation subjects of the National Curriculum, information and communication technology and science based on the revised National Curriculum for 2000 and the current national guidance and involve curriculum co-ordinators in evaluating the implementation and outcomes of these actions by monitoring the curriculum and teaching formally.  
(Paragraphs 37, 39, 40, 69, 137, 142, 146, 163, 169 and 187)
- Update the policy for assessment, reporting and recording to meet the school's current thinking and planning in this area of its work and ensure that the procedures for assessing pupils' attainment, progress and personal development are applied consistently throughout the school and that assessment information is used as a guide to short and longer-term planning.  
(Paragraphs 34, 58, 60, 61, 70, 74 and 106)

## **OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL**

- Review its homework policy, informed by the national homework guidelines for primary schools.  
(Paragraphs 34 and 62)

- Standardise how completed topic work should be presented within the key stages and produce a whole-school writing policy.  
(Paragraphs 40, 58, 92 and 101)
- In consultation with parents, pupils and staff, seek views about the provision of extra-curricular activities for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2.  
(Paragraphs 43 and 179)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	47

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	11	45	38	4		

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	21	163
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		34

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		22

#### 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	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	27

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	19	9	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	15
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	23	24	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (78)	85 (86)	82 (91)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	19
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	23	23	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (76)	82 (76)	96 (86)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	9	13	22

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	8	8
	Girls	11	11	12
	Total	18	19	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (67)	87 (73)	91 (87)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	9	9
	Girls	10	11	11
	Total	17	20	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (67)	91 (73)	91 (93)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	131
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: YN – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	25.3

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

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	52

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32

Number of pupils per FTE adult	7.3
--------------------------------	-----

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1998/99
----------------	---------

	£
Total income	353382
Total expenditure	327461
Expenditure per pupil	1893
Balance brought forward from previous year	28469
Balance carried forward to next year	54390

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	177
Number of questionnaires returned	45

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	42	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	51	33	7	0	9
Behaviour in the school is good.	29	49	11	4	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	40	14	5	2
The teaching is good.	60	31	2	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	20	51	16	13	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	33	7	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	47	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	32	48	16	5	0
The school is well led and managed.	49	40	2	0	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	52	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	37	9	21	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**

76. Children enter the nursery class in the September after they are three. They then attend for half of each day for one whole school year. The level of development in the majority of children when they enter the nursery is below that usually found in children of this age. The strongest area is their physical development; less well advanced is their speaking as the children have a limited vocabulary and are not generally used to speaking at length. Good provision in the nursery class, with a high ratio of adults to children, enables all the children, including those with special educational needs or who have English as an additional language, to make good progress. The children currently in the nursery are on course to meet the nationally-defined desirable learning outcomes by the time they are aged five. In the autumn term after they are four, children enter the reception class and are assessed according to the Durham baseline assessment scheme. The children who had just reached the age of five or were just about to do so at the time of the inspection met the desirable learning outcomes in nearly all areas of their development. Their physical development, independence, their relationships and their mathematical skills exceeded the average results of other schools in the pool of the Durham assessment scheme. Their speaking was below expectations but their reading and writing were broadly in line with other schools.
77. In the nursery class, all of the adults work hard to settle the pupils into an interesting and secure environment, bright and stimulating inside and spacious outside. The children benefit from a lot of kind and encouraging adult attention and from well-established routines which develop their personal and social skills. This provision is reinforced by good links with parents both before and after the children begin school. The overall quality of teaching is good. A strong feature of the teaching is lesson planning, with the teacher and classroom assistants working collaboratively. Routines are established from the outset. Activities are well focused in a relaxed and stimulating learning environment. The overall management of the under-fives enables high standards of behaviour. It is evident that the quality of teaching contributes significantly to the rate of progress made by the children and to their enjoyment of school. The children enjoy being at school, as is evident from their smiling, happy faces. In the reception class, the children start on the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, which at present suit their stage of development, although occasionally the children are not provided with quite enough to do during group activities. A range of other activities extends their knowledge and understanding of the world and they are keen to learn.

### **Personal and social development**

78. The teaching is good in this area. The children in the nursery and, therefore, not yet four, work well in groups, without fussing. They are keen to take part, they share, take turns and they sensibly choose their own activities when the group work is finished. They behave very well. They take pride in their achievements, for instance, the Easter cards and bonnets they made in the week of the inspection. They relate well to adults and to other children and say thank you. They are polite and friendly with visitors. They wait patiently for their food and drink at the daily snack time when they sit at tables in their groups. The children respond well to events such as the Easter assembly for the whole school when they sat for nearly forty minutes. They enjoy the humour in books and some higher-attainers identify the feelings of the characters

such as the little bird, Spike, in “Spike’s New Nest”. The adults work very hard in the first term to foster the children’s independence in dressing and hand washing, in talking about themselves and in knowing the routines and how to behave with a lot of other children.

### **Language and literacy**

79. Good teaching enables pupils to make good progress. The strongest strand in this area is reading. The children’s interest in books is above expectations. They enjoy listening to stories and joining in with the teachers, reading familiar stories like “The Very Hungry Caterpillar” or “Not Now, Bernard”. They enjoy humour and pretend-read with expression, enjoying the onomatopoeic words in Helen Oxenbury’s story of the family on a bear hunt. All the children handle books with care. They know that pages turn from right to left but some jump to the right-hand page when they have turned over. Lower-attainers have a short attention span when they are looking at books. All the nursery class can recognize their own name, as they register themselves each morning by picking up their name card. By the time they are five, children know the initial sounds and letters for a number of words and can identify the separate words in a phrase. They are also aware of several ways in which stories can be told. The imaginative story sacks with prompts for parents and props to illustrate the story, as well as the established habit in the reception class of taking a reading book home, also foster interest in reading. By the age of five, highest-attainers write recognisable sentences and know letter shapes, sounds and names. Most children read and write a number of frequently used monosyllabic words and reach expectations for their age in writing. The lowest-attainers, who are not necessarily the youngest, manage emergent writing but without recognisable letters by mid-year in the reception class. Speaking is the weakest strand of this area of learning. All the teachers are good role models for clear and engaging speech, and in the nursery they hold two groups for circle time to give the children increased opportunities for speaking. Most children speak clearly, but only briefly, for instance, about how they came to school or what they are engaged in. They are not generally as forthcoming or loquacious as is expected by the age of five. They have taken part in imaginative play on a desert island in nursery and under the sea in reception but none of this was seen during the inspection. Children listen well both to adults and to one another.

