

INSPECTION REPORT

CAPTAIN SHAW'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bootle

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112290

Head teacher: Mrs C Whiteley

Reporting inspector: Mrs A Pullan
30839

Dates of inspection: 26th – 28th March 2001

Inspection number: 194328
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 controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Main Street Bootle Near Millom Cumbria
Postcode:	LA19 5TG
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Reverend A Cordiner
Date of previous inspection:	March 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

OIN	Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
30839	Mrs A Pullan	Registered inspector	Mathematics	How high are standards? The school's results and achievements.
			Science	How well are pupils taught?
			Information and communication technology	How well is the school led and managed?
			Religious education	
			Design and technology	
			Physical education	
			Special educational needs	
			Equal opportunities	
14083	Mr A Anderson	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
				How well does the school care for its pupils?
2456	Mrs J Bell	Team inspector	English	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Art and design	
			Geography	
			History	
			Music	
			Children in the foundation stage	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Captain Shaw's Church of England Primary School is a small community school (12 boys and 17 girls) on the west coast of Cumbria. The school serves a small rural village and the pupils either live in the village or the surrounding areas. In 1998 the school was threatened with closure. However, there was massive support for the school from parents and the local community. This, together with an improvement in the quality of education, resulted in the school being kept open. As a result, the school has recently undergone extensive building alterations, which has caused considerable disruption to the learning environment for quite a long time. There are no pupils at the school from ethnic minority groups and no pupils for whom English is not their first language. The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs (28 per cent) is slightly above most schools nationally and the number of pupils who have a statement describing their particular educational need is also slightly above most schools at 3.5 per cent. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals has risen steadily since the first inspection to 14 per cent, and is now similar to most schools. When children start in the foundation stage their ability is broadly typical of most four year olds. There are good links with the local pre-school playgroup and this ensures that children are well prepared for entry to school. However, many children come from quite isolated areas and their personal and social skills are often not as well developed as other areas.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school. Despite many disruptions, standards have been maintained since the last inspection and are satisfactory. The head teacher leads and manages the school very well. She clearly knows the strengths and weaknesses of the school and how it should develop. There are only two full-time teachers but they are well supported by additional staff resulting in a good standard of teaching throughout the school. The pupils clearly enjoy school and the majority of them behave very well and show very good attitudes to their work. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The head teacher leads and manages the school very well.
- The standard of teaching is good.
- The pupils behave very well and show very good attitudes to their work.
- Relationships in the school are very good.
- There is a very good partnership between the school and parents.
- The school provides a high quality of care and support to the pupils.

What could be improved

- The school development plan.
- The overview that the school has about the implementation of the whole curriculum.

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 1999 when it was taken out of special measures. Since then it has made steady and satisfactory improvement. The inspection identified four main areas for development: To raise standards of writing further: To continue to develop the curriculum and planning: Continue to improve the methods of assessment, the analysis of the information gained and the use made of data: To find ways to extend the system for monitoring standards and the quality of education by the governors and the staff.

Following the last inspection the school compiled a thorough action plan, which it has implemented well. However, some of the areas for improvement identified required specific input by the class teacher who has since left or were indicated to be completed over a four-year time scale. Consequently, some of the areas are still in the process of being developed. The school has focused on raising standards of writing further

by increasing the opportunities pupils have to write and improving teacher subject knowledge through training. Pupils' standards of writing are improving but this has not yet impacted on the school's results in the national tests. The school has been unable to make significant progress with the issue of developing a curriculum overview because of the high percentage of staff changes and this still remains an issue for the school.

The school now has good assessment procedures. Pupils' attainment is monitored regularly and clear targets are set for improvement. However, insufficient links are made with planning the curriculum to ensure that work is always sufficiently challenging for children in the foundation stage. The monitoring of standards and the quality of education is now good. Monitoring is regularly carried out by the governing body, the head teacher and by advisers from the local education authority. The school's accommodation has improved significantly since the last inspection. The building has been completely redesigned and altered to a high standard. This has created a much improved learning environment for the pupils and allows more opportunities for practical activities and for quiet study. The school has good capacity to continue to improve.

STANDARDS

This school has very small class sizes so their performance data has to be treated with great caution. This school cannot reliably be compared statistically with other schools that have many more pupils.

In the national tests in 2000 the school's results in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 indicate that the school attained well below other schools nationally and also well below other schools with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals. However, these results were expected as both these classes had a high number of pupils who had been identified with special educational needs. Consequently, the results of the national tests last year are not an accurate reflection of the overall standards in the school.

Teachers know the pupils very well because of the small class sizes. This means that work is usually well matched to the majority of pupils' needs and steady progress is made. Pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs are well supported and they also make steady progress. However, occasionally opportunities are missed that would stretch or challenge those pupils capable of higher attainment in the foundation stage, so they do not always make sufficient progress. Consequently, standards are satisfactory in the foundation stage and Key Stage 1 but they could be higher.

The school has improved its standards at a rate similar to most schools nationally. The standards of work seen in pupils' books and lessons during the inspection are satisfactory in all subjects. Most pupils are attaining standards that are typical for their age, particularly in Key Stage 1. The school has a high proportion of pupils in Key Stage 2 who have been identified as having special educational needs and the school's targets realistically reflect this.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils work hard and show very good attitudes to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The majority of pupils behave very well. Many show a responsible and mature attitude and are aware of other people's needs.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships in the school are very good. Pupils respect their teachers and work well with each other.
Attendance	Pupils enjoy school and attendance is good.

Everyone in the school contributes to the very welcoming, friendly atmosphere. The pupils are polite and

courteous both to each other and adults. The majority of them behave very well and all are proud to belong to the school. They are aware of other people's needs and many willingly help those who have a problem with their work. Most enjoy their work and are very keen to do their best and make improvements. They are very appreciative of the alterations to the building and take great care of it.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

On balance the quality of teaching is good. In the 15 lessons seen, 33 per cent of lessons were satisfactory, 20 per cent good and the remaining 47 per cent were very good. There are only two full-time teachers, one of whom is in her first year of teaching, but they are very well supported by part-time teachers and support staff. All staff in the school enjoy teaching and this clearly shows in their lessons as they try to provide activities that will stimulate and motivate the pupils but that also make learning fun. As a result, pupils find their lessons interesting, enjoy them and try to produce their best work. Most pupils apply themselves well to tasks and work hard. All staff teach the basic skills of English and mathematics well. The school has focused on improving standards in these areas and as they have improved teachers have begun to use pupils' literacy and numeracy skills effectively in other areas of the curriculum.

As the numbers in the school are very small teachers know their pupils very well. In Key Stage 2 there is a high proportion of pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs. Work set for these pupils is well matched to their needs and abilities but in the foundation stage of learning work is not always set that sufficiently challenges those pupils capable of higher attainment.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The school provides a broad curriculum that is enhanced through many visits, including residential opportunities, to widen pupils' experiences.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are identified early and given additional support if necessary. Individual education plans clearly identify targets for improvement and pupils' progress towards those targets is well monitored.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Very good provision is made for pupils' moral and social development. The school places a great emphasis on teaching pupils the correct way to respond to situations and why. There is satisfactory provision for their cultural and spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The school knows the pupils very well and provide well for their personal and social needs as well as their academic ones.

Between the last inspection and the beginning of this school year the school took advantage of the opportunity to concentrate on teaching English and mathematics in order to raise standards. It is now using all the nationally recommended schemes of work but is finding it necessary to make significant alterations so that they can be taught to a wide age range. Consequently, the school does not yet have a clear overview of how it will implement the whole curriculum. However, the school is very aware that many of their pupils live in quite isolated areas and provides many opportunities for visits that broaden their

experiences. The school works very well with parents. Parents are welcomed into school and feel that they are very well informed and involved in the life of the school. The school cares very well for its pupils. Teachers and staff are dedicated and caring and because of the small numbers know their pupils extremely well.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Very good. All teachers in this school work very well together as a team but the head teacher is the driving force behind the improvements and developments. She has a very clear educational direction for the school that is shared and understood by all staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors monitor the work of the school well and have sufficient knowledge about the school to make well informed decisions about its future direction. However, the school development plan is out of date and is not an accurate reflection of the governors' knowledge or involvement with the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school has good procedures for evaluating standards but does not yet use them sufficiently to influence planning.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. All money allocated to the school is well targeted and used appropriately. The school understands and applies the principles of best value.

This school is very small; consequently staff have to take on many roles. The head teacher leads by example and is very hard working and committed. All staff are very willing to give their time and there is a great team spirit. The head teacher has a very clear educational direction for the school, which is shared and understood by everyone involved with the school. Despite the fact that the head teacher has responsibility for teaching a class she manages the day-to-day running of the school very well so that it does not affect the quality of education for the pupils. Governors know the school well and are fully involved in all decisions. Many are in school on a regular basis and there is good monitoring of the quality of teaching. However, the school development plan is out of date and, therefore, governors cannot demonstrate on paper what their priorities are, how they will be linked to the school's finances or how they will measure the success of any developments.

