

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **CROFTLANDS JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Ulverston

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112198

Headteacher: Miss J Dower

Reporting inspector: Mrs Elisabeth Linley  
27281

Dates of inspection: 7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> May 2002

Inspection number: 195917

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Oakwood Drive Ulverston Cumbria
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Appropriate authority:	Cumbria
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Mason
Date of previous inspection:	23 <sup>rd</sup> June 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
27281	E Linley	Registered inspector	History; music	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9306	B Moore	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
2893	J Manning	Team inspector	English; religious education; geography; special educational needs; English as an additional language	
31022	P Hardwick	Team inspector	Mathematics; physical education; equal opportunities	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
24031	I Idle	Team Inspector	Science; information and communication technology; art; design and technology	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Croftlands Junior School is situated on the southern edge of the market town of Ulverston in South Cumbria. The area serves families whose parents are mainly homeowners and are in full time employment. There are 286 full time pupils aged between seven and 11 on roll. The school is slightly larger than the average sized primary school. Most of the pupils transfer from the adjacent infant school and a minority of pupils come from outside the catchment area because parents choose this school for their children. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science and average in all other subjects. Thirteen pupils are registered for free school meals and this represents a proportion that is below the national average. However, there are 70 pupils on the special educational needs register whose needs include support for autism, dyslexia, speech and communication, physical and hearing impairment and emotional and behavioural needs. This number matches the national average. Nine pupils have a statement of special educational needs and this is above the national average. There are no pupils with English as an additional language.

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

Providing satisfactory value for money, this is an effective school. Standards in English and mathematics are above national expectations, they are well above national expectations in science and in line with national expectations in information and communications technology. Teaching is good overall although there is a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching that needs improvement. The school is well led by an effective team comprising headteacher, senior management team and governors and is supported well by staff, parents and pupils. The strengths of the school outweigh its weaknesses and the school and its community have much to be proud of.

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

- Standards by the age of 11 are well above average in science and above average in English and mathematics.
- The teaching of English, mathematics and science.
- The partnership of the headteacher and senior management team, together with the very positive contribution made by the governors, provides effective leadership.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Pupils have a good attitude to learning. Relationships within school are strong and pupils behave well.

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

- Teaching, where it is currently unsatisfactory and poor.
- The balance in the curriculum and the proportion of time allocated to some subjects is unsatisfactory.
- The library is under-used.

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

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

The school has improved well since the last inspection in June 1997. Standards have improved as has the percentage of good lessons. The leadership by the headteacher and other key staff has been consolidated and extended and the governors now make a very good contribution to the management of the school and fulfil all statutory requirements. The school has produced effective procedures to assess pupils' work. Teachers have produced schemes of work for all subjects in order to identify a clearer progression of skills and understanding. However, although the school still plans a broad curriculum, time is not suitably shared between the different subjects. The teaching and learning of English receives approximately one third of the time and as a result time is limited for information and communication technology in Years 3, 4 and 5. Even so, improvements in standards achieved in information and communication technology by the time pupils are 11 have been made. This is largely due to increased

teaching time and the specialised teaching of information and communication technology skills in Year 6. Overall, improvement has been good and the school is well placed to continue.

## STANDARDS

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

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

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

In the National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds in 2001, pupils' standards were well above the national average in English and science but below the national average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, standards were well above average in science, average in English but well below average in mathematics. Improvements overall have been broadly in line with the national trend. When children start school in Year 3, standards in speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematics are generally above what might be expected. However, standards in all other subjects are in line with what might be expected. By the age of 11, standards in English, mathematics and history are above the levels normally expected of 11-year-olds and standards in science are well above what is expected. By the age of 11, standards in art and design, design and technology, physical education, geography and music are in line with national expectations. Whilst standards in information and communication technology are also in line with expectations by the age of 11, pupils have limited opportunities to develop their skills in information and communication technology in Years 3, 4 and 5 due to lack of time. Pupils aged 11 achieve appropriately in religious education and meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. The school sets challenging targets and pupils achieve well overall. A strategy to raise standards of more able pupils in writing in Years 5 and 6 has been implemented and is starting to show improvements. The school has also focussed carefully on the teaching and learning of mathematics during the current year and results are likely to improve.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school are good. Pupils are interested in their work and keen to learn. They settle quickly and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons and break-times is good.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is satisfactory.
Attendance	Attendance is good. Pupils arrive promptly at lessons.

Pupils' relationships with each other and with adults are very good. Children are sensitive to the needs of others and support each other well. The atmosphere in the school is friendly and no bullying was observed during the inspection.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	<b>aged 7-11 years</b>
Lessons seen overall	Good

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

Teaching is good overall. Teaching has improved since the last inspection and a number of very good and excellent lessons were observed. All teachers have good relationships with their pupils. Overall, assessment is used well to inform future planning to enable teachers to build effectively on previous learning. Teachers ensure that pupils know what they are expected to learn in lessons and, as a result, most pupils concentrate well. However, a small number of lessons observed were less than satisfactory. Where teaching was unsatisfactory and poor, teachers' subject knowledge was often weak. Activities were not planned sufficiently well to challenge pupils in their learning and as a result, teachers had difficulties in managing pupils' behaviour. However, the teaching of English, mathematics and science is a strength of the school and the literacy and numeracy strategies are implemented effectively. As a result the majority of pupils learn well in these subjects and they maintain good standards. The school works hard to provide effectively for pupils with a wide range of special educational needs. Pupils with special educational needs are taught and supported effectively, as are pupils in the 'able writers' groups in Years 5 and 6, and as a result they make good progress overall.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory and the school meets all statutory requirements. However, the time allocation is inadequate for information and communication technology in Years 3, 4 and 5.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Teachers match pupils' work carefully to meet their individual needs. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support from well experienced and qualified assistants.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school makes sound provision for pupils' spiritual development through assemblies and the teaching of religious education. Pupils' moral, development is good. The school clearly teaches pupils the difference between right and wrong. The provision for pupils' social and cultural development is also good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Effective procedures are in place for child protection and health and safety matters.

Good procedures are in place to assess pupils' academic progress. Groups of pupils are identified as needing extra help if they are to reach the targets set and booster classes are organised appropriately. The school involves parents very well in the assessment process for pupils with special educational needs. Provision for pupils who are gifted and talented is appropriate. For example, an 'able writers' group, for pupils in Years 5 and 6, is taught by the headteacher.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Effective leadership is provided by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior management team. Co-ordinators have begun to develop their role and manage their subjects more effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities well and takes an active role in helping to shape the direction of the school. They are fully committed to, and supportive of, the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Monitoring and evaluation of performance is good. There is a rigorous analysis of standards, checking of the progress towards targets and evaluation of teaching.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. There is an appropriate link between development planning and finance. Best value principles are understood. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

Overall, the accommodation and resources are satisfactory; however, the library does not promote a positive learning environment and is underused. There are sufficient well-qualified teachers to meet the demands of the National Curriculum and support staff are of high quality.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like school and they make good progress.</li> <li>• Teachers mark pupils' homework well.</li> <li>• Teaching is good overall.</li> <li>• School promotes good attitudes and values.</li> <li>• Behaviour in school is good.</li> <li>• The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• Parents are able to approach school with questions or concerns.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of homework.</li> <li>• The range of extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the positive views of parents. Homework is generally appropriate and is used well to support pupils' work in school. With regard to the school's provision of extra curricular activities, the inspection team recognises that there are fewer activities available for pupils in Year 3 and 4 than in Years 5 and 6. However, the range of activities provided by the school is good overall. In addition, there are visits and visitors to school that enhance pupils' learning.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