### **Mathematics**

80. Sound teaching enables the children to make satisfactory progress in this area where they exceed the desirable learning outcomes by the age of five. In the nursery, children count up to ten. Their recognition of figures up to ten and of circles, squares, rectangles, and triangles is mostly accurate. They gain an increasing awareness of shapes through cutting out and making mobiles of cut-outs. They are comfortable with concepts of ‘bigger than’ and ‘smaller than’, though the adults do not frequently capitalise on opportunities to use such mathematical language in everyday life in the nursery. In the nursery almost all the children are very confident with singing games, using numbers up to five frogs, caterpillars, or iced buns, which require addition and subtraction in ones. On entering the reception class, the children start on the programme for the National Numeracy Strategy, through which they make good progress.



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

81. The teachers make well-planned efforts to widen the children's limited experience. The nursery class has recently visited the Whinlatter Forest Park to choose the school Christmas tree and it has visited a play park in Maryport. The reception class visited Aquaria in connection with their work on "The Little Mermaid " and their underwater play corner. Nursery children know what clothes to wear on their desert island in the play corner and what they would need to wear in a snowstorm. Children in reception know different animals and their young and talk about features of rain forests. They can compare the past and the present in their own lives. By the age of five, they are using the computer to help them to read a story and to draw coloured pictures. Teaching is sound in this area and the children make satisfactory progress so that, by the age of five, most of them reach this nationally-defined desirable learning outcome.

## **Physical development**

82. The school provides good opportunities for children to make good progress in this area, which, along with personal and social development, is the strongest area of their learning. In physical education activities in the school hall, the children are aware of their own space and that of others. They show increasing control of their movements on the apparatus in the hall. They hold on tightly when swinging and moving on the sturdy outdoor play equipment based on a deep-water theme. They climb carefully and their balancing skills are developing well. They enjoy running around and like being outside, even on a cold day. The children have good fine-motor skills in cutting, glueing and in their increasing control of pencils and crayons.

## **Creative development**

83. Teaching is satisfactory in this area and the children make satisfactory progress. Along with attainment in speaking and knowledge and understanding of the world, this is one of the weaker areas of learning. Much of their energy in the first term is consumed in getting used to school so it is some time before the children spontaneously engage in imaginative play. For this reason, it is important when planning for the Early Learning Goals from September 2000 that teachers ensure that sufficient stimulating opportunities are created for all the children to develop imaginative play. The children have a good repertoire of songs and they sing well for their age, with expression and enjoyment. Most children draw recognisable people with limbs and fingers, and with some detail, for example, a kite in a picture entitled "We played outside". There is some evidence that they enjoy experimenting with colours. However, in the week of the inspection, all the children were making Easter bonnets and Easter cards to prescribed patterns with pre-cut decorations so there was a limit to the choices they could make.
84. Since the last inspection the school has improved the accommodation for children under five. The new building has created more classroom space, which is attractively decorated, and the light conservatory is used for messy activities by the nursery, reception and Year 1 children. There is also extra space outside with large, safe climbing equipment. Teaching in the nursery is now good. The school is already in the process of further developing the outdoor play facilities and adding to the stock of large outdoor toys. At present, the long-term planning for the nursery is not full enough to be a help to someone else if the teacher were to be away. More rigorous medium and short-term planning by both the nursery and reception class teachers, based on both formal and everyday assessment details, would help all the adults to support individuals and groups more effectively.

## ENGLISH

85. Pupils' attainment in reading at the end of Key Stage 1, in the 1999 National Curriculum test results, was broadly in line with the national average in comparison with all schools and when compared with similar schools. An above-average number of pupils go on to achieve good grades in their reading. Pupils' standards of attainment in writing are likewise broadly in line with the national average in comparison with all schools and in comparison with schools with a similar intake.
86. Standards of attainment achieved in the end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests in 1999 are above average, both in comparison with all schools, and when compared with similar schools. Standards in reading have been maintained since the last inspection, whilst standards in writing have risen since the previous inspection when they were deemed to be unsatisfactory.
87. There has been an incremental improvement in English at the end of both key stages since the last inspection, when pupils' attainment was below the national average. Increased standards of attainment in both key stages appear to have been influenced by the effective implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, the booster classes provided by the school, and the extra times outside the National Literacy Hour to support reading and writing.
88. The school's National Curriculum results are influenced by the fluctuating nature of the school's pupil population, with a significant number of pupils joining and leaving the school each year. The current cohort of pupils in Year 6 is not expected to achieve the above-average results achieved in 1999, with approximately three-quarters of pupils working towards the expected national norms this year. Following the national trend, girls are expected to perform better than boys in their SAT examinations.
89. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils demonstrate broadly satisfactory oral skills when talking to their friends, but lack the confidence to express their ideas in a more open situation. This applies likewise to pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, with many pupils lacking the skills to structure their ideas in a logical manner and to express their ideas and opinions within a formal situation.
90. Standards of attainment in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 are satisfactory, with pupils being able to utilise a sound range of phonic and decoding skills in their reading. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils likewise demonstrate satisfactory reading skills, though most of their reading activities are linked to the reading of storybooks. Listening to pupils read during the period of the inspection and the school's own twice-yearly reading test indicate that the majority of pupils in both key stages have a reading age broadly in line with their chronological age.
91. Writing standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are at least satisfactory and often good, with pupils writing about the events in their daily lives and the stories read to them in class.
92. Standards of writing at the end of Key Stage 2 are broadly satisfactory, though writing is not always joined up and is too often presented in pencil. The school does not have a handwriting policy in place.

