

INSPECTION REPORT

ST THOMAS'S C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kendal

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112322

Headteacher: Mr. W. Holliday

Reporting inspector: Mr F. Carruthers
21285

Dates of inspection: 5th – 9th November 2001

Inspection number: 194257

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Kendal Green Kendal Cumbria
Postcode:	LA9 5PP
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs B. Handley
Date of previous inspection:	April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21285	Mr F. Carruthers	Registered inspector	Design and technology, Music, Physical education, Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
13746	Mr D. Russell	Lay inspector		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?
25509	Mrs J. Clarke	Team inspector	English, Geography, History	
30205	Miss T Kenna	Team Inspector	Mathematics, Art and design, The foundation stage	How well is the school led and managed?
14991	Mr A. Hardwicke	Team inspector	Science, Information and communication technology, Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to its pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This voluntary aided primary school has 294 pupils on roll, aged four to 11. The school is bigger than most primary schools. It is situated on the northern edge of Kendal and serves a mixed area of private, local authority and housing association property. The socio-economic circumstances of the families of most pupils are broadly average and this is reflected in the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (20 per cent). The mobility of pupils and their families is similar to that found in most schools. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is low and they are of Black origin. None is at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. There are nine pupils with statements of special educational need and this is above the average for all primary schools. Their needs vary, covering learning difficulties, severe learning difficulties, autism, emotional and behavioural difficulties and hearing impairment. Twenty-five per cent of pupils are on the school's register of pupils with special educational need and this is in line with the national average. Children enter the two reception classes at the start of the school year in which they are five years old and the range of their attainment on entry as measured by an initial assessment is average. In their personal, social and emotional development, the attainment of many is below that expected of children at this age. Collective worship and religious education are the subject of a separate inspection.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school. As a result of very good leadership by senior managers and good teaching, the pupils achieve well. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve well and standards achieved by pupils in Year 6 are much higher than those in similar schools.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and relationships are good.
- The quality of teaching is good and there is a high proportion of very good and excellent teaching. This results in the high standards that pupils achieve.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- There is a rich variety of learning experiences, including activities outside lessons and visits out of school.
- Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good.
- Leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher provides very clear direction for the work of the school. He is well supported by the deputy headteacher and senior management team, and the effectiveness of the governing body is excellent.

What could be improved

- Provision in the two reception classes so that it matches the high quality found in the rest of the school.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in April 1997. Since then the school has made very good progress. The three key issues at that time, which related to overall management of the curriculum, and the support for pupils' personal development and for pupils with special educational needs, have been resolved very well. Good standards have been maintained since the last inspection and teaching has improved. Significant improvements have been made to the learning opportunities for pupils and provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is now very good. The role and involvement of governors in shaping the direction of the school are now excellent. Last year the school was awarded a Department for Education and Skills (DfES) Achievement Award, in recognition of standards achieved.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	A	A	C	A
Mathematics	C	A	B	A
Science	A	A	A	A

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

Pupils achieve well and, as is evident in the table above, standards are well above the average of similar schools. Inspection findings indicate that this is the result of skilled teaching and targeted support for pupils, especially those with special educational needs, who also achieve well. Good standards have been maintained over the years and the trend upwards has been in line with the national trend. Work seen in all three subjects is well presented. The school sets challenging targets for the pupils and is successful in meeting them.

In Year 2, inspection findings indicate that standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average and in science, they are average. In 2001 tests and teachers' assessments at the end of Year 2, results when compared with those of similar schools were well above average in reading, very high in writing and above average in mathematics and science.

Attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) is similar to that found in most schools at the end of Years 2 and 6. It is above that expected of pupils in the age range in art and design, design and technology and music. Attainment is above that expected of pupils in Year 2 in physical education. There was insufficient evidence to form a judgement at the end of Year 6. Attainment is similar to that found in most schools in geography and history. Children in the two reception classes make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning and good progress in personal, social and emotional development. This is because staff make this aspect a priority in their planning.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school and are enthusiastic about their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. This is an important factor in why pupils achieve good standards of work in class. Around school and at playtimes, there are effective procedures to maintain good behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils work well independently or in groups and there are good relationships between staff and pupils, and among pupils.
Attendance	Good. This helps the progress that pupils make.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory / Good	Very 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.

Teaching overall is good and this is significant in helping the pupils to achieve as well as they do. There is consistently very good teaching in Years 1, 2 and 6. English, mathematics and science are taught very well in these year groups and there is some very good teaching evident in other classes as well. There is a high level of expertise among teachers and they make very good use of learning support staff to help in teaching small groups of pupils, especially those with special educational needs. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and as a result, the quality of pupils' learning is good. Because pupils have clear targets to achieve in English and mathematics, they have a good awareness of strengths and weaknesses in what they do. Pupils try hard in lessons. Teaching is good across a range of subjects and is very good in design and technology and music, where specialist teaching by one of the subject leaders to some of the junior-aged classes is helping to maintain good standards. Teaching in the two reception classes is a balance of satisfactory and good. The quality of provision in these classes is hindered by a number of factors, including shortcomings in the accommodation and learning resources.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. There is a rich variety of learning experiences, including activities outside lessons and visits out of school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Clear individual education plans are written for pupils and there is very good support provided by class teachers and support staff.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school's main statements, <i>Everyone Is Important, Care and Consideration Always</i> and <i>Great Expectations</i> are underlined in the Christian values and ethos of the school. All aspects of the provision support the pupils' personal development very well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is a caring school. There are very good procedures to support and monitor the pupils' academic and personal development and their behaviour.

Partnerships with parents are good and have been maintained since the last inspection. Parents help in school and support their children at home well. Volunteers support the school's *Homework Club* and the very active parent, teacher and friends association raises funds for much needed resources.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very effective leadership for the school and is well supported by the deputy headteacher and senior management team. They have provided the direction which has seen the school make very good improvement since the last inspection.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Excellent. Governors have a very good grasp of the strengths of the school and take a close interest in subjects of the curriculum.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Monitoring of teaching and provision has made an important contribution to improvement, and senior managers closely compare how well the school is doing in relation to similar schools.
The strategic use of resources	Funding for specific purposes, such as special educational needs and the premises, is used very effectively. Governors and senior managers consult a

	range of people about important matters, obtaining the best resources at competitive prices.
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Staffing levels are good and learning support assistants are very well trained for their roles. The accommodation is good overall, but one reception classroom is cramped and there is only a very small secure outdoor area for the reception children to use. There are extensive grounds which are used well for the purpose of pupils' study. Levels of resourcing are good. There is a newly opened central library. Resources for the reception classes have shortcomings and require reviewing and upgrading.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The children enjoy school • Teaching is good • Parents feel comfortable approaching the school • The school has high expectations of what the children can achieve • Children get the right amount of work to do at home. 	<p>A few parents feel that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the management of pupils' behaviour in class is inconsistent • behaviour in the playground could be better • there are not enough activities outside lessons.

Inspectors support the positive views of parents. They consider the arrangements for classroom management are well defined and effective. Boisterous behaviour in the playground is dealt with appropriately and there are good procedures recently introduced to help pupils at playtimes, including the *Friendship Stops*. There is a very good range of activities outside lessons.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The inspection findings are that pupils' attainment in English is in line with the national average at the end of Year 6. In mathematics and science, attainment is above the national average. These findings are supported by the latest test results for Year 6 pupils in 2001, which have yet to be validated and which show that compared with similar schools, standards were well above the average in all three subjects. Standards have risen since the last inspection and the trend upwards has been broadly in line with the national trend. These very good results show that all pupils, both boys and girls, achieve well throughout the school. Pupils who are on the school's special educational needs register are fully included in every lesson and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Last year the school was awarded a Department for Education and Skills (DfES) Achievement Award, in recognition of pupils' achievements.

2. There are many contributory factors to the high level of pupil achievement. There is skilled teaching throughout infant and junior classes and especially in Years 1, 2 and 6. Subject leaders and senior managers of the school have worked hard to improve the pupils' attainment and have put into place a range of strategies to bring about improvement. These are having a positive effect upon how well the pupils perform. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has been very well implemented and the school is effective in embracing new initiatives to improve further the teaching of English and mathematics throughout the school, for instance *Early Literacy Support* and *Springboard Mathematics*. As a result, there has been particular improvement, for example, in the ability of pupils to make rapid and accurate mental calculations in their mathematical work. Learning support assistants play a very significant role in helping the pupils who learn slowly and those who find concentration and application very difficult. All the teachers work hard to ensure that the pupils' confidence and self-esteem in lessons are maintained, and praise and help are employed to achieve this aim.

3. At the end of Year 2, inspection findings are that standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average. In science, standards are average. In the unvalidated 2001 National Curriculum tests, the pupils scored above the national average in reading and well above the national average in writing. When their results are compared with those of similar schools, the pupils scored well above the average in reading and very highly in writing. In mathematics, results show that pupils' attainment was broadly in line with the national average, and above in comparison with similar schools. In science, teachers' assessments show attainment was average compared with all schools and above average compared with similar schools. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is consistently very good and is the most significant reason for how well the school is performing in national tests when results are compared with those of similar schools.

4. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning. They develop positive attitudes towards their work as a result of the good teaching they receive. The school is diligent in its procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs and good individual programmes are set to target these needs. There is an effective combination of mainly in-class support, but also withdrawal groups when necessary. Both these systems are successful, and together ensure that pupils make good progress. In some classes and year groups the number of pupils with special educational needs, and the nature of their problems, are such that they make significant additional demands on the skill and understanding of teachers. This accounts for some variations in the overall attainment of different year groups, which have had an impact on National Curriculum test results.