- 1 When pupils start school in Year 3, their standards of achievement are above what is expected nationally in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In all other subjects their achievements are as might be expected. Pupils entering the school in Year 3 in September 2001 achieved above average results in the Year 2 National Curriculum tests. Pupils who took the tests at age 11 at the end of Year 6 in summer 2001 achieved similarly high standards when they were assessed at age seven. Targets set for English and science were exceeded in 2001; however, pupils' achievements fell well below the target set in mathematics. As a result, the school has analysed data effectively to identify why there was a drop in standards achieved in mathematics and has worked hard to support improvement in this subject.
- 2 Standards of attainment in the 2001 National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds were well above the national average in English. When compared with similar schools, standards were average. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level was above the national average and average when compared with similar schools. Overall the trend shows that standards are rising in line with the national average. There were no significant differences between the achievement of boys and girls.
- 3 The full range of inspection evidence shows that standards are above average in all aspects of English. Boys and girls achieve equally well in reading as in speaking and listening but girls do better in gaining higher levels in writing. Within the school, there is a high proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs; however, they are supported well both in groups and individually and make good progress in their learning. The high quality of teaching and implementation of the literacy strategy contributes to pupils' achievements. Pupils' achievements are also currently supported by groups for 'more able writers', both in Years 5 and 6.
- 4 In mathematics, the 2001 National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds showed that standards were below the national average and well below average in comparison with similar schools. Attainment at the higher level was well below both the national average and in comparison with similar schools. There was no significant difference between the achievements of boys and girls in mathematics. Overall, over the last four years pupils' attainments have risen in line with the national average.
- 5 The full range of inspection evidence reflects a different picture and standards in mathematics are now above those expected nationally by the age of 11. The school has taken the fall in standards in 2001 very seriously and has focussed sharply on providing good support for pupils in their learning. Teaching is consistently good in mathematics and the implementation of the numeracy strategy is effectively contributing to the improvements in standards. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school and they maintain high standards. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress against targets set for them in their individual education plans.
- 6 In English and mathematics the targets set for Year 6 pupils are based on very careful analysis of the assessments made within each year group. Since different year groups vary in the numbers of pupils with special educational needs and the numbers of higher attaining pupils, targets are realistically challenging for each year. Groups of

pupils are identified as needing extra help if they are to reach the targets set and booster classes are organised appropriately.

- 7 The standards of attainment at the end Year 6 in science were well above both the national average and in comparison with similar schools in the 2001 tests for 11-year-olds. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels was well above the national average and well above average when compared with similar schools. There was no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
- 8 Inspection evidence suggests that standards in science this year are equally as high as they were in 2001. Progress is good and is consistent throughout the school and attainment in all aspects of science (experimental and investigation, life processes, physical processes and materials and their properties) is very good. Standards in Year 6 are well above national expectations. The progress pupils make is good and generally consistent, reflecting the good quality of teaching overall.
- 9 In information and communication technology, the standards achieved at the end Key Stage 2 are in line with those normally expected for pupils aged 11 years. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in using an expected range of equipment. Pupils make sound progress overall in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding of how to communicate and handle information through information and communication technology. However, progress made by pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 is not consistent. There is insufficient time given to the teaching of information communication technology in these year groups. Also pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to use their skills because they do not have regular access to computers. The use of information and communication technology in other subjects and especially in supporting literacy and numeracy is unsatisfactory and has been identified as an area for improvement by the school. In Year 6, however, pupils have regular time every week to develop their skills in information and communication technology lessons. As a result they make good progress in a short time.
- 10 Pupils apply their literacy skills satisfactorily across the curriculum but this could usefully be extended. However, there are insufficient opportunities presented for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge in other areas of the curriculum.
- 11 Standards are above national expectations in history, which reflects an improvement since the last inspection and in line with national expectations by the age of 11 in art, design and technology, physical education, geography and music. Pupils aged 11 achieve appropriately in religious education and meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
- 12 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout school. Their structured learning programmes are effective. The support they receive from teachers and assistants enables them to practise regularly to improve their skills. In speaking and listening they take a full part in lessons because teachers ask them the sort of questions that build on the things they know and can do.

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

- 13 At the time of the last inspection pupils were judged to have a positive attitude to their work. This has been maintained, and pupils' attitudes to their school are good. Pupils are enthusiastic about their school and are keen to participate in school activities. This enthusiasm is reflected in the quality of behaviour, which is good overall. Pupils behave well in and around school; and in the majority of lessons they are able to enjoy their learning. However, there are lapses of behaviour by a minority of pupils when

class control is less effective and the work is insufficiently challenging. In those lessons where teaching is less than satisfactory the frequent interruptions affect the learning of other pupils. Pupils are able to work well together in English when the task is made clear to them, occasionally a minority is distracted if they are asked to listen for too long. They respond best to well-paced lessons that provide them with regular opportunities to research ideas and then report back their findings. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into lessons. They participate when the questions are closely matched to their understanding. Support assistants help them well to collect their ideas together and this gives them confidence. The majority of pupils are courteous and polite and very welcoming to visitors. Pupils form very good relationships with one another and with adults. This is a strength of the school, indeed, in personal, social and health education pupils are learning how to respond to each other and to show consideration for others.

- 14 Staff, led by the head teacher, set a good example in their relationships with one another and with the pupils. This is reflected in the way pupils relate to one another, without any apparent aggression. They are supportive of each other in lessons; and in a very good 'good work' assembly willingly applauded the efforts of others. There have been no permanent exclusions. Discussion with pupils showed they have a good understanding of the need for school rules and the procedures to follow should they observe any form of oppressive behaviour. This has resulted in the good attitudes of pupils when at play and the absence of aggression.
- 15 The personal development of pupils is satisfactory overall, and is supported by the work of the school council and residential visits. Within the community they enter events such as Young Citizens quiz and Home Safety quiz. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop initiative and to take responsibility for their own learning. The under-use of the library means that pupils do not do enough research in school.
- 16 Pupils are happy to come to school and the attendance rate at the school is good. The school focuses well on maintaining a high level of pupils' punctuality. Pupils join with staff and parents to support events organised by the Croftlands Parents Association and help the school to become a focus for links within the community.

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

- 17 The quality of teaching is good overall. Of lessons observed 41 per cent of lessons were judged to be satisfactory, 33 per cent were good, 14 per cent were very good and five per cent were excellent. Compared with the previous inspection, there has been a good improvement in the quality of teaching. This is due to improved teaching of literacy and numeracy resulting from in-service training and the national initiatives. Improvement is also due to regular and appropriate monitoring of teaching by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and English and mathematics curriculum co-ordinators.
- 18 Where teaching is very good and excellent the ethos of the classroom is very positive and promotes learning very well. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good. Teachers speak to pupils with respect and in turn are spoken to in a similar manner. Teachers have high expectations of achievement, behaviour and presentation. This contributes to pupils' self-esteem, confidence in their abilities and self-discipline. Combined with teachers' effective classroom management, this means that classrooms are pleasant working environments. Most teachers develop good relationships with their pupils; they manage behaviour appropriately and as a result pupils are mostly focussed on their lessons and show positive attitudes to learning.

- 19 Teachers' subject knowledge is good overall in English, mathematics and science. When teachers are confident in their subjects they extend and build on pupils' learning as they progress through the lesson. Learning is consolidated by reviewing what is already known about the topic being discussed, and by the use of constructive feedback to help pupils improve their work.
- 20 Positive features observed in many literacy and numeracy lessons include very good introductions and explanations. Teachers ensure that the learning objectives are made clear to the pupils and are well matched to their needs. Teachers successfully balance whole class teaching with opportunities for enquiry, and for pupils to work independently and co-operatively. They provide opportunities for pupils to solve problems, handle materials and use and enhance their skills and knowledge. For example, in a Year 3 numeracy lesson, the teacher encouraged pupils to think of facts that related to two-dimensional shapes. Very good support and questioning supported pupils' learning well. This is also a feature of teaching in science where it is good overall. Teachers are skilled in their questioning which promotes thinking and sets a good pace to the lesson. Teachers value the contribution of pupils, whether correct or incorrect, and as a result pupils respond enthusiastically. They use praise and encouragement regularly to enthuse and motivate pupils.
- 21 The teaching of the basic skills in literacy and numeracy is good overall. The basic skills and techniques in literacy and numeracy are taught explicitly, systematically and thoroughly. Where very good and excellent teaching was observed the teachers enthusiastically build on pupils' previous learning and develop their lessons according to the pupils' individual needs. In literacy lessons the teachers' skilled and challenging questioning aids pupils' understanding. In numeracy lessons most teachers have high expectations of pupils and encourage pupils to explain how they arrive at their answers and to use appropriate mathematical vocabulary. This develops pupils' confidence in mathematics and increases their own awareness of their learning. The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum, however, is limited and the school has recognised this as an area that is in need of development.
- 22 Teachers work conscientiously to provide interesting starting points, such as through visits and visitors to school to motivate and engage pupils in their learning. For example, pupils in Year 3 enjoyed a visitor to school who was in character as an 'air raid warden'. They demonstrated a clear understanding of many facts about World War 2 and were clearly interested to learn more about 'gas masks' and 'Anderson shelters'. Teachers who shared the experience supported pupils' learning well with further questions and explanations of the facts that were shared.
- 23 Pupils with special educational needs are taught well. Individual education plans are detailed and helpful and ensure that pupils achieve well. Teachers and support staff work closely and effectively together to this end. Groups of pupils are identified as needing extra help if they are to reach the targets set and booster classes are organised appropriately. Also, more able writers in Years 5 and 6 are provided for in small groups during the week.
- 24 During the inspection, however, seven per cent of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory or poor. Where teaching is less than satisfactory, teachers' subject knowledge is often insecure. As a result, there is insufficient challenge in the lesson and the pace becomes very slow. Pupils become inattentive and, on some occasions, disruptive. The management of pupils' behaviour then becomes the focus of teachers' attention and this was evident in most lessons where teaching was unsatisfactory. Although the percentage of unsatisfactory lessons observed has

decreased since the last inspection the issues identified for development are significant and need further improvement.