93. Pupils' oral skills upon entry are below average. Pupils in Key Stage 1 listen quietly to teachers' introductions to lessons. Whilst teachers regularly provide pupils with the opportunity to make an oral contribution to lessons, a number of pupils are quiet and somewhat reserved when speaking to adults.
94. Likewise, whilst pupils in Key Stage 2 are provided with regular opportunities to develop their oral skills, most of these opportunities come about as a result of responding to their reading and writing activities, rather than the development of oral skills as a discrete area of the English curriculum. Although pupils are provided with the opportunity to contribute to assemblies and school productions, role-play and educational drama do not make a significant contribution to the development of pupils' oral skills.
95. Observation during the period of the inspection indicates that reading is effectively taught, with teachers using a satisfactory range of strategies, including phonics linked to the commercial scheme of work used by the school. Pupils' satisfactory progress in reading is enhanced by teachers' planned use of guided reading, and opportunities for pupils to engage in silent reading activities outside the literacy hour. Pupils with identified reading problems receive good support from classroom assistants.
96. Whilst pupils in Key Stage 2 make satisfactory progress in their reading skills, with most pupils becoming free readers by the end of Year 4, there are too few opportunities for pupils to regularly read a range of genres, including poetry, plays, non-literary materials and pre-twentieth century poetry and prose.
97. Pupils are positive about reading, with many pupils being members of local libraries. All this makes a valuable contribution towards pupils' progress in reading.
98. Pupils in Key Stage 1 develop good writing skills. They develop a sound knowledge of basic English skills appropriate to their age and are able to use them in a satisfactory range of factual essays about events in their daily lives, and the creative interpretation of stories read to them in class.
99. As pupils move through the key stage, they continue to develop good English skills. The scrutiny of English work, however, indicates that there is an over-emphasis on the development of isolated English skills, often on worksheets, which could otherwise be taught within a more challenging and imaginative framework. Whilst pupils in Key Stage 2 are provided with the opportunity to respond to a range of texts, it is done so on an irregular basis, with an over-emphasis on the use of comprehension-type activities. Opportunities need to be found for pupils to write regularly in an extended manner for a wider range of purposes, directed to a number of audiences.
100. Although pupils plan their written work, drafting skills are not used in an effective manner, and opportunities are lost for pupils to re-draft their work in terms of content structure and style. This very important strategy would help to support less able pupils and to really extend the more able. The retention of these final drafted pieces of work would provide the school with the opportunity to identify progress across years and key stages. The new computer suite is beginning to make a contribution to pupils' word-processing skills and their subsequent written work, although this remains an area for development.

101. Whilst teachers regularly correct pupils' work, pupils rarely correct their own mistakes, with the result that opportunities are lost to improve their work. A significant number of pupils, including in Year 6, continue to write in pencil and do not write in a joined-up way.
102. The majority of pupils in both key stages approach their work in a positive and committed manner and give their work their full attention. Behaviour in classrooms is always good. This makes a significant contribution to pupils' satisfactory and often good progress in lessons. Occasionally, a minority of pupils take a somewhat passive approach to their learning and are reluctant to make an active contribution to lessons.
103. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good and often better, whilst the overall quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is predominantly good. Lessons are well planned and organised. Teachers in both key stages demonstrate a secure understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and generally use it in an effective manner. This is a significant factor in the progress made by pupils. Most teachers provide pupils with a range of interesting individual or group activities which match pupils' abilities. Teachers use the plenary session in a satisfactory manner to reflect on what has been learned, assess pupils' understanding and to celebrate their achievement.
104. The best lessons come about where teachers demonstrate personal enthusiasm for the work in hand and create a motivating atmosphere in which good learning can take place. Good teachers explore shared-reading activities in such a way as to develop pupils' interest and enthusiasm for the text being studied as a piece of literature, and not simply for the English language skills used in the passage. Good and very good progress was made where the group activities provided by the teacher were closely linked to the text being studied, rather than isolated English skills' activities. All this was observed in Year 2 where, following on from an imaginative reading of a Spring poem, with appropriate word level work, pupils were provided with the opportunity to work in small groups in contributing their own verses to an original poem, 'A Recipe for Spring'. Their sheer commitment, enthusiasm and the pride in their final work were extremely impressive.
105. Those lessons deemed to be less than satisfactory in Key Stage 2 occurred where the pace of the lesson was slow, where the activities provided, usually on worksheets, were undemanding, and where pupils made very limited progress in the time available.
106. There is a policy for the subject and a commercial scheme of work. This needs to be adapted and added to to meet the unique needs of the school. The school needs to review its current assessment and recording procedures in order to ensure that teachers are fully aware of the level at which individual pupils are working. The school has invested a great deal of money in resources for the literacy hour. Accommodation for the subject is good. The school has addressed the majority of areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection and fulfils the requirements of the National Curriculum.

## MATHEMATICS

107. The previous inspection report stated that attainment and progress were unsatisfactory overall at each key stage. Reception pupils' attainment was satisfactory. Progress made by pupils with special educational needs was good. Factors contributing to these results included unsatisfactory teaching in half the lessons seen, poor curricular management and an underdeveloped curriculum.
108. This inspection finds that there has been a marked improvement in all of these factors. However, because of the varying ability levels of the cohorts of pupils, the Key Stage 1 achievements are more volatile than those at Key Stage 2.
109. The National Curriculum test results for 1999 show that in Key Stage 1 the number of pupils reaching Level 2 or above was below the national average, as was the number achieving Level 3.
110. The results were also below those for similar schools. However, taking the results of the four years from 1996-99, the standard achieved in mathematics was well above the national average.
111. From the evidence gathered during the present inspection, the pupils' standards are broadly in line with the national averages.
112. In Key Stage 2 in the National Curriculum tests in 1999, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 or above was well above the national average, and the percentage of pupils reaching Level 5 or above was close to the national average.
113. Over the four years from 1996-99, the pupils' performance in mathematics was close to the national average. In comparison with similar schools, the 1999 results were above the national average.
114. Evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that these standards are being maintained. The school is set to achieve its percentage targets at each key stage.
115. Pupils in Year 1 were seen counting accurately in tens and investigating pattern. They also explored weighing using a simple balance, estimating weight and investigating whether there was a simple link between the weight of an object and its apparent size. In Year 2 pupils multiply by two, halve and double mentally and apply these skills to simple money calculations. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have good number skills, a knowledge of money and weighing, can name simple two- and three-dimensional shapes, undertake simple measurement and have a working knowledge of time and the calendar. Pupils also use computer programs to develop their skills in simple data handling and to reinforce their knowledge of number bonds and table facts.
116. In Key Stage 2, this is extended. Pupils in Year 3 were seen extending their mental addition skills, adding up to four two-digit numbers. They also have a concept of fractions and can readily identify halves, quarters, thirds, sixths, etc, and know that one half equals two quarters and other simple equivalents.