Finances in the school are managed very well and have been prudently used to enhance resources. The school has sufficient good quality resources to deliver most areas of the curriculum. The building has recently been redesigned and refurbished to provide two very attractive and spacious classrooms with good additional space that is used primarily as a library but also well used by staff providing additional support for pupils with special educational needs and for music.

PARENTS’ AND CARERS’ VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their child likes school. • Their child is making good progress. • Behaviour in the school is good. • Their child gets the right amount of work to do at home. • The teaching is good. • They are kept well informed as to how well their child is doing. • They feel the school is approachable. • The school expects their child to work hard. • The school works closely with parents. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons.

Inspectors agree that parents are right to be happy with the school and agree with all their positive comments. However, inspectors’ views are that there is an appropriate range of extra-curricular activities. The school provides many opportunities for visits that broaden pupils’ experiences.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1 This school has very small numbers of pupils in each year group. This means that any statistical data has to be treated with great caution as it cannot reliably be compared to others school that have a much greater number of pupils. In the end of Key Stage 1 and 2 tests in 2000 results were as the school expected. In both the Year 2 and Year 6 classes the school had identified a high proportion of pupils as having special educational needs. Consequently, in Key Stage 1 the school attained very low results in comparison to other schools and in Key Stage 2 the results were well below other schools. These results were also very low in Key Stage 1 and well below in Key Stage 2 when compared to schools with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals. As the school has a high proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs in Key Stage 2 (40 per cent) the targets the school has set for future performance are realistic.

2 In all subjects the majority of pupils are reaching the standards they should for their ages by the time they leave the school. Most pupils start the school with attainment that is typical of the majority of four year olds. However, assessment of the children currently in the reception class shows that their attainment is above that of most four olds with the exception of their personal and social development which is slightly below. In Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils are given work that matches their individual needs so that all pupils make, at least, the progress of which they are capable. However, children in the foundation stage are not always given work that is suitably challenging.

3 Pupils make steady progress throughout their time in the school. The school has been subject to many disruptions, including changes to the teaching staff and extensive building work. However, pupils are now making good progress in their lessons but this has not yet significantly influenced their attainment and standards.

4 Standards in English, mathematics and science are at the levels expected for pupils' ages. Standards are steadily improving and the school exceeded the targets it set itself for English last year. Improvements have been made since the last inspection and standards in writing are now satisfactory. Most pupils listen attentively in class. They speak clearly and some express themselves well. The school is implementing the National Numeracy Strategy well. At the beginning of all mathematics lessons a strong emphasis is given to developing pupils' mental skills. In science pupils are given many opportunities to develop their scientific knowledge and understanding through practical experiences.

5 Standards are satisfactory in information and communication technology and religious education. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of word-processing but their experiences, and therefore understanding, of using technology to control and monitor the physical environment is limited and could be improved. Pupils meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and are given many opportunities for first hand experiences in religious education.

6 In all other subjects standards are satisfactory. The school has recently correctly placed an emphasis on the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and these are now starting to be used effectively in other subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7 Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, personal development and the relationships within the school are consistently very good. The teaching and non-teaching staff, parents and the pupils themselves have very high expectations of the standards of behaviour that are acceptable in the school. The vast majority of parents believe that the school consistently maintains high standards of behaviour and is helping their children become mature and responsible.

8 Pupils' enthusiasm and their attitudes to the school are very good. They enjoy coming to school and there is little or no lateness. The vast majority of pupils consistently show positive attitudes to their work. They are interested and fully involved in all activities. Pupils are confident, motivated, enthusiastic and eager to learn. They listen carefully to their teachers, willingly ask and answer questions, and freely offer their own ideas and opinions. Pupils quickly settle down diligently in class, maintain high levels of concentration, and stay on task.

9 Overall standards of behaviour by the vast majority of pupils are very good. Nearly all pupils behave very well and act in a mature and responsible manner. Behaviour in the classrooms is very good and there is little or no disruption to learning. This has a positive impact on the standards achieved. However there are a small number of children who can, at times, display inappropriate behaviour. The effect of these pupils' behaviour is minimised by the consistently very good class control and management by the teachers and support staff. Pupils move around the school site in a quiet and orderly manner and their behaviour at breaks and lunchtime is very good. There were no signs of any bullying or isolation of individual pupils. There was one fixed term exclusion in the academic year prior to the inspection and one in the current year to date.

10 Relationships in the school are very good. Pupils relate very well to their teachers, to other adults whom they come into contact with, and also to one another. They are polite, courteous and very welcoming to visitors. They collaborate well, share resources, take turns and listen to each other. Boys and girls of all ages mix and play well together at breaks. The vast majority of pupils consistently show respect for their teachers, each other and the environment. For example, pupils take great pride in ensuring that the school building is well looked after. During assemblies pupils show appropriate respect for the occasion, willingly join in hymn singing and bow their heads reverently during prayers.

11 Pupils' personal development is very good. They are learning a very good range of social skills that is helping them to develop into well-rounded individuals. Pupils support local and national charities and are learning to be aware of others less fortunate than themselves. They take part in sporting competitions and an appropriate range of visits, including residential experiences. Pupils respond very well to the opportunities for taking responsibility for their own work in the classrooms. For instance, in many lessons, when not subject to direct teaching, they showed initiative and worked independently with a minimum of supervision. The children have the opportunity to contribute to the smooth running of the school, for example, by making suggestions, which are discussed at "circle time" and agreeing the school code of conduct

12 Levels of attendance are well above the national average. There is no unauthorised absence.

13 The very high standards maintained in pupils' attitudes, behaviour, personal development and attendance are a strength of the school and have a positive impact on teaching and learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14 On balance, the quality of teaching throughout the school is good and usually very good in Key Stage 2. As a result, pupils now make good progress in most subjects. However, because of previous inconsistencies in teaching and disruption due to the building work, this is not yet reflected in the standards pupils attain, although there are now signs of improvement.

15 The teaching of children in the foundation stage is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. All adults work very well together. They plan activities that stimulate children's interests and develop their personal skills as well as their academic ones. For example, in a science lesson on "pushes" and "pulls" children were given the opportunity to experiment with toy vehicles. They were very excited about this and keen to find out whose vehicle went the furthest. However, staff also encouraged them to be fair and allow all children an opportunity to carry out their experiment. Staff have high expectations of children's attitudes and expect them to listen attentively whilst other children are talking so that they value what

others have to say and contribute to the lesson. Relationships with adults and children are very good. Children respond well to adult attention, are eager to learn and often achieve well when working with an adult. In the most successful lessons the children's learning was extended by well-timed intervention and questioning to identify and reinforce their learning. However, this was not always the case and, in some sessions, work was rushed because no adult intervened to reinforce the need for careful writing or to ensure that tasks were fully understood.

16 Children in the foundation stage experience literacy and numeracy lessons with Years 1 and 2. These lessons are very well planned and prepared and allow children the opportunity to participate in reading activities that sufficiently challenge them. However, other aspects of these lessons could be better. For instance, more direct teaching of skills such as letter and number formation to improve writing and mathematical work.

17 In both key stages literacy and numeracy are taught well. As the school has only a small number of pupils staff get to know them very well. Work is well matched to pupils' needs and abilities and, particularly in Key Stage 2, is sufficiently challenging. For example, in a Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson pupils had to choose the correct method of calculation to solve a problem. Some problems required more than one calculation to arrive at the answer. As the problems were written rather than being presented as a straightforward calculation, pupils found this particularly challenging as they had to interpret what the problem was about. The very good teaching resulted in pupils being well supported when they had difficulty and reassured when they lacked confidence. The teacher structured the lesson very well to allow appropriate time for pupils to consider and answer the questions but with timings clearly indicated so that they worked at a good pace with a clear sense of purpose. Each year group had work set for them at the correct level and because of this, pupils fully understood what they were doing, found the activities stimulating and worked hard. As a result, pupils made very good progress in this lesson. Through good questioning at the end of the lesson the teacher was able to assess what pupils knew and what they needed to do to improve further. For example, most pupils had difficulty understanding the concept that if eggs only came in boxes of 12 and 45 eggs were needed by a chef then 4 boxes would have to be ordered. Most pupils did not understand that they could not just buy the correct amount of eggs.