- 25 Homework is appropriate and supports pupils' learning. Very high quality marking was seen when observing pupils' work, including homework. The comments made by the teachers clearly picked out positive features of the pupils' work and praised them, and also provided helpful suggestions of how to improve it. Parents appreciate the comments that are made to support their children's learning and feel that marking is of a good standard.

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

### **How good are curricular and other opportunities?**

- 26 The school provides a broad and relevant curriculum, which meets statutory requirements for all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. It is not, however, suitably balanced as too high a proportion of time is given to English, with insufficient time available for other subjects, especially information and communication technology. The governing body has chosen to allocate more than the recommended amount of time to physical education. This is to ensure that all year groups attend a weekly swimming lesson in response to a locally identified need, the safety of pupils, as the school is surrounded by many stretches of open water. Insufficient consideration has been given, however, to the impact of the additional time for English and physical education on the remainder of the curriculum.
- 27 There have been major changes to the way the curriculum is planned following the weaknesses identified in the findings of the previous report. Teachers' planning for literacy and numeracy is good. Co-ordinators usually guide and oversee the long and medium term plans based on the literacy and numeracy frameworks and teachers then plan thoroughly using agreed formats. The literacy and numeracy strategies are well established. Teachers adopt the strategies well to meet the needs of their pupils, especially to develop their writing skills in literacy.
- 28 The school has produced long and medium term plans for other subjects adopting many elements of the nationally recommended schemes of work. These provide a good framework to ensure continuity and progression. Year groups use these schemes well and frequently collaborate in weekly planning. The schemes and plans are published termly, for parents, this assists parents in supporting their children's learning. As a result, parent governors monitor the long term planning and in the past, have identified where there have been gaps in the provision. For example, in the work planned for information and communication technology in a mixed age class.
- 29 The use of pupils' information and communication technology skills in the rest of the curriculum is given insufficient priority in the long, medium and short term plans. As a result the development of these skills is inconsistent across the school with fewer opportunities provided in Years 3, 4 and 5. Information and communication technology is not yet established in classrooms as an everyday tool for learning.
- 30 More could be done to extend pupils writing skills in the foundation subjects. There are some good examples of writing, for example, in science in Year 3 and in geography in Year 6. Opportunities for application of numeracy throughout the curriculum are similarly underdeveloped. Overall, however, there have been considerable improvements in the quality and consistency of planning since the last inspection.

- 31 The school is committed to equality of opportunity and access for all pupils. Results of National Curriculum tests are monitored by gender in order to ensure the curriculum is equally inclusive for boys and girls. The curriculum of pupils with special educational needs is good and fully meets the requirements of the code of practice. There are good procedures in place for the identification and assessment of these pupils. Individual education plans are in place that set clear targets in literacy, numeracy, information communication technology and social skills. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support in the classrooms and, when necessary, away from the class group. Overall provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they achieve well.
- 32 Insufficient care is taken in monitoring the frequency with which pupils are withdrawn from lessons and assemblies to receive additional support, music lessons or to attend the school council. This means that some pupils do not have their full entitlement to all the subjects of the National Curriculum, to religious education and to collective worship.
- 33 So far no clear policy is in place to identify or support gifted and talented pupils. However, an extension class is offered in Years 5 and 6 for higher attaining pupils to further develop pupils extended writing skills; this caters well for their needs.
- 34 A range of homework enhances the curriculum and extends pupils' knowledge. This is particularly good in English but is also given to support other subjects. The use of information and communication technology to support work at home is encouraged in some classes.
- 35 The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE), including sex education and guidance on the misuse of drugs is satisfactory. A new co-ordinator has been appointed recently and has begun to check the provision across the curriculum noting where opportunities for developing pupils' awareness and knowledge occur. A whole school policy has recently been written and is ready to be adopted. Any gaps in provision are small and have been identified. The school is well supported by a school nurse who delivers a sex education programme to Year 6 pupils. A science bus visits the school each year and raises pupils' awareness of the dangers of drug misuse. The subject is well supported by a link governor who monitors the provision.
- 36 The school is developing the citizenship curriculum and has a school council that deals with issues of concern to pupils. Pupils take part in a young citizen's quiz and the school places a heavy emphasis on being good citizens. The use of 'circle time' is being developed in some classes but is not consistently adopted throughout school. However, all classes provide some time for pupils to discuss school issues.
- 37 Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Spiritual development is satisfactory. An appropriate atmosphere is created in 'good work' assemblies to help pupils to develop their spiritual awareness. For example, in a 'good work' assembly that was observed, time was given for reflection and the prayer was well linked to the work of the school. Pupils focused on the lighted candle and reflected on their good work and how they cared for others. Religious education lessons provide a planned programme to develop pupils' spiritual development. Pupils are encouraged to think about the universe and how it came about.
- 38 In art, pupils have opportunities to think about the feeling of characters in stories and how to show feelings in their sketches. During the inspection, in a numeracy lesson,

pupils were amazed when they suddenly realised that the number of sides, angles and lines of symmetry in a range of shapes were all the same.

- 39 Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good and strongly linked. Pupils have good opportunities to celebrate their successes by sharing their work in 'good work' assemblies. Pupils are sympathetic to each other's needs and show a mature understanding of the difficulties that some pupils have both in work and behaviour. In lessons for English, science and design and technology pupils are required to develop social skills of working together in groups, sharing ideas, materials and equipment. They listen sensitively and contribute confidently. For example, in a Year 5 class, pupils discussed carefully in groups whether sounds could travel through different materials. They listened carefully to each others contributions. All their ideas were valued and this raised pupils' self esteem. Good moral issues are discussed in religious education and geography lessons; for example, relating to environmental conservation. Also, a theatre company visits each year to perform to the school and this contributes to pupils' moral development as the theme of the production this year was bullying.
- 40 The provision for cultural development is also good. A good range of other faiths is studied in religious education and includes Hinduism and Judaism. This work is supported by visits to school by a Rabbi to talk about family traditions. In their English lessons, pupils study topics on foreign cultures and they extend their art skills when designing and making head-dresses. Pupils learn about lives of young people in Kenya as part of their geography work. Pupils raise money for Oxfam, Children in need, Christian Aid and Blue Peter. A range of educational visits is provided to support pupils' work in school; for example, a specialist in African Dance visited the school to support the work of pupils in Year 5. Pupils also have the opportunity to spend a day as monks at Cartmel Priory and they further develop their understanding of the works of Shakespeare by attending productions locally.
- 41 Pupils are given some responsibility within the curriculum, for example when helping to organise a school fair. However opportunities for pupils to take responsibility are limited and this is an area the school has planned to develop further.
- 42 The curriculum is enhanced through a good range of extra curricular activities particularly for Years 4, 5 and 6. Clubs include football, cricket, netball, choir and brass instruments. Fewer opportunities are available for Year 3 pupils but the school is widening the range of opportunities for these pupils who can participate in some clubs, for example, football and choir. A number of the extra curricular clubs are well supported by parents and the community. The school has strong links with the community. Visits and visitors further enhance the curriculum, for example, a professional rugby player assisted in a Year 5 physical education lesson. The school makes good use of many community links including the police, paramedics, the Environment Agency, local churches and sports clubs to enrich the curriculum. Pupils are offered a residential visit to Keswick in Year 6. In the past this visit has involved all Year 6 pupils. The school has contributed to a local drama festival and the choir performs for local elderly groups helping to develop a sense of community responsibility.
- 43 Good links with the local infant and secondary schools ensure the continuity of pupils' education. There is close liaison with the infant school, on the same site, and the two schools sometimes join together for curriculum or school development days. The school has developed some curriculum links with the local secondary school and 'bridging units' are undertaken beginning at the end of Year 6 and continuing in the secondary school to ease transition. Pupils also spend a day in the secondary school



in their final year in school. Liaison takes place with subject co-ordinators across the three phases of education.