117. Year 4 pupils could calculate the factors of 24 mentally and, having learned to tell the time in hours and minutes using a.m. and p.m. where required, were extending their knowledge to use the 24-hour clock. In Year 5, tables are extended to ten times and pupils can mentally multiply by 10 and 100. They are also conversant with decimals to two places and can add and subtract them. Year 6 pupils have more challenging number-pattern work and they are able to perform more complex calculations. They use addition, subtraction, multiplication and division operations to solve a variety of problems, often with a minimum of teacher assistance.
118. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have good general number skills both mentally and in written calculations. They can recognise, draw and construct a variety of two- and three-dimensional shapes. They can measure, find simple perimeters, areas and volumes, use a protractor to construct angles, understand symmetry in two-dimensional shapes; they can construct and use a variety of graphs for data collection and most pupils are able to understand average, mode and mean.
119. Progress over the key stages varies between classes but is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1 and good over Key Stage 2. No unsatisfactory teaching of mathematics was seen during the inspection and, in the majority of lessons, it was good at each key stage.
120. Teachers have worked hard to introduce the National Numeracy Strategy effectively and they have succeeded. They all have lessons planned to the national requirements, though the format varies from teacher to teacher. Standardising the teacher planning and the introduction of a whole school policy for handwriting and presentation would improve pupils' achievements even further and make monitoring of the subject more efficient.
121. Teachers expect good standards of behaviour and accuracy in class work. They know their pupils well and have, through good quality displays and careful attention to groupings, created an effective learning environment within the school.
122. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. Their tuition and extra support are usually given in the classroom by well-briefed assistants who provide teaching related to the classes as informed by the class teacher and individual education plans. Monitoring work has been undertaken by the co-ordinator and by the headteacher. Although the co-ordinator does not have regular non-contact time, very effective use has been made of the time available to promote the subject.
123. The school uses its performance data information appropriately to inform the setting of individual improvement targets. Extra tuition for pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 is now provided on a targeted basis to two groups: booster classes for those who need help to achieve level 4, the school's main target across Year 6, and the headteacher provides classes for higher-attainers to improve the number of pupils reaching level 5.
124. Pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject and enjoy their lessons. Resources for the subject are in good order, sufficient and well stored. The subject meets statutory requirements.

## SCIENCE

125. The last inspection said that standards were broadly satisfactory in Key Stage 1 but progress was slow throughout Key Stage 2 and, by the age of 11, attainment was unsatisfactory.
126. There was no whole-school co-ordination of the subject and assessment procedures were not used to inform planning.
127. The school's results have varied quite widely over the intervening years, mainly on account of varying cohorts and a trend towards improvement as the work of the co-ordinator, appointed after the last inspection, impacts upon standards. A commercial scheme of work was introduced in September 1999 and this provides a whole-school structure for the subject and a basis for systematic work on assessment over time.
128. In 1999, the end of Key Stage 1 teacher assessments showed that attainment in science was above the national average. Teachers' statistics and observations made during the present inspection show a sound picture, with achievements broadly in line with national averages.
129. In the 1999 National Curriculum end of Key stage 2 results, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 or above was above the national average, but the percentage reaching Level 5 was well below the national average. These results were broadly in line with the national average in comparison with all schools but below the results for similar schools.
130. Teachers' statistics and observations during this inspection show that the pupils' attainments will be similar to these, although there is some evidence that the number of pupils achieving Level 5 will slightly increase.
131. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils possess a good scientific vocabulary and some sound scientific knowledge. In Year 1, pupils examine how materials change when subjected to heating or cooling by experiments conducted on chocolate. They also acquire a knowledge of the properties of materials from observation and experiment and can describe those suitable for warm and cool clothing and waterproof ones if required. Year 2 pupils had a very interesting lesson on the life cycle of the hen. Live chickens were brought in by a parent and provided an unusual but very relevant basis for the classes' work on living creatures.
132. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils show a working knowledge of the concept of a fair test. They know the effects of exercise on circulation and show an awareness of the interrelationship between the heart, blood and lungs. They know how to separate solids and liquids, can recognise a variety of rocks and fossils and have an elementary knowledge of magnetism and electricity. Their studies also include listening to visitors who explain, for example, the effects on the environment of pollution or of industrial activity.
133. Pupils show a good level of interest in science, with lively discussions and sensible questions being posed. Behaviour seen was good, with pupils respecting one another's views and carefully looking after any equipment used.

134. Pupils in both key stages have appropriate opportunities for experimental and investigative science. This has produced a positive impact on their learning.
135. Pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language make good progress in science. This is because they have extra adult input when needed and have work planned to address their needs.
136. The overall quality of the teaching is good. Planning is clear and detailed, although its variable layout makes monitoring and other comparisons more difficult for the co-ordinator. Teachers know their pupils and have good supportive relationships with them whilst keeping a clear focus on achievement. The provision for special educational needs is good and these pupils progress well. Governors and parents give freely of their time to help in classrooms and accompany the visits, which enriches the curriculum.
137. Since the last inspection, a co-ordinator has been appointed and, although non-contact time has not been available on a regular basis, monitoring, support and work done to revise policies and introduce a commercial scheme of work in September 1999 are beginning to raise achievements and ensure consistency of the delivered curriculum across the key stages. The subject is well resourced and meets statutory requirements.

