

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Cockermouth

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112335

Headteacher: Mrs P Conway

Reporting inspector: L A Furness
8245

Dates of inspection: 8th July – 10th July 2002

Inspection number: 195918

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4-11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Mountain View
Cockermouth
Cumbria

Postcode: CA13 ODG

Telephone number: 01900 325932

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Steven Walker

Date of previous inspection: 24th June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
8245	L A Furness	Registered inspector	Equal opportunities English as an additional language English Music Physical Education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? <i>The school's results and achievements</i> How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9214	J Garland	Lay inspector		How high are standards? <i>Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.</i> How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
16761	M Hemmings	Team inspector	Special Educational Needs Foundation Stage of Learning Mathematics Science Art and Design Design and Technology Geography History Information and Communication Technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Joseph's Catholic School is a small primary school situated in Cockermouth, a small town in north-west Cumbria. The majority of pupils live within the town, although approximately one third of them live in villages nearby. All of the pupils are white European and there are no pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. Seventy-three pupils, grouped into three classes, attend the school. One class consists of reception age children and Years 1 and 2 pupils. One class consists of Years 3 and 4 pupils and another of Years 5 and 6 pupils. The percentage of pupils entitled to school meals free of charge is below the national average. The percentage of pupils having special educational needs is below the national average and the percentage of pupils having a statement of special educational need matches the national average. When children first start school in the reception class (the Foundation Stage of Learning) their academic and personal skills are mainly above those expected for their age. However, with so few children in each cohort, it is very difficult to anticipate accurately year upon year the children's attainment on entry. The current headteacher has been in post for approximately two years following an unsettled period of time when the school was without this key member of staff in post. She teaches the class of pupils in Years 3 to 4 for four days a week and a part-time teacher takes this class for one day to enable her to carry out her leadership and management responsibilities.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school. The pupils' attainment by the age of 11 is good in English and at least satisfactory in mathematics and science. Pupils' attitudes towards school are good; they behave well and quickly learn to respect their teachers and each other. The teaching is satisfactory with good teaching in the class of Years 3 and 4 pupils. The school is well led and managed and, when considering the attainment on entry to the school of the majority of children and the standards they attain by the time they leave, the school provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- A very good school development plan based on a thorough audit of the school's needs provides a very clear way forward for future development.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher are good and she provides clear direction for school improvement.
- Pupils in Years 3 and 4 make good progress and achieve well because of the good and very good teaching they receive.
- The pupils' behaviour is good; they have positive attitudes to learning and try hard to succeed in their lessons.
- The school's partnership with parents is very good.

What could be improved

- Procedures and opportunities for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning.
- Pupils' knowledge of what they are expected to learn in lessons and how they might improve the standard of their work.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils are able to do.
- Provision for children of reception age and in particular their creative development.
- Teachers' confidence and knowledge of how to teach all aspects of the National Literacy Strategy.

Aspects of all of the above bullet points are identified in the school improvement plan.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since it was last inspected in June 1997 the school has addressed satisfactorily two of the key issues identified. A consistent approach has been adopted for the gathering of assessment information and the quality of teaching and progress of reception age children and of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is no longer unsatisfactory. However there is still more work to be done with both of these issues and further improvement is already planned for in the school development plan. The third issue regarding the behaviour of older boys and of the consistent implementation of the behaviour policy has been addressed very well. Pupils' behaviour is good and the policy of the school is clearly understood and implemented by all. Since the appointment of the new headteacher two years ago, there has been rapid improvement in many aspects of the school's work. Overall, there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection with good improvement in the last two years.

STANDARDS

The school has very small numbers of pupils taking the national tests in Year 2 and Year 6 and it is therefore not appropriate to make comparisons with national statistics as each pupil accounts for a significant proportion of the overall distribution of levels within the school. However, the work seen in classrooms indicates that the standards attained by the majority of pupils in Year 2 and 6 at least match the level expected for their age in English, mathematics and science with a significant number of them attaining standards that are above the expected level in English in Year 6 and in mathematics in Year 2. Because the teacher of the Year 2 pupils is not as confident and knowledgeable about teaching the National Literacy Strategy as the National Numeracy Strategy, attainment in reading and writing is not as good as in mathematics. The pupils' achievement throughout the school is satisfactory with good achievement in English by Year 6 and in all subjects in the class of Years 3 and 4 pupils. The good achievement is mainly due to the specific targeting of more able pupils in English and the good teaching that pupils in Years 3 and 4 receive. On entry to the reception class the children mainly have skills in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and personal, social and emotional development that are above that expected for their age. By the time they enter Year 1 they attain at least the requirements of the 'early learning goals' for all the areas of learning recommended for children of this age, apart from creative development where attainment is below that expected. The challenging targets set for literacy and numeracy were achieved in 2001 and the school is on course to achieve the target set for 2002.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school and are eager to learn. They show positive attitudes in all they do.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well both in and out of classrooms. They are polite and friendly, and very willing to help.
Personal development and relationships	Good. All pupils willingly accept responsibilities. They are caring and considerate, and get on well with each other and with staff
Attendance	Good. Attendance is above the national average. Pupils are punctual and lessons start on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

The majority of teaching observed was satisfactory or better. However, there is a marked contrast in the teaching of pupils in Years 3 and 4 and the other two classes. The teaching of this class of pupils is always at least good and results in pupils making good gains in their learning. The very good relationships within this class create a warm and productive learning environment where pupils are not afraid to be wrong, and are successfully encouraged to help each other. Teaching is mainly satisfactory in the other two classes but occasionally teaching is unsatisfactory. Activities do not always sufficiently challenge all pupils. In English and mathematics, teaching is satisfactory overall and the teachers adequately reinforce literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. In the class of Years 5 and 6 pupils, the teacher's expectation of the pupils' presentation of their work is not high enough resulting in work that is untidy and poorly presented. The quality of handwriting throughout the school also is in need of improvement. Teachers make appropriate use of resources to support pupils of all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs. The specialist-teaching assistant provides good support for pupils with special educational needs throughout the school. Although teaching overall is satisfactory for children in the reception year, teaching methods do not demonstrate a secure understanding of how young children learn. There is an inappropriate balance between activities that are directed by the teacher, and those that the children select for themselves. Written marking is mainly satisfactory and is often good for the class of pupils in Years 3 to 4. However, it is not used consistently throughout the school to inform pupils of why their work is good and what they need to do next to improve. The practice of sharing the learning of the lesson with the pupils at the start and during the lesson is inconsistently applied. Pupils therefore do not have satisfactory knowledge of their own learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory and all statutory requirements are met. However, there are some shortcomings in provision for reception-age children. There are good opportunities for extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are provided with effective support that enables them to participate successfully in all aspects of school life.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Pupils clearly understand the difference between right and wrong and they are kind to one another. Although pupils are well informed about the ways of life of different people in the world, they are less well prepared for life in multi-cultural Britain today.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Child protection and health and safety procedures are good but the systems for assessing pupils' attainment and checking on

	the progress that they make although satisfactory are recognised by the school as needing to be more rigorous.
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The school's partnership with parents is very good. Parents are very supportive and have a continuing confidence in the work of the school. The quality of information provided for parents is very good and successfully helps to promote this very good partnership.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher leads and manages the school well. She is very clear about school improvement and is well supported by all the staff. A very good school improvement plan is in place to take the school forward.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Sound. Governors work hard on behalf of the school and give of their time and skills willingly. They provide enthusiastic support to the headteacher and staff but they need to be more rigorous in the monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. A secure start has been made in school self-evaluation, although the monitoring of teaching and learning is correctly identified as a priority for further development.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school spends wisely and secures good value for its expenditure. The principles of best value are soundly applied.