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

- 44 Since the last inspection the school has developed good support for ensuring pupils' welfare. Teachers understand their pupils well. They know the procedures to be followed to ensure that pupils are well protected and that the level of welfare is good.
- 45 The school has a clear policy for child protection and all staff are aware of procedures. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The governing body ensures that effective procedures are in place to promote all related matters of health, safety and security. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. A check is kept on any non-attendance and a friendly phone call from the office assures the school that the child is safe. Parents appreciate the way staff care for their children.
- 46 Procedures for the monitoring of pupils' academic support and personal development are good. The high quality of guidance for pupils was demonstrated in a talk given to all Year 6 pupils regarding their forthcoming tests, this talk established a sensible balance between academic and social development. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support during lessons and in groups. Many have severe difficulties, which inhibit their learning but make progress because their targets are carefully planned. The school involves local agencies to ensure that medical as well as educational support is appropriately administered. Staff work hard to ensure that everyone in the school community is valued. In the best lessons there is a consistent approach that ensures the good behaviour of pupils and the elimination of oppressive behaviour. This effective support makes a positive contribution to pupils' well being, and enables children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered.
- 47 Assessment was a significant weakness in the last inspection report and the school has made good progress in addressing this issue. The progress individual pupils make through school is closely tracked and evaluated by class teachers and the senior management team. Effective systems for assessing and recording pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science are in place. Pupils take end of year assessments using nationally recommended tests. Progress made by groups of pupils, for example boys and girls, is closely analysed to ensure the school is providing for all pupils' needs. The school responds well to this analysis and makes good use of the findings to adjust the teaching or curriculum provision.
- 48 Recently portfolios have been compiled for most subjects. These provide clear examples of work that are accurately matched to the levels described in the National Curriculum so that teachers can use them to judge work samples against. These provide the basis for assessments in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.
- 49 The tracking of progress for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers maintain clear records of the progress made by pupils and set further targets based on secure assessments. There is good collaboration between the special educational needs co-ordinator, teachers and support staff who use these assessments effectively to ensure all pupils receive good support
- 50 A strength of the school is the marking of pupils' work. Work is clearly marked and annotated, often with a National Curriculum level. In English for example, where pupils in Year 6 know exactly what is expected of them and seeing clearly what progress they are making.

- 51 Subject leaders work closely with class teachers, as in science, where the co-ordinator and teachers monitor pupils' progress and set appropriate future targets together. These assessments are used as a guide for reporting back to parents.

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

- 52 The school has maintained its good relationship with parents, who have a positive view of the school. Of the returned questionnaires, 95 per cent of parents thought their child was making good progress at school. A high percentage thought the teaching is good. Parents also say they would be confident to approach the school if they had any problems and that the school is helping their child to become mature and responsible.
- 53 The school has good links with parents this helps to consolidate and extend pupils' learning. Parents help in school and several are willing to help with extra curricular activities and to travel with pupils on visits into the community. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed of their child's progress. Parents appreciate the positive relationship that exists between home and school in support of their children. They are particularly pleased with the quality of individual education plans.
- 54 The quality of information for parents is very good. Home school agreements are in place. Reports on pupils' progress give a clear indication of what pupils can do and what they should do next to improve. Reports meet the statutory requirements. The very clear marking policy used by the school and the very helpful comments made ensure pupils and their parents have a clear indication of the progress made in lessons. The school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents give a clear indication of the life of the school. Newsletters are clear and helpful. They provide parents with an opportunity to share in the life of the school.
- 55 Parental contribution to pupils' learning at home and at school is satisfactory overall. However, the Croftlands Primary Association provides good support for the school. The association has a commitment to both the Infant and Junior schools. They raise valuable funds to support the pupils in both schools and in addition through the many social and fund raising events establish a firm partnership with both schools. The funds raised provide many extras to support children's learning and the social and fundraising events enhance the life of pupils in the school and place the school firmly in the hub of life in the community.

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

- 56 There is effective leadership and management in the school and considerable improvement has been made against the key issue identified at the time of the last inspection.
- 57 There is a shared commitment to succeed among the staff, governors and pupils. The headteacher takes the leading role in day-to-day management and is supported well by the deputy headteacher and the senior management team. A good ethos is created in the school and is supported by the very good contribution made by the governors. There is a genuine care for all pupils and a commitment to equal opportunity. As a result, this school is a pleasant and happy community, and an industrious learning environment. The school places a high priority on raising standards in English, mathematics and science and developing the achievements and self-esteem of individual pupils. The aims of the school reflect this commitment.

- 58 The headteacher monitors, with the help of the deputy headteacher and English and mathematics co-ordinators, the quality of teaching and learning and the standards achieved by the pupils. They have worked systematically to support the improvement in teaching. However, there is a small amount of teaching that continues to be unsatisfactory and the management of the school needs to tackle this issue with urgency.
- 59 The school undertakes careful analyses of its data on pupils' performance. The outcomes are used well to identify strengths and weaknesses within subjects and the progress of individual pupils and groups of pupils through the school. Mathematics has been a particular example where the school has been successful in its analysis. Staff have worked hard to use information well to improve the teaching and learning of mathematics throughout the school.
- 60 The school is successful in achieving its aims. Pupils are encouraged to work hard, review their strengths and weaknesses and achieve as well as they can by the time they leave school. Most parents are pleased with the way the school's aims are reflected in pupils' achievements and their attitudes to learning. Parents appreciate the good provision that the school makes for pupils with special educational needs. However, the school does not monitor sufficiently well how often pupils are withdrawn from assemblies and lessons to receive additional learning support or to attend the school council or music lessons.
- 61 The governors are very knowledgeable of the strengths of the school. They also know and understand the need for development in the areas that have been prioritised in the school development plan. The governors and staff are fully involved in school development planning. The governors maintain close contact with the school and monitor successfully the progress of the school through their various committees. The main strengths and weaknesses of the school have been identified and the school is meeting the targets that it has set for improvement. Some of the governors have close contact with the school and are in a good position through their subject co-ordinator links to monitor the curriculum.
- 62 Appropriate financial procedures and spending priorities are identified in the school development plan and linked to the school budget. Financial administration by the school secretary and bursar is very efficient. The governing body have strategically planned to use a large surplus to resource a new information and technology area in school and to contribute to the refurbishment of pupils' toilets and the hall floor. The surplus has also been maintained in order to retain teaching staff in the future when a predicted fall in pupil numbers will take place and thereby class sizes will be kept small. However, given the very large surplus available, insufficient consideration has been given to the refurbishment of the library to make it a positive environment for learning and to the redecoration of some internal areas of the school.
- 63 Governors work very well with the headteacher, both in the setting of the initial budget and in its review. There are efficient procedures for monitoring and evaluating the success of financial decisions, particularly when related to staffing, building and the curriculum. The governing body is conversant with the principles of best value and fulfils its role as critical friend by asking probing questions to ensure the best use is made of the resources available. For example, the bursar and governors keep in close contact and compare their school with others effectively. However, consideration must be given to the use of two teachers to support a group of fourteen pupils in Year 6, and whether this provides best value for money.
- 64 There is good management of the pupils with special educational needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator has daily contact with support staff and has time set-

aside during the school week for management duties. Opportunities for training are given and communication is good between staff and parents. Links with the services provided by the local education authority are also good.

- 65 Most teachers have at least one area of subject responsibility and carry out their responsibilities appropriately. Co-ordinators monitor teachers' planning and the learning resources appropriately. In addition, the co-ordinators of English and mathematics have a strategic role in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects and an extensive view of standards across the curriculum. The subject leaders manage their budgets appropriately and the deputy headteacher manages effectively the assessment of pupils' progress. The main focus of curriculum development has rightly been English and mathematics and, as with science, are subjects that are managed well.
- 66 There are appropriate induction procedures in place for newly qualified staff or staff who are new to the school. All members of staff are appraised on their work and professional requirements, by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. This process is conducted within the framework of the requirements for performance management. Teachers' personal needs, as well as those for in-service training in subject areas, are considered according to the targets set on the school development plan and their own needs. Statutory requirements are met.
- 67 There are sufficient, well-qualified teachers in the school. Teachers have good subject knowledge in English, mathematics and science and this helps them to teach well. Learning support assistants are well deployed and they are effective in their work.
- 68 Overall the accommodation is satisfactory. The school has one large hall and plenty of well maintained field space including an area designated for nature conservation. Resources are adequate and are to be improved, by the purchase of additional lap top computers and books for the library. At the present time, however, the library does not provide a positive learning environment for pupils and is under-used.
- 69 This is an effective school and provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- 70 In order to raise standards and improve the quality of education the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) Improve the quality of teaching where it is currently unsatisfactory by:
- Varying pace and teaching styles
  - Providing activities for pupils that are interesting and challenging
  - Improving teachers' subject knowledge through support and relevant training
  - Improving strategies for behaviour management
  - Monitoring and evaluating teaching to set targets for improvement and by reviewing progress made on a regular basis