## **ART**

138. Standards of work seen are generally higher than expected in both key stages. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection report. Pupils use an appropriate range of materials and techniques in both key stages, including paint, clay, textiles and they use and investigate both two- and three-dimensional media.
139. The good foundations that are established in Key Stage 1 enable pupils to achieve well from the outset. Based on the small number of lessons observed and the analysis of pupil's work, the overall rate of progress made is good in all age groups. Pupils in Year 1 demonstrated good cutting and glueing skills, some showed imagination when decorating their Easter eggs with repeated or irregular patterns. The work based on observations of pineapple, cabbage and coconut in Year 2 showed a good understanding of different textures. In Year 3, sketchbook observations of man-made or natural materials were carefully recorded and drawn largely to scale. Pupils in Year 4 used a range of techniques to make decorative flowers for their Easter bonnets or hats. Years 5 and 6 combined materials in relatively secure ways when finishing their Easter bonnets/hats. At all ages, pupils have a good understanding of the work of various artists, including Franz Marc, Paul Klee, Monet and Renoir; for example, the subdued colours used by Year 3 in observations of Paul Klee's work. The pastel observations based on the trilogy of Ken Currie, 'The First Light of Day', showed a good knowledge and understanding of the context in which the artist's work was produced. The colourful display of Aboriginal art completed by Years 5 and 6 portrayed a wide range of shapes and symbols that represented rocks, waterholes, rivers and lightning. Knowledge about non-Western artists is not as well advanced as it is about Western artists in all age groups.



140. Attitudes to the subjects are positive. Behaviour and personal relationships are good and this contributes well to their achievements. Pupils work independently and in groups, they help one another and they are willing to clear up after the lessons. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and they are integrated well. In the older Key Stage 2 lessons, not all pupils were confident in expressing their ideas.
141. The overall quality of teaching is good in both key stages, based on lesson observations and other supporting evidence. Appropriate attention is given to developing pupils' enjoyment of art and to enabling them to encounter a variety of approaches to art. In Key Stage 2, the requirements of investigating and making are combined with knowledge and understanding when possible. The management of pupils is good and teacher expectations are high. Art work is displayed throughout the school and it contributes considerably to the learning environment and to pupils' cultural development. Daily planning is inconsistent in its content and presentation, and the use of ongoing assessment features little in the day-to-day plans. Support staff are used well and this enables all pupils to make progress in relation to their prior attainment. Information technology, mainly as graphics work, is promoted across the classes. Some teachers are more confident in the information technology capability than others. There is some inconsistency in the opportunities provided for pupils to appraise their own and others' art work and, as a result, pupils' self-knowledge about their learning varies in some classes.
142. The school now has an art policy, but it has yet to document a scheme of work. This is planned based on the revised National Curriculum for 2000 and national guidance. There is no formal monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum and teaching but it is planned for as part of the current school development planning. Resources are adequate for the curriculum provided. There is a need for more teaching and learning resources to promote non-Western cultures through art.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

143. Limited teaching of design and technology was observed during the inspection due to the timetabling arrangements. Judgements are made from the topic lessons seen, from an analysis of the pupils' work, including display, and discussions with pupils and teaching staff. This shows that the overall standards attained are similar to those found nationally. This is an overall improvement on the last inspection report where this was an area for action and improvement. Pupils make a good start in Key Stage 1 work where the importance of practical work is recognised. Standards of design work and work on structures are not as well advanced as would be expected by the age of 11, but pupils' skills in making and a knowledge of fitness for purpose are developing appropriately. Self-evaluations of completed work vary between year groups in their quality and depth.
144. In Year 2, the making of an Easter Bonnet was informed by simple flow sheets of what needed to be done. Materials were identified appropriately. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use words and pictures to communicate their ideas and proposed activities. The completion of a bookmark in Year 4, when compared to the original designs, showed similarities between what was planned and the finished product. The higher-attaining pupil self-evaluations of the outcomes clearly expressed the difficulties encountered and how the bookmarks could have been improved. Year 6 step-by-step action plans make good reference to 'Who is my customer?' Some consideration is given to measurement but little to cost. The promotion and use of numeracy skills in

Key Stage 2 is not always evident. Handwriting is usually in pencil and not all pupils use joined-up writing in Key Stage 2. This is an area for whole-school attention and policy.

145. Pupils have good attitudes to learning. They speak with enthusiasm about earlier work that they had completed, for example, in the making of a dragon for the 1999 Flimby Carnival. Year 6 had a good recall of the making of a wagon in card, and 'Flight Day' kites. Year 2 pupils enjoyed making finger puppets and were obviously proud of their Easter Bonnets. Pupils tend to use the vocabulary of art when describing their work. Good attention was given by many pupils to the presentation of their Easter Bonnets, which were worn proudly when judged during the whole-school celebration assembly on the last day of the term.
146. The elements of teaching seen in topic-work activities, which are mainly the development of pupils' making skills, are satisfactory. There is, however, too little attention given to the promotion of design and technology vocabulary and the assessment of this subject based on its level descriptions. The co-ordinator is well informed and is fully aware of the needs of the school and the support that is required for those teaching staff who are less secure in their knowledge and understanding of the programmes of study. The policy is in need of review. The school has yet to document a scheme of work which sets out the knowledge and skills to be taught from Key Stage 1 to the age of 11. Monitoring and evaluation of the subject is planned for this year as a part of the whole-school strategy to extend this formally into the foundation subjects of the National Curriculum. Computer-aided work is insufficiently provided for. Design and technology is not reported on separately in the pupils' annual reports.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

147. At the time of the last inspection, attainment and progress in geography were satisfactory. However, the subject curriculum was described as underdeveloped and unco-ordinated. Since then, a co-ordinator has been appointed, the subject has a policy and national guidelines are being adapted as part of the school's response to the revised National Curriculum for 2000. This has improved the curriculum for the subject and further development is planned.
148. During the present inspection, no teaching was observed at either key stage, as geography is not taught during this part of the year. Evidence was collected from work folders, discussions with pupils and staff, planning documents and displays.
149. The quality and range of learning opportunities enable at least satisfactory progress, thus maintaining standards in line with the previous inspection report.
150. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a sound knowledge of their local area, supplemented by visits and visitors to the school. Pupils in Year 1 make simple sequenced maps and can talk about their journey to school. In Year 2, mapping skills are developed further to include drawing classroom maps, a school plan and a sketch map of the area around the school. They are developing a useful geographical vocabulary and a sound foundation for later mapping and environmental skills.