18 Throughout the school science and physical education are taught well and the teaching of all other subjects is satisfactory. The school's support assistant has a keen interest and very good knowledge of physical education so teaches most of these lessons with the support of the teachers. Activities are provided that physically engage the pupils at all times and motivate them competitively. Consequently, pupils find these lessons enjoyable and fun. Teachers have a very good knowledge of science. In these lessons most activities are practical so that pupils have the opportunity to discover scientific concepts for themselves. For example, in a science lesson in Key Stage 2, pupils dropped paper 'spinners' from the top of the stairs and then altered the mass on the bottom of them to see if it affected the direction of the spin. In Key Stage 1, pupils pushed toy vehicles to see if it was the type of vehicle or the amount of force exerted on it that made it move the furthest. Pupils enjoyed these activities, were interested in the problem and so applied themselves very well to what they were doing. Consequently, progress in these lessons was good.

19 All staff in the school manage pupils well and achieve high standards of behaviour. Adults listen carefully to pupils and value what they say. This has ensured that good relationships are established throughout the school. Staff are very good role models for the pupils and this has helped improve the attitude of pupils towards each other and, consequently, improve behaviour to a high standard. Pupils appreciate, value and respect their teachers.

20 The quality of teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is good. Individual education plans are written for these pupils so that they are provided with activities that are well matched to their particular needs. The flexibility created by small, mixed aged classes means that pupils can work with others of a similar ability not just a similar age. When pupils are withdrawn for specialist support, or to work with classroom support staff on their individual programmes, the teaching is tightly structured and focuses on the pupils' individual difficulties. Consequently, in these sessions pupils make good progress in

their knowledge, skills and understanding. The support staff know pupils very well and a high priority is placed upon developing pupils' independence. This is achieved in a caring and supportive learning environment. When external support agencies such as Learning Support provide programmes for pupils, the support staff follow these carefully.

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

21 The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school are satisfactory at both key stages. The programme planned for the children in the foundation stage is broadly satisfactory but does not always include sufficient challenge, particularly for those pupils capable of higher attainment. Although children at that stage make sound progress, there is insufficient direct teaching of skills such as letter and number formation. The school meets the requirements for all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. These pupils are well supported and the school has ensured that a statemented pupil is taught with younger pupils where her needs can be met. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have access to the full curriculum and all activities. A useful initiative was prompted by concerns over boys' achievement in literacy and the school is part of a successful consortium bid for a joint project to enable each school to focus on gender issues.

22 The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are implemented well. Lessons are well planned and teachers are clear about what the pupils should learn. The school has made a good start on reviewing and updating curricular policies. It has adopted national guidance to support curricular planning in all subjects but, because of the low numbers on roll, the staff are carefully adapting this guidance to meet the needs of pupils in the mixed age classes. This ensures that their tasks increase in challenge as pupils progress through the school. Planning has improved since the last inspection.

23 The sustained focus on implementing the Literacy and Numeracy strategies and managing the disruption of substantial rebuilding and redecoration have inevitably slowed aspects of curriculum development. The school has had to prioritise and has rightly given emphasis to raising standards in English and mathematics. This has meant that subjects such as history, geography and design and technology have not been given a high priority and, although standards are satisfactory, these subjects are under-represented within the whole curriculum. There has been insufficient time for the school to develop its planned work on reviewing and gaining an overview of the whole curriculum.

24 The provision made for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory given the size of the school. In the past year the school has organised football, netball, choir and a study club for boys and girls after school. Many activities depend on the availability of staff, interested parents or friends of the school. There is good commitment by staff, parents and other members of the community and the activities are well attended. The staff enhance the curriculum through a good range of educational visits. They are aware of the isolated location of the school and work hard to enrich the opportunities for all pupils. Teachers make effective use of the local and wider environment and this ensures valuable learning experiences. Pupils explore the local area and occasionally further afield, when they participate in short residential visits. These visits support pupils' achievement in science, history and geography. They promote well the pupils' personal and social development since they learn teamwork, consideration for others and begin to take responsibility for themselves and their learning. All pupils participate in the programme of visits and there are several whole-school visits throughout the year. Pupils have visited Sellafield Visitors' Centre, The National Trust Coast Show at Whitehaven and this year older pupils have the opportunity for a residential visit to London, with visits to The National Gallery, Science Museum and other places of interest.

25 The staff and governors are developing good links with other schools in order to ensure breadth and balance in the curriculum. They value the effective links with Millom School and the other feeder primary schools in the Millom Schools Consortium. These links compensate for the small size of the school since they provide good opportunities for those pupils capable of higher attainment to work with

similar pupils from other schools. Pupils work together on activities that extend the curriculum in science, drama, information and communication technology and art and design. The school ensures that pupils transfer smoothly to the next school at the age of 11. The school is improving its provision for physical education by improving teachers' knowledge, planning and resources through involvement in the School Sports Co-ordinators' Project and, although this is at an early stage, the preliminary audit has already raised teachers' awareness of the way to develop the subject. Currently the good expertise of a classroom assistant ensures that the programme of physical education is taught well and provides a good range of activities that are supporting pupils' achievement.

26 The curriculum is enhanced by the effective links with the community. There is a great deal of support for the school within the local community and many individuals visit the school to share interests and expertise. For example, a retired vet is pianist for the school and accompanies the pupils at the South Cumbria Music Festival. A parent works with pupils on an environmental project to create a wildlife area in part of the school field. Another parent supports the pupils' work in information and communication technology. Pupils learn about Judaism in religious education and their learning is enhanced by the visit of a Jewish lady who taught them how the Passover is celebrated. The village history group enriches the curriculum and pupils learned what Bootle main street was like a hundred years ago.

27 Although there is no written policy for sex education the school has adopted local authority guidance and teaches health and sex education through the science curriculum and health education programme. The school nurse supports teaching in these areas. The school has begun to develop its policy for promoting pupils' drugs awareness and these areas are raised in discussion with the oldest pupils. The school's clear policy on personal and social development starts with the youngest children and is implemented well throughout the school so that pupils' personal and social development is good.

28 The provision for spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. The school's strong Christian ethos underpins pupils' spiritual development. This is promoted through assemblies and in religious education. The school also takes opportunities to promote spiritual development within other subjects of the curriculum. For example in geography, pupils in Key Stage 2 handled Indian jewellery and wondered at the exquisite carving of statuettes. A visit to Carlisle Cathedral reinforced pupils' spiritual response to the stained glass windows and the atmosphere of calm.

29 The school makes good provision for pupils' moral and social development. It teaches pupils the difference between right and wrong and the very caring ethos helps them to be more aware of their responsibilities to one another. A Christian sense of fairness underpins the school's teaching on moral and social matters. Teachers and pupils value teamwork and pupils collaborate in lessons to share equipment and help each other. In the morning, before lessons start, for example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 work sensibly in groups to practise work on the computer and those with greater competence help others to access information on the Internet. In the youngest class the pupils had the opportunity to sit in a circle and share feelings and ideas. During this time they eagerly talked about how they feel when they do something well and were very clear about setting their own personal targets. Pupils listened well to each other and nodded agreement as one child volunteered 'I would like to ride my bike without stabilisers'. In the same lesson the teacher made sure that she listened and valued each pupils' contribution. Teachers set good examples during these sessions and use them to develop pupils' awareness of the need to be sensitive and respect the views and feelings of others. A strong code of behaviour guides pupils in their day-to-day school life. This helps reinforce good behaviour in the school and this has a positive effect on pupils' work. Pupils care about other people and take part in raising money for charitable causes. For example, they have collected for parcels to be transported to children in Bosnia.

30 Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory and pupils have good opportunities through the wide range of visits and visitors to learn about their local culture. The school is in a very isolated area with few opportunities for pupils to meet people of other cultures and traditions. The school therefore invites visitors to help raise pupils' awareness. For example, a local couple had visited India and shared their slides with pupils in the Key Stage 2 geography topic. They brought in artefacts such as photographs, a sari, jewellery and carvings and answered pupils' well thought out questions about life in

India. The recent redecoration of the school has made it difficult to display art in order to reinforce pupils' spiritual or cultural awareness. At present there is only a limited amount of art around the building and this mainly reflects Western European artists. There are sound opportunities for pupils to learn about different religions in their work in religious education.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31 The school effectively supports its pupils and the staff strive hard to promote their welfare. The head teacher places a high priority on pastoral care and provides very good leadership in this aspect. All staff are very approachable and totally supportive. The non-teaching staff are dedicated, committed and provide good support for both teachers and pupils. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, have a very good understanding of the school's pastoral and welfare procedures, and implement them consistently and conscientiously. Good provision is made for medical and first aid requirements, and arrangements for dealing with routine matters such as minor injuries are very good. Conscientious staff, who are alert and vigilant, supervise pupils very well at breaks and lunchtimes and their standard of care is high.

32 The school makes appropriate use of relevant external support agencies and very good use of its learning support staff. Non-teaching staff and parent helpers are deployed effectively and used well to support pupils and teachers. Support for pupils with special educational needs is good, which has a positive impact on their attainment and the progress they are making. Child protection procedures are securely in place and there is a very good awareness throughout the school. There are very good procedures for health and safety. These are well known by all staff who consistently demonstrate safe practice at all times, particularly in physical education lessons. The governing body and the head teacher take their health and safety responsibilities very seriously and all the required safety inspections and checks, including risk assessment, are regularly carried out, continually updated, and properly recorded.