(Paragraphs: 13; 24; 58; 91; 109 & 124)

- (2) Improve the curriculum by:

- Reviewing and adjusting the length of time allocated to the teaching of English;
- Providing increased opportunities for pupils to use their skills in literacy and numeracy in all subjects
- Ensuring that sufficient time is provided for the teaching of information and communication technology and that this is consistent throughout the school
- Providing increased opportunities for pupils to apply their information and communication technology skills in all subjects

(Paragraphs: 9; 10; 21; 26; 29; 30; 77; 79; 86; 93; 105; 116; 119; 120; 122; 123; 138 & 141)

71 The headteacher and governors should also:

- Improve the learning environment of the library and the quality of the books that are in it
- Improve the use of the library and encourage pupils to study independently

(Paragraphs: 15; 62; 68; 79 & 114)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	63
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5	14	33	41	5	2	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)	286
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	70

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	20

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.96
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.09
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 2**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	41	30	71

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	34	30	41
	Girls	30	20	30
	Total	64	50	71
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (86)	70 (94)	100 (96)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	33	34	41
	Girls	28	26	30
	Total	61	60	71
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (88)	85 (88)	100 (94)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

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

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

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

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

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.2
Average class size	26

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

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	125

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	619,589
Total expenditure	584,928
Expenditure per pupil	2,004
Balance brought forward from previous year	56,179
Balance carried forward to next year	90,840

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*



## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	286
Number of questionnaires returned	140

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	38	55	7	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	40	54	4	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	23	66	7	1	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	57	11	3	1
The teaching is good.	41	56	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	47	10	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	31	7	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	41	4	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	32	52	12	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	36	51	6	1	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	35	58	6	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	18	39	19	11	12

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

### **ENGLISH**

- 72 At the age of 11 pupils' attainment in National Curriculum tests in English was well above the national average in 2001. Compared with similar schools standards were average. The attainment of pupils when they came to the school was above average and so they had made satisfactory progress by the time they left. Pupils with special educational needs achieved well and their levels of attainment had risen over time. In recent years results in English tests have fluctuated between very good and average. They are higher in English than in mathematics but below results in science.
- 73 During the inspection standards seen were above average in all aspects of English and this is an improvement from the time of the last inspection. By the age of 11 pupils are achieving well and have made satisfactory progress in the four years they have been at the school and have maintained good standards. There is a high proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs and these make good progress, prompted by their support teachers and by the good attention paid to their needs by class teachers. Although pupils with special educational needs receive a lot of help individually and in small groups, they are integrated into lessons for most of the time. Boys and girls achieve equally well in reading, and in speaking and listening but girls do better in gaining higher levels in writing.
- 74 Standards in speaking and listening are above average. Pupils with special educational needs often achieve well in the whole class session at the start of the literacy hour. Pupils of all abilities collaborate well and it is not unusual for more able pupils to assist others who find learning difficult. A good example of this occurred in Year 4 when the topic for debate was the advantages and disadvantages of homework. In another lesson in the same year group, a girl with special educational needs pointed out the paragraph structure of the story they were reading. In some classes where the teaching is less carefully planned, however, pupils do lose concentration especially if the tasks are not challenging enough. Older pupils have a good understanding of their own levels of attainment and can explain how they might improve their work. They talk without prompting about how to vary sentence structure using connectives and other methods.
- 75 Pupils achieve good standards in reading in most classes. In Year 5, there was evidence of a high level discussion resulting from the reading of poetry from a different culture. Here pupils had been expected to analyse with the teacher's help the devices used by the poet to create his ideas and images. In other classes pupils show good understanding of sophisticated vocabulary. Many can put phrases such as "a devastating eyesore" into simpler terms such as "a very ugly sight." Some reading aloud is good especially in the highest ability group in Year 6. The teacher uses the ideas put forward by pupils to illustrate key points in the lesson such as the error of changing tenses in an account. The range of books available to support reading is good but they are often old and worn-looking. Pupils tend to restrict themselves to a narrow range of styles and authors although they enjoy what they read. There is no check to ensure that pupils read widely. The library is rarely used for research and it lacks excitement and appeal.
- 76 The standards in writing are above average. Pupils settle quickly to their work in most classes especially when they have clear targets both in the time allowed and the content expected. Only in the rare lessons when the introductions are too long do pupils become restless and lose the impetus to put their ideas down in writing.

Spelling is good in most classes. From an early age, pupils keep a “troublesome word” book and most take care in their proof reading of work and are reminded by teachers’ remarks in their books. Older pupils quickly learn the difference between words such as “licence” and “license” because they understand nouns and verbs. A number of pupils use word processors to good effect in most classes. They draft their ideas carefully, helped by teachers giving them chances to discuss a range of ideas with the class as a whole. Pupils with special educational needs feel confident enough to write expressively: “I was proud of my pony because it had won.” There are some examples of good poetic writing in Year 5 where several pupils can sustain rhyme and rhythm for as many as twenty-four lines. In the able writers’ group in Year 6 there are some very good examples of evocative writing such as the description of Banquo’s ghost emitting “hot breath lingering over the cold night air”. Some pupils wrote a mature account of the plight of the Al Qaeda prisoners using clearly constructed paragraphs based on research from newspapers. It is obvious that many pupils enjoy writing.

- 77 Teachers plan the literacy hour well in most classes. In one excellent lesson, the teacher effortlessly linked the word and sentence discussion to the written task to follow. Her enthusiasm and understanding of how pupils learn ensured that pupils were able to develop their writing. There are some other good examples of pupils extending their written work especially in science in Year 3, where pupils are helped to compile an interesting dossier on fossils, supported by simple writing frames. This practice is not yet widespread across the curriculum. As a result, too much time is spent on isolated activities unrelated to other subjects in the frequent periods allocated to literacy.
- 78 The quality of teaching is good overall. A quarter of teaching seen in English was very good and it was occasionally excellent. Nearly seven lessons in ten were at least good and no teaching was unsatisfactory. The main strengths in teaching are:
- Teachers create a very good climate for learning in most classes by setting out clear expectations for work and behaviour
  - Pupils are encouraged by teachers’ questions to think for themselves particularly in the higher attaining groups
  - Support for pupils with special educational needs inside and outside of classrooms is good and these pupils achieve well
  - Assessment data and descriptions of levels of attainment are used well to help teachers and Year 6 pupils to set realistic targets
  - Very detailed marking of work often challenges pupils to “think what will happen next” and “how they can communicate this best.”
- 79 The co-ordinator for English is new but the planning and vision for the subject are very good. Her extremely good leadership is enhanced by providing models of good teaching and assessment. Since the last inspection there have been good improvements in the quality of teaching and in the standards achieved in writing. The main areas for future development are:
- To promote ideas to help pupils to read more widely
  - To improve the library and make it a more stimulating area for pupils to undertake independent research
  - To ensure that the literacy hour is planned to help pupils develop writing skills in other subjects

## **MATHEMATICS**

- 80 In the 2001 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, standards were below the national average. When compared with similar schools standards were well below expectations. Standards in the 2001 tests were significantly lower than the year before and the trend over three years shows the school achieving broadly in line with the national average. The school has taken the fall in standards last year very seriously and addressed the causes as a priority. Based on evidence gathered during the inspection, standards are now above those expected nationally. Pupils enter the school achieving standards above average, therefore progress for most pupils is satisfactory. A feature of the results in 2001 was the low number of pupils achieving above the expected level. The number of pupils working at this level is now significantly increased.
- 81 There are no marked differences in the performance of girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress. Teaching assistants give particularly good support to these pupils. Teachers' planning is thorough and supports the teaching assistants in their role.
- 82 In Year 3, pupils are able to accurately record numbers to 100 with some children able to record numbers to 1000. Most pupils can recall number facts to 20 confidently. However, pupils were less secure when they used number facts to solve problems. Pupils' knowledge of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes is good. They can place lines of symmetry on regular shapes and they know facts that relate to the number of sides, angles and lines of symmetry within a shape. By the age of 11, pupils are able to work out calculations in their heads quickly, although pupils in Year 5 were less confident in their multiplication facts in the 6, 7 and 8 times tables. In Year 6 the most able pupils are able to solve complex problems involving percentages and fractions and they work at a level well above the national average. Pupils had a sound knowledge of measures and in lessons were able to use this to solve problems. Pupils make good progress overall in solving problems that involve real life situations; this is because it is a regular feature in Years 5 and 6.
- 83 The quality of teaching and learning overall is good. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection and a quarter of teaching was very good or excellent. A strong feature of lessons was teachers' very good subject knowledge. Teachers use a wide range of vocabulary and this results in pupils being able to explain their work using the correct terminology. For example, in a Year 3 class, pupils talked confidently about reflective symmetry and the properties of shapes. Where teaching was good, teachers were enthusiastic and they used a variety of strategies to support pupils' learning. Strategies often involved the use of visual aids or resources. For example, pupils used a broom handle divided into ten to support their learning of the 7 and 8 times tables. The use of individual whiteboards allowed teachers to assess pupils' understanding before they moved to the next concept. As a result, pupils learned effectively. Where teaching could be improved, teachers did not match work to the pupils' ability well enough and as a result failed to stretch the higher attaining pupils. In a small minority of lessons, pupils spent too long on the carpet in a whole class activity. However, a feature of most classrooms was good or excellent annotation of pupils' work and the marking and assessment of pupils' books. This was particularly strong in Year 6 where pupils were given levels of achievement and targets for improvement.
- 84 The teachers are familiar with the National Numeracy Strategy, which they apply effectively. The three-part lesson structure is firmly established and teachers plan effectively and explain lesson objectives well to pupils.