151. In Key Stage 2, more detailed work is undertaken and the curriculum broadens to include studies of, and visits to, nearby areas such as Maryport and Cockermouth, undertaken in the early part of Key Stage 2, whilst pupils in Year 5 have a residential visit to the Lake District and those in Year 6 visit Newcastle, an appropriately contrasting environment. Pupils show a good level of interest in the subject and enjoy the visits and other practical work which follows on from them.
152. The subject co-ordinator appointed following the previous inspection has undertaken with colleagues a revision of the subject policy documents and they are presently adapting national guidelines, which include improving assessment opportunities, in order to prepare for the requirements of the revised National Curriculum for 2000 government initiative. No non-contact time is available for the co-ordinator to monitor the classroom teaching in the subject at the time of the inspection, nor are there whole-school guidelines for assessment, handwriting and presentation of the subject.
153. Resources for the subject are sufficient and funding is being made available for the purchase of CD-ROMs to enable information technology to feature more strongly in the subject. There are some cross-curricular links with history, religious education and art. Many of the visits have these specifically included during the planning.

## **HISTORY**

154. The previous inspection stated that attainment and progress were satisfactory in Key Stage 2 but unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1 and that the subject was unco-ordinated. There was an over-reliance on commercial worksheets which often resulted in unsatisfactory teaching, and the curriculum planning should be revised particularly for the class which contained both infant and junior pupils.
155. During the present inspection, two lessons, one at each key stage, were seen, pupils were spoken to, teachers planning pupils' work and displays were all examined. It is evident that most pupils have knowledge and understanding typical of their age groups. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and are well supported.
156. There is now a co-ordinator who, with colleagues, has produced a policy and, from September 1999, the school has adopted and introduced the national guidelines for history with adaptations for the school's particular classes, some of which have two age groups in Key Stage 2. The mixed-age class at the Key Stage 1 and 2 interface has been discontinued. The teaching seen is satisfactory and sometimes good.
157. These observations show an improved situation since the last inspection. However, there is not a formal system in place for assessing and recording history, nor does the school have an effective policy or guidelines to ensure consistency in presentation of work and handwriting.
158. Pupils' work throughout the school shows a satisfactory development of historical knowledge and understanding. In Year 1, they studied the first American space journey: an imaginative start linking history and science. Year 2 pupils are developing chronological concepts from studies of old and new toys, visiting the Toy Museum at Cockermouth and listening to a visitor who talked about her own early life and experiences. This led to some researches conducted via a questionnaire which pupils used to gather information about times past from their parents and grandparents.
159. In Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 3 study aspects of Ancient Greece and its associated

classical mythology. Year 4 used a health inspector's report to look at housing conditions in Victorian times, and Year 5 looked at the life of a Victorian servant. Year 6 pupils compared Flimby now with twenty-five years ago, learning some research skills and using information technology to record some of their findings.

160. The lessons seen and the work examined show that teaching in the subject is satisfactory and has some good features, for example, in the use of visits to the Tullie House Museum and the Newcastle Museum, to both enrich the curriculum and develop links with art and geography. Historical skills are taught effectively and these, together with the use of historical artefacts and documents, motivate the pupils and encourage them to use time outside school for historical enquiries of their own. Teacher planning, whilst often good, does not have a common school format for ease of analysis by the co-ordinator nor does it always make it explicit how teacher assessment informs planning.
161. Pupils were attentive in the lessons and those spoken to in other classes said that they enjoyed history and readily recalled work done previously in school.
162. The co-ordinator offers support to colleagues and communicates interest and enthusiasm for the subject. The subject helps pupils to develop a good understanding of their own culture through historical work focused on Flimby and of past cultures, for example, that of Ancient Greece.
163. The co-ordinator does not have non-contact time to monitor the classroom teaching in the subject. Resources are sufficient and well stored, supplemented by loans from teachers and parents' personal collections. Although the work presented is often of good quality, there are no policies or guidelines in place to ensure consistency of handwriting and presentation of pupils' work.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

164. At the time of the last inspection, standards and progress were reported as satisfactory in each of the year groups. The software programs that were in use at that time were judged to be generally appropriate, with a suitable balance between data handling, word processing and computer-assisted learning. The provision for control technology was not extensive. There is still a shortage in software so as to meet fully the requirements of this core subject of the National Curriculum.
165. Pupils' attainment is satisfactory and broadly in line with the national expectations at the end of both key stages in their knowledge, skills and understanding of how to gather information from a variety of sources including CD-ROMs. They can use text images and sound to develop their ideas, but Key Stage 2 pupils do not yet have access to monitoring events and in both key stages to using simulations/models to explore patterns and relationships due to software constraints. Some provision is made for developing control technology including the use of a programmable floor turtle. When this was used in a Year 2 lesson, good links were made with mathematics work related to angles and direction. The school has significantly updated its hardware and software provision since the last inspection for what is now a core subject of the National Curriculum but there are still shortages in software to deliver the strands of modelling and monitoring (Key Stage 2).
166. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils can select and present information in different forms. They use the mouse confidently, know how to use sound, insert text and