33 The school has very effective procedures in place for promoting and monitoring discipline and good behaviour. This has a positive effect on the high standards of behaviour that are maintained throughout the school. Attendance is monitored rigorously and absence is correctly recorded, followed up and appropriate action taken.

34 As there is a small number of pupils in the school the head teacher, class teachers and support staff know their pupils extremely well and have a very good understanding of their individual personal needs. Overall procedures for supporting and monitoring academic progress and personal development are good. Teachers maintain comprehensive records that include baseline assessment, samples of completed work and personal profiles. Assessment is consistently carried out and is used to inform teachers' daily plans. However, the tracking of individual pupils is not yet fully developed and assessment is not being used to fully support the higher attaining pupils, particularly in the foundation stage. The school does not have rigorous procedures for assessing attainment in all curriculum areas so cannot guarantee that all pupils reach the standards they are capable of in all subjects. In addition, the school does not have a clear policy about how it will use its good assessment procedures to provide a curriculum that is well matched to the needs of all its pupils.

35 This is a very caring school that provides effective support and guidance for all its pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

36 Relationships between the school and parents are very good. The school enjoys the active support of most parents. The vast majority of parents consistently expressed a very high level of satisfaction with almost all aspects of the school. There are a small number of committed parents who regularly help in the classrooms and accompany the children on out of school trips. The majority of parents are fully involved in their children's work in school and at home. Parents support homework and home reading, and consistently enter appropriate comments in the home-school reading books. There is an active parents and friends association that organises social and fund raising events for the school. A considerable amount of money has been raised for the school by parents. A computer, television and video recorder have been purchased with these funds. All parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with problems or complaints and are confident that their comments are listened to. A small but significant number of parents disagreed that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. The inspection team judged the provision of extra-curricular activities to be satisfactory for a school of this size.

37 Communication between the school and home is very good. The school sends out regular, informative newsletters and frequent letters about specific events and activities. The school publishes a comprehensive and informative prospectus and the governors hold an annual meeting with parents and publish an annual report. Both the prospectus and the governors' annual report contain all the statutory required information. Parents are given a personalised and informative progress report and offered the opportunity to attend consultation meetings to discuss their children's work and progress with their teachers. Reports clearly indicate progress, what pupils can and cannot do, what they understand and set targets for improvement.

38 The true extent of parental support is evident in the way in which they, and the community, rallied round when the school was threatened with closure. Overall, the partnership with parents enriches the school's work and has a positive impact on pupils' learning and personal development.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

39 The head teacher is fully committed to the development and improvement of all aspects of the school. She is very hardworking and leads by example. The school has undergone a period of great disruption and turmoil but she has handled this well. Despite all the disruptions, the head teacher has effectively established a hardworking team of staff who all share her clear vision for the educational direction of the school. Relationships that have been established are a strength of this school. There is a great sense of pride to belong to Captain Shaw's that is shared by the staff, pupils, parents and governors and most of this is due to the very good leadership and management by the head teacher.

40 The head teacher has had a very good understanding of the areas and standards that the school needed to develop and the priority in which they should be tackled. Since the first inspection in 1996 the school's priorities have been to establish good behaviour and attitudes in the pupils so that they could apply themselves to their work. In addition, the quality of teaching needed improving and pupils required a better environment in which to work. This has taken some time but has now been fully achieved. The quality of teaching is good and pupils show very good attitudes and behaviour. Standards are satisfactory and the school is now very well positioned to raise pupils' attainment further.

41 Monitoring of the quality of teaching is difficult because of the small number of staff in the school. However, the head teacher has effectively involved the local education authority's advisers and has developed a thorough knowledge and understanding of the strengths of the staff and the areas for development. Consequently, staff in the school are used effectively and have clear programmes of personal development identified.

42 The governors are very involved with the school. Many are in school on a regular basis and are well informed to be able to make suitable decisions about its development. As the school has had to make

many radical and very important changes since the first inspection it has needed to have in place a series of action plans that identified short term developments. The latest action plan has recently been achieved and the school now needs to establish a comprehensive school development plan that clearly identifies its future developments and priorities.

43 Finances are well managed. A bursar regularly visits the school to advise on spending and to compile monitoring reports for the governors. The chair of the finance committee regularly meets with the head teacher and the bursar to monitor spending. Consequently, governors have a good understanding of the school's financial situation and match spending well to the school's needs. As a result, resources have been improved. They are satisfactory for all areas of the curriculum and are high quality. Governors consider how to get best value when they allocate funds and regularly monitor spending to ensure it is being used prudently.

44 The classroom accommodation is satisfactory and has been refurbished to a high standard. The two classrooms are of adequate size to allow the full curriculum to be taught but there are no spare rooms, apart from the library, for shared practical work or withdrawal of groups of pupils. The hall is adequate for assemblies and dining but poorly equipped for physical education lessons as there is no large apparatus. The library is a good size and well placed to be accessible to both classrooms. There is a shortage of suitable cupboards for the storage of resources within the building but the external craft room does provide some storage space.

45 Access into and throughout the school for pupils with physical disabilities is unsatisfactory. The teaching areas are on the first floor and can only be accessed by stairs. There is disabled toilet provision although this is not readily accessible as it is located on the ground floor. The building is kept spotlessly clean, well maintained and the learning environment is enhanced by attractive displays of the pupils' work.

46 There is a small hard surface playground that is adequate for the numbers attending the school. There is no separate, suitable play area for children under the age of five which means that these children have restricted access to outdoor activities. There is a large grass sports field situated close to the school.

47 The school has made satisfactory improvements since the last inspection. It has a sound capacity to continue this improvement as all adults associated with the school are committed to continual development and improvement.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

48 The governors and staff of the school should now:

1. Ensure that the school has a current development plan through which improvements and developments can be identified and evaluated. (Paragraph 42)

2. Within the curriculum overview ensure all pupils' specific needs are met by identifying:
 - how assessment will inform future planning; (Paragraph 34)
 - how specific groups of pupils will be sufficiently challenged or supported; (Paragraphs 16, 77, 50)
 - what provision the school will make for pupils in the foundation stage, particularly those pupils capable of higher attainment; (Paragraphs 58, 77, 21)
 - how the foundation subjects will be implemented. (Paragraphs 23, 87, 91, 96, 100)

The following, more minor, area for development should also be considered:

- improve pupils' experiences, and therefore understanding, of using information and communication technology to control and monitor the physical environment. (Paragraph 98)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	15
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	16

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	47	20	33	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR- Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	29
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR - Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	8

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	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.0
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	2	1	3

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	*	*	*
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	33% (50%)	33 (50%)	67 (100%)
	National	84% (82%)	85 (83%)	90 (87%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	*	*	*
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	33% (50%)	67% (50%)	67% (100%)
	National	84% (82%)	88% (86%)	88% (87%)

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

*Where the cohort is 10 or less figures are omitted.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	4	3	7

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	*	*	*
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86% (100%)	71% (80%)	86% (80%)
	National	75% (70%)	72% (69%)	85% (78%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	*	*	*
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71% (100%)	71% (100%)	86% (100%)
	National	70% (68%)	72% (69%)	80% (75%)

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

*Where the cohort is 10 or less figures are omitted.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	29
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	13
Average class size	14.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	37

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999 - 2000
	£
Total income	101,294
Total expenditure	102,360
Expenditure per pupil	3,530
Balance brought forward from previous year	6,763
Balance carried forward to next year	5,697

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	28
Number of questionnaires returned	24

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	79	17	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	71	29	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	46	4	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	50	46	4	0	0
The teaching is good.	83	17	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	67	33	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	92	8	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	96	4	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	83	12	4	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	88	8	4	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	75	17	0	0	8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	21	25	0	21

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

49 The school's provision for children in the foundation stage is satisfactory. The children are taught in a class containing reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. Although the teacher plans for the youngest children to have opportunities for practical experiences across all the areas of learning deemed suitable for the foundation stage this does not always work in practice. The current organisation of the class enables the reception children to work on their own tasks, helped either by a classroom support assistant, a student, or the teacher. On other occasions the children are briefed on what to do and work independently.

50 Children make steady progress but this could be better if there was sufficient direct teaching of skills such as letter and number formation to improve writing and mathematical work. The children benefit from the more carefully planned literacy lessons where they work with an adult but in other sessions they choose from a range of activities and some of the reception age children spend very little time on tasks. The teacher has only been with the class for a term and a half and the programme for the foundation stage children has not yet been evaluated sufficiently to ensure that the activities and experiences provide well-planned practical activities to reinforce their achievement within all the areas of learning. The teacher's planning is comprehensive and has begun to incorporate the national guidance for the foundation stage but frequently the children's activities are either not sufficiently challenging or need more adult intervention to be fully effective.