- 85 Good relationships were a feature of most lessons. Pupils had good attitudes to learning and behaved well. Pupils were interested and co-operative; they were able to work well individually and in groups. Also, the way pupils present their work is of a high quality overall.
- 86 Little use is made of information and communication technology to develop pupils' mathematical understanding, skills and knowledge and there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge in other subjects. These are areas for development.
- 87 The co-ordinator has been in post for less than a full year but is providing good leadership for the subject. A real strength of her leadership is the effective use of the analysis of test results to identify and address any areas of weakness. A thorough self-evaluation has been undertaken with intensive support from the local education authority. In-service training has been organised to meet development needs and a parents' evening has been held to raise awareness of the numeracy strategy. The co-ordinator monitors planning and offers support. These strategies have begun to improve standards and address the weaknesses identified last year. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the development of mathematics and is currently working on assessment systems to add to the national tests used at the end of each year. A governor to link with numeracy has been identified and is supportive and well informed.
- 88 Satisfactory progress has been made by the school overall since the last inspection. However, the school has worked hard during the current year particularly to improve teaching and learning and in the leadership of the subject.

## SCIENCE

- 89 In the National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds in 2001, pupils' performance was well above the national average. In comparison with similar schools their performance was well above average. The attainment of boys was slightly higher than that of girls. The inspection judgement is that pupils' performance is well above average and there are no obvious differences between the attainment of boys and girls in the present Year 6 classes. The teachers' assessments for pupils entering the school show pupils' attainment to be above the national average. Pupils' achievement is good. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and science is a strength of the school.
- 90 Standards that pupils achieve throughout the school are high. In Year 3, pupils study 'Light and shadow'; they set up a fair test in groups and work well together to record their findings to prove that the length of the shadow alters with the height of the light source. Pupils discovered that they had to adjust the materials used, as the shadow was too long to measure. They understood that extra care had to be taken with the position of the light source to ensure the accuracy of the test. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 6 they know the correct method to use to separate different mixtures. Pupils give accurate definitions of words such as 'evaporate, dissolve, soluble, insoluble magnetic, sieving and filtering' and identify correctly 'iron and steel' as metals which are magnetic. There is a clear focus on the use of scientific language, both in their discussion and written work. They discuss their work confidently with visitors and show a clear understanding of all aspects of their work.
- 91 The quality of teaching overall is good with one excellent lesson and one unsatisfactory lesson seen during the inspection. The strengths in teaching are apparent when teachers have good subject knowledge and provide interesting activities that help the pupils understand the lesson. Pupils are given plenty of time to

practise their skills and develop a clear understanding of their work. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils predicted the sounds they might hear outside the classroom before they created their own tests to find out whether vibrations from sound sources could travel through different materials. A wide range of materials was provided and pupils really enjoyed trying different ideas to test the results. One pupil said, 'I know that sounds travel through water because I put two spoons in the water, hit them together and I could hear the sound.' In this lesson the pace was excellent and pupils were all fully involved. Pupils demonstrated their understanding of the difference between solids and liquids and knew that air is a gas.

- 92 The planning of science lessons is good, pupils are actively involved in discussion and their ideas are valued. The relationship between teachers and pupils is very good, encouraging pupils to work hard. Pupils are keen, show a lively interest, feel confident to offer ideas and show enjoyment in their science lessons. Where the teaching is less successful, teachers lack sound subject knowledge and the work offered is planned at too low a level for the more able pupils so their learning is not well enough extended. Pupils are not clear about the work they are expected to do, some lose interest and their chattering interrupts the lesson. For example in a Year 4 lesson, pupils closely observed, drew and labelled a variety of bones. However, the development of pupils' scientific understanding was minimal; there was insufficient challenge in the task and a minority of pupils became disruptive; as a result, pupils' learning was unsatisfactory.
- 93 The subject leader is well qualified for her role and is fully aware of the strengths of the subject and the priorities for development. The school has adopted the nationally agreed scheme and this is currently being adapted to create a more balanced programme for Years 4 and 5. This has ensured a balance in the teaching of all aspects of science; however, the use of information and communication technology in science is limited. Planning across the school is monitored but no opportunities are yet available for the subject leader to observe others teaching science. Formal assessment takes place twice a term, at the end of each topic, and the results are recorded and compared against the levels in the National Curriculum.
- 94 The school does a lot to enrich the work that the children do in science. Visits to Sellafield as part of Year 6 pupils' residential stay in Keswick extend pupils' understanding. The Science bus visits school each year and all pupils have a lesson covering a wide range of themes including drugs, alcohol and smoking. The British Association for the Advancement of Science organises a science day in the drill hall where pupils experience a range of practical workshops.
- 95 Although standards are very good, teaching, assessment and recording through the school lack consistency. However, progress overall since the last inspection has been good.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

- 96 Pupils make satisfactory progress during their time in school and reach standards typical for pupils at the age of 11. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included and make good progress in practical work.
- 97 Pupils develop an understanding of tone in their work in pencil and have opportunities to explore colour through mixing paint, using fabrics and observing the work of great artists. Pupils develop their observational skills and they look carefully at cross sections of fruit and reproduce these using paint and pastel crayons. In Years 4 and 5, these skills are extended and pupils gain an improved understanding of texture when studying landscapes painted by Van Gogh and Claude Monet. Pupils use their

skills in colour mixing well and use a range of paints to create their own landscape pictures in the style of these artists. In Year 6, their work shows careful attention to detail when colouring faces in the style of Andy Warhol and the ability to paint a portrait in the style of Picasso

- 98 Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Good aspects of teaching are seen when teachers are confident in the subject, there is good pace to the lesson and pupils clearly understand the task they have to do. For example, in a Year 3 class, pupils created distance in their collage background for their Lowry pictures by using different sizes of buildings and different shades of paper. They looked carefully at the sizes of the people they drew in order to create further depth in their pictures. Focussed questioning by the teacher encourages pupils to discuss and express feelings experienced when listening to a story through their sketching; for example, how the Ugly Duckling felt when he changed into a swan.
- 99 Teachers use quality resources to represent a range of cultures and styles. Pupils are given opportunities for three-dimensional work and they use an exciting range of materials to create head-dresses. This extends their learning about art from different cultures and contributes effectively to their cultural development. Teachers plan to ensure that pupils' work in art links to many other areas of the curriculum including information and communication technology. For example, in Year 6, pupils use digital cameras as part of their work on portraits
- 100 Pupils have good attitudes to their learning, they are interested and keen to do their best. They discuss ideas together sensibly, share materials well and help each other. The opportunities planned enable them to cover a good range of work using a wide variety of materials and their work shows variety and individuality. Exciting whole-school projects such as the Queen's Jubilee and annual Ulverston Flag Festival give pupils opportunities to work with others on large-scale projects supported by a resident artist.
- 101 Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection. However, the subject leader is well aware of the strengths of the subject and the priorities for development. These include opportunities to adjust the scheme of work for Year 3 and to ensure that assessment is consistent throughout the school. A nationally agreed scheme of work is used which has been adapted to meet the needs of the school. The subject leader offers good support to other teachers and has collected a wide range of pictures and books, including those of other cultures, to support her subject.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

- 102 Pupils make satisfactory progress during their time in school and reach standards typical for pupils at the age of 11. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included and make good progress in practical work.
- 103 Pupils in Year 3 know how a hydraulic system makes part of their box model monsters move and understand how air can be used to create movement. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 use electric circuits successfully in their 'Light it up' project. They produced good design drawings, clearly labelled and evaluated their finished product carefully. They identified the need to "hide the wires so that children wouldn't be tempted to play with them" when making a torch. Older pupils in Year 6 extend their understanding of a fair test when, for example, they used water to test how waterproof their shelters were. They investigated a wide range of different shelters before they made their own models and used straws to create their framework. Pupils looked carefully at how they added strength and selected appropriate materials to make them waterproof.