images, for example, when designing a Mother's Day card. They present their work using different fonts and text sizes. Pupils have a good understanding of the hardware and its functions. At the age of 11, pupils can talk about the information they need to know and where they can find it, for example, for the first edition of the *Flimby Flyer*. Pictures were inserted confidently, the digital camera was used to portray and promote the success of the school swimming team, and it is used regularly to display the 'team points award winner' on a weekly basis in the school hall. A questionnaire was devised as a means of interviewing the editors. The gardening advice column is a good example of how the pupils have thought carefully about the audience when presenting content and information to other pupils and parents. A good word-processed account is being prepared about the Year 5 visit to Isthmus Cottage in Keswick. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 conveyed these ideas in a variety of forms, including using text and graphics, for example, The Cross of Jesus. At all ages, factual data is searched for using the Internet, and pupils are developing an appropriate knowledge of the uses of computers inside and, to some extent, outside of school. Good use is made of information technology to develop the basic skills of literacy and numeracy for those pupils with special educational needs within lessons and during support sessions.

167. Attitudes to information and communication technology are very positive. Access to this technology is enhancing self-esteem as well as enabling pupils to communicate with others outside of the immediate area. Pupils work independently and share their ideas readily. Behaviour in these activities is good. Information technology makes a significant contribution to the pupils' personal and social development. On occasions, some pupils lack confidence in articulating why events had happened in a particular way.
168. Information technology is taught as a cross-curricular subject and discretely timetabled sessions take place. The community CREDITS room is also a source for discrete teaching as a part of timetabling but it was not used during the inspection week. Based on the analysis of pupils' work, discussions with staff and pupils and direct observations of information technology teaching during the inspection, the overall quality of the teaching provided, which is largely based on communicating and handling information, is satisfactory. Good use was made of demonstration and the reinforcing of numeracy skills in a control lesson in Year 2. The use of story to motivate the learners worked well, and helped maintain their concentration skills. Questioning skills were effective and most pupils responded accurately. The use of assessment and procedures for assessment are not developed sufficiently. Information technology is not reported on in the pupils' annual report to parents.
169. The information technology policy reflects appropriately the philosophy of the school. It is in need of review now that information and communication technology (ICT) is a core subject of the National Curriculum and is also a tool used to develop work in other subjects. Good recognition has been given in the school's bid for National Grid for Learning resources of the need to keep up with the pace of development that is taking place in this subject of the curriculum. Due to the isolated location of Flimby, good emphasis is given to widening learning on a regional, national and international level for both pupils and members of the local community. A community computer day is planned for Wednesday, 7 June 2000, when the ICT facilities of the school, including the CREDITS room, will be used. The co-ordinator is well aware of what needs to be tackled in regard to those strands of the National Curriculum that are not fully provided for and has documented a realistic timescale, subject to the constraints of available resourcing. Plans are in place to monitor and evaluate formally both the

teaching and curriculum coverage as a part of the whole-school action plan which will include the curriculum co-ordinator in having scheduled time to carry out this function as a part of redefined roles and responsibilities of subject co-ordinators.

## MUSIC

170. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils reach an appropriate standard for their age. This is consistent with those reported in the last inspection. All Key Stage 1 pupils sang tunefully and enthusiastically when performing Easter songs to the whole school in the end-of-term assembly. They sing the words by heart, and they can manage some unaccompanied songs, as was evident in their hymn practice. In groups, Year 2 pupils created their own rhythm patterns on percussion instruments and recorded them in their own notation so as to be able to play them to the rest of the class.
171. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are reaching an appropriate standard for their age in their appreciation and performance of different rhythms. Younger Key Stage 2 pupils invented their own pentatonic melodies over a regular beat. Older pupils, both boys and girls, responded well to the different rhythms in "Bugsy Malone" and were able to sustain two different concurrent rhythms. The recorder group from Year 4 also has a good sense of rhythm. On the other hand, singing tunefully in Key Stage 2 is below the standard expected at this age. Although the choir sings some part songs and manages some challenging harmonies quite tunefully and with appropriate expression, this is not the case in class music at the end of Key Stage 2. Here the pupils do not produce a rounded tone, clear words and sufficient expression. Most boys at the end of Key Stage 2 tend not to open their mouths sufficiently when singing. This is similar to the judgement made in the last inspection where it was reported that many of the boys in Key Stage 2 found it difficult to sing in tune.
172. The school is now taking pains to improve singing at the younger end of the school and sustain the improvement as pupils get older. Teachers are now more confident in the teaching of music and the resources are now more numerous and better organised. Although the curriculum now gives pupils opportunities to compose music, there are still no schemes of work for ensuring a balance of activities and systematic progress throughout the school.
173. The overall quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and it is satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Teachers have a good sense of rhythm, they can sing and some can play instruments. They manage their classes well, communicating with good eye contact and clear speech and singing. They create an encouraging atmosphere and some teachers make good use of rehearsal techniques when they use demonstration, practice, appraisal and more practice for improving performances. They enable pupils with special educational needs to make as good progress as the rest of their class. The best teaching stimulates pupils to respond enthusiastically to a mixture of activities within the lesson, to work well in groups and perform with confidence to the rest of the class. The teachers use interesting multicultural programmes in Key Stage 2, for example, an African version of "Cinderella". The extra-curricular Key Stage 2 choir, the recorder group and the small guitar group extend the pupils' musical experience and enjoyment of music. Pupils throughout the school respond well to live accompaniment on the piano or guitar. In spite of their competence, several teachers are not confident about their music teaching. This results in them relying overmuch on published tapes and giving pupils too few chances to appraise their own performances and those of others in order to improve, and to respond to the spirit of the music when the tape poses a question. In some lessons, pupils stop listening alertly after hearing

the teacher or the tape for much of the lesson. Some teachers are not confident about encouraging pupils to sing well-known songs unaccompanied so that they can concentrate on aiming for the best intonation, diction and expression. Occasionally, the room is organized so that pupils are huddled together or have their backs to the source of sound. The school misses opportunities to share music with pupils at times like the start of assembly.