51 The children begin school with at least satisfactory skills in language, literacy and number skills. The school's assessment of the current reception children on entry shows that they are above the levels expected for their age in these areas. They are confident and mature but their personal and social skills are less well developed.

52 Teaching is at least satisfactory and occasionally good. Adults are deployed well and work well with children to support their learning and this enables them to make progress in lessons. The children are eager to learn and often achieve well when working with an adult. In the most successful lessons the children's learning was extended by well-timed intervention and questioning to identify and reinforce their learning. However, this was not always the case and in some sessions work was rushed because no adult intervened to reinforce the need for careful writing or to ensure tasks were fully understood.

53 The induction of children into the school works well and includes visits before they start school. There are good links with the local pre-school playgroup and this ensures that children are well prepared for entry to school. As a result they settle in very quickly. The school has a new policy to support the provision for children in the foundation stage but has not yet implemented it to provide a clear direction with regard to the organisation and development of learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

54 The children start the foundation stage with broadly satisfactory personal, social and emotional development. They are often mature and have had some useful experiences to support their learning. Apart from their pre-school playgroup, many of the children from outlying farms have had few opportunities to mix with other children before starting school and have been with adults for much of their time. They make good progress in their personal and social development; enjoy coming to school and are eager to learn. They settle well into the routines of their classrooms and relate well to each other. The children are relaxed, happy and secure in their class base and move confidently around the school. They achieve well because all staff give priority to developing their confidence in a range of individual, small group and whole class activities. Most children play and work well together and they are learning to co-operate and share. The adults work well together, provide good role models and relationships are very good. All children are encouraged to take a full part in all activities at a level where they are confident. They integrate well with the older pupils in the class who often help and encourage them.

Communications, language and literacy

55 The staff rightly set a high priority on the development of early speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. They provide sound opportunities for children to practise their speaking and listening within all activities. The children listen carefully and their speaking skills are good. For example, they listened carefully to each other in a discussion about things they could do or would like to do. One girl said 'I can do somersaults' and another, not to be outdone stated 'I can do handstands but Mum holds my feet!'. The children sustain conversation well, have good vocabulary and pronounce words correctly.

56 Children learn to listen to each other and to adults in structured games and activities. However, speaking and listening skills are not sufficiently reinforced for all children during independent activities. Role-play provides some opportunities to promote the development of language and social skills and children use experiences from outside of school to act out different situations. The role-play area was set up as an 'Estate Agents' and children 'telephoned' prospective 'buyers' and showed photographs of houses. However, there were some missed opportunities to reinforce the children's skills by guiding them to talk about their roles and to give reasons for choices. There were notepads to enable writing skills to be practised by taking 'orders' but space was cramped and the area lacked sufficient resources to stimulate children's language to the fullest.

57 Many children enter school with good experience of books and use pictures to make sense of the stories when sharing a book with adults. They enjoy listening to stories and are eager to share books with each other and with adults. Staff read stories well and this motivates the children to join in. The children have a good recall of the stories they hear in their literacy lessons. For example, the teacher had shared 'Six Dinner Sid' with the whole class and children looked at the pictures and answered questions about Sid's different activities. Children make sound progress in learning letter sounds and are beginning to use these to identify simple, commonly used words. They recognise their own names and are beginning to recognise simple sentences in early reading books. Higher attaining children are beginning to blend letter sounds to read simple sentences and recognise a good range of commonly used words. Most children know many rhymes and action songs by heart and join in enthusiastically. Parents are very supportive; they read regularly with their children and use the reading diaries well to record their child's progress. Early reading skills are well on target to meet the learning goals identified for children by the end of their year in the reception class.

58 Early writing skills are satisfactory but children could achieve more highly. Initially children try to write simple sentences and their writing includes recognisable letters. The higher attaining children make sound progress over time and work shows improved letter formation with words that are spelt with sensible alternatives if children do not know the correct spelling. Other children show uneven progress in their writing, as there is insufficient direct teaching of letter formation. Children are presented with a variety of worksheets that enable them to practise writing patterns but these do not sufficiently increase in their level of challenge. When children begin to write there are too few reminders about spacing and how letters should be written. However, most children's writing includes individual, recognisable letters formed with increasing pencil control. A few write simple words and sentences unaided. By the end of the foundation stage, most of the children are likely to reach the standards expected for their age in early reading and writing but a few could attain more highly.

Mathematical development

59 Most children are working well within the expectations for their age in the mathematical area of learning. Teaching is good and the teacher plans suitable activities for work in groups since the class contains reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children. Learning is sufficiently well managed to ensure that children persevere with their tasks when they are working independently. The work is planned to take account of the National Numeracy Strategy and all the children joined in the whole class activity of counting in tens. The reception aged children knew that all numbers in this series must end in nought and counted accurately from 10 to 100. The teacher's very clear instructions and good use of questioning to check on what the children understood ensured good progress in the session. The group tasks were

planned well to take account of the different age groups in the class. The reception children listened well and confidently recognised numbers as they shared a ‘big book’ with their teacher. They understand 1:1 correspondence and matched written numbers to the number of animals shown on each page of the book. They have very good attitudes to their work and are very supportive of each other. For example, one child wrote a “5” on the board and another said ‘That’s lovely’.

60 Children learn to count through activities that motivate them well. For example, they hunted for plastic bears that the teacher had buried in the sand and became quite competitive in their eagerness to find the most. They carefully counted the number of objects that the teacher had put into sets and also accurately counted the total of three sets of objects. The children have a sound understanding of terms such as ‘more than’ or ‘less than’. They complete simple addition to six and most are confident in matching six numbers to six objects. The children identify and colour two-dimensional shapes and recognise squares, circles, triangles and oblongs. They complete simple ‘shopping’ sums using amounts up to 10 pence. All the reception aged children understand terminology such as ‘heaviest / lightest’ and sort successfully the largest and smallest in a group of objects. Children learn the properties of simple shapes through building models, making pictures with paper shapes and using jigsaws. By the end of the foundation stage, most of the children are likely to reach the standards expected for their age in mathematics but a few could attain more highly.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

61 The children enter the foundation stage with sound knowledge and understanding of the world about them, particularly the natural world of their own rural farming community. They understand that some things change over time. For example, all the children can identify differences in houses and know that in past times houses had no electricity or gas and food was cooked on a coal or wood burning range. They develop sound skills to underpin work in geography and have learned to record their findings in a simple table after conducting a traffic survey in the village.

62 In their topic on materials the children have found objects made of wood, metal and plastic in the classroom. They build on their earlier work to find transparent, rough, smooth and flexible objects. They are beginning to identify when push and pull forces are used in the home, for example, they know we pull light cords, pull curtains and push and pull doors. The children’s computer skills are satisfactory. They use the keys and the mouse to operate cursors in simple programs that enable them to practise counting and matching skills. The older children in the class help the reception children as they work in pairs. The children’s achievement in this area of learning is satisfactory and, by the end of the foundation stage, most of the children are likely to reach the standards expected for their age.

Creative development

63 By the time they reach the end of the reception year, the children’s attainments in creative development are on target to match those expected. Children are enthusiastic and keen to take part. There are opportunities for them to regularly paint, although this activity is not available on a daily basis. They learn to mix colours and produce pictures to which they add text. They draw recognisable pictures of activities throughout the day and choose suitable illustrations to show ‘lessons’ and ‘lunchtime’. The children have designed and made their own masks and these show imaginative decoration. The teacher creates opportunities to reinforce children’s vocabulary and children name the primary colours and also know others such as orange, pink and purple. They use a range of materials to learn about texture and create pictures, collages, prints and patterns.

64 Children regularly experience singing activities; they memorise counting and action songs and learn to sing them tunefully. In a soundly taught music lesson the children joined the Year 1 and 2 pupils and had opportunities to experiment with simple keyboards to compose and name their own tunes. After listening carefully to music from ‘Star Wars’ all wanted to use this theme. They enjoyed the session but there was too little time allowed for them to get to know the sounds the keyboard could produce and to create, refine and memorise their own tunes. The children listen well to tape recorded sounds and used

their knowledge from home to recognise sounds such as a food mixer, carpet sweeper and a drill. There were good links with science as children recognised which objects used electric power and one child observed that ‘the sweeper uses push and pull forces’. The children’s achievement in this area of learning is satisfactory and, by the end of the foundation stage, most of the children are likely to reach the standards expected for their age.