Teachers, however, respond positively to these challenges, and ensure that the teaching approaches they use are appropriate for pupils of all abilities. The strength of the school's planning procedures, and the effectiveness with which the needs of individual pupils are met ensure that all make the best progress possible and achieve well.

5. Attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) is similar to that found in most schools at the end of Years 2 and 6. It is above that expected of pupils in the age range in art and design, design and technology and music. Attainment is above that expected of pupils in Year 2 in physical education. There was insufficient evidence to form a judgement at the end of Year 6. Attainment is similar to that found in most schools in geography and history across the age range.

6. The children in the reception classes make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning and in personal, social and emotional development good progress is made. This is because the staff make this aspect of development a priority in their planning. Most of the children are on course to attain the expected early learning goals by the time they reach the end of the reception year. Children's progress could be better, but there are shortcomings in the provision, including the quality of the accommodation and range of learning resources available.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Since the last inspection, positive attitudes towards learning, good behaviour in lessons and good relationships continue to prevail at the school. Fixed or temporary exclusions from school have been eliminated. Attendance levels for the last four years have been broadly in line with the national average and unauthorised absences are below the national average.

8. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic about their school. Both the upward trend in attendance levels and very low levels of lateness throughout the school reflect this enjoyment. The children in the two reception classes settle well into the routine of school life and the majority relate well to each other. They learn to take turns as they share equipment and resources and show increasing levels of concentration. Pupils in infant and junior classes are eager to develop high levels of understanding of new concepts. Good relationships exist between teachers and pupils, who are polite and not afraid to ask pertinent questions. For example, in a Year 1 science lesson, some of the younger pupils, when undertaking tasks on predicting outcomes, felt confident to ask their teacher to repeat some tasks to confirm their findings. High expectations, a good pace to learning and target setting by teachers help pupils to develop positive attitudes. In lessons, pupils exhibit and sustain high levels of concentration. Teachers actively encourage pupils to achieve challenging but attainable learning objectives. They offer words of praise and develop suggestions and ideas made by the pupils.

9. Pupils work effectively either independently or collaboratively. Teachers encourage the concept of *talking partners*, in which pupils are encouraged to share their thinking in solving difficult tasks. Teachers take every opportunity to reinforce these attitudes by giving praise and reward stickers. In all subjects, pupils' positive attitudes to learning reflect their levels of achievement.

10. Behaviour in and around school is generally good. Teachers control pupils' behaviour well using effective classroom management strategies. Pupils with identified behavioural difficulties sometimes adversely affect the pace of lessons but this is handled well by teachers and learning support staff, using the school's behaviour policy. For example, pupils displaying uncooperative behaviour are given *time out* with support staff or the headteacher in order to give them the opportunity to regain their composure and return to class and further learning. There is little evidence of oppressive behaviour,

bullying, sexism or racism around the school. However, records of behavioural incidents indicate that effective actions are taken when appropriate.

11. Good behaviour in lessons is having a positive impact on attainment. It means that pupils can achieve the expected learning outcomes. Pupils respond well to the established work ethic and this means they produce good standards of work. Although there is an element of boisterous behaviour during playtimes and around the corridors, behaviour is normally acceptable and pupils play well together. When any inappropriate behaviour in corridors occurs during arrival and departure, staff are quick to respond.

12. During lunchtime in the dining hall, pupils were polite and showed a genuine interest in talking to visitors. Pupils are considerate to others. Older pupils are always available to assist younger pupils. For example, an initiative called *Caps* has been introduced at playtimes, when selected pupils wear green baseball caps so that younger pupils needing assistance can easily identify them. Older pupils give this help willingly. There are good relationships amongst pupils. Pupils are willing to share ideas and work together in lessons. The use of *Circle time*, that is, formal opportunities for discussion in lessons, helps them to express their feelings towards each other and highlight areas of concern to them. During playtime, pupils may use *The Friendship Stops* when they have no one to play with. Anyone seeing someone waiting at the *stops* can then go and see if they would like to play. This leads to very good relationships being formed amongst pupils.

13. Attendance is good. During the last school year, attendance levels were broadly in line with the national average. Unauthorised absences were below the national average. Review of attendance during the first half term of this year shows that levels are above the national average.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching is good. Of 50 lessons observed, four out of five were good or better and two out of five were very good or excellent, which is a high proportion. There is no unsatisfactory teaching and this is a significant improvement since the last inspection when just over one lesson in ten was judged to be less than satisfactory and there were few very good or excellent lessons. Several factors account for this improvement. There is quality in depth amongst the staff, evident, for example, in the fact that all those teachers eligible to apply have achieved the status of *threshold teachers*, that is, effective professionals whose pupils achieve well. In addition, two staff are *leading mathematics teachers* for the county, providing support for colleagues in other schools.

15. Improvement has also been the result of important developments in the teaching of English and mathematics, which was inconsistent at the last inspection and ranged from unsatisfactory to very good. The teaching of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy is now good overall and very good in Years 1, 2 and 6. The teaching of science throughout the school has improved and training to support the teaching of ICT has benefited the expertise of staff and pupils' experience of computer applications. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs has improved as a result of action taken to address a key issue at the last inspection. Teachers make very good and often excellent use of support staff to help groups of pupils, especially those with behavioural difficulties. A very good system to monitor the quality of teaching and learning by the headteacher has been established and is very effective in raising teachers' expectations about what pupils can achieve. Teachers' planning has been a focus for development. To address a key issue at the last inspection, new year-group or double year-band leaders have been established to take charge of planning for subjects. As a result of these improvements, the quality of learning is good and pupils of all levels of attainment achieve well.

16. Teaching in the foundation stage is a balance of good and satisfactory lessons. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Good routines for pupils to follow have been established, which have a positive impact on the children's learning. The two teachers are well assisted by learning support staff. Lessons are planned to meet the needs of all the children with careful regard and attention paid to the early learning goals. Where teaching is good, the staff challenge the children well and motivate them to make learning fun. Children respond well to all staff and obviously feel very happy and secure with them. Good links are frequently made between different areas of learning. Teachers and learning support assistants regularly assess the children's progress. Provision overall is impeded by a number of factors. The cramped accommodation inside, the under-use of outdoor accommodation, and the limited resources available to stimulate the children both physically and mentally are limiting the rate of progress that the children make.

17. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is very good. Four out of five lessons are very good or better and the remainder is good. All aspects of the teaching are of a high standard. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve and how they make use of support staff and learning resources are excellent. This leads to the good and often very good progress that pupils make in lessons and results in the school achieving standards at the end of Year 2, for instance in writing, which are very high compared with those of similar schools. Teaching in junior classes is good and one third of lessons are very good or better. The best teaching is to be found in Year 6 and one of the two Year 5 classes. There is also some very good teaching in the other Year 5 class and in lower junior classes. Teachers' planning is very thorough and supports the learning of all pupils, whatever their level of ability. To challenge more able pupils, seven go to a local high school for extra lessons in mathematics. Staff in the junior classes have high expectations for what pupils can achieve and the outcomes are evident in how the school's standards at the end of Year 6 are well above those of similar schools. Staff new to the school, including one newly qualified teacher, have settled in very quickly and are already making a very positive contribution to the quality of teaching and learning.

18. Teachers have good and often very good levels of knowledge and understanding about the range of subjects they teach. In ICT, the expertise of teachers has developed well. The teaching of music in junior-aged classes is made better by the deployment of one of the subject leaders to teach some classes other than her own and this results in good coverage of the programmes of study. Teachers have a good grasp of how to implement the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and the pupils are taught very well. They are having a marked impact on pupils' achievement in national tests in Years 2 and 6. The development of literacy and numeracy is supported through a very good focus on reading, writing and calculating and measuring in other subjects. For instance, pupils write well in history and science. They measure out their designs in design and technology and produce tables and graphs in science.

19. The quality of teaching is enhanced further as teachers share the learning objectives with the pupils. This helps pupils to understand what is expected of them. Lessons often end with a review of learning, which enables teachers to assess achievement. Teachers use good questioning strategies to assess levels of understanding. The pace of learning is good and pupils have a good awareness of their strengths and weaknesses as a result of individual targets they have in English and mathematics. These targets are regularly updated and teachers refer to individual and group targets in lessons. Pupils acquire skills and knowledge well in subjects such as mathematics and the more able pupils achieve very well as a result. Pupils put a good amount of effort in their work.

20. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good overall, and often very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection as a result of action taken to address a key issue. Teachers know their pupils well and have very good awareness of how to meet their individual needs. The teaching strategies used are supportive and sensitive and consequently all pupils are fully included in all aspects of the school's curriculum. All adults develop very good working relationships,

which promote good learning, and build confidence and self-esteem. A particular feature is the very good use that is made of support staff. Adult support during each week is directed towards specific pupils according to their level of need. For instance, there is a high level of support in classes that have above average proportions of pupils with emotional and behavioural problems, and adult support helps the pupils to focus their attention on what the teacher is saying in whole-class sessions and to offer answers and make comments. If a pupil is unable to pay attention, then the assistant withdraws the pupil to do individual work and brings her / him back when it is possible. This helps both the pupil and the rest of the class to make progress. This approach has a positive impact on learning in all subjects, so that pupils are fully included in all aspects of the school's life and work.

21. Teaching in science is good and often very good, especially in Years 1, 2 and 6. It is very good in design and technology and music. Teaching in the few lessons of physical education seen was very good in infant classes and good in junior classes. It is good in ICT. There was insufficient evidence to judge teaching in art and design in infant classes and in geography and history in both infant and junior classes, but the quality of learning, evident from pupils' work and talking to pupils, is very good in art and design and good in geography and history. Art and design is taught well in junior classes.