- 104 There has been improvement in teaching and learning since the last inspection and examples of good and very good teaching were observed. Where the teaching is good there is good pace and the teacher uses focussed questions to develop pupils' thinking skills. Pupils are therefore suitably challenged. Teachers have a good understanding of the different stages of designing and making. They use this knowledge well to ensure that pupils design and make artefacts for a particular purpose; as a result, pupils learn well. Pupils can evaluate their models constructively and give sound reasons for any changes made. They use appropriate language when discussing and writing about their work. Teachers provide a range of materials to support pupils in their learning and pupils select carefully those they wish to use. However, more opportunities to use resistant materials such as wood would improve the quality of the work achieved by older pupils and to extend pupils' skills in the use of a wider range of tools and equipment. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils. They support them well and explain carefully the details relating to their work. Pupils respond very positively to this approach and express their ideas confidently. For example, in Year 3, when an iced-lolly was the free gift advertised on their packaging design for cereals. Pupils discussed at length the possibility of cereals and iced lollies in the same package and how to keep the iced-lolly frozen! They gave very good reasons for the decisions they made and extended their initial ideas well. Pupils considered carefully the impact of the design of their packaging on potential customers and used lettering and illustrations well.
- 105 The headteacher is currently acting as subject leader and is fully aware of the strengths of the subject and the priorities for development. The issue of the development of pupils' skills as they progress through school, identified in the last report, has been met. A nationally agreed scheme is now in place and this has led to a more consistent approach by teachers to this subject. Planning shows that all aspects of the subject, including food technology, are taught. However, older pupils do not have enough planned opportunities to use resistant materials and develop further skills by using a wider range of tools and equipment. In addition, links with information and communication technology need to be further enhanced.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

- 106 Little geography was on display during the inspection. A few lessons were observed alongside a scrutiny of work together with discussions with pupils and staff. Attainment is average throughout the school and the progress made by pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory overall.
- 107 Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The school has adopted the scheme suggested in national guidelines. However, geography has had a fairly low profile as the school has concentrated on other subjects of the curriculum.
- 108 In the younger classes, pupils show an understanding of world climate by comparing and contrasting hot and cold countries. Pupils have a good knowledge of moral issues related to geography and they study river pollution and are able to use accurate technical terms. They realise that actions can have a lasting effect on the world they live in. Older pupils have studied the differences between life in Kenya and their own town. Some of the work in Year 5 is quite detailed and clearly demonstrates how climate and culture affect ways of living. There was a good link between history and geography during the study of the Aztec civilisation. More able pupils had drawn a good map of a typical city and had fully annotated it using geographical terms accurately to show how canals had been built, for example. In Year 6 pupils have a sound knowledge of the water cycle and use expressive writing to colour their accounts such as "miniscule droplets float around and condense into cloud". Pupils



show sound knowledge of the Internet in their research on geography. However, it is often restricted in many classes by the over-use of worksheets asking for short answers. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Some teaching is imaginative and resources are used well such as plans of mountains cut to scale to help pupils to see the vast differences between Britain and the rest of the world. In Year 6, teachers have promoted pupils' natural flair for language, for example, pupils wrote some imaginative poems in the topic on mountains about K2:

*“Day to day I watch the view.  
High above is icy blue.”*

- 109 There are some weaknesses, however, when lessons lack clear direction and pupils are allowed to wander off their tasks. For example, In a Year 4 lesson, some pupils used the computer to record on a plan of the school where the noise levels were high. This was a good idea but the planning of the lesson failed to take into account the needs of all the pupils, including those with special educational needs and the more able. As a result the lesson lacked pace and challenge and pupils' learning overall was unsatisfactory.
- 110 Pupils benefit from some field trips but these are not extensive, apart from the visit to Keswick at the end of Year 6, and the natural geographical features of the area are largely under used. Planning for the subject and support for teachers are under-developed.

## **HISTORY**

- 111 By the time pupils reach the age of 11 standards in history are above national expectations and this reflects an improvement since the last inspection. Evidence from lesson observations, discussions with pupils and scrutiny of work, shows that pupils have a good understanding of life in past societies. The majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.
- 112 In Year 3, pupils demonstrate good knowledge of life in Britain during World War 2. For example, in lessons they showed that they understood well the impact upon everyone's lives that major incidents had, such as air raids and the subsequent bombing of civilian areas. Pupils in Year 4 are beginning to provide reasons for main changes and events in Victorian society. Pupils in Year 5 have developed their understanding of chronology through studying timelines and the important events that took place at the time of the Aztecs. In Year 6, pupils have explored life in societies of the past, for example, art, theatre and architecture in the times of the Ancient Greeks.
- 113 The quality of teaching and learning observed was good overall. For example in a very good lesson in Year 5, the teacher involved pupils with special educational needs well in their discussion when comparing life at the time of the Aztecs, to life today. In a Year 3 class, the teacher skilfully questioned pupils to promote their learning, following a visit from an 'air raid warden' who performed well in role-play. The teacher had good subject knowledge and encouraged the development of speaking and listening skills well. As a result, pupils were keen to contribute to the class discussion and posed some good 'moral' questions, for example, 'Even if the shelter was full, you wouldn't leave anyone outside?'
- 114 Pupils benefit from the opportunities to extend their learning from planned visits to places such as Cartmell Priory where pupils in Year 5 have a monastic morning linked to their work on the Tudors. They have the opportunity to discuss issues that support pupils' spiritual and moral development, for example, the effects of the 'dissolution of the monasteries' at the time of Henry VIII and how people were

prepared to die for their faith. Opportunities for pupils to study independently, however, could be improved. The library is not used sufficiently well and access to computers, for pupils to develop skills in information and communication technology skills through history, is limited.

- 115 The co-ordinator offers appropriate support for the development of the subject. Training to improve opportunities for assessment has been undertaken and this in turn has boosted staff confidence. Monitoring of planning is at an early stage, however, planning for the teaching and learning of history has improved since the last inspection.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

- 116 Pupils make satisfactory progress during their time in school and reach standards typical for pupils at the age of 11. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included and make satisfactory progress. Good improvement has been made overall since the last inspection and a nationally agreed scheme is now in place. The school has decided to move computers back into classrooms instead of using them in a suite. A new co-ordinator has recently been appointed. Staff training has taken place and resources have also been improved. Although standards achieved by the age of 11 have improved since the last inspection, standards in other year groups are inconsistent. This is mainly because the subject is not taught consistently throughout the school. With the exception of Year 6, insufficient time is given to the teaching and learning of information and communication technology during the week. As a result, pupils' progress in Years 3, 4 and 5 is not as good as it could be.
- 117 The standard pupils achieve in information and communication technology is supported by the access pupils have to computers at home. As a result, in Year 3, pupils can use the computer to develop their word processing skills when, for example, they write adventure stories of the moving monsters they made in design and technology. They understand how the computer identifies a wrongly spelt word and they know the keys needed to create capital letters. A minority of pupils extend their understanding of symmetry and can 'pick up and drag' pieces to create a symmetrical shape. Year 4 pupils change the font and size of letters when they write bullet points to identify ideas 'for and against' in their discussion in literacy. They have some understanding of the use of data to create bar charts and pie graphs. They are beginning to understand the purpose of inputting data onto a spreadsheet.
- 118 Year 5 pupils input their own personal data into the computer, and have a sound understanding of how to use these records to answer questions; for example, "How many pupils are nine years old and like football?" They use the Internet and CD ROMs to research information about the Aztecs to support their history work and use their computers at home to support their homework. In Year 6, pupils use the computer with confidence. They use their word processing skills confidently to present their writing in many different ways. They access the Internet, understand how to use search engines. Good use is made of the digital camera to collect pictures for their 'Power Point' presentations of aspects of their school in order to create their own web site. During the inspection pupils began to set up the web page.
- 119 The teaching observed was satisfactory overall. Teachers in Years 5 and 6 make good use of the computers, both those in classrooms and the four laptops that are available. All pupils in Year 6 are taught by the subject leader and these lessons are clearly time-tabled each week. Whole class teaching takes place. The teacher uses the projector appropriately and all pupils have access to computers. As a result, pupils in Year 6 maximise the use of computers and develop an appropriate range of skills. However, in Years 3, 4 and 5, the lack of consistent time-tabling and whole

class teaching hinders pupils' progress. The work planned for pupils in these year groups does not always challenge the more able pupils and this results in a lack of interest and on occasions, incidents of disruptive behaviour occur. Teachers' knowledge in this subject varies across the school and this affects the pace and challenge offered to pupils and the consistent development of skills through the school.