Staffing levels are satisfactory and all staff are well deployed. The accommodation is satisfactory, although there are some shortcomings in the availability of space for reception age children. Resources are at least satisfactory in all subjects. They are mostly well used and are easily accessible to staff and pupils. The lack of large outdoor play facilities is also a weakness in resource provision for reception age children.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems. • The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best. • The school is well led and managed. • The school is helping children to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parents are unsure if their children get the right amount of homework.

The parents are right to be appreciative of the work of the school and the inspection team agrees with all of the positive views of the parents. With regard to the area the parents would like to see improved, parents were divided about what they would like to improve with regards to homework. Some thought there was too much homework and some too little. The inspection team however, judges that the

homework arrangements are good. The headteacher has put a good programme into place and the pupils themselves are quite clear about when they can expect of homework, what it is for, and when it is to be handed in. Homework diaries are used appropriately to provide a dialogue between home and school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. It is inappropriate to make comparisons between the results of the National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science for pupils in Year 6 and Year 2 with national statistics, as each pupil accounts for a significant proportion of the overall distribution of levels within the school. However, the scrutiny of work indicates that the standards attained by the majority of pupils in Year 2 and 6 at least match the level expected for their age in English, mathematics and science with a significant number of them attaining standards above the expected level in English in Year 6 and in mathematics in Year 2. There is good achievement in English by Year 6 in 2002 and in all subjects in the class of Years 3 and 4 pupils. The good achievement in Years 3 and 4 is because of the predominantly good and very good teaching that this class receives. The good achievement in English is mainly due to the specific targeting of more able pupils. In the remaining classes and subjects, pupils' achievement is satisfactory because the teaching is mainly satisfactory. The challenging targets set for literacy and numeracy were achieved in 2001 and the school is on course to achieve the target set for 2002.

2. On entry to the reception class the children mainly have skills in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and personal, social and emotional development above those expected for their age. By the end of the reception year they attain at least the requirements of the 'early learning goals' for all the areas of learning recommended for children of this age, apart from their creative development where attainment is below that expected. This is because children are provided with insufficient opportunities to develop their creative and imaginative skills and too many activities are adult directed.

3. Pupils' make satisfactory progress in speaking and listening and by Year 6 they have good speaking and listening skills, using a broad and varied vocabulary to express their thoughts and ideas. They speak clearly and articulately and all pupils are attentive when listening to adults or to each other. Pupils in Years 1 to 4 ask and answer questions confidently and with enthusiasm. The Years 5 and 6 pupils however, are more reluctant to express their ideas aloud in front of the class as was seen in English lessons. They are much more willing to share their ideas when working in pairs or in a group.

4. Pupils' achievement in reading is satisfactory. By the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils know the names and sounds of letters. Lower attaining pupils use this knowledge and their understanding of the relevance of picture clues to decipher unfamiliar words. Average and higher attaining pupils read clearly and fluently and have a good understanding of what they are reading. By the time they are in Year 6, the majority of pupils read accurately and show a sound understanding of a range of texts. They are able to talk about different books and express their preferences, for example, fantasy and biographies. They understand how to locate information using a variety of sources including the Internet and library books. They make satisfactory use of these skills when carrying out research in different subjects.

5. Pupils' achievement in writing is satisfactory. By Year 2, the majority of pupils write complete sentences using correct punctuation, for example full stops and capital letters. Simple spelling are also correct All pupils make reasonable attempts at story writing and most produce work in appropriately constructed sentences that communicate meaning. Higher attaining pupils' writing shows some variation in sentence construction and sometimes they use connecting words to make their sentences more interesting. By the time they are in Year 6, the majority of pupils write in a range of styles for different purposes. Higher attaining pupils use punctuation accurately and include good descriptive vocabulary and complex sentences as they write. The use of grammar and interesting vocabulary is less secure by the average and lower attaining pupils. Although there is satisfactory achievement in writing, achievement in handwriting is unsatisfactory. Younger pupils do not join their letters confidently and although handwriting exercises show quite good work, this is not the case in their own independent writing. Many pupils in Years 5 and 6 have untidy handwriting and do not always join their letters and the presentation of their work is poor. Some pupils, even in Year 6, often write in pencil. Expectations of the presentation of the pupils' work are not high enough particularly in English, mathematics and science. Work is often not dated and a ruler is not used to draw lines or underline information.

6. In mathematics, the pupils' achievement is satisfactory. By the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils have a good range of calculation strategies which they use efficiently to solve a variety of problems. They have a good mathematical vocabulary and they use this well to explain their mental strategies or how they have solved a problem. By the end of Year 6, most pupils are competent in the four rules of number, and have an appropriate knowledge and understanding of fractions and decimals. They have secure mental recall skills and explain their strategies for working out answers to problems clearly and correctly. They use information and communication technology to support their work, especially in activities involving data handling. For example they created graphs and pie charts to interpret information on a traffic survey they had carried out in Cockermouth.

7. Pupils use of literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects is satisfactory. For example pupils use writing skills in geography to write reasoned arguments about the need for traffic lights and a zebra crossing near a new supermarket. In science, pupils record their investigations and in mathematics they use reading and comprehension skills to access problems and then use speaking skills to discuss strategies for finding solutions. They have opportunity to use their numeracy skills in other subjects, such as science when taking accurate readings from a thermometer to record changes in temperature or in design and technology when carrying out measuring activities.

8. Pupils' achievement in science is satisfactory. Pupils in Year 2 have a sound knowledge of a variety of scientific topics including plant growth and the factors necessary for plants to grow well. The majority of them know how to make a simple electrical circuit and identify and name different sources of light. They are able to carry out simple investigations but the use of too many worksheets prevents these pupils from satisfactorily developing their independent recording skills. By the time that they are at the end of Year 6, most pupils have an appropriate ability to identify the need for a fair test and to be able to plan and carry one out independently of the teacher. They have a secure understanding of reversible and irreversible changes and know which materials make good thermal insulators. Pupils' investigation skills are satisfactory but there are some shortcomings in their ability to interpret information, identify trends and make conclusions that are evaluative rather than a description of what they have done.

9. In information and communication technology (ICT), the majority of pupils by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 attain standards that match those expected for their age and their achievement is satisfactory. By the end of Year 2, pupils know how to change the type and size of text and to retrieve, process and display information. They are able to use different programs for example, a paint

programme to create symmetrical drawings. By Year 6, pupils produce graphs and charts and are able to interpret the information displayed, as was evident in their graphs of a traffic survey of Cockermouth. The majority of pupils use ICT appropriately to enhance their work in subjects such as English, mathematics, science, history and geography.

10. By the end of Year 6 in art and design and design and technology, the majority of pupils including those with special educational needs attain standards that match those expected for their age and their achievement is satisfactory. They demonstrate satisfactory drawing and painting skills and use a variety of different materials appropriately to make different design models. In geography and history the majority of pupils attain the standards expected for their age in both subjects. In history, younger pupils show a good understanding of time and know about similarities and differences between the past and the present. Older pupils have a secure understanding of a range of historical times including the Vikings, the Ancient Greeks and life in Britain since the 1930's. They know how to use evidence to find out about the past and have a developing understanding of the significance of historical artefacts. In geography, the pupils in Year 2 have satisfactory mapping skills and by the end of Year 6, most pupils use lines of longitude and latitude to locate places on a map. They have a good awareness of environmental issues and are able to give a reasoned argument as to why certain things are necessary to improve the environment. In music and physical education there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on attainment or achievement.

11. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well. This is because work is carefully planned for their needs and in literacy and numeracy in particular, they receive good support from the specialist teaching assistant. Other pupils who have difficulties in English and mathematics receive effective additional support, through initiatives such as the Early Literacy Strategy, the Additional Literacy Strategy and the Springboard mathematics programme. More able pupils in Year 6 are also well targeted and through the use of 'booster classes' these pupils have been able to attain the higher levels in the National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. The attitudes, behaviour and personal development of pupils including those with special educational needs are good. These are important strengths which are helping pupils to learn. They enjoy coming to school and are responding well to the ethos of working together towards school improvement. They are polite and friendly and are eager to do their best. Pupils are keen to contribute to lesson introductions, to offer answers and to participate enthusiastically, with an eagerness to please, in practical subjects. Their enjoyment was particularly evident on sports-afternoon when all pupils from youngest to oldest joined in with enthusiasm and gusto.

13. The attitudes and behaviour of children aged under five are good. They have settled into school well and obviously feel safe and secure. They listen attentively to their teacher even though the activities planned are occasionally unsatisfactory for these young children. Nevertheless they concentrate well and try hard to succeed. When working together they share ideas and resources willingly

14. Behaviour is also good, with no problem areas identified as there were in the last inspection. Bullying, a key issue of the previous inspection, has been very well addressed. Pupils are clear that bullying is not tolerated and they maintain that school is a happy and co-operative place with any minor disagreements quickly sorted out. There have been no exclusions from the school in the last two years. Pupils move sensibly around the school and show an appropriate respect for each other, for adults, for the building and for the resources made available to them. They respond well to the praise and merit systems which the headteacher has put in place. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers concentrate on

their work and collaborate well together. Playground behaviour is also good. Even when it is wet pupils enjoy staying in their classrooms playing various board games. Older pupils willingly become involved with looking after the younger children. The head teacher is aware that these helpers are mainly girls at the moment and there are good plans in place to persuade more boys to participate.

15. Relationships throughout the school are good. Pupils and staff get on well together and the Christian ethos of the school is well in evidence. Older pupils are very much aware of the way they should treat younger ones and how to treat their peers. As a result they are very caring of each other. Pupils respond well to visitors to the school. For example, as pupils have little experience of a multicultural society a local resident originally from Pakistan, was invited into the school. Pupils were very interested to learn about the customs and traditions of her country and asked her many questions about life in Pakistan.

16. Pupils' personal development is good and all pupils willingly accept responsibilities. For example, they are keen to undertake jobs such as door monitors, and helping to keep equipment tidy in the hall or classroom. Pupils also have class responsibilities for handing out and clearing away equipment and books and they carry these out well. Pupils also respond well to wider issues such as preserving the environment and the advantages of recycling. They worked hard on a project of ridding a public beauty spot of unsightly rubbish. Their work was recognised by the local council and pupils have now planted daffodil bulbs in this area of the town and additional litter bins have been placed along the route. Pupils are very aware of the impact of their actions upon others and know very clearly the difference between right and wrong.

17. Attendance is good being above the national average. This is an improvement from the last inspection when attendance was satisfactory. Punctuality is good. Pupils attend school regularly and registers are taken promptly resulting in lessons starting on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The majority of teaching observed was satisfactory or better but teaching is occasionally unsatisfactory. There is a marked contrast in the teaching of pupils in Years 3 and 4 and the other two classes. The teaching of this class of pupils is always good and often very good which results in pupils making good gains in their learning.

19. Teaching is at least satisfactory overall in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology throughout the school and history in Years 3 to 6. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on teaching in art and design, design and technology, geography, music and physical education overall or in history for pupils in Years 1 and 2.

20. The quality of teaching for children in the Foundation Stage of Learning, that is reception age children, is satisfactory overall, but it is unsatisfactory in the creative area of learning. In literacy and numeracy lessons the activities are planned to build on prior attainment, in order that the children make satisfactory progress. The teacher expects the children to behave well and has developed a good relationship with them. As a result, they respond positively, concentrate well and usually have a good work rate. The majority of activities that children undertake are explained carefully, so they are clear about what they are to do. The children grow in confidence through the constructive praise that they receive from adults working in the reception class. However, teaching methods do not demonstrate a secure understanding by the teacher of how young children learn. There is an inappropriate balance between activities that are directed by the teacher, and those that the children select for themselves. The children's creative development is restricted also by a lack of teacher expertise and their physical development limited by a lack of appropriate large outdoor equipment for them to use. There are times

when the work given to children lacks sufficient challenge and, as a result, they do not always achieve to their full potential.

21. The teachers have worked hard to implement the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. All the teachers have a secure understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy but some are less secure about elements of the National Literacy Strategy. Particular areas of concern are the teaching of guided reading and word and sentence level work. The teachers of Years 3 and 4 pupils provide good models for the teaching of both Strategies and are secure in their knowledge of the elements of both. All teachers provide sound opportunities for pupils to use their developing literacy and numeracy skills in other National Curriculum subjects. In mathematics lessons good use is made of oral and mental work at the start of lessons and lessons are mainly taken at a brisk pace. There are times however, when the lessons are overlong, particularly for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and, as a result, the pace slows with pupils losing their concentration and motivation. The teachers' expectations of Years 1 and 2 pupils and pupils in Years 5 and 6 are often inappropriate. In Years 1 and 2 pupils are expected to sit for far too long on the carpet as was seen one morning when pupils were sitting for approximately one hour before moving to their independent activities. The teacher did recognise that this was a long period of time and spent a few minutes carrying out physical activities to stop pupils becoming too fidgety. In Years 5 and 6 the teacher's expectation of pupils' presentation of their work is not high enough resulting in work that is untidy and poorly presented. The quality of handwriting throughout the school also is in need of improvement.

22. Teachers' half-termly and weekly planning is detailed showing the key objectives to be learnt in each lesson. The planning addresses satisfactorily the needs of pupils of two age groups within each class. The learning of the lesson is usually shared with the pupils at the start of the lesson but it is rarely referred to during the lesson. Pupils are not always informed of what the teacher expects from them and the criteria for success during independent activities, is not made clear to the pupils. Although pupils have key learning targets identified these again are rarely referred to. Pupils are unable to remind themselves of their individual targets because they can not see where they are displayed. The whole class sessions at the end of the literacy or numeracy hour are not used effectively to consolidate and evaluate the pupils' work and to help them to learn from each other. Written marking, although satisfactory and is often good in years 3 and 4, does not effectively help pupils to improve the standard of their work. Comments are often evaluative and do not clearly indicate the good elements of the work or what pupils need to do next to make progress. Homework, however, is used well to support and extend pupils' learning in the classroom.

23. Relationships throughout the school are at least good and this is particularly evident in the class of Years 3 and 4 pupils. The very good relationships in this class promotes a learning environment where pupils want to achieve and are not afraid to discuss their ideas in front of others. The teachers' skilful questioning techniques ensures that all pupils are involved in class teaching sessions and mutual respect between pupils means that all answers are listened too and valued. During group activities for example in science the teacher intervenes well to challenge pupils' thinking and to develop their understanding further of the life cycle of a plant, and that plants are organisms that have parts with different jobs to do. The teachers' enthusiasm for teaching successfully makes learning fun and consequently, the pupils show a great deal of enjoyment in their work, are curious and keen to ask questions to further their learning.

24. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and the work planned is usually well targeted to their needs. The staff are knowledgeable about the pupils' individual programmes of work and the activities given to them are appropriate. Careful questioning by all teachers encourages the pupils to take an active part in class discussions. The specialist-teaching assistant is used well to

support pupils with special educational needs. She has formed good relationships with them and provides effective support for them to record their findings and ideas.

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

25. The curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils are satisfactory, with pupils having access to a variety of relevant learning experiences. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been appropriately implemented for pupils in Years 1 to 6, although there is recognition by the school of the need to more effectively deliver some elements of the literacy hour, such as the guided reading sessions. There are some mathematics lessons that are overlong, which results in a slowing in pace and some pupils losing interest and becoming restless. The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is satisfactory, with satisfactory opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills to enhance their work in other subjects. The school has identified the need to ensure more structure in the timetabling of ICT lessons, so that the basic skills of ICT can be taught more effectively. There are also good plans to deliver more of the science curriculum through structured practical investigations. All statutory requirements are met, as are the guidelines of the 'Here I Am' programme for religious education.