22. Teachers show appreciation of the work that pupils produce. In the best lessons they also suggest ways in which it could be improved further. Pupils' books are marked regularly and there are some examples of very good marking in English. The best marking includes suggestions of how work might be improved, and helps both pupils and teachers plan for future lessons. The use of homework to support pupils' learning and help to raise standards is very good and the school's homework club contributes very well to the pupils' learning in this aspect.

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

23. The quality and range of subjects taught and learning opportunities are very good overall and are enriched with a very good range of activities outside lessons, including after-school clubs and visits related to different subjects. The curriculum meets statutory requirements in all subjects. All pupils have equal opportunities to enjoy the full range of learning opportunities.

24. Appropriate proportions of time are allocated to the different subjects and the school has very successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. At the time of the last report the provision for history was found to be unsatisfactory. This subject is now taught more regularly and there has been good improvement since that time. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is effectively provided through specifically targeted lessons, as well as in subjects such as science. The school nurse visits regularly, and the school also makes use of the local *health bus*.

25. Teachers' planning for coverage of the programmes of study in National Curriculum subjects is very good. Nationally recommended schemes of work have been adopted for many subjects. In art and design, music and physical education, however, the school has reverted to its own schemes after a year's trial of the national ones. This reflects well-founded confidence which the school has in its own schemes, and which is justified by the results achieved. Management of subjects has been allocated appropriately, according to the qualifications and experience of staff, and developmental training has been provided as necessary. Planning for literacy and numeracy is very good and agrees with the guidelines provided in the two national strategies. In planning for the foundation stage, the two reception class teachers have carefully taken into account the statutory early learning goals for children of this age. However, insufficient improvement both in accommodation and resources, in order

to support changes in the curriculum for this age group, has prevented teachers' planning from having its full impact on learning.

26. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and pupils make good progress throughout the school. This reflects very good improvement since the last inspection, where provision was found to be unsatisfactory. The school's support for pupils with special educational needs was judged to be insufficient, and provision for those pupils on the lower stages of the register was in need of improvement. All pupils are now well supported, and the school has effectively addressed those areas identified in the last report. Individual education plans are well constructed and regularly reviewed. Pupils receive very good support from both class and specialist teachers, as well as classroom assistants. This ensures that they make the best possible progress over time, and positively promotes good learning. Pupils with statements of special educational need are also well supported, and the skills of outside agencies, where appropriate, are used well. These pupils are involved in all subjects of the curriculum and they are all fully included in the life of the school. Their statements are well constructed, and provision to meet the requirements of each statement is in place.

27. The school's policies and practice for the promotion of all aspects of equality of opportunity are good, and they have a positive impact on, for example, those pupils who have special educational needs. Pupils of differing abilities and needs generally work and play together amicably, both within the classroom and around the school. The school's very good support for pupils' social development makes a good contribution to this aspect of provision.

28. Personal, social and health education is well planned, with valuable learning opportunities which relate to their pupils' personal experiences. These opportunities help to resolve possible conflicts, in situations such as those which might arise during school playtimes. The use of *Circle time* to explore these areas is developing well. As they move through the age groups, pupils are given increasing opportunities to discuss their feelings and actions, and how they affect others. Good links are made with other subjects, for instance in science, where the effects of different kinds of food on individual health are considered. The ways in which the actions of communities can affect the environment are also studied. In Year 5, for example, pupils consider alternative solutions to traffic problems in Kendal, and how different interest groups, such as shopkeepers and pedestrians, might be affected. Such activities also make a worthwhile contribution to pupils' understanding of aspects of citizenship.

29. A very good variety of activities outside lessons is provided, and they are very well supported by pupils of all ages and both sexes. Clubs meet after school on most days, and include music making, recorders, a homework club run by parents and volunteers, a choir and an environmental club. There are also sporting activities, including football, netball and bench ball. During recent years, the school has provided a good range of visits to support different aspects of the curriculum, for example to The Brockhole Centre and Thirlmere reservoir by Years 5 and 6. There have been visits by the schools' music service, participation in Red Nose Day, and a Young Citizen's Quiz. The richness and variety of these activities have made very valuable additions to the curriculum.

30. Good links are maintained with other local schools. For instance, a scheme has been established for more able to have extra numeracy lessons in an associated high school. Funding has been found to enable these pupils to travel by taxi. Links are also well developed with a school in London, so as to give pupils experience of differing communities.

31. The school makes very good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is a very good improvement from the last inspection where the spiritual, moral and social provision was good and the cultural provision was satisfactory. The school now has a written

policy, which underpins this important area of the school's work and ensures that this aspect of the pupils' development has a secure place in the curriculum.

32. The pupils' spiritual development is very well promoted. The main statements, *Everyone Is Important, Care and Consideration Always*, and *Great Expectations*, emphasise the Christian values and beliefs linked with the ethos of hard work, which are at the heart of the life and work of the school. The vicar, who is also a governor of the school, gives time to lead the school in worship and is welcomed to the school by pupils eager to share a book or conversation with him. Pupils explore their thoughts and feelings during class and school assemblies through prayer and reflection. There are also occasions in the busy schedule of life at school for the pupils to gather their thoughts in quiet moments and pray. There are opportunities in lessons where the pupils have a chance to talk about their own feelings, talk about how they think others might feel and value the contributions of others. Central in the school hall is the Millennium Banner with its clear message *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever*. The pupils are pleased to talk about their work and their likes and dislikes. Year 6 pupils spoke about their feelings at being in their last year in school and how they would miss the teachers and the headteacher when they left.

33. Moral development is very well promoted throughout the school. The school policy is to encourage the pupils to recognise that everyone is important. Care and consideration should be shown to everyone so that all work effectively together. To achieve these high aspirations the pupils devise their own class rules, which they review at the beginning of each term. They talk about class problems and personal worries and are sure that the staff are always there to listen to their concerns and anxieties. The school ethos is one of self-discipline and responsibility to one another. All members of staff apply this Christian approach consistently throughout the school. Secure relationships provide a firm basis for the development of a clear moral understanding. Pupils are taught right from wrong, with the very youngest children in the reception classes having a clear understanding of what is expected of them.

34. Social development is very well promoted by all adults throughout the school and pupils are encouraged to care and take responsibility for others. The *Friendship Stops* in the playground and the care the older pupils take of the younger pupils mean that the school works as a supportive community. Pupils willingly accept responsibility, for example when distributing materials in lessons and tidying up at the end, and helping in the organisation during and at the end of school assemblies. Social issues relating to the locality are addressed effectively through different subjects. The pupils are also encouraged to understand problems in the context of the wider world. The pupils have prayed for the people caught up in the effects of the recent terrorist attacks in New York. Here the pupils consider their own personal feelings and thoughts on the effects of these terrible incidents. The school successfully promotes an atmosphere in which pupils are able to discuss important questions and concerns. There are many contributions from visitors and members of the local community in the school. The inclusion of pupils with statements of special educational need and those pupils who find learning and concentration difficult in class, supports the pupils' social development and promotes positive attitudes towards these pupils.

35. Provision for cultural education is very good. The pupils have a very good understanding of the world community, and their understanding of their own place in a multi-cultural society is very strong. Parents feel that multi-cultural issues and understanding are very well conveyed by the school. The school has a continuing link with a school in London, which has a very different cultural mix. Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to go to London and live and work alongside pupils from this school. The pupils study a range of artists and composers. The variety and number of educational visits and visitors to the school include different cultural experiences. Pupils study a wide range of ancient civilisations and gain a good understanding of the life and time of these ancient peoples.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. This is a caring school. The school has made very good progress in establishing procedures for monitoring and supporting the welfare of pupils. This was a key issue at the last inspection. The school places emphasis on the safety and welfare of the pupils. For instance, governors are very active in carrying out risk assessments around the school. Funds are allocated to improve safety of the playground, particularly around the climbing and swinging facilities. The health and safety policy is a well-defined document. A section on the supervision of pupils at specific times of the day is clear. This policy document promotes the school's three key aims. Fire extinguishers and exits are clearly marked on the school layout maps. A governor on the premises committee has been trained to undertake electrical testing of equipment around the school. Appropriate first aid facilities are provided. Several members of staff have received full first-aid training. Good records of accidents are maintained.

37. Child protection procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are good and rigidly implemented. The headteacher is the designated person for child protection purposes. All teachers have received training in child protection. New teachers at the school are fully aware of their responsibilities in handling and identifying children at risk. The school works closely with outside agencies in this very important area.

38. Systems for monitoring attendance are very good. The move from conventional registers towards optimal marking registers is positive, allowing the school to monitor attendance more effectively and improving the efficiency of administrative procedures. Close liaison with the education welfare officer helps support the school in its efforts to improve attendance levels. Procedures for marking registers are efficient and pupils sit quietly during registration. In some classes, teachers take the opportunity to introduce the use of other languages to respond to registration. Good follow-up procedures ensure levels of unauthorised absences are kept to an absolute minimum. The headteacher takes every opportunity to urge parents not to take their children out of school for holidays during term time.

39. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good. School rules are strategically placed around the classrooms. Teachers use well established strategies to control behaviour in the classroom and pupils respond positively to receiving stickers and merit certificates for good work and behaviour. The school communicates regularly with parents on any pupil's inappropriate behaviour. Removing privileges and effective reprimands consistently reinforce the need for good behaviour during lessons. Detailed records are kept of any identified bullying incidents. Since January this year, records show nine incidents investigated and dealt with by the headteacher. On a day-to-day basis, an open-door approach at the school allows parents to raise any matters of concern.