Physical development

65 The children in the foundation stage have no regular opportunities to explore a range of activities in outdoor play, although they have regular time for physical activities in the hall. These help them to make good progress in gaining co-ordination and to develop social skills as they play circle games. They work with Years 1 and 2 and quickly develop confidence in the large space of the hall through opportunities in physical education lessons. They handle equipment safely and enjoy their physical activities. These reinforce some aspects of the children’s personal and social development and they learn to work well in pairs and groups. They respond quickly to signals to stop or change direction as they jog, run or skip around the hall. The children use their manipulative skills in practical situations to make models using construction kit or play dough. They show sound dexterity as they make pictures and collages. Most show sound control and are developing satisfactory co-ordination over time. Children’s achievement in this area of learning is satisfactory.

ENGLISH

66 By the end of both key stages standards in English are at the levels expected for the pupils’ ages. Standards are steadily improving and the school exceeded the targets it set last year. Improvements have been made since the last inspection and standards in writing are now satisfactory.

67 Most pupils listen attentively in class. They speak clearly and some express themselves well. For example, pupils in Key Stage 1 listened carefully to the teacher’s recall of a shared story and talked about Sid, the cat in the story. They worked well in pairs to find alternative describing words to those given in the story and identified a range of alternatives for ‘naughty’. The teaching was sound but the teacher lost opportunities to explain words in the text. For example, she read ‘Sid has a swanky air when acting as Scaramouche’ but failed to check whether pupils understood ‘swanky’. By the end of Year 6, most pupils formulate and ask sensible questions. For example, when visitors to the school were explaining about their trip to India pupils asked such things as, ‘We saw the Taj Mahal on the slides. It was beautiful, but what are the other buildings like?’.

68 Pupils make steady progress in reading and by the end of Years 2 and 6 their attainment is typical of most pupils their age. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils read accurately and with reasonable fluency. They have a good knowledge of letter sounds and use them to build words they do not know. They have sound strategies to help their reading and use picture clues and context to support their reading. Pupils recall earlier books in the reading scheme and use their knowledge to predict what might happen in their current book. For example, one pupil looked at pictures and talked about the characters then decided ‘the magic key will turn the toy rocket into a real one and the children will go to Mars’. By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils read accurately, with fluency and some expression. Pupils understand plot and identify motive appropriately. They have good word recognition and define most words accurately. For example, one pupil read a non-fiction book on Ancient Egypt and made very good attempts to read unfamiliar words such as the names of the pharaohs “Akenhaton” and “Tutenkhamun”. They know how to use books for information and can find material on CD-ROM or locate data on a web-site to support their work in other subjects. Pupils are eager to read and talk confidently about their favourite books and authors. They use the library well and read both fiction and non-fiction books.

69 Pupils have made good progress with their writing and standards are now satisfactory. By the age of seven pupils’ write simple stories that have a beginning, middle and end. A few write imaginatively and use a good range of vocabulary. Pupils use their writing skills to label diagrams and write simple sentences to match drawings in science. For example, they found and wrote about different materials used to make

objects in the classroom. However, they do not apply consistently their knowledge of when to use full stops and capital letters. Pupils write poetry and are gaining an understanding of different forms of poem. They understand alliteration and recognised this in their class book 'Six Dinner Sid'. They enjoyed the task of applying alliteration to their own name and volunteered examples such as 'Clumsy Claire' and 'Bad Bob'. They wrote their own words for characters in the book but no reminders were made about the teacher's expectations for handwriting. Only higher attaining pupils develop a clear style to improve the shape and size of their letters and standards are much more variable amongst other pupils, where letter shape and size are quite inconsistent.

70 In Key Stage 2 handwriting is mainly satisfactory and sometimes good. It is better in pupils' handwriting books but they do not always apply these skills in other writing tasks. Pupils write in detail to tell stories, describe experiences and review books. The range of written work is broad and pupils make good progress as they write for a range of purposes. They write reports of visits, write imaginatively on the theme of myths and legends, write about characters in Macbeth and write clear instructions on how to program a video recorder. Most pupils use punctuation correctly and understand the importance of adjective and verb. They understand the value of drafting and use it effectively to improve their work. By Year 6, pupils use punctuation to denote speech in their text. They write well-constructed letters for different purposes such as making an application for a job. The school has begun to find ways to encourage pupils to improve their writing and this is beginning to show good results. Pupils use information and communication technology to support their work in English and use word-processing to write, edit and print out their writing for display. They use different fonts to suit the theme of their writing and can locate and paste in "Clip Art" images to enhance stories, make their own books or to illustrate work in history and geography topics. Teachers encourage pupils to use their writing in other subjects. For example, in geography pupils produced well thought out work on the 'greenhouse' effect and on the recent floods. In history, pupils have written lively accounts of Boudicca's uprising against the Romans.

71 In all classes, relationships are very positive, both between pupils and between staff and pupils. Most pupils participate actively and are keen to learn. Behaviour is mainly good. These qualities ensure that lessons proceed in a constructive working atmosphere that supports learning well.

72 The standard of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good, and sometimes very good in Key Stage 2. In both key stages teachers have sound subject expertise and are implementing successfully the National Literacy Strategy and plan lessons well to take account of the different year groups in each class. The good teaching in Key Stage 2 promotes effective learning and the teacher enhances lessons with well-chosen resources and effective management of support staff. For example, in a well-planned lesson, the classroom support assistant worked well with the Year 3 and 4 pupils to enable the class teacher to focus on the Year 5 and 6 pupils. In a well-taught lesson, there was a good balance between direct teaching and opportunities for pupils to work independently or in groups. The teacher's skilful questioning extended pupils' thinking and by the end of the session many could use inference well to give a picture of characters in their story. One described a dominant character as 'towering over Roy'. The teacher's enthusiasm encouraged pupils to identify a wide range of figurative terms to extend their written description of characters. She used the last part of the lesson well to enable the older pupils to read out their work. This reinforced their understanding of ways to improve writing and also enabled the Year 3 and 4 pupils to gain from the good examples of the Year 5 and 6 pupils.

73 The classroom support assistant works effectively with pupils who receive extra help through the Additional Literacy Strategy. This enables pupils to have well-matched tasks to help raise their attainment. These pupils are making good progress in their reading and writing skills. The work in a smaller group enables them to receive individual help and the good relationships reinforce their self-esteem.

74 The management of literacy is sound; the head teacher and Key Stage 1 teacher work well together to develop it throughout the school. The head teacher has a very good grasp of what is working well and where things can be improved. For example, as a result of analysing the results of national tests the school is now involved with other local schools in a useful initiative to improve boys' writing. Homework arrangements are satisfactory and help pupils to consolidate their learning, particularly in

reading and finding information to support topic work. Parents are kept well informed. Resources are of good quality and are managed well to enable pupils to access them independently.

MATHEMATICS

75 By the end of both key stages standards in mathematics match those expected for pupils' ages. For example, by the end of Year 2 most pupils correctly add and subtract numbers up to 20 and show a sound understanding of counting in multiples of 2, 5, 10 and 100. They measure accurately using centimetres and recognise single lines of symmetry in shapes. Pupils use their understanding of basic number skills to solve simple word problems correctly. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make steady progress in mathematics throughout the school. By the end of Year 6, pupils accurately add and subtract large numbers, measure angles carefully, recognising acute and obtuse angles and covert fractions to decimals and decimals to percentages.

76 The school is implementing the National Numeracy Strategy well. At the beginning of all mathematics lessons a strong emphasis is given to developing pupils' mental skills. In both key stages the quality of teaching in this part of numeracy lessons is very good. Teachers prepare a range of quick-fire questions to ask pupils that are very well matched to pupils' needs and abilities. For example, in one lesson, Year 3 pupils were asked to find the sum of 12 and 18, Year 4 pupils had to find 9 more than 28, Year 5 pupils had to give numbers that were multiples of 36 and Year 6 pupils had to find $\frac{1}{2}$ of 4.8. The pace of these sessions is very brisk resulting in pupils being suitably challenged but also being well motivated to arrive at the answers as they find these activities fun.

77 In all the mathematics lessons seen planning was thorough so that activities were provided for the different ages of pupils in the class. Good teaching was seen in Key Stage 1 where reception children had to total the amount of objects in three sets then hunt for and count bears hidden in the sand, Year 1 pupils worked very well with the support assistant working out time one hour before or after a given time and pupils in Year 2 did a similar activity but they used digital time. In this lesson all activities were very well prepared and organised so that pupils could work independently. The teacher was then able to effectively concentrate on one group whilst monitoring what the others were doing. This ensured that all pupils were well supported throughout the lesson and most made good progress. However, some of the activities given to the reception children, whilst being appropriate for their age, did not sufficiently stretch and challenge those who are capable of higher attainment so they did not make the progress they should.