174. The school has striven to maintain weekly music in each year in spite of recent constraints on curriculum time. A link governor has observed some music lessons but as yet the co-ordinator has not monitored planning and teaching to see what could be done to develop them. There is little use of information and communication technology to help pupils compose music.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

175. The last inspection reported attainment and progress as satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and, in Key Stage 2, standards were good in swimming and unsatisfactory in gymnastics. During the present inspection, pupils are achieving the expected standard in games and dance for their ages. No gymnastics lessons were seen due to the timetabling arrangements but the school continues to provide a range of games, gymnastic activities and dance in each year of the key stages and swimming in Years 5 and 6. Older Key Stage 2 pupils can swim more than 25 metres, and are capable of more than one stroke. Eight per cent of the group have achieved the Amateur Swimming Association bronze, silver or gold awards.
176. In a Year 2 games activity, pupils bounced the ball accurately on the spot, threw beanbags carefully onto a target area; bouncing a ball onto a bat was less skilful. They show a developing understanding of how important it is to be active. Pupils applied the rules of the games well. In a Year 4 dance activity, pupils made good progress in their ability to put together and refine a series of sequenced dance steps to make a meaningful dance of their own. Year 6 pupils demonstrated good control of their varying and imaginative movements as they created a dance sequence about the Zambezi River. Good ball control was seen when shooting and dribbling with a football. At all times boys listened carefully and eagerly demonstrated their movement patterns to each other. This is a significant improvement on the last inspection report.
177. At all ages, pupils listen carefully and follow instructions. They collaborate well and work independently when asked to. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated well into all activities observed. Behaviour is good and attitudes at all ages are positive and, as a result, this makes a good contribution to pupils' knowledge and understanding of fitness and health. Pupils show a pride in their finished pieces of work. Both boys and girls give their complete attention.
178. The overall quality of the teaching in both key stages is good. This is an improvement on the last inspection. There is a much-improved security in subject knowledge, and the activities seen were challenging and purposeful. Features of the good teaching observed were when demonstration is used effectively to reinforce the acquisition of new skills and techniques. Opportunity is given for pupils to take some control over their own learning. Teachers pay good attention to safety. Assessment is usually oral and praise is used as appropriate. Insufficient attention was given to paired working; in the dance sessions in Key Stage 2 most pupils worked in single sex groupings. Planning on a day-to-day basis is used appropriately but it is inconsistent in its content and presentation. Praise is used well, but formal assessment is not used enough as a

means of recording pupils' academic performance and personal development.

179. The school has a policy for this subject following the last inspection. The co-ordinator and link governor for physical education are working together on the formulation of a scheme of work and its assessment. Seasonal extra-curricular sports activities are in place, but only for pupils in Key Stage 2; three staff and some parents act as coaches. The school participates successfully in friendly inter-school matches, including football and netball, and swimming galas. The school has developed strong connections with local rugby teams, and players help to train the pupils.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

180. Observation of a limited number of lessons, a scrutiny of work and teachers' planning documents all indicate that pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in religious education and are working towards the requirements and demands of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The school has maintained standards of attainment since the last inspection, and resolved the areas of weaknesses identified in the previous report. Because of the time of the year, most religious education activities were centred around the theme of Easter.
181. In the reception class, pupils explored the story of Easter and the crucifixion of Jesus. This was handled in a very sensitive manner by the class teacher, who focused on the concept of rebirth and hope for man, rather than Jesus' suffering and death. The teacher handled pupils' questions in an appropriate manner. Through good storytelling, the pupils came to a simple understanding of the importance of Easter in the Christian calendar.
182. Pupils in Year 2 likewise explored the Easter story, with increased emphasis on the idea of rebirth and renewal. Many pupils already had a simple understanding of the story of Easter. The teacher used good questioning skills to extend pupils' knowledge and to assess their understanding. Pupils were provided with the opportunity to consider the Jewish Feast of the Passover and to make a connection between the Christian and Jewish faiths. Pupils made good progress in their understanding of worship and the importance of celebration in the Christian and Jewish faiths.
183. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 were provided with the opportunity to explore the importance of Easter within the Christian calendar, not as a time for despair, but as a time of renewal and hope for the future. Through a good introduction and exposition, the teacher provided a secure and reflective atmosphere in which discussion could take place. Whilst many pupils made an active contribution to this element of the lesson, a significant minority of pupils took a passive approach to their learning and were reluctant to express their ideas and feelings. The written activity provided by the teacher was somewhat undemanding and failed to stretch the Year 6 pupils in the mixed-age class. Pupils' written work makes a limited contribution to pupils' literacy skills.



184. Examination of the agreed syllabus used by the school and teachers' plans indicate that, over time, pupils are provided with the opportunity to explore and extend their knowledge and spiritual understanding of Christianity. They develop an understanding of stories in both the Old and New Testaments, as well as stories connected with the Sikh religion. Pupils consider the prophets, festivals and celebrations of each of these faiths and come to an understanding of the beliefs shared by these faiths and their impact on people's beliefs and their daily lives.
185. The large majority of pupils approach their work in religious education in an interested and committed manner. They listen with respect to one another's beliefs, and are sensitive to other people's feelings.
186. The overall quality of teaching in both key stages is satisfactory. Lessons are planned well, with teachers using good open-ended questions to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. Whilst teachers provide regular opportunities for classroom discussion, examination of pupils' written work indicates that it is sometimes undemanding and fails to challenge higher-attaining pupils. Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge and present it to pupils in a meaningful and interesting manner. Information technology is occasionally used as a means of developing pupils' ideas further, for example, the Years 4 and 5 pictures of 'The Cross of Jesus', but it is not making a significant enough contribution to their religious education.
187. There is a policy for the subject, with the school using the Locally Agreed Syllabus as its scheme of work. This has not been adapted nor extended to meet the particular circumstances of the school. The school has access to a good range of artefacts, for all faiths, from Carlisle Cathedral. School assemblies and a number of church leaders and visitors, including from St. Nicholas' Church, make a significant contribution to religious education. The subject makes a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.