40. Procedures for assessing the pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science are very good and information is used very well to plan lessons and set targets for pupils to achieve. These aspects are helping pupils to achieve well over time. Teachers use the information to re-group pupils during the year for sessions of the literacy and numeracy strategies. Staff share this information with both parents and pupils, and parents value this. In addition, staff also assess knowledge and understanding in subjects such as geography and history by end-of-topic assessments. In design and technology, pupils are encouraged to evaluate the outcomes of their work, such as models and pieces of craftwork. Staff in the foundation stage use initial assessments to help them to plan work, and they regularly record observations on the children to assess progress. Class teachers keep at hand individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs, and are good at assessing pupils' understanding of the work. They provide good support for the pupils.

41. Teachers know their pupils well. Procedures for supporting pupils' personal development are very good. Throughout the academic year, careful recording of pupils' personal development enables

teachers to give parents very detailed accounts of their child's development. For example, identifying the need to support some pupils to complete their homework led to the formation of the *Homework Club*. Support for this is provided by a number of parents and volunteers. A studious atmosphere is developed which allows pupils to concentrate, seek advice and complete important tasks. The club is well attended by junior-aged pupils. The school council gives opportunities for pupils to represent the views of their colleagues and to put forward suggestions to improve life at the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. Parents view the school's achievements positively. They praise the school's good reputation, ethos and high learning expectations. Parents acknowledge the very supportive, caring attitudes. They like the very effective reception induction programme. Parents are pleased that the school actively promotes and encourages their involvement in school. However, some parents are not happy with inconsistency of classroom management, some bad behaviour in the playground and perceived low level of activities outside lessons. It is the view of this inspection that arrangements for classroom management are well defined and effective. The behaviour policy ensures teachers are active in encouraging good behaviour during lessons. There appears to be some boisterous behaviour in the playground and around the school and this is dealt with appropriately. Pupils generally work and play together well. Inspectors consider that there is a very good range of activities outside lessons.

43. Partnerships with parents and the community are good and this finding is broadly similar to the last inspection. The Home-School-Child Agreement addresses the main aims of the school and conveys its expectations. Parents and pupils are able to identify how to involve themselves in the life of the school. There is a very active parent, teacher and friends association, which raises funds for much needed equipment at the school. Many parents help at the school listening to pupils read and with other classroom activities. Helpers receive good guidance in what they need to do to support pupils. This additional parental participation supports the school with its aims in trying to achieve high standards, good progress and good quality education.

44. The quality of information provided for parents is of a high standard. For example, the school prospectus is well structured and presents information in an easy-to-follow style. Annual reports from governors are good and contain useful information for parents. Governors send questionnaires to parents to seek their views on certain issues and use the information to improve the way the school is organised and managed. Regular newsletters to parents communicate essential information. Parents are able to understand how they may help their children with each term's topics. Pupils' progress reports are neatly presented. They give parents much needed information on achievements and define targets set for their children in the coming year. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully consulted and involved in decisions about their children.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. The headteacher leads the school very well and promotes a very strong whole-school commitment to continued improvement. He is ably supported by an experienced and knowledgeable senior management team, who contribute positively to the overall management of the school. Effective systems are in place to enable all staff to use their professional skills well, both as subject leaders and key players in school improvement. There are regular meetings for all staff, year group leaders, subject leaders and the senior management team, that result in positive action to maintain school improvement. The roles and responsibilities of all staff are clearly defined and there are very good opportunities for

professional development. Procedures for performance management are in place with targets set and milestones identified. Professional reviews are held regularly between the senior teacher responsible for staff development and her colleagues. These help teachers to identify their training needs and to plan ways of putting their professional skills to best use for the benefit of the school.

46. The headteacher and senior management team have very effective procedures for collecting and analysing information about the progress and attainment of each pupil. This information is shared freely with the rest of the staff and governors. It is used well when evaluating the impact of teaching on attainment and to plan initiatives that bring about further improvement. The school is currently involved in a study with a local college into how pupils learn and the impact that teaching has on this.

47. Subject leaders have worked very hard to review and evaluate teaching, learning and pupils' achievement in their subjects. The impact of their work is very good, as is the support given, particularly in English and mathematics, by the local education authority. Some of the less experienced teachers and those new to the school are benefiting from the good support available to them.

48. The governors' effectiveness in fulfilling their responsibilities is excellent. The school enjoys the support of a very hard working team of governors, led by a very committed chair of governors. They have an excellent relationship with the staff, pupils and parents, all of whom they regularly consult regarding their plans for the development of the school. These they regularly monitor and evaluate, ensuring that the implementation of improvements is continuous. The governors' contribution to the effectiveness of the school is excellent. They frequently visit in a monitoring role, as every governor has a subject of the curriculum for which s/he is responsible. All governors regularly report their findings to the full governing body. This work helps them to gain a very good impression of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

49. The headteacher, and special educational needs co-ordinator, who is a part-time member of staff, share the responsibility for managing provision for pupils with special educational needs, and this arrangement works very well. All aspects of the role are very efficiently structured so as to ensure the needs of all pupils are effectively met. The co-ordinator is well informed and resourceful in her approach to the role, and draws well on national and local initiatives for the benefit of pupils. Liaison between all adults, both within the school and from outside agencies, is very good.

50. Financial administration is very effective and efficient and supports the smooth running of the school. The school is managing a deficit budget because of circumstances beyond its control, but this situation has speedily been turned around and the budget is rapidly becoming realigned. The school has bought into a bursarial service. The bursar reports regularly to the headteacher and the finance subcommittee. The high quality of the reports they receive enables the headteacher and the finance committee to monitor and control expenditure. Recommendations from the latest auditors' report have been acted upon and these were minor matters. The school seeks best value for money by rigorously comparing prices and evaluating the quality of its purchases and the services provided. Specific grants are very effectively used for their dedicated purpose. The school makes good use of its technological services and many of the teachers use their computers to support teaching and learning. Records are computerised and this development gives good assistance to the welcoming and highly efficient secretaries.

51. Teaching and support staff work together well to promote the ethos of the school, which ensures that all pupils are helped to achieve their full potential and be well prepared for life in a diverse society. The school is well staffed with teachers who are appropriately qualified and experienced for their roles. Classroom support assistants are very well trained and give valued support to the teaching staff. They make a significant contribution to the standards achieved by the pupils. There are very good

procedures in place for the induction and support of new staff. Newly qualified teachers are very well supported by an experienced mentor and have a structured school and local authority induction programme with appropriate time during the week to plan and observe others teach. The school secretaries, lunchtime staff, kitchen staff and cleaning staff make an important contribution to the life of the school.

52. Accommodation is good overall. The main building is well maintained and generally the classrooms have appropriate space for teaching and learning. There are a number of small rooms and areas that the school makes very good use of to aid teaching and learning. The accommodation for the reception classes is not as good, however. One classroom is very small and there is only a small secure outdoor area for the children to use. There are extensive grounds and a pond to aid the pupils' study of the science curriculum.

53. The efficient and effective use of resources contributes positively to the quality of learning and standards achieved by the pupils. Levels of learning resources are good overall and appropriate to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. Resources for design and technology are satisfactory. There is a newly opened central library, and library and reading resources are good. The resources available to the children in the foundation stage are in need of reviewing and upgrading. Resources for the teaching of pupils with special educational needs are of good quality, sufficient for need, and well organised. The funding provided for pupils with special educational needs is well used, and the resources provided for the development of basic skills in literacy and numeracy are good.

54. This is a very effective school that has made very good improvements since the last inspection and provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. Senior staff and governors should

- (1) improve provision in the foundation stage, especially in terms of accommodation and learning resources, so that it matches the high quality found in the rest of the school. (Paragraphs 16, 25, 52, 53, 58, 65)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	50
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	18	22	8	0	0	0
Percentage	4	36	44	16	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	294
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	59
Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	72
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	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	30	23	53

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	27	27
	Girls	21	21	21
	Total	46	48	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (76)	91 (98)	91 (93)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	27	27
	Girls	21	21	21
	Total	45	48	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (93)	91 (93)	91 (98)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	23	14	37

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	21	22
	Girls	12	10	14
	Total	32	31	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (86)	84 (86)	97 (93)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	22	23
	Girls	11	11	14
	Total	31	33	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (76)	89 (86)	100 (81)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	5
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	249
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.9
Average class size	26.7

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	126

Financial information

Financial year	2000 / 01
	£
Total income	586 276
Total expenditure	608 680
Expenditure per pupil	2071
Balance brought forward from previous year	2390

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	280
Number of questionnaires returned	121

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	41	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	44	43	6	1	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	29	55	10	4	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	58	10	1	3
The teaching is good.	55	44	1	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	50	12	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	37	3	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	37	2	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	39	50	8	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	48	39	7	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	39	7	0	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	29	39	15	5	12

Other issues raised by parents

A few parents feel that

- the management of pupils' behaviour in class is inconsistent
- behaviour in the playground could be better.

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

56. The foundation stage refers to pupils from the time they enter the nursery until they reach the end of their reception year. At this school there is no nursery class, and children enter the reception classes at the beginning of the school year in which they will reach their fifth birthday. At first, the school limits the length of the school day for the children, gradually increasing it until all are able to complete a full school day by the beginning of the second half of the autumn term. At the time of the inspection, there were 40 children on roll and all had spent two weeks of full days in school.