78 The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is very good. Very good activities were given to pupils that challenged them by presenting them with problems they had to solve. For example, Year 3 pupils were given the cost of various items that could be included in a 'Party Bag'. They were then given a sum of money and the number of people attending the party. They had to choose which items would be put in the party bags. Pupils had to read the problem, decide the calculation then arrive at the answer. Pupils related well to the activity as it had relevance for them and they were keen to solve the problem. Throughout the lesson the teacher showed that she knew the pupils well by giving extra support to those who needed it but by giving good direction to the use of time and thereby maintaining a brisk pace to the lesson so that the pupils remained motivated and interested.

SCIENCE

79 By the end of both key stages standards in science match those expected for pupils' ages. For example, by the end of Year 2, pupils show a sound understanding of the properties of materials describing them as transparent, waterproof, rough or smooth. They understand the dangers of electricity and draw and construct simple circuits. Their understanding of how electricity is made was greatly enhanced by a visit to British Nuclear Fuels. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make steady progress throughout their time in school. By the end of Year 6, their knowledge of materials has increased to include a sound understanding of thermal conductors and insulators and they categorise materials by their properties, for example, whether they are flexible or rigid, transparent or opaque. Pupils show a good understanding of how to carry out experiments to prove a hypothesis. For example, they conducted

experiments to ascertain which type of soil contained the most air, they tested different papers to see which was the strongest and they tested circuits to see if changing the length of the wire effected the brightness of the bulb.

80 In both key stages science is taught well. Teachers ensure that science lessons are as practical as possible, giving pupils the opportunity to experiment with the ideas they have been taught. For example, in a science lesson in Key Stage 1, the lesson began with a teacher-led discussion about which toys would be pushed or pulled. The use of pupils' own toys ensured they were interested but the teacher's good subject knowledge was shown through the choice of toy vehicles to precisely demonstrate the teaching points. For example, when developing the pupils' knowledge of the 'push' force the teacher asked which of the toy vehicles would go the furthest. Initially the pupils' responses were based on the type of vehicle. For example, most said the police car or the racing car – one child believing it would go further because of the stripes. The teacher then gave the pupils sufficient opportunity to watch how far each others toy went. Through very skilful questioning the teacher guided the pupils to realise that it was the amount of force exerted on the toy that resulted in the greatest distance rather than the toy itself. Through finding this out for themselves the pupils showed very good understanding of the concept by the end of the lesson.

81 Pupils enjoy their science lessons and look forward to them, mainly because the teachers make them interesting and fun. In a science lesson in Key Stage 2, pupils investigated air resistance. After a brief introductory discussion pupils proceeded to work co-operatively in pairs: Year 3/4 pupils to see if air resistance could slow a moving object and Year 5/6 pupils to see if mass would affect how a spinner fell. All pupils predicted what they thought the outcome of the test would be and all understood the principles of making the test fair. Pupils showed very good concentration throughout the lesson because they were very interested in what they were doing. The teacher knew the pupils very well and therefore was able to give additional support to those who needed it. By the end of the lesson the younger pupils fully understood that the greater the air resistance the slower the object falls and the older pupils realised that altering the mass on the end of a spinner altered the direction of the spin.

82 The school is implementing the nationally recommended guidance for science. However, it has had to make significant alterations to be able to successfully deliver it to mixed age classes. For example, all pupils study the same topic at the same time but the skills and experiments within those topics are matched to the pupils' ages appropriately. This is working well and the school is now well positioned to make decisions about how this subject will be developed in the future.

ART AND DESIGN

83 No art and design lessons were observed during the inspection. Judgements have been based on a scrutiny of pupils' work, discussion with teachers and pupils, and examination of teachers' planning. The recent redecoration of the school means that the amount of work on display was also limited. At both key stages, pupils work at the levels expected for their age. The majority, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress in relation to their prior attainment.

84 In Key Stage 1, pupils become aware of pattern, colour and texture in natural and man-made forms, as they use a range of materials and media to express their ideas. They mix colours to create different shades. The pupils have drawn different types of houses and made colourful posters for display in their 'Estate Agents' Office'. They have created some interesting masks through exploring the textures and colours of different materials. Pupils use pencils and crayons carefully to create their own record of what happens at different times of the day.

85 In Key Stage 2, pupils make sound progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding. They build on earlier work to extend their use of a variety of techniques. Pupils made good use of a digital camera to create images. They choose different textures and colours to create a collage of flowers. Teachers encourage pupils to use art and design to enhance their work in other subjects and pupils have effectively used their knowledge of life in Ancient Egypt to create mobiles showing the mask of Tutankhamun with hieroglyphs to denote what they have done. Teachers record pupils' work in

photographs that include very effective collage work of hedgehogs made from autumn leaves. Pupils have also produced a collage to record changes in Bootle main-street over the past 100 years and this has been publicly displayed as part of the area's Millennium celebrations.

86 No direct teaching was seen but the quality of work produced shows that teaching is satisfactory. Lesson planning is thorough and tasks are suitably matched to the age range of the pupils. This enables them to learn at a satisfactory rate commensurate with their level of attainment. Pupils develop a satisfactory range of skills through the breadth of activities they experience.

87 The school is developing its work to take account of recent national guidance and is now well positioned to formulate a clear plan for how this subject should be delivered in the future. The range of resources has been extended to allow the new curriculum to be taught effectively.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

88 The only design and technology lesson seen was in Key Stage 2. Standards of achievement and teaching are satisfactory in both key stages.

89 Throughout the school pupils make steady progress in design and technology. In Key Stage 1, pupils design the type of sweets they think their mothers would like on Mothering Sunday. They show sound skills in choosing the appropriate shape, colour and flavour and take great care in designing and making an appropriate container for them to go in. Whilst working with food, pupils show a good understanding of the need for hygiene, making sure their hands are washed thoroughly. Evaluations at the end of the project show that pupils understand that sweets both have to look good and taste good. Good links are made with other subjects. For example, whilst studying homes in geography pupils learnt how to make different hinges by scoring and bending card. This skill was then put to good use with the pupils designing and making collage houses with doors that actually opened. Pupils study the types of materials used in house construction and show a sound understanding of the need for correct materials to be used for specific purposes. For example, windows have to have a material that is transparent whereas the roof has to have a material that is waterproof.

90 In the lesson seen in Key Stage 2, the standard of teaching was very good. The classroom and all materials were very well prepared so that pupils could work independently at their tasks. This lesson was one of a well-planned series of lessons. The teacher showed good subject knowledge in challenging the pupils to use knowledge and skills they had learnt in science and information and communication technology to help them design and build an alarm that used an electrical circuit with a buzzer. Pupils had to identify a 'valuable' object and then protect that object with an alarm. Pupils found this activity absorbing and stimulating and took care to design their alarms well. They all had a very good understanding of what they were doing and were very supportive of each other helping those pupils whose designs did not work as well as others. Pupils evaluated their alarms as they built them, altering and amending their design sheets as necessary.

91 Lessons are currently based on the recently recommended national guidelines. However, the school is evaluating and adapting these guidelines to ensure that they work effectively for mixed age classes. The school does not yet have a clear plan for the implementation and development of this subject but now has a good understanding about what will need to be included.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

92 There was only one geography lesson seen and no history lessons. Although these subjects have had less emphasis due to the school's recent focus on implementing the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy, pupils cover sufficient work, make satisfactory and sometimes good progress and standards are at the levels expected by the end of both key stages.

93 In geography, pupils in Key Stage 1 have conducted a traffic survey of vehicles passing through their village. They have successfully used their numeracy skills to make a table to record their findings. Pupils are aware of the dangers of traffic in their local area and have produced well-designed posters to publicise the need for road safety. Their current topic on 'houses' helps to reinforce skills in both history and geography. Pupils know how houses have changed over time and that many homes in the past had no electricity or gas and people relied on coal and wood fires to cook their food and give warmth. They have looked at houses in the village and are beginning to understand the need for shops, schools and other services to support settlement.

94 In current work in Key Stage 2, pupils compare their village in Cumbria with life in the Indian village of Chembakoli. They make good progress because their teacher provides good opportunities for them to learn from the first hand experiences of local people who have visited India. In a well planned and effectively taught lesson, the pupils asked sensible questions to extend their knowledge of Indian buildings, clothes and food. They had good recall of slides shown in an earlier lesson and the Year 3 and 4 pupils made careful observational drawings of artefacts such as jewellery and woodcarvings. Year 5 and 6 pupils used literacy skills well to take notes during the visitors' talk and used the information well to draw their own conclusions on life in different parts of India. By the age of 11 they show a good awareness of environmental issues and have produced well thought out arguments to support their views on global warming and the 'greenhouse' effect. They have a sound awareness of topical issues and have written about the recent flooding in many parts of Britain. By Year 6, pupils use their ICT skills well to find information using CD-ROM and the Internet.