26. The pupils' creative development is aided by the variety of activities planned during music and art lessons. There are visits to art galleries and museums and opportunities to take part in art and music workshops. Pupils are able to take part in music and drama performances for parents and for members of the local community. The curriculum is also enriched by involvement in national and local initiatives, as is exemplified by the school being a member of a consortia of schools receiving training, through funding, from Beacon Status. This has helped teachers to develop their understanding of the issues involved in raising attainment in writing and delivering mathematics for more able pupils. The school is currently working with Cumbria Early Years Partnership and a neighbouring school to provide a 'Wraparound' care facility on the premises.

27. The curriculum that the school provides for the children in the Foundation Stage of Learning is satisfactory. There is emphasis placed on the teaching of literacy and numeracy and also on the children's personal, social and emotional development, which results in them making appropriate progress in their academic skills and allows them to show increased confidence as they settle into the school routines. However, occasionally the children are presented with work that does not meet their needs, as is shown by the limited opportunities for them to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills through structured play activities. Good opportunities are provided for the children to take part in a variety of visits, which effectively enriches their knowledge and understanding of the world.

28. During the last inspection, it was found that planning was a weakness and a key issue of the inspection was to develop schemes of work that were linked clearly to the programmes of study of the National Curriculum. The school has successfully addressed this issue and planning is now satisfactory. The school has developed a long-term plan, based on national guidelines, which deals well with the needs of classes of two age ranges. All subjects now have schemes of work that ensures continuity and progression of learning throughout the school with learning objectives and outcomes clearly identified. The planning for the Foundation Stage of Learning is in its infancy and does not effectively identify the steps to be taken towards the early learning goals recommended for children of this age. Consequently, the work given to the reception age children does not always appropriately match their needs, activities lack challenge, which hinders the progress that these children make.

29. The provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education is good with pupils having opportunities to relate to others, in a variety of situations, so that they learn to respect the values and

beliefs of other pupils and adults. Pupils are given opportunities, in and out of classrooms, to show initiative and to take responsibility, which supports their personal development. Younger pupils deliver messages between classes, take registers to the office and get out and put away resources in lessons, whilst being looked after in a considerate way by older pupils at various times of the day. The class councils provide regular times each week for pupils to solve problems in their everyday life at school. This system is to be extended to a school council in autumn 2002, to further develop the pupils' understanding of the democratic process. There is sensitive provision for sex education, which stresses the importance of warm and caring family relationships. As part of their work in science, pupils are helped to develop good attitudes towards healthy eating and are made aware of the harmful effects of drugs.

30. The school is successful in ensuring that all pupils have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities that are provided. There is clear statement on equal opportunities, so that all staff are aware of this aspect of school life. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and successfully reflects the transition to the requirements of the new nationally agreed Code of Practice. The curriculum is fully inclusive and these pupils have equality of access to all aspects of school life, being ably supported by the specialist-teaching assistant. The individual programmes of work are of good quality, having specific and manageable targets in them. Enrichment activities and procedures are in place for more able pupils so that they can make appropriate progress. There is satisfactory provision for children with special educational needs in the Foundation Stage of learning, which enables them to take full part in all activities.

31. The provision for extra curricular activities, including educational visits, is good. Clubs for pupils to join, include ICT, general knowledge, football, country dancing and technology. The school gives all pupils opportunity to take part in an extensive variety of visits that enrich the curriculum by providing further significant learning experiences. These include trips to nearby places of educational interest, such as the Roman Museum at Maryport, the Mayor's Parlour, the Toy Museum and the Yorvik Experience in York. A range of visitors, including puppet makers, an African storyteller and a drumming group, have worked with the pupils to develop a variety of skills.

32. There are good links with the community that make an effective contribution to pupils' learning. Strong links with the parish church involve the priest regularly coming into school to work with pupils to develop their understanding of the Catholic faith and to support their spiritual development. The pupils are involved in all parish activities, such as fetes and coffee mornings, and have a key role in celebrating mass in St. Joseph's Church on holy and feast days. The 'Friends of St. Joseph' are active participants in many areas of school life. They provide funding for many areas of the curriculum, and their activities give strong cohesion to the social and family life of the school. The police come in to give 'Stranger Danger' talks, and the local fire brigade visits to give advice on fire safety. There are opportunities for pupils to raise money for a range of charities, such as 'CAFOD' and the 'Good Shepherd Lenten Appeal' by which they gain a good understanding of the needs of others. Links with local businesses enable them to gain an understanding of the world of work. There are good links with the local secondary school, which successfully prepares pupils in Year 6 for when they transfer to it. The school is forging good links with a teacher training college.

33. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, which shows improvement since the last inspection when it was found to be satisfactory. It effectively enriches the quality of the school's life as a caring Catholic Christian community, helping pupils to develop positive attitudes, a sense of responsibility and high self-esteem.

34. The pupils' spiritual development is good, being fostered through the curriculum and the acts of collective worship. During class worship for pupils in Years 5 and 6, they read from the bible, say

prayers and have the opportunity for quiet, personal reflection. An important element in pupils' spiritual development is the way the school works closely with the parish priest. He works in classrooms and leads a variety of services and celebrations that are a focus of renewal and affirmation for all. Pupils are provided with opportunities to discuss values and beliefs, including religious beliefs, and the manner in which they affect peoples' lives. The teachers value pupils' ideas and efforts and this is shown by the way that all pupils are encouraged to make contributions during lessons along with the attractive displays of pupils' work in the school. In music and art, the pupils are able to explore experiences that reflect moods such as happiness or sadness. In circle-time activities, the teachers showed that they valued pupils' questions and gave them chance to reflect on their own ideas and concerns.

35. The provision for moral and social development is also good. It features in many aspects of the curriculum as an integral part of the school ethos. The pupils are encouraged to develop good moral values through the good examples set by the staff. Adults work hard to promote a sense of fairness among pupils and are successful in teaching them to be tolerant of each other. There is a school code of conduct that is displayed in classrooms and around the school, so that pupils are clear about what is acceptable and what is not. There are 'circle-time' activities, in which pupils sit in a circle with their teacher and are helped to express their own views and respect other people's opinions that are different from their own. These activities are used well to promote good moral values, with pupils learning the importance of caring for others and the impact of peoples' actions on others. Pupils are helped to take responsibility for their actions and to work and play together with respect and tolerance. They are encouraged to listen to and respect the opinions of others, as was seen during the introductions and round up sessions of most lessons. From the start of their time in school, pupils are provided with good social development opportunities and are encouraged to work collaboratively, in pairs and small groups, as is especially evident in English, mathematics and science. There are good relationships underpinning the school's work, being based on mutual trust and respect between staff and pupils. The good range of extra curricular activities and visits supports pupils' social development. During these activities they learn a variety of important social skills, such as working together and caring for others. The strong community links help to develop the pupils' understanding of the world of work and of their role in society.

36. The pupils' cultural education is satisfactory, being encouraged through work in art, music, history and geography, and this is complemented through the provision of a wide range of visits and visitors. Many opportunities are given for pupils to visit places of cultural interest, such as art galleries and local museums. In religious education, there is emphasis placed on learning about the beliefs and traditions of other faiths and cultures. However, the school recognises the need to better prepare pupils for life in multi-cultural Britain, by more effectively developing their understanding of other people's religious convictions and cultural traditions.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. There are good procedures in place for child protection and for ensuring the health and safety of the pupils. Staff training in these areas is up to date and all staff are aware of current legislation. They have been involved in training to ensure that child protection is well organised. Very good use is made of the expertise of the governors from the fire service and the police force to enhance health and safety procedures. There are clear procedures for visits out of school and the pupils' safety is of utmost importance. First-aid arrangements are good and parents are notified promptly if their child is unwell during the day. Attendance is well monitored, resulting in above average figures. Parents are well aware the importance of good attendance.