57. The initial assessments undertaken when the children start in the reception classes indicate that there is a range of attainment on entry. Most children come having pre-school experience from a local nursery school, and a small number have no pre-school experience. Overall, attainment on entry is average and there is a large minority below that. Most children start their full time education with skills that range from average to below average in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development. In their personal, social and emotional development, their attainment is below average. The children make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning and in personal, social and emotional development they make good progress. This is because the staff make this aspect of development a priority in their planning. Most of the children are on course to attain the expected early learning goals by the time they reach the end of the reception year.

58. Provision for the children in the reception classes has remained broadly in line with the previous inspection. In most areas of learning, attainment and progress are comparable with the previous inspection. However in others, such as communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development, standards are not as high. In all their planning and assessment, teachers have carefully taken into account the statutory early learning goals for children of this age. However, insufficient improvement both in accommodation and resources, in order to meet the changes in the curriculum for the foundation stage, has prevented teachers' planning from having its full impact on learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

59. All children make good progress in this area of learning and achieve well. They are on course to achieve their expected goals by the end of the reception year. The children settle well into the routine of school life and the majority relate positively to each other. They talk to one another about their work, some join in well showing and telling the rest of the class about items they have brought to school from when they were babies. The children learn to take turns as they share equipment and resources. For example, they took turns playing the wood blocks in their music lesson. The children show increasing levels of concentration and at the time of the inspection they were beginning to remain on task well, especially when supported and encouraged in their activities by adult supervision. For instance, this was evident when they mixed yellow and blue *Play Doh* in order to produce green. Teaching in this area of learning is good. The associated skills are well planned into the daily activities. All staff consistently reinforce the need for good manners, sharing and caring, when playing word and number games. The children are taught to take account of the views and needs of others.

Communication, language and literacy

60. The children make sound progress in this area of learning. Most achieve well and are on course to reach the learning goals expected of them by the end of the reception year. The children often start the day with reading activities, recognising common words and letter sounds. Support staff help to supervise word and phonic games. Most children participate fully and confidently in these activities. They listen well and many express themselves clearly and confidently when answering questions. When teaching is good, lessons are well planned with activities and pace matching the children's abilities. In one good lesson, the children chose and named items beginning with *f* from the feely bag, and succeeded in sorting items into sets by their initial sound. All the staff question the children skilfully and encourage them to speak at increasing length. Most children are developing fine motor control and are on course to be writing their own name and simple sentences by the end of the year.

Mathematical development

61. The children make satisfactory progress and the majority are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the year. They are able to sort shapes into simple sets and successfully complete jigsaws. Most understand numbers to 5 and can count to 10 and beyond. They know 1 more and 1 less when counting animals in a set. The quality of teaching is good. The staff intervene effectively to promote mathematical thinking. Tasks are well-planned and organised with due regard for the National Numeracy Strategy. The children are taught to solve simple addition and subtraction problems using numbers to 10. Most are on course to know the names of common shapes and create symmetrical patterns by the time they reach the end of the year.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

62. Children make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Many are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the year. They are able to talk about their families and are beginning to develop a sense of the past, talking about when they were babies. Visits to the surrounding area extend the children's knowledge. These experiences provide a good foundation for historical, geographical, scientific and technological learning. The children are developing a sound understanding and concept of time as they explore the autumnal changes happening around them. They use the surrounding area well in exploring the features of living things. They have constant access to computers and use the mouse independently to control simple computer programmes such as *Dressing Teddy*. The quality of the teaching overall is satisfactory, and the staff plan effectively a wide and interesting range of activities. They confidently make use of new technology.

Physical development

63. The children's achievement is satisfactory and they make sound progress. The majority are on course to reach the early learning goals by the end of the year. Children develop skills of co-ordination, balance and a sense of direction well. This was evident in an outdoor lesson when the children were beginning to play cooperatively with a partner, kicking and passing balls and hoops. They have good relationships with adults and attentively listen to the instructions given by their teacher. They are confident and demonstrate good self-control. There are good resources for indoor physical development, however extremely limited provision is made for outdoor activities. Consequently pupils do not have regular opportunities to experience the stimulation and sensations felt when developing control over their bodies, and the effect that pedalling, pushing, pulling and other large-scale movements have on them. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The curriculum is well planned to develop the skills of building with construction materials, cutting, sticking and threading, which effectively promote the children's co-ordination and fine motor skills.

Creative development

64. The children make satisfactory progress in this area of learning and the majority are on course to achieve the expected early learning goals by the end of the year. There is a good range of creative activities available for the children. They are able to explore colour through painting and printing and they have opportunities to use their imagination through role-play, music and stories. Opportunities are provided to explore their feelings and express themselves. Many are confident to do so, whether in a small group or in the whole class. All the children are well supported in their activities by their teachers and classroom assistants. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, and the planning of activities is sound.

Teaching

65. The quality of teaching is a balance of good and satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The two teachers have established good routines for the children to follow, which are having a positive impact on their learning. They are well assisted by support staff. Lessons are planned to meet the needs of all the children with careful regard and attention paid to the early learning goals. Where teaching is good, the staff challenge the children well and motivate them to make learning fun. Skilled questioning promotes further thinking and reflection on the task in hand. Children respond well to all staff and obviously feel very happy and secure with them. Good links are frequently made between different areas of learning. Teachers and support assistants regularly assess the children's progress, records are kept and targets set which are included in the day-to-day planning. The initial assessment of the children is regularly reviewed throughout the year. Staff identify children with special educational needs early and support them very effectively in their learning whenever possible. Although teachers' planning addresses the early learning goals, provision overall is impeded by the cramped accommodation inside, the under-use of outdoor accommodation, and the limited resources available to stimulate the children both physically and mentally.

ENGLISH

66. Pupils' attainment is above the national average at the end of Year 2 and in line with the national average at the end of Year 6. In the 2001 tests for Year 6 pupils, the pupils scored average results when compared with all schools, but well above average when compared to similar schools. In the 2001 tests for Year 2 pupils, the pupils scored above the national average in reading and well above the national average with their writing. When their results are compared with those of similar schools, the pupils scored well above average in reading and very highly in writing. These very good results show that all the pupils achieve well throughout the school. Pupils who are on the school's special educational needs register are fully included in every lesson and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. These results also reflect the skilled teaching the pupils receive.

67. There are many contributory factors to the high level of pupil achievement. The subject leaders and senior managers of the school have worked hard to find ways of improving the pupils' attainment and have put in place a range of strategies to bring about improvement. These are having a positive effect upon how well the pupils perform. The National Literacy Strategy has been very well implemented and the school is effective in embracing new initiatives to improve further the teaching of English and literacy throughout the school. Learning support assistants play a significant role in helping the pupils who learn slowly and those who find concentration and application very difficult. All teachers work hard to ensure that the pupils' confidence and self-esteem in lessons are maintained, and praise and help are employed to achieve this aim. At the time of the last inspection pupils' attainment was similar to the present position in Year 6 and shows an improvement in Year 2.

68. Speaking skills are developed through effective teaching and the opportunities that teachers create to enable the pupils to develop skills. The children begin Year 1 with average speaking and listening skills. The teachers encourage the pupils to answer questions and talk about their lessons and give their ideas. For example, Year 5 pupils took on roles of different interested parties in their geography lesson as they spoke about the possible effects of prohibiting the flow of traffic through Kendal High Street. They put forwards their ideas clearly. The older pupils in Year 6 talked about their lessons in school and their particular likes and dislikes, giving their reasons in a careful and considered way.

69. Most pupils read fluently and accurately, and good standards are evident throughout the school. Reading is well promoted with a significant number of parent and volunteers coming to school to read with pupils at an individual level. The range and quality of reading books available to the pupils also have a significant impact. It is clear from the pupils' positive attitudes that they enjoy reading. The school has recently purchased a number of new reading books chosen to appeal particularly to the boys. This was a direct consequence of a questionnaire that the governing body sent out to the pupils, and also a general concern about standards in reading in the school. Boys said that they found the reading books were not particularly interesting for them. In Year 2, average and less able pupils talk about the stories they are reading and use a range of strategies to tackle words that they find difficult. More able pupils are keen to read and they show good levels of interest in their books. Year 4 pupils enjoy reading and take home their books regularly. In Year 6 the pupils demonstrate good levels of fluency, read with good expression and a clear understanding of the text as well as underlying themes of their books. They discuss their preferences and explain the reasoning behind their choices. Pupils read a range of books from school and home with *Prince Caspian* and *The Demon Headmaster* being favourites. Pupils enjoy reading poetry and books about American Football and computers. Pupils regularly use the library for research during lessons consequently good library skills are developed.

70. Standards in writing are consistently high throughout the school. This is because of the many opportunities the pupils have to plan, draft and redraft their writing. The teachers use a wide range of techniques to help the pupils to improve their writing. For example, in an excellent Year 1 lesson the class teacher used a puppet to fix the pupils' attention on the middle sound of different words. The rapt attention that the pupils gave to the teacher and the puppet as he tried hard to learn, meant that all the pupils were firmly focused on their learning and they all achieved very well. In Year 2, the pupils were busy writing a set of instructions to help other pupils to draw a monster. In the final part of the lesson the pupils read out their instructions and the other pupils drew. This extremely enjoyable activity ensured that the pupils wrote clearly, read accurately and listened well to enable them to draw a frightening monster. A joined-up style of writing is taught and the pupils are given many opportunities to write in other subjects. The most able pupils in Year 2 write very well. They use capital letters and full stops consistently and are beginning to choose their words for effect. The less able pupils do not always use capital letters and full stops in their work. In Year 6, the pupils' writing skills are developing well. This is the result of consistently good teaching throughout the school and the very good help and encouragement that pupils are given by learning support staff. The teachers ensure that they match the pupils' tasks to their specific and individual needs. Pupils write in a range of styles and their stories develop an interesting style with exciting vocabulary. Punctuation and the use of paragraphs are correctly used, and spellings show good levels of accuracy. Work is very well presented throughout the school, with the pupils' handwriting being very clear, fluent and neat. The youngest pupils learn to write their letters correctly and quickly learn a cursive style. Information and communication technology is used particularly well throughout the school to help the pupils with their spellings and in drafting and redrafting their work.