95 No lessons were seen in history but discussions with Year 6 pupils showed that they remember key points of learning well, even after several months. Pupils are interested in history and have a good recall of their work on Roman Britain. In their current work on Ancient Egypt they know about the ways Egyptians worshipped their Gods and have a good awareness of the process of how the dead were treated. Pupils have a sound understanding of the importance of archaeology and how the finds in the pharaohs' tombs and the interpretation of hieroglyphs have given an insight in to how people of Ancient Egypt thought and lived their lives.

96 Teaching was good in the geography lessons seen and the quality of pupils' work and their evident understanding shows that both subjects are taught satisfactorily. Teachers make good use of recent national guidance to plan their work and carefully adapt it to meet the mixed year groups in each class. However, they do not yet have a clear plan for the future implementation and development of these areas. They make good links between subjects so that pupils use their literacy skills to write accounts and numeracy skills to record findings in graphs and tables. The school makes very good use of the local and extended environment to support pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

97 Standards in information and communication technology by the end of both key stages are satisfactory. The school has improved access to computers since the last inspection and good areas for computer use have been purpose built in both classrooms. These are well used by pupils who access computers to research or present information in other curricular areas such as geography, history and science. Consequently they have had a significant impact on improving pupils' progress in the short period of time since this equipment was introduced.

98 In Key Stage 1, pupils make steady progress in learning to use information and communication

technology to present information. They learn to use the simple features of a word-processor and quickly gain confidence to type text from the keyboard and use the mouse. By the end of Year 2, pupils use word-processing packages to enter and edit text for themselves. Pupils learn to use computers to handle data. They enter data into simple databases and present information in graphs and charts. However, they are not given sufficient opportunities to use simple controllable toys and, consequently, they do not develop the necessary skills to program a device to carry out a simple sequence of movements.

99 Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress in developing their word-processing and presentation skills. A grandparent regularly helps in school giving pupils individual tuition and support with computer skills. This additional support plus pupils' enthusiasm for the subject contributes significantly to the progress they make. They learn to combine different font sizes, colours and styles to create different effects in their work, and to use graphics and drawing tools effectively. They present text in different layouts, such as lists of questions linked to their geography topic of India. Pupils then find answers to their questions by accessing the Internet and all understand the procedures for sending electronic mail messages. By the end of Year 6, pupils have good skills in this aspect of information and communication technology. They combine photographs taken using a digital camera with text in a range of styles and formats. For example, they took photographs of how the building had been altered and added text explaining what had happened during the building work. However, pupils do not make sufficient progress in other aspects of information and communication technology. They do not learn to monitor and control the physical environment sufficiently well or how to program and control a floor robot.

100 The school is introducing the recommended national guidelines in this subject but this is still being evaluated and adapted. Consequently, the school does not yet have a clear plan for the future implementation and development of this subject.

MUSIC

101 Only one music lesson was seen. This was at Key Stage 1. However, teachers' planning shows that the subject meets requirements. Pupils have a sound range of opportunities to compose and make their own music and teachers create good opportunities for pupils to practise their singing and to perform their work in festivals in the county. For example, pupils take part successfully in the Cumbria Music Festival. From the evidence available it is evident that pupils make sound progress to reach the standards expected for their age at the end of each key stage.

102 In Key Stage 1, pupils sing tunefully and have a good repertoire of songs that they know. They listen carefully and name different instruments played on a tape. In the lesson seen the pupils made sound attempts at using a simple keyboard to compose their own tune. They understood the process but there was insufficient time given for them to compose, practise, refine and perform their music.

103 The school uses recent national guidance to ensure that pupils have increasing challenge as they progress through the school. By Year 6 they understand and follow sign notation, and compose simple percussion pieces. All pupils have the opportunity to take part in performances. The school is developing good curricular links with its receiver secondary school and local primary schools. This enables older pupils to work with those in other schools on a range of music activities and this has a positive impact on their achievement.

104 Teachers give priority to pupils' enjoyment of musical experiences. Pupils join in with interest and use musical instruments sensibly. They are supported well by people from the community. For example, a local person freely gives his time and expertise to play the piano and accompany pupils' singing, in school and at the music festival.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

105 In physical education pupils make steady progress. During the inspection only games lessons were seen, however, scrutiny of teachers' planning shows that all areas of physical education are covered. Discussions with pupils and staff indicate that achievement in all areas of physical education is at least in line with expectations for pupils' ages. The support assistant in the school has particular expertise and interest in physical education. The school uses this expertise well and the support assistant teaches most of the physical education lessons supported by the teachers. Consequently, teaching in this subject is of a high standard.

106 Pupils in Key Stage 1 thoroughly enjoy these lessons, as they are challenging, conducted at a brisk pace and fun. They move confidently with very good awareness of space and others. They understand the need to warm up before activities as the teacher reminds them often what the purpose of the activity is. For example, explanation was given as to why the heart beats faster during activity and what would happen to muscles if the body was not sufficiently warmed up and stretched before beginning an activity. During this lesson pupils worked well together in pairs and groups and showed sound catching and dodging skills.

107 In Key Stage 2 pupils build upon previously learned skills. They show increasing control both of their own body and of a ball. Their skills are well developed by introducing activities that require them to apply these skills in a competitive situation. For example, dribbling balls around cones in team races. Most pupils show a good understanding of fair play but a minority of boys do not, however, the teacher handles these situations very well so that they are not detrimental to the lesson. The very good teaching ensures that lessons are stimulating, challenging and thoroughly enjoyable. The support assistant shows very good subject knowledge by continually explaining the effect that particular activities have on the body and how stamina can be built up. Pupils attend swimming lessons throughout their time in the school and most pupils swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6.

108 The school uses the accommodation and resources it has well. In order to enhance resources and provision the school is currently engaged in a project with the local education authority to develop physical education skills. However, there is no opportunity for pupils to develop their confidence and skills in off-ground work with high apparatus as the school does not have any.

109 The fact that the school is very small has not stopped it from participating in local events such as the Inter School Sports days and mini-soccer tournaments. The school also provides extra-curricular activities in football and netball. Pupils are given the opportunity to participate in outdoor adventurous activities with a series of residential experiences throughout Key Stage 2.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

110 No lessons were seen in religious education. However, there was sufficient evidence for judgements to be made. By the end of both key stages standards in religious education match the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Teaching in this subject is satisfactory but the school provides many first hand experiences that greatly enhance the provision.

111 Throughout the school pupils make steady progress. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils show a sound understanding of Christian values. They understand the story of "The Creation" and the teacher's sound subject knowledge develops this theme well in each year group to relate it to present day earth. For example, reception children relate the story of "The Creation" to how they should care for people, whereas pupils in Year 1 relate it to how they should care for and look after the environment. Religious education themes are also well developed in class assemblies. The teacher told the story of 'Who loves you little Beetle?', discussed the feelings illustrated in the book but related the story well to how God created all creatures and asked pupils to reflect on God's gifts to the world.

112 Pupils in Key Stage 1 regularly visit the local church. They know the vicar well as he is regularly

in school. They recognise various parts of the church and know that the font is used for baptism, why Sunday is a special day and what the symbol of the cross represents. They have a good understanding of the main Christian celebrations of Easter and Christmas – including re-enacting the Nativity for parents and the local community. As this is a farming area emphasis is also given to Harvest Festival, thanking God for their food but also raising money for those children in other countries who have insufficient food. Good links are made with religious education and pupils' personal and moral development. Pupils are encouraged to feel special in God's love but also to appreciate other peoples feelings as well as their own. For instance, in a personal, social and health education lesson in Key Stage 1, pupils discussed what made things fair or unfair and if they have done something wrong and how they can change it.

113 In Key Stage 2, pupils develop their knowledge of the Christian faith to include a secure understanding of Lent. They know the story of Jesus entering Jerusalem on Palm Sunday; that on Shrove Tuesday pancakes are a symbol of preparing for fasting and on Ash Wednesday palm crosses are burnt and the vicar puts the sign of the cross on their foreheads out of the ashes. Most pupils show a good understanding of the parables in the Bible, for example, The Lost Sheep and The man who came through the roof. They link the messages of the parables to present day and relate well to feelings portrayed in the stories. For example, they recognised that in The Prodigal Son story the son that stayed home and worked was very jealous of attention bestowed on his brother when he returned home. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils also show a sound understanding of other faiths, particularly the Jewish faith. They recognise and appreciate the similarities and differences between elements of the Jewish and Christian faiths. For example, they know that Christians worship in church and the service is led by a vicar, and Jews worship in a synagogue led by a Rabbi. This understanding of Judaism was enhanced by the visit to the school of a Jewish lady who explained the fundamental principles of the faith and demonstrated how the feast of the Passover was celebrated.

114 The local Evangelical Minister regularly visits the school to take assemblies. The school also invited The Baptist Church to visit and explain their faith to all pupils through a puppet show. These first hand experiences give pupils a good understanding of differing faiths and beliefs as they have the opportunity to ask pertinent questions and engage in discussion.