38. Procedures to ensure that pupils are progressing well socially and in their personal development are good. All pupils are well known to the staff and the staff work hard to foster pupils' self esteem by

giving them confidence in their ability to succeed. Pupils are confident to approach adults with their concerns and they receive sensitive and effective guidance. Personal support is given to individuals when necessary and any issues are dealt with promptly and effectively. Reasons and explanations are always given to pupils as to why actions are taken. Areas of responsibility for pupils are being increased, with plans well advanced for a school council to have real decision-making powers. Guidance is good to prepare pupils to cope with the outside world, with sex education, anti drugs information and a push towards a healthy lifestyle built into the school's programme. Measures to prepare pupils to live in a multicultural Britain need to be developed. The parents, who feel that their children's personalities and personal development are well charted and supported, also praise the procedures that are in place.

39. Procedures for monitoring behaviour are good. Behaviour issues are addressed effectively and some parents made the point that their children who had had problems in other schools settled well in this school due to its good systems of support. Christian principles are stressed appropriately and there is a positive ethos that rewards good behaviour and acts of kindness. Prompt attention is given to inappropriate behaviour, reasons are given and parents are quickly informed and involved in improving the behaviour of their children. The school successfully encourages pupils to be responsible for their own behaviour and to realise the consequence of their actions. There is no evidence of oppressive behaviour occurring.

40. In the previous inspection report, assessment procedures were identified as a weakness. Since then the school has made satisfactory improvement. There are recently introduced systems in place that allows the school to collect pupils' attainment data. These enable the teachers to track that pupils' progress is as good as it should be. However, this is in an early stage of development and as yet is not having a significant impact on pupils' achievement and attainment. Assessment arrangements are not effective for children in the Foundation Stage of Learning, as there is limited information to track their progress towards the early learning goals. Analysis and use of assessment information although satisfactory needs to be developed further. This is an area already identified by the headteacher as an area for improvement within the school development plan. There has however, been one good example of the use of assessment information and that is in the identification of pupils who are capable of attaining the higher level in the National Curriculum tests in Year 6. These pupils have received appropriate support and their good test results, particularly in English, verify the usefulness of this appropriate targeting. Key learning targets are shared with both parents and pupils but there is limited evidence of these referred to during lessons or in the marking of pupils' work.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. The parents and carers' views of the school are very good. The very high return of parental replies to the questionnaire sent out by the inspection, are overwhelmingly positive about the headteacher and the measures she has put into place to improve the school. At the parents' meeting, positive comments were made about the work of the school. The only area of contention was the issue of homework but parents were a little divided about what exactly was the area of concern. Some thought there is too much homework, some too little. The inspection team however, judges that the homework arrangements are good. The headteacher has put a good programme into place and pupils themselves are quite clear about when they can expect of homework, what it is for, and when it is to be handed in. The school has effectively introduced the idea that homework is the responsibility of the pupils, not the parents and pupils have responded well to this expectation. Homework diaries are starting to be used appropriately as a two-way messaging system between home and school.

42. Parents' involvement with the work of the school is good. They feel welcome and there is 100 per cent attendance at the evening meetings where parents are able to discuss their children's progress

with the teachers. Unusually, a large number of parents also attend the governors' annual reporting evening to parents. This is because the governors have built in other activities to happen on the same evening that will interest the parents.

43. The school is trying hard to involve parents more in their children's learning. Very useful curriculum information is provided so that the parents know what their children are going to learn. They are also provided with the key targets for learning for the year. In this way the parent's input into their children's progress is improving. Information about progress is very good, it happens formally every term and in addition, parents are welcome to come into school to see their children's books at anytime, to discuss any difficulties and to rejoice in their children's successes. Parents feel very welcome in the school and appreciate the useful discussions with the teachers. Other information to parents is equally clear and helpful. The school prospectus is an attractive and useful document. A reading record, which is completed by the teachers and parents, provides a very useful dialogue between home and school. Reports also have useful information and targets which parents find easy to understand and act upon.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44. The leadership and management of the headteacher are good. The headteacher provides firm and sensitive leadership and with the effective support of the staff and governors gives a clear direction for the development and improvement of the school. She has been at the school for approximately two years and during this time she has gained good respect from governors, staff, parents and pupils. A strength is the strong team approach, which is essential in a small school. The headteacher has a heavy teaching commitment and there is no deputy headteacher in post. Therefore the headteacher is very reliant upon her staff and she has successfully created a team who work well together and who share leadership and management responsibilities. The effective teamwork is a strong feature of the school and has succeeded in creating a learning environment where relationships are good and pupils feel secure and valued. There is a positive ethos that reflects the school's commitment to achieve improving educational standards and equality of opportunity for all pupils. Performance management has been satisfactorily introduced. Appropriate objectives have been agreed and all relevant documentation is in place. New teachers and students are well supported by the school and the student who is working in the school at the present time comments upon the good support that has been available.

45. When the headteacher first started at the school she carried out a very thorough audit of the school's provision. This resulted in a very good school development plan being formulated which is very securely based on the school's needs and provides a very effective tool for school improvement. For example, the headteacher very quickly discovered that staff had not completed the training for the National Literacy Strategy. This resulted in the implementation of a comprehensive literacy action plan. Foundation Stage planning was in need of improvement and this also is being developed. A cycle of review was implemented for the policies and programmes of work in all National Curriculum subjects as many did not accurately reflect current practice in the school.

46. The governing body fulfils satisfactorily all of its statutory obligations. Governors take their responsibilities seriously and make a sound contribution to the running of the school. They are kept well informed by the headteacher and work hard in their individual and collective roles. The skills of different governors are used well. For example, governors from the fire service and the police force provide useful and informative advice about the school's health and safety procedures. Other governors are involved in the daily life of the school, for example attending assemblies and other events and supporting pupils' in the classroom. In order to develop their role more fully, the governors are aware of the need to develop a more critical stance regarding the school's provision and to acquire

a more rigorous monitoring and evaluation role. They know that they need training in this aspect of their work

47. The main issues arising from the previous inspection have been rectified. A consistent approach has been adopted for the gathering of assessment information and the quality of teaching and progress of reception age children and of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is no longer unsatisfactory. However the school recognises and has identified in the school development plan that there is still more work to be done with both of these issues. The third issue regarding the behaviour of older boys and of the consistent implementation of the behaviour policy has been addressed very well. Pupils' behaviour is good and the policy of the school is clearly understood and implemented consistently by all. Pupils have been involved in drawing up a code of conduct in line with the behaviour policy and feel that the policy is implemented fairly by all adults.

48. The schools' financial planning is good and the school manages its budget well. The school is careful that 'earmarked' funds are used appropriately. The headteacher and governors carefully monitor accounts for these specific funds. The budget designated to special educational needs is used well to promote the learning of these pupils. Routine financial and administrative procedures are good and the school administrator can readily provide accurate financial information to guide the leadership of the school. Satisfactory use is made of information and communication technology in this work to manage the budget and monitor attendance. The governors ensure that the principles of best value are applied soundly in the school's work particularly when deciding priorities and their likely effect on standards and the pupils' achievement.

49. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching are satisfactory. The headteacher checks and evaluates teaching and is supported from time to time by Local Education Authority personnel, for example the literacy consultant and the school adviser. In the context of performance management, lessons have been observed and teachers have targets for improvement. However, with a four day teaching commitment the headteacher has had limited opportunity to carry out this part of her leadership and management role. Also the headteacher recognises that her checking role now needs to be more rigorous and more sharply focused in order to support teachers and help them to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Examining teachers' planning and scrutiny of pupils' work has taken place. The evaluation from these activities has resulted in issues such as untidy handwriting and poor presentation being accurately identified as areas for improvement on the school development plan.

50. The four teachers in the school undertake all subject leadership and management roles. They share the responsibilities and the headteacher is keen to introduce procedures and to provide training that will help each of them to play a more active role in managing their subject across the whole school. Apart from literacy and numeracy, other subject co-ordinators have had limited opportunity to carry out their monitoring and evaluation role. There are policies and programmes of work that need to be up-dated and this is something that has already been recognised and identified in the school improvement plan where a cycle of review has been established. It may be some time before the school reaches the position where it is able to have as much impact from subject leadership as it would like. However, the indications are that all staff are very committed to play a full and active role in school improvement and want to support the headteacher.

51. The management of pupils with special educational needs is good and all statutory requirements are met. The school is implementing well the new special educational needs Code of practice and policy is in place for pupils who are identified as gifted and talented. The documentation is clear and enables pupils' progress to be appropriately tracked. Appropriately there is a termly review of the progress of these pupils. The specialist teaching assistant is used well particularly in literacy and numeracy activities to support pupils who have special educational needs. The governors see equality

of opportunity and the inclusion of pupils, whatever their background, as important aims of the school and the school is successful in meeting these aims.

52. There is a satisfactory level of staffing and staff are effectively deployed. The accommodation is satisfactory and all areas of the school are used efficiently. However, there are some shortcomings in the availability of space for reception age children and this restricts the opportunities for children to become involved in sand and water activities. Standards of tidiness and cleanliness are consistently good both inside and outside of school and in the hall in particular there are attractive displays of pupils' work. Outdoor facilities are good and the school benefits from a large playing field for its outside games activities. The building is well maintained overall and resources are satisfactory for all subjects. All resources are used well and are accessible to staff and pupils. The lack of large outdoor play facilities is a weakness in resource provision for reception age children. Also the role-play area does not provide a stimulating environment for these young children to develop their imaginative and creative skills.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to continue with school improvement and to raise standards, achievement and progress, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

1. Improve procedures and opportunities for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning by:

- providing training for both governors and subject co-ordinators to enable them to carry out their monitoring and evaluation role effectively;
- producing a manageable timetable for monitoring and evaluation activities to occur;
- ensuring all with monitoring and evaluation responsibilities have the opportunity to do so;
- ensuring that the monitoring and evaluation activities rigorously informs teachers about the good elements of their work and identifies how they might improve;
- using the information from the monitoring and evaluation activities to improve provision and the quality of teaching and learning.

(paragraphs: 46, 49, 50, 68, 73, 79, 82, 85, 90, 94, 96 & 99)

2. Increase pupils' understanding of how they might improve their work by:

- ensuring that pupils are aware of the criteria for success and of their own individual learning targets so that they have the opportunity to improve;
- using written marking as a tool for improving pupils' work;
- ensuring that pupils have the time and the support to address the issues identified by the written marking comments;
- regularly monitoring and evaluating the practice of informing pupils of how they might improve.

(paragraphs: 22, 66, 68, 72, 77 & 90)

3. Raise teachers' expectations of what pupils are able to do including improving pupils' presentation skills and the quality of handwriting by:

- implementing the action plan regarding presentation of written work and monitoring and evaluating the agreed practice throughout the school;
- consistently implementing the agreed handwriting policy;
- ensuring that pupils are informed regularly about the expectations of the school regarding their written work;
- identifying what is an appropriate amount of time for pupils to sit and listen before carrying out independent work and monitoring that this is happening.

(paragraphs: 5, 21, 25, 49, 65, 70, 71, 77 & 90)

4. Improve provision for the children of reception age by:

- ensuring that planned activities and assessment activities are securely based in the ‘early learning goals’ recommended for this age of children;
- improving the role-play area and the quality of outdoor play equipment;
- developing the teachers’ knowledge of the creative aspect of children’s learning’

(paragraphs: 2, 290, 28, 40, 52, 54, 55, 56, 58 & 59)

5. Develop teachers’ confidence and knowledge of how to teach all aspects of the National Literacy Strategy by:

- continuing to implement the good literacy action plan;
- regularly monitoring and evaluating the teaching of the literacy hour and supporting teachers where necessary.

(paragraphs: 21, 25, 45, 66 & 68)

In addition to the above the governors should consider including the following more minor issues in their action plan:

- Implementing the plans in place to develop pupils’ investigation skills in science and monitor the use of worksheets by the younger pupils. *(paragraphs: 8, 25 & 75)*
- Ensure that the skills of information and communication technology are taught in a structured way. *(paragraphs 25 & 94)*
- Prepare pupils more adequately for life in multi-cultural Britain today. *(paragraph: 36)*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	25
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	2	4	17	2	0	0
Percentage	0	8	16	68	8	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/a	73
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/a	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/a	8

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

The attainment of pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in the National Curriculum tests is omitted from this section because in the Year 2001 there were only six pupils in Year 2 and seven pupils in Year 6.

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	73
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.8
Average class size	24.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	14

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/a
Total number of education support staff	N/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/a
Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/a

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0

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.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	151,461
Total expenditure	157,211
Expenditure per pupil	2456
Balance brought forward from previous year	555
Balance carried forward to next year	-5195

Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
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: 69.9%

Number of questionnaires sent out	73
Number of questionnaires returned	51

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	25	8	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	65	29	6	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	55	41	4	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	39	24	4	0
The teaching is good.	59	33	6	2	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	69	25	6	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	90	6	2	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	80	20	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	69	25	6	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	82	16	2	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	76	20	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	71	20	9	0	0

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

53. A nationally approved assessment scheme used as children start school in the Foundation Stage of Learning, shows that the attainment of the majority is above that expected for their age in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and personal, social and emotional development. However, with so few children in each cohort, it is very difficult to predict accurately year upon year the children's attainment on entry to the school. During their time in the reception class they make satisfactory progress and, by the time they enter Year 1, nearly all the children are attaining the learning goals expected for their age in most areas of learning. In creative development they do not attain the expected goal. There are currently seven children of reception age, who are taught alongside pupils of Years 1 and 2 age. The quality of teaching and learning provided for children of reception age is satisfactory, which shows improvement since the last inspection when it was found to be unsatisfactory. There are satisfactory induction arrangements, which include new children being invited into the reception class in the summer term before they start at the school.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

54. Children make satisfactory progress in learning to play harmoniously with others, to share and to co-operate with adults. Their attitudes to learning are positive and their response in lessons is good, being well behaved and able to share resources fairly and to take care of one another. They co-operate well with each other, especially when given the opportunity to work on activities independently of the teacher. This was seen when children were working in the sand and water areas during a mathematical activity on finding halves of numbers. However, as a result of too many teacher directed activities such opportunities are limited. During a collective worship session, the children were encouraged to reflect on the day ahead and how their actions could make others happy or sad. As a result of experiences such as this, they are effectively learning to show respect for others' feelings and ideas. There is appropriate emphasis placed on health and safety issues, and children are encouraged to wash their hands when appropriate. Outside visits supports their social development, such as to the local market, a toy museum and a tea room in Cockermouth in which they mix with adults and other children. Adults interact with the children in a positive manner and, as a result, they obviously feel safe and secure and are happy in the classroom and wider school environment. Teaching is satisfactory in this area of learning and the majority of children at least attain the early learning goal by the time they are of Year 1 age.