71. The quality of teaching is very good overall, especially in Years 1, 2 and 6 and in one of the two Year 5 classes. It is good in all other classes. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this is

demonstrated in the way they lead discussions with the pupils about their work. The school has fully adopted the National Literacy Strategy and it is consistently used across the school. The class teachers have very high expectations of the pupils and improvement and encouragement are actively sought. For example, in a Year 5 class, the teachers' consistently high expectations of her class meant that the quality of *concrete poems* they wrote were of a high order. The pupils enjoyed this activity, worked well co-operatively and independently and so achieved well.

72. In lessons, tasks are well matched to the pupils' needs. The very good levels of adult help for those pupils who find learning and good behaviour difficult mean that they also learn and achieve well. Their self-esteem is raised and they feel good about the amount and accuracy of the work they have completed in a session. Pupils with statements of special educational need are fully included in the work of the class. Their individual written or reading tasks are carefully matched to their individual specific needs. In a mixed Years 3 and 4 class, the teacher's clear and very thorough planning, as well as good levels of praise and encouragement meant that the pupils worked hard to write about things special to them. The teacher's use of *talking partners* and the visual impact of showing her own precious items meant that the pupils were clear about what they had to do and had some good ideas to start off their work.

73. The teachers regularly use literacy skills in the support of other subjects. In this way, pupils have many opportunities to develop and extend their speaking and listening, reading and writing skills. Marking of pupils' books is consistently good throughout the school. Teachers regularly make supportive and evaluative comments. They indicate their spelling mistakes and how pupils can improve their work. Each pupil has a clear idea of where they need to improve and the older pupils know which National Curriculum level they are working at. Tests and assessed work help the teachers to track the progress that the pupils are making. This information is also used very well to make sure that those pupils who need additional support receive it so that they are able to make the best possible progress.

74. The very skilled and enthusiastic subject leaders have worked hard to bring about improvements in standards throughout the school. They have evaluated teaching and learning and have a clear and accurate understanding of the strengths of the subject and an action plan for improvement. They have given help to colleagues to encourage them to improve and develop their work. Additional lessons and *Additional Literacy Support* lessons have had an important impact on how well the pupils achieve. Levels of resourcing, including library books and books in the reading scheme are good.

MATHEMATICS

75. The findings of the inspection are that standards are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6. Test results at the end of Year 6 show that attainment was above both the national average and in comparison with prior attainment. It was well above average in comparison with similar schools. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 was above the national average. Boys and girls both performed better than boys and girls nationally. The results of tests at the end of Year 2 in 2001 show that pupils' attainment was similar to the national average, and above average in comparison with similar schools. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 was close to the national average. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and make very good progress. Evidence from the current inspection shows that changes to teaching following the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy are having a positive effect on standards, and particularly in the ability of pupils to make rapid and accurate mental calculations.

76. Pupils in Year 2 demonstrate increasing knowledge and understanding of basic number facts. They understand place value of hundreds, tens and units, how to add and subtract ten, and many work with number bonds to 100 orally. All pupils understand that subtraction is the inverse process of addition, and they have increased their use of different strategies when adding and subtracting. Pupils successfully apply these methods to solve simple problems. Most are aware of the passage of time and how it is measured, they recognise two-dimensional shapes and can describe their properties.

77. By the time pupils are in Year 6, they have continued to make good progress with the skills of mental calculation. They have a good knowledge of number facts including multiplication tables and they use a range of strategies to calculate answers correctly, often checking answers by using alternative methods of calculation. They demonstrate good understanding when multiplying decimals, rounding 4-digit numbers to the nearest hundred, calculating fractions into their lowest terms and changing them from mixed numbers to improper fractions. Most are fully aware of the properties of quadrilaterals, and are able to use their knowledge when categorising these shapes.

78. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall, especially in Years 1, 2, 5 and 6 and in one of the mixed Years 3 and 4 classes. It is good in all other classes. Strategies for stimulating pupils' interest and enthusiasm are very well planned. In Year 1, a teacher deliberately re-arranged numbers incorrectly and provoked an immediate, positive response from pupils. In another Year 1 lesson, pupils were fascinated by how many times they could complete a task while their *tocker* marked out 10 seconds. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher made good use of assessment when she brought together pupils who had not fully understood the previous lesson's objectives, in order to consolidate their learning, prior to continuing with the lessons activities. When teaching is very good in junior classes, very searching questioning consolidates learning for all pupils, regardless of ability. This helps all pupils to rise to the challenge. They did this with enthusiasm in a Year 3 lesson. All understood the concept being taught and multiplied 2-digit numbers by 10, whilst the more able multiplied and divided 3-digit numbers by 10. In Year 6, great interest and enthusiasm were shown when pupils were asked to identify the properties of quadrilaterals. Very good learning took place when more able pupils were partnered with less able, ensuring that all pupils' learning was developed. To challenge more able pupils, seven go to a local high school for extra lessons. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support from learning support assistants and have activities well matched to their ability, achieving very well.

79. The content of what is taught has a very good structure, with a good balance between the teaching of facts and knowledge, and opportunities for pupils to use investigative skills. There is good application of skills in other subjects, for instance when pupils use their skills of measuring to make a model in design and technology, and when they weigh the ingredients for making biscuits and cakes. Good application of skills was also seen in a mixed Years 3 and 4 science lesson where pupils were reading the scales on a thermometer, measuring the temperature of water, and then calculating the differences. Good use is made of ICT, for instance data handling, graphics and number programmes to support learning. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and they try hard to make sure they understand what their teachers are explaining. They respond with enjoyment to the first part of the lesson where they are expected to think quickly in response to mental arithmetic questions. They take pride in their work in the second part of the lesson when they show their skills and knowledge in independent work.

80. There are two subject leaders, taking responsibility for infant and for junior classes. Both are *leading mathematics teachers*. There is very good management of the subject, and a very strong commitment to raising standards. They have a very clear vision of the developments necessary in order to achieve their aim. Procedures to assess pupils' progress are very good. All statutory and non-statutory tests are regularly analysed and individual pupils' progress is tracked. Teachers'

assessments are ongoing, with records kept and targets set in order to help with day-to-day planning. There is a nominated governor who oversees the teaching of numeracy. She plays a very active role, regularly reporting to the governing body on her monitoring of the new initiatives that have been put in place, and their impact on standards of attainment throughout the school. The subject is very well resourced.

81. Since the last inspection, the school has made very good improvement. Coverage of the subject has been reviewed and the role of the subject leader has been greatly strengthened. This has resulted in standards of attainment in all year groups showing good improvement.

SCIENCE

82. The finding of the inspection is that overall standards are average by the end of Year 2, and above average by the end of Year 6. This marks an improvement since the last inspection, when standards were judged to be average. Over the last few years there has been a gradual improvement in test results, with some fluctuation between year groups, the overall trend being upward. The latest unvalidated test results show similar outcomes. At the end of Year 6, they show that pupils attain standards that are well above those found nationally and those of similar schools. Improvement over the last few years has been good, compared with national trends. At the end of Year 2, teachers' assessments show attainment to be average compared with all schools and above average compared with similar schools.

83. The reasons for improvements are good teaching at all stages throughout the school, well planned, interesting work for pupils of all abilities, and good management of the subject. Teaching is good throughout the school, and often very good. Teachers show good understanding of the subject, and so are able to explain ideas clearly to their pupils. The work is very well planned, so that all activities build on previous work, and are suitable for the differing levels of understanding within classes. Teachers generally have very high expectations. They expect their pupils to work hard, do their best, and behave sensibly. Despite the fact that some pupils find it difficult to settle to their work or to concentrate for long, teachers use effective management strategies so as to minimise disruption and keep everyone focused on their work. Procedures to assess pupils' progress are well developed, and enable teachers to modify the work in response to individual understanding.

84. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, the teacher had prepared the work very well, and her enthusiastic approach ensured that all her pupils were inspired to join in. They experimented with ramps and toy cars, and the teacher guided them carefully through the process of making predictions, and investigating what happened. The teacher's skilful work gave pupils opportunities to share and cooperate, discuss their ideas together and record what they found out by drawing pictures. This approach ensured that pupils of all abilities were fully included in the work and achieved well. During the lesson there was a good working atmosphere, pupils were attentive and keen to join in. The teacher gave them opportunities to say what they thought, and to use correct scientific language, such as *investigate* and *predict*.

85. Pupils generally enjoy the subject, particularly when they are given interesting, practical activities. They work together sensibly, taking turns and sharing when necessary. They work well in groups and can listen to the opinions of others and share ideas and suggestions. These activities make a good contribution to pupils' social development. Visits to different places, as well as use of the school's varied and interesting grounds, also make stimulating and worthwhile additions to classroom-based work.

86. By the end of Year 2, pupils have experienced a wide range of activities in the different aspects of the subject. They can collect data and answer questions and, with appropriate support, participate well in simple investigations. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils were investigating the effects of heat on different materials. The lesson was very well planned and prepared, and pupils were given the experience of changes to pancake mixture, chocolate and toast, when they were heated. The teacher and support assistant both worked skilfully to involve pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, and the result was a highly successful lesson, which gave all the children interesting and memorable experiences, and developed their understanding of changing materials very well.