- 120 Pupils enjoy using computers; they mostly work co-operatively and help those who are less confident. Pupils in Year 6 explain the processes they use clearly and are keenly interested in their work. Younger pupils, however, do not have regular planned lessons for information and communication technology when their skills could be further developed.
- 121 The subject leader has recently been appointed. She has good subject knowledge and supports other teachers appropriately. All pupils have information and communication technology folders for their work and Year 6 pupils have completed a self-assessment of their skills in this subject. The subject leader has identified the issues to be addressed and these still need to be put in place.
- 122 Insufficient time is given to the teaching of the subject and it is not time-tabled for all classes. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to use their computer skills in other lessons. Teachers need more clearly focussed training in order to teach all aspects of the subject confidently. Assessment and monitoring of pupils' achievements and experience is inconsistent through the school. This also applies to the monitoring of pupils' access to computers. The school intends to remove 'Acorn' computers from classrooms at the end of this academic year. The ratio of PC's is appropriate for the number of pupils in school and twelve additional 'wireless' laptops were ordered during the inspection. This will ensure that improved opportunities are available for whole class teaching.

## MUSIC

- 123 At the time of the last inspection insufficient time had been given to the teaching and learning of music to ensure that the full range of National Curriculum requirements were taught. Improvements in the allocation of time have been made and overall, by the time pupils reach the age of 11, they have experienced what is required. However, insufficient links are made with the development of information and communication technology skills in music to ensure that the requirements of 'sound technology' are fully met.
- 124 From lesson observations and discussions with pupils evidence was available to demonstrate that standards meet national expectations by the time pupils leave school at the age of 11. The majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Pupils have opportunities to perform simple compositions. For example, pupils in Year 5 related sounds to pictures appropriately and selected a range of instruments to create a desired sound. Pupils in Year 6 listen to music such as 'Joseph and his Technicolor Dream Coat'. In a music lesson, they identified the rhythm of the piece and sang with it appropriately.
- 125 Teaching overall is satisfactory; however, with the exception of the co-ordinator, teachers are not confident in the subject and this results in lack of pace and challenge in lessons. For example, in a Year 6 music lesson when teaching was poor, the teacher did not challenge pupils sufficiently well to improve their singing or ensure that they all complied with the required task of clapping to a given beat. As a result pupils became bored and a minority were disruptive.

- 126 The planning of the subject has improved overall since the time of the last inspection. The school has adapted a commercially published scheme and has planned for units of work to take place appropriately throughout the school year in all year groups. However, at the moment, insufficient challenge is presented in lessons and lessons are too long for the content that is to be covered. The school must ensure that music lessons are planned sufficiently well for pupils to be challenged effectively and ensure that the needs of all pupils, particularly those who are musically able, are met.
- 127 Provision for private tuition is available during the school day. The majority of pupils are withdrawn from their class to receive lessons in brass and violin. These are of a high standard and contribute well to the music curriculum. Lessons for recorder also take place and whilst some take place out of the school day, pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 miss other lessons in order to attend them. Pupils who receive recorder lessons make good progress. However, the school does not monitor the impact of withdrawing pupils from their lessons at the present time and this is an issue that needs immediate attention. For example, pupils leaving and returning to a geography lesson in Year 4 had a negative impact on the teaching and learning of that lesson.
- 128 Pupils' attitudes to learning are satisfactory. Those involved in the choir enjoy this extra-curricular activity. It is well led by the music co-ordinator and has recently been extended to include pupils of all year groups in the school.
- 129 The contribution of music to pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. It could be further improved, however, by ensuring that the appreciation of music at assembly time is formally planned, rather than current practice, which takes place on an ad hoc basis.
- 130 The co-ordinator is an experienced musician and has worked hard to raise the profile of music in the school. Resources are satisfactory overall. They have been improved recently by the purchase of musical instruments to accompany the scheme of work. However, consideration should be given to the replacement of resources that are in need of repair or broken beyond repair.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

- 131 The curriculum for physical education is heavily weighted towards swimming and as a result pupils demonstrate above average levels of performance in swimming for their age, as was the case at the time of the last inspection. There is no difference in standards between boys and girls. All pupils have a weekly swimming lesson for ten weeks each term. Pupils have one other lesson a week in which to learn the other areas of the National Curriculum for physical education. The curriculum is planned in blocks of study throughout the year and at the time of the inspection only lessons in games were observed. In games, pupils in Year 3 achieve well, because they are systematically taught skills and techniques. Pupils make satisfactory progress and by the end of Year 6 standards achieved are in line with what is expected.
- 132 Teaching is satisfactory overall. Where good teaching was observed, there was a clear structure to the lesson. Pupils warmed up, practised and were taught skills and applied them in a game. Pupils demonstrated skills such as fielding and striking a ball. Good use was made of support assistants to involve pupils with special educational needs. In one lesson good use was made of a visiting rugby player who was able to coach pupils in Year 5. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection. However, teachers did not consistently plan to provide a clear structure to their lesson to ensure that pupils' skills were developed systematically. This is an area that should be improved.

- 133 Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good they are enthusiastic and co-operate well in lessons. Overall relationships are good and use of praise is a feature of the teaching.
- 134 There is a long term plan in place which makes use of nationally agreed schemes of work and provides details of how pupils make progress as they move through the school. This has yet to improve standards. Pupils report enjoying work in gymnastics and dance. A visiting specialist in African dance recently supported lessons in the school. Pupils participate in outdoor and adventurous activities during a residential experience to Keswick in Year 6.
- 135 The curriculum is well supported by a range of extra curricular activities including cricket, rounders, football, netball and tennis. Parents and local sporting clubs provide good support. Pupils who attend these clubs make good progress.
- 136 The leadership of the subject is satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and provides support as needed. He has developed the scheme of work and assists other teachers with their planning but the subject has not been a school priority. The co-ordinator has not yet had the opportunity to deliver training or monitor teaching.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 137 Standards observed in lessons show that pupils are attaining in line with the expectations set out in the locally agreed syllabus and they make satisfactory progress throughout the school. In Year 3, pupils are expected to think carefully about difficult questions related to the creation. They write in simple terms about the "big bang" and more able pupils can talk about the things that God had made. For instance, in one lesson they considered the intricate detail of the bark of trees as an example of natural beauty. Teaching helps pupils to develop their spiritual and moral thinking. Pupils also learn about other faiths such as Hinduism and they can pose questions that will help them to find out more. Visits to local buildings and churches help pupils to experience a greater understanding of such beliefs as those held by the Quakers and the Methodists.
- 138 Older pupils think about personal and social issues like friendship and forgiveness. They write prayers that are read out in assemblies and which show that they understand the feelings of others. Some of their writing is detailed and extensive as in their work on Saint Paul. Higher attaining pupils can draw up a diary account stretching over several days. Good marking poses searching questions such as "How did Jesus change Paul?" Pupils use guidelines to build up a picture of how famous people often have special characteristics. They use imaginative writing such as an interview with Mother Teresa to explore these issues. Standards of writing are good when pupils have these chances but they are not very frequent.
- 139 By Year 6 standards are average. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good because the work is carefully geared to their needs. They receive good support in class. Pupils' knowledge of technical terms such as "transubstantiation" is good. They are encouraged to think about the difficult ideas that surround them. They pose thoughtful questions about things that baffle them such as "How can the stars be so far away and we still see them?" Pupils have benefited from the opportunity to study other faiths such as Judaism and Hinduism and most have a sound understanding of the similarities and differences in religions that make them distinctive.

- 140 The quality of teaching is sound overall. Teachers have used the guidelines well but some introductions to lessons are rather long and pupils become distracted. Pupils respond well when they are involved in the learning. Examples of this are the careful design and construction of their own prayer boxes when studying Judaism in Year 5. Support assistants for pupils with special educational needs are used well to support pupils' learning. They provide very good support, and as a result pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- 141 The planning for religious education is good, however, the use of information and communication technology in religious education lessons is an area that is yet to be fully developed. A start has been made on providing a portfolio of assessed work as examples of pupils' attainment in the subject and these are positive developments made since the last inspection.