Communication, Language and Literacy

55. The majority of children will listen to a story attentively and respond appropriately, talking about their likes and dislikes. Their speaking skills are good, as was shown when they were working with a governor of the school. They eloquently told her what was happening in the picture she was showing to them. They expressed themselves clearly and made themselves understood. When choosing a book, they hold it the right way, understand that words and pictures carry meaning and are aware that print is read from left to right. The children enjoy books and handle them with care. They are beginning to associate sounds with patterns, words and letters, and are able to recognise simple and familiar words. Children enjoy mark making and basic writing experiences, and use a range of implements for drawing, marking, scribbling and writing. The more able children are capable of writing a recognisable simple sentence and make reasonable attempts at words with which they are not familiar. The majority of children attain the early learning goal in this area of learning by the time they are of Year 1 age.

Although teaching is satisfactory there are times when they are given work that lacks sufficient challenge. This was seen in one lesson where the children were using their experience of stories as a basis for independent writing. After the introduction the children were given the task of drawing a picture. This was an inappropriate activity that did not effectively develop their writing skills. The role-play area is rather a dull place and does not provide a stimulating environment for children to develop their good speaking and listening skills as well as using their imaginative skills.

Mathematical Development

56. With adult support the majority of children count up to 10 and beyond and recognise what comes before and after different numbers. They show that they are able to place in order numbers 1 to 10 by their value and match the corresponding number of objects to the number up to 10. There are practical activities provided for the children to practise their number skills, such as in one lesson when they were using model 'care bears' and 'dinosaurs' to make up half a number to a whole one. During their sorting and matching activities, the children match accurately objects by colour and shape. They correctly recognise and name regular shapes such as circle, triangle and square and are beginning to develop their spatial awareness to distinguish between forward, backward, left and right. Most of the children develop appropriate mathematical language, such as 'more than' and 'less than', during their mathematical and play activities. When they are working in the sand and water areas, they correctly use mathematical terms such as 'full' 'empty' and 'half full' to talk about what they are doing. The majority of children attain the early learning goal in this area of learning by the time they are of Year 1 age. Teaching is satisfactory although lessons are overlong, with the children spending far too much time sitting on the carpet. This results in them losing concentration and becoming restless. Sometimes the independent activities are not challenging enough. For example, in one session on finding out about quarters and halves the activity was finished very quickly with one child remarking 'this is too easy'.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

57. There are appropriate opportunities provided for children to develop their powers of observation and ability to ask questions, as part of their natural curiosity. Children look at and talk about the similarities and differences of materials and investigate these appropriately by using their senses. In one lesson when making a 'Mr. Potato Head' with cress seeds for hair, they showed they understood that plants need water and sunlight for healthy growth. The children build and construct, using a variety of objects, and select the tools and methods they need, to assemble and join the materials that they use. They make satisfactory use of information and communication technology to help them in their work, as seen when they use a paint programme to make symmetrical shapes. They concentrate well on their work and show much interest and enjoyment in their activities. Appropriate use is made of the local environment, such as when visiting the local market, to support the children's learning about the wider world. The majority of children attain the early learning goal by the time they are of Year 1 age and teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory.

Physical Development

58. Teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory. The children show good skills in manipulating scissors, writing and painting tools and in handling a range of equipment when making models. An example of this was seen when children used scissors to cut out decorations for their 'Mr. Potato Head'. They have satisfactory control when moving the mouse during their activities on the computer. Although no physical education lessons were observed, the children were seen at playtimes to walk, run, skip and hop with confidence. Their awareness and control of their own and others space is developing in a satisfactory manner. More opportunities need to be provided for children to work with a variety of resources, such as sand and water trays, in order to develop further their co-ordination in

structured play activities. There is no large outdoor equipment, such as bikes, for children to use and, as a result, this aspect of their physical development is not being developed in a satisfactory way. However, the majority of children attain the early learning goal in this area of learning by the time they enter Year 1.

Creative Development

59. The teaching of this area of learning is unsatisfactory and, consequently, the children are not making the progress of which they are capable. Children do not attain the early learning goal in this area of learning by the end of their reception year. There are not enough opportunities for them to develop their ability to listen, observe and use imagination through art, music, dance, stories and imagination. The lack of expertise of the teacher in this area means that the children are sometimes given activities that are inappropriate for their needs. This was evident in an art lesson when they asked to transfer small sketches from the previous week onto a large sheet of paper and then to paint them. The idea of scale involved in this activity was beyond the children's understanding and, consequently, learning was minimal.

ENGLISH

60. Although there have been only a few pupils taking the National Curriculum tests each year and therefore comparative figures need to be handled with some care, the overall statistics do show that there was some underachievement in the subject in 2001 by Year 6 pupils. The key concern was that far too few pupils were attaining the higher levels. This meant that the more able pupils in particular were not achieving to their full potential. However through effective targeting of the pupils capable of higher attainment the school has rectified this situation. This year in the National Curriculum tests the majority of pupils attained at least the level expected for their age with approximately half them attaining standards at the higher level. The work of the current Year 6 pupils adequately reflects these results.

61. The 2001 National Curriculum test results in reading for the Year 2 pupils provided a similar picture, with some evidence of underachievement. In writing their performance was better. The present Year 2 pupils are working at levels expected for their age in both reading and writing but there is limited evidence of higher attainment in writing. The 2002 National Curriculum test results confirm these judgements.

62. Pupils enter the school with good speaking and listening skills. They speak clearly and confidently and the majority give explanations that provide relevant information and interesting detail. They have a wide and interesting vocabulary, which they use well during their speaking activities. Although pupils in Years 1 to 4 willingly and enthusiastically ask and answer questions, pupils in Years 5 and 6 are more reluctant to speak out aloud in front of the class. The teacher appropriately asks these pupils to discuss their ideas in pairs before answering questions and this strategy successfully gives them the confidence to reply to the teacher's questions. Listening skills are good throughout the school with pupils listening well to teachers, other adults and to each other.

63. The subject co-ordinator identified that reading was an issue of concern and that many of the older pupils were not developing sufficient interest in reading. After consultation with the Local Education Authority literacy consultant the situation has improved and the pupils now are achieving satisfactorily. Teachers throughout the school are using the daily literacy lesson to promote reading skills and a new reading scheme has been introduced to help pupils to develop their comprehension skills. By the time they are in Year 2, most pupils know the names and sounds of letters and recognise phonic blends. Lower attaining pupils use these skills and picture clues well when faced with deciphering unfamiliar

words. Although lower attaining pupils still need adult support when reading aloud, other pupils read simple books accurately, instantly recognising character names and a good number of often used words. Average and higher attaining pupils blend letters successfully and have a good understanding of what they are reading. By the time they are in Year 6, the majority of pupils read accurately and show a sound understanding of a range of texts. Lower attaining pupils still lack fluency and expression when given the challenging texts that are more appropriate for their age. The majority of pupils now have good attitudes towards books and higher attaining pupils show an increasing ability to infer meaning from what they read as they discuss characters and events in texts and in their own written work. The majority of pupils in all age groups adequately explain their preferences in reading, for example, fantasy and biographies. They are familiar with a range of authors and by Year 6 they have a good understanding of how fiction and non-fiction texts are organised and how to find books about different subjects. Regular library sessions extend the pupils' reading and library skills. The majority of higher and average attaining pupils also understand how to locate information using the Internet. They make satisfactory use of these skills when carrying out research in history or science.