87. By the time they reach the end of Year 6, pupils have continued to develop their understanding across the whole of the science curriculum, and reach levels that are better than those found nationally. They have developed their understanding of scientific enquiry, and are increasingly able to take responsibility for planning and carrying out their own investigations. Many can make their own observations, comparisons and measurements, record their findings and draw conclusions from what they have seen. In work on electrical circuits, for example, Year 6 pupils were able to see the need for conventional symbols in drawing circuit diagrams. They could construct their own circuits from diagrams, and predict whether they would work before checking by building real circuits. The work appealed to pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, and this contributed well to the very good working atmosphere in the lesson. Consequently, pupils of all abilities achieved well.

88. The subject is well managed, with both the senior management team and the subject leader having clear views of priorities for development. Strategies for improvement are well thought through, and based on careful assessment of current trends and needs. The school has a good range of resources, which are well organised and safely stored. Good attention is given to the safe use of resources, and all staff are made aware of the importance of appropriate care during practical activities. The school has worked hard to develop the use of ICT to support work in subjects such as science. However, in some classes, at present, opportunities are missed to support the work through structured use of appropriate software.

ART AND DESIGN

89. Pupils' attainment is above that found in most schools at the end of Years 2 and 6. All pupils make good progress. No teaching was seen in infant classes, and evidence was gathered from a scrutiny of work and displays. In junior classes, teaching overall was good with one excellent lesson seen. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and are well supported in their work. Since the last inspection, standards of work seen in junior classes have improved. The quality of teaching has also improved, with no unsatisfactory teaching seen during the inspection.

90. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are given a very full range of activities. They learn to mix colours and to work in a wide range of media. Displays show good quality examples of *collage*, painting, mixing colours, printing, and drawing. All are displayed with great care and the effect is of high-quality presentation. Pupils also collect folders of examples of their work, reflecting the standard of work seen in the displays. Many different materials and techniques are used to investigate pattern, and music is used to inspire creative design.

91. Junior-aged pupils continue to develop their skills. They keep regular sketchbooks, which show an improvement in skills over time. In Year 4, pupils are adept at mixing many different shades of one colour and can arrange them in order of density. Their sketching skills are developing, as is their choice

of media for presenting their work. Charcoal and chalk on grey paper were used to sketch a still life in Year 5, with very good results. In Years 5 and 6, pupils successfully used many different media including pastels, watercolours, pencils and charcoal to produce sketches of local Victorian buildings.

92. Learning in infant classes is very good and teaching and learning in junior classes are good overall. One excellent lesson was seen and another was satisfactory. Where it was satisfactory, the lesson was planned with clear objectives for pupils. However, pupils were insufficiently challenged by some of the activities, resulting in some pupils not remaining on task. In the best lesson, an atmosphere was produced where all were completely engrossed in making a *mood sketch* inspired by music. They used many varied techniques, including sketching in different media and watercolours, to produce their finished designs. This led to good attainment both in art and design and speaking and listening skills, when pupils were invited to explain how they interpreted the music into a design, to the rest of the class. This included one pupil with special educational needs, who was able to show his interpretation to the rest of the class.

93. All pupils have access to ICT programmes to support the subject. Pupils in Year 2 use brush and line tools to create patterns in the style of Mondrian, and the flood-fill tool to produce islands of colour. Junior pupils create their own patterns and designs with the use of brush and line, flood-fill and clip art programmes.

94. The subject leader has a very clear vision of the development of the subject. She has taken a very clear lead in the production of an agreed policy and schemes of work, taking into account nationally recommended guidelines and National Curriculum documents. Assessment records are kept and are used to help planning. All teachers are made aware of the techniques and skills to be addressed in order that cross-curricular plans may be made. There is a wide range and quality of materials available for use by teachers and pupils.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

95. Attainment is above that found in most schools at the end of Years 2 and 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection and is the result of good management and monitoring of the subject, and effective planning and training for staff. All aspects of the process of design are taught very well and pupils' learning is very good.

96. Files of pupils' work show that pupils achieve well and this includes those with special educational needs. For instance, pupils in Year 6 investigate shelters. They examine different kinds of shelters, from a four-poster bed to igloos, reflect on materials that are suitable for different purposes, and then design a shelter and a model of it. They compile job tasks and information about safely using tools. After building their model, they photograph it, using a digital camera, and evaluate their work, looking for improvements. The quality of pupils' learning is very good in these projects and their evaluations reflect this. For example, pupils comment on their own personal development, for instance how they feel they did working cooperatively. The presentation of work by pupils of all levels of ability is of a high standard. Pupils take a pride in their work, and the end product is well finished, whether it is a musical instrument, a Christmas card, using stitch work, or a model monster, with parts that can be inflated to move.

97. Teaching is very good and teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Marking of work is detailed and encouraging. For example, one teacher wrote, *Don't be put off by initial problems...and...consider adding extra detail.* In a Year 4 lesson where pupils were designing a container for money, the class teacher, new to the school, had established good routines and safe

procedures, so that pupils were careful with needles and scissors. Pupils talked readily about what they had been doing in this project; they described different types of stitches and their purposes and they were keen to do well. The teacher organised mixed-ability groups of pupils so that the less able were supported by the more able and this worked well. Another feature of the very good teaching is the use that is made of ICT, for instance in providing lettering for posters, which incorporate text and pictures using the digital camera.

98. It is a similar picture of very good provision in the infant age range. Pupils in Year 2 find out about medieval castles in history and after an appropriate visit, plan the construction of one and then build models, some using *Lego*, others using card and silver paper. Teaching and learning are very good. To interest her class in a topic on moving pictures, a Year 1 teacher introduced two books with flaps and openings. One book contained pictures that incorporated flaps and sliding mechanisms, the other only flaps. She focused the pupils' attention by suggesting the class could make this second book better by giving it sliding parts. By the end of the lesson, the pupils had managed to make their own picture and been encouraged to persevere even when things went wrong. The teacher encouraged them to talk with a partner about what they found difficult and to report back to the whole class. One of the least able pupils made a very good contribution reporting back and the teacher helped all the pupils to learn from the mistakes of others without anyone feeling silly.

99. Subject management is good and this is evident from a scrutiny of the subject leader's file. The subject leader was absent on maternity leave at the time of the inspection and a new member of staff is to cover in her absence. Opportunities to monitor the subject in the past have been effective in leading to improvements in how well topics are taught. For example, changes were made in how a topic on making slippers was taught, in order to make better use of time. Levels of resourcing are satisfactory and have been supplemented by funding from the parent, teacher and friends association, for example ovens for food technology. The subject makes a very good contribution to skills of literacy and numeracy and to the pupils' personal development.

GEOGRAPHY

100. Pupils' attainment in Years 2 and 6 is similar to that found in most schools. The standards reflect good, interesting and relevant lessons, which are tailored to the needs of all the pupils including those with special educational needs. Pupils learn about their own locality and the issues that are apparent in Kendal. They also study different areas of the world, which give the pupils a more global perspective. Regular educational visits and residential experiences to different parts of the locality give the pupils good opportunities to learn about features and changes that are taking place within the county and the towns of Kendal and Carlisle. The Year 6 visit to London gives the pupils an excellent opportunity to live and work with pupils who live in a very different environment and come from a wider range of cultural backgrounds. Provision and standards are similar to those at the last inspection.

101. Because only one lesson was observed during the inspection, judgements have been based upon interviews with pupils, observations of the pupils' work and an interview with the subject leader. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of the locality. In Year 1 the pupils study the route they take to school and draw a map to show the way. They look at maps of the British Isles recognise where Kendal is located. In Year 2, the pupils learn about Katie Morag and her island home. They consider the transport used on the island and draw pictures of the tractor and boat. Pupils in Year 3 learn about the countries that *Bobby* and *Betty* travel to. They have been to a number of different places and always send postcards back to the school to keep the pupils informed as to their whereabouts. They have visited Paris, Bruges and Arran. The pupils also write postcards to their pen pals in St Albans and describe the locality in which they live.

102. By the end of Year 6, the pupils' specific geographical language develops well. This is because the teachers work hard to ensure that the correct geographical terms are used by themselves and the pupils. In a successful lesson in Year 5, the class teacher used a local problem of congestion in Kendal High Street to raise the pupils' awareness of environmental issues. The pupils recognised the need to do something about traffic jams but also understood that different groups of people have very different points of view. In an effective *hot seating* session, the pupils gave the different perspectives of interested parties. In this way the pupils developed an understanding that different people have different needs.

103. There was insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching. However, the quality of learning is good. For example, in Years 5 and 6 the pupils learn about the River Kent. They have the opportunity to work alongside some students from a local college and to extend their learning of rivers during a field trip. Here the pupils observed the natural features of the area. They observed the profile of the river and in subsequent lessons matched their observations to learning about meanders, flow of water, erosion and deposition. Because the pupils learning was based upon their field trip it is evident that the pupils' learning was real and so they learnt well. The pupils extended their knowledge of the river by a visit to the library, where they researched the impact of the floods caused by the River Kent in Kendal.

104. The subject leader is enthusiastic and is keen to promote the subject throughout the school. She has an action plan for the further development of the subject. Resources are good with a wide range of photographs, books and programmes available for the teachers and pupils to use.

HISTORY

105. Pupils' attainment in Years 2 and 6 are at the levels expected of pupils in most schools. These findings are similar to those at the last inspection. However, the progress the pupils make in their skills of historical enquiry is more secure now than it was then. The standards that the pupils achieve reflect the interesting and stimulating lessons they have.

106. As only one lesson was observed during the inspection, judgements have been based upon interviews with pupils, observations of pupils' work and an interview with the subject leader. By the end of Year 2, pupils develop satisfactorily their knowledge and understanding of people in the past and how they lived. They have a clear understanding that these people lived in a very different way. Pupils in Year 2 reflected on the lives of men who fought in the First World War and how the nation remembers the dead from all wars on the 11th November each year. The effective use of an interview with an old soldier and actual archive footage of World War I enabled the pupils to reflect with amazement on how the poppies managed to grow even in the midst of terrible noise and destruction. The high levels of concentration shown by the pupils during this presentation meant that they gained a good impression of life in the trenches. They thought that it must have been *very scary* to live there and wondered how a soldier could sleep standing up. After they had carefully created their own poppy wreath, they placed it accurately upon a time line they are building of historical events. The pupils particularly enjoyed their topic on medieval castles. They thoroughly enjoyed creating their own model castles. These effectively show all the different parts of the castle. The pupils are particularly knowledgeable about armaments of the time.

107. By the end of Year 6, the pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of different periods of British history. They develop an understanding of life during Celtic, Tudor and Victorian times. The pupils learn about the life of children in Victorian times and about the Webster buildings in Kendal. They find

out about the family of builders who built so many buildings in Kendal. They make discoveries about the life and times of Henry VIII and know that he had many problems. They understand that he needed a son and that he had a very expensive lifestyle to fund. They study the Ancient Egyptian and Greek civilisations and come to understand the legacy of these times upon our lives today. The emphasis in all lessons is clearly one of finding out information from a wide range of sources. After careful examination of these sources, the pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of how people from the past lived and the homes and environment in which they lived. Good illustrations and accurate guidance encourage the pupils to careful observations and well-considered deductions so that pupils gain a good understanding and sense of time.

108. There was insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching. However, the quality of learning is good. Teaching throughout is clearly rooted as far as possible in first-hand enquiry. To support this policy of learning through first-hand experiences and the use of source materials, teachers organise visits to a wide range of local educational venues. The Year 6 visit to London enables the pupils to look at important buildings that provide a key to the past. Pupils gain further knowledge and understanding of these periods through visitors to the school who through role-play and with artefacts bring the past to life. The use of timelines clearly fixes the pupils' learning in the correct chronological sequence.

109. The subject leader is new to the school. She is enthusiastic and has good ideas for the further development of the subject. Resources are good and the school makes effective use of a wide range of resources in the locality to promote effective learning for all pupils, including those with special educational needs.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

110. At the end of Years 2 and Year 6 pupils' attainment is in line with that found in most schools. At the last inspection standards were judged to be good at the end of Year 6. Whilst this indicates a decline in standards, the school has experienced considerable fluctuations from year to year, caused by differences in individual performance. The curriculum for ICT has also undergone major changes, and the school has recently adopted the nationally recommended schemes of work, and so strict comparisons cannot be made.

111. As they move through the school, pupils are given a range of worthwhile experiences, and they achieve well. These experiences are provided both during specific lessons, and also as part of work in other subjects, where the computer enables pupils to make use of a variety of software that supports the work they are doing. Examples were seen, in some classes, of pupils using computers to help with their work in other subjects. The school has identified this as an area where they could do better, and it is the view of the inspection that this aspect of the work needs further development.

112. By the end of Year 2, pupils have learnt to control the computer by means of the keyboard and mouse, using software such as *Dressing Teddy* and *Colour Magic*. They have experienced simple techniques such as combining writing and pictures and producing simple graphs. Teachers are good at providing activities which support the work in a range of subjects. In a Year 2 literacy lesson, a group of pupils worked on the computer to develop their spelling skills. The work fitted in well with the rest of the lesson and enabled the pupils to improve their spelling, as well as their computer skills, in an enjoyable and useful way.

113. By the end of Year 6, pupils have continued to develop their skills and have experienced a wide range of activities. They can use their skills to present information in a variety of forms, to

exchange information with others using different means, including electronic mail, and can compare the use of the computer with other ways of collecting or presenting information. In a Year 5 lesson, for example, pupils learnt about databases. They produced their own branching *decision trees* on paper, and then moved on to the computers to use a database programme about flags. They could see the similarity between the software and their own work on paper, and compare the two methods. The work gave pupils a good understanding of how databases work, as well as an example of how computers can save time and effort in sorting and finding information. Good provision of hardware and software also meant that all pupils were able to use software which was well matched to their needs.

114. The quality of teaching and learning is good but this has yet to have a full impact on raising standards. Teachers generally work confidently with the computers, and show appropriate knowledge and understanding. Learning support staff also help the pupils effectively in their computer work. Pupils are well trained to be able to work sensibly at the computer, even when unsupervised. They are able to work cooperatively, sharing and taking turns well, and this aspect of the work makes a good contribution to their social development. Pupils are enthusiastic learners and teachers are quick to use this strength in their planning. Girls and boys enjoy equal access to resources and attain broadly similar standards. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and sometimes use computers to support their basic learning. Staff use the available time and resources well to boost the progress of the pupils.

115. Provision has also improved as a result of the increase in quality resources. The subject leader has worked hard to improve provision, and the school has made good use of national and local sources of funding. The subject is very well led by the experienced and knowledgeable subject leader. He provides a range of support and training to all staff and has overseen the development of new and much improved hardware and software.

MUSIC

116. Attainment is above that found in most schools at the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards are good because the quality of teaching is very good and pupils are well motivated to achieve. The two subject leaders, one in the infant and the other in junior classes, manage the subject very well. One teaches music lessons to junior classes other than her own. Both have very good expertise and help to provide a consistently high standard of provision across the school. This constitutes an improvement since the last inspection. The subject has a high profile, there are a number of clubs and activities outside lessons for pupils and individual pupils can learn a choice of instruments. The school enjoys a good reputation for its work.

117. By Year 6, most pupils read simple rhythmic patterns from traditional notation. They are familiar with various conventions of notation and know the time value of notes. In one lesson, they performed well in an ensemble with tuned and untuned percussion instruments. This work included Caribbean influences. The pupils understood the need for and followed the lead of a conductor, starting and stopping on command. Pupils sang tunefully and enjoyed performing. As a result, they produced an effective performance as a whole class. This was the result of the very good teaching by one of the subject leaders, whose strategies to manage the class meant that the pace of learning never dropped. Her expertise with the subject enabled the pupils to improve on their performance. In another lesson, younger junior pupils enjoyed building the effect of a gathering storm, using percussion instruments, voice and other body parts. Teaching was good and the teacher's ability to organise activities kept the pupils well involved. Pupils listened well to the performance of different groups.

There are a large number of pupils learning to play the recorder and other instruments in this age group and their interest and enthusiasm are contributing positively to the quality of learning in lessons.

118. Because teaching is very good in Year 2, the attainment of the pupils is above expected levels. Pupils gain a very solid understanding of rhythm and pitch. They know the value of minims, crotchets and quavers and play rhythmic patterns well by using parts of their body or on percussion instruments. They are taught how to hold beaters properly to gain the clearest sound. In a lesson observed, the teacher linked the work to the class topic in history and pupils learnt about different instruments used in medieval times as they listened to music that would have featured in a banquet. The teacher focused attention on the mood of the different pieces and encouraged the pupils to evaluate what they heard. Pupils with special educational needs take a full part in lessons and this was evident in this lesson when a pupil with hearing impairment took her turn to play an instrument.

119. Subject management is very good. Planning follows a published scheme of work adapted to the school's requirements, and provides good coverage of the programmes of study. Pupils keep files of work covered and a newly introduced audio record of work performed by different age groups is being compiled. This is helping the subject leaders to monitor how well pupils' learning is progressing. Levels of resourcing are good and storage of instruments in the assembly hall is very well designed for access and convenience. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' social and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

120. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is above that found in most schools and pupils achieve well. This is an improvement since the last inspection. There was insufficient evidence to form a judgement about attainment at the end of Year 6. The school reports that last year only one pupil did not complete the minimum requirement in swimming for the age group.

121. Two lessons were observed, a gymnastics lesson in Year 2, which was very good, and a dance lesson in a lower junior class, which was good. In both lessons observed, teachers managed the pupils very well, including those in one class who have behavioural difficulties. This meant that the pace of learning was maintained and the lesson objectives were achieved. The dance lesson had a clear structure. It consisted of warm-up activities to music and a topical theme on bonfires and fireworks, with the opportunity to hear an appropriate piece of classical music by Stravinsky and to compose a dance to it. The lesson finished with a cool-down activity. Pupils composed dance movements and were able to combine them into a sequence. Some displayed good levels of body coordination and control, others found the activities more difficult but all were well involved and tried hard. Attainment overall was average for the age group. In the Year 2 gymnastics lesson, the pupils displayed good levels of coordination. They devised various ways of travelling closer to the ground and showed that they could change and adapt their ideas well. The teacher emphasised different aspects of movement, such as stretching, pulling, pushing, striding and sliding. Consequently, the pupils made suggestions about improvements and could devise more challenging ways of moving. Because the teacher has established very good routines, the pupils were quiet and listened well. She observed the pupils closely and made full use of demonstration to improve the performance of all pupils. The few with special educational needs were supported well by the learning support assistant, who took a full part in the lesson encouraging the pupils to do likewise. Behaviour was very good and the pupils really enjoyed the lesson.

122. The subject leader has recently taken on the role, and staff are reviewing teachers' planning, which is based on a published scheme and provides appropriate coverage. Levels of resourcing are good. There is a very good range of activities outside lessons and there are two residential visits during the junior years when there are opportunities for pupils to enjoy outdoor and adventurous activities. The subject promotes the pupils' social development well.