64. Pupils' achievement in writing is satisfactory. By Year 2, the majority of pupils write complete sentences accurately using full stops and capital letters. They sequence sentences correctly and have a satisfactory understanding of tenses knowing that words ending in 'ing' are in the present tense whilst words ending in 'ed' are in the past. Reasonable spelling attempts reflect a satisfactory knowledge of phonics, for example, 'avenchiliy' for 'eventually'. All pupils make reasonable attempts at story writing and most produce work in appropriately constructed sentences that communicate meaning. Higher attaining pupils' writing shows some variation in sentence construction and sometimes they use connecting words and phrases well, for example, continuing their story with phrases such as 'After a couple of days'. By the time they are in Year 6, the majority of pupils make good use of the opportunities presented to them to write in a range of styles for different purposes. Pupils express their ideas and improve their grammar and punctuation through writing biographies, diaries, letters and imaginative stories. Higher attaining pupils use punctuation accurately and include good descriptive vocabulary and complex sentences as they write. Lessons in extended writing give all pupils, but especially higher attaining pupils, further opportunities to develop their writing skills. Average attaining pupils cover similar work to the higher attaining pupils, but their grammar and use of language is less secure. Lower attaining pupils produce less mature writing and have difficulties with grammar and spelling. These pupils, most of who have special educational needs, receive good support, and tasks in literacy are well matched to pupils' needs.

65. Although there is satisfactory progress in writing, progress in handwriting is unsatisfactory. Pupils of Year 2 age are not joining their letters confidently and although handwriting exercises show quite good work, this is not transmitted into their own independent writing. Many pupils in Years 5 and 6 have untidy handwriting and do not always join their letters and the presentation of their work is poor. Some pupils, even in Year 6, often write in pencil. The teacher's expectations of the presentation of the pupils' work are not high enough. Work is not dated and lines are often drawn freehand. A handwriting policy is in place but it is not implemented consistently throughout the school.

66. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It is never less than good in Years 3 and 4. The teachers of this age group of pupils use their secure subject knowledge to plan work with clear learning objectives. They share these with the pupils thereby ensuring that the pupils' thinking is effectively focused on what they are to learn, and they use the objectives to guide their teaching and support effective assessment. Whole class sessions are usually lively and interesting and the teachers ensure all pupils are included by effectively adapting questions to enable all to participate whatever their level of prior attainment. The teachers successfully transmit their own enjoyment of literacy to the pupils and plan independent and group tasks that provide appropriate levels of challenge for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. For example, in a shared writing session, the

teacher supported the pupils well to produce interesting persuasive writing in the context of advertisements. In the satisfactory lessons the teachers are not as secure about how to teach the word and sentence level work. The whole class sessions at the end of the literacy hour are not used effectively to consolidate and evaluate the pupils' work and to help them to learn from each other. The criteria for success during independent activities, is not made clear to the pupils. Homework is used well to extend pupils' learning and the reading diary is used well to provide a useful dialogue between the teachers and parents.

67. In all age groups, the teachers' satisfactory planning of work in other subjects supports the development of pupils' language and literacy skills. For example, in geography, Years 5 and 6 pupils write reasoned arguments about the need for traffic lights and a zebra crossing near a new supermarket. In science, pupils record investigations or write out instructions. Information and communication technology skills are used appropriately to support pupils' learning, for example, through using word processing skills. The subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A good example was seen in Years 3 and 4 when pupils sensitively discussed the honesty of the language used in an advertisement when trying to promote a certain product. They realised that in many instances the language did not appropriately describe the item and considered the morality of this, thoughtfully.

68. The leadership and management of English are good and there has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. The subject co-ordinator is very conscientious and has a secure understanding of strengths and areas requiring improvement. The good literacy action plan clearly identifies what is necessary to address the shortcomings and to raise standards throughout the school. The school has satisfactorily introduced the National Literacy Strategy but the co-ordinator recognises that there are some elements of the Strategy, for example, guided reading and the teaching of the 'progression in phonics programme' with which the staff still need support. The co-ordinator has worked successfully with staff to develop their knowledge of how to implement the different elements of the literacy hour and is aware of the need to continue with this work. An appropriate target-setting system has been introduced but these targets are not referred to consistently in daily lessons and therefore they are not impacting sufficiently upon raising the standard of the pupils' work. Teachers' marking is also not always helpful in giving pupils enough information about what they need to do to improve. The analysis of National Curriculum test results is beginning to be used to help all staff have greater awareness of what needs to be done to raise standards. There is some monitoring of teaching and learning happening at the moment but again the co-ordinator knows this needs to be more rigorous and there are good plans in place to implement this. There is a satisfactory range of books and other English resources available throughout the school and they are used well by all adults to support teaching. The specialist teaching assistant is used well to support pupils with special educational needs throughout the school and her support ensures that these pupils make good progress and achieve well. Useful strategies such as the Early Literacy Strategy and the Additional Literacy Strategy have been put into place to support those pupils who require extra support in aspects of literacy.

MATHEMATICS

69. As there are so few pupils in each cohort it is inappropriate to compare the pupils' results in mathematics with national statistics or with the statistics of similar schools. The standard of attainment of the majority pupils who are currently in Year 6 match the national expectation for their age and in Year 2 approximately half of pupils are working at the level expected for their age with approximately half of them working at the level above that expected. Pupils' achievement throughout the school is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily overall but there is good achievement when the specialist teaching supports them assistant.

70. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but is better in the class of pupils in Years 3 and 4 and, as a result, these pupils make good progress and achieve well. The teachers plan and organise their lessons appropriately and use questioning well to challenge the pupils' thinking and to develop their mathematical knowledge and understanding. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy. This enables them to set work that matches the pupils' abilities. In Years 1 and 2, the teacher places appropriate emphasis on developing basic skills in mathematics through practical activities, as was seen in a lesson on fractions when pupils handled a variety of stringed beads to find out about halves and quarters. In this lesson the mental starter was delivered at an appropriate pace, so pupils effectively consolidated their rapid mental recall skills of doubling and halving numbers to 10. The pupils are given a variety of activities that securely develop their skills of recognising and using simple patterns and relationships to solve problems. There are times however, when the lessons are overlong and, as a result, the pace slows with pupils losing their concentration and motivation. By the end of Year 2, most pupils employ a variety of calculation strategies to solve problems and use correct mathematical vocabulary to talk about what they are doing, as well as to explain the methods they used to solve problems.

71. Teachers continue to use practical activities to teach the basic skills to pupils in Years 3 to 6. An example of this was in a good quality lesson for pupils in the Year 3 and 4 class, when learning how to identify and sketch lines of symmetry. The teacher gave a detailed explanation of the activity and effectively demonstrated techniques to be used, so the pupils were clear about what they were to learn and how to set about their activities. As a result, they made good progress in their understanding of how to sketch the reflection of a simple shape along a mirror line. There was strong emphasis placed on pupils using accurate mathematical language, or as the teacher put it 'talk the talk'. Consequently, the pupils learned new words such as 'perpendicular' and 'factor' to extend their own mathematical vocabulary. In this lesson, as in most others, the pupils listened attentively whilst explanations were given, were well behaved and showed a great deal of interest and enjoyment in their work. They used mathematical resources and equipment, which are adequate and readily accessible, with care and share them fairly with others. In a lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, the teacher used questioning well to develop the pupils' skills in explaining their strategies for working out number problems. The pupils showed a satisfactory understanding of how to use standard written methods for the addition and subtraction of number. However, the standard of presentation of pupils' work was poor, with the teacher not having high enough expectations of what pupils' are able to do. By the end of Year 6, most pupils are competent in the four rules of number, and have an appropriate knowledge and understanding of fractions and decimals as well as knowing how to use them to solve problems. They have secure mental recall skills and are proficient in their ability to explain their strategies for working out answers to problems.

72. The teachers enable pupils to use information and communication technology to support their work, especially in activities involving data handling. This is evident in the work of pupils in Year 6, in which they have used computers to create graphs and pie charts to interpret information on a traffic survey they had carried out in Cockermouth. Throughout the school, there are times when the learning objectives of the lesson are not explained fully enough at the beginning of the session, or revisited during the course of the lesson. As a result, pupils are not always clear of the target that they are working towards, or of what they need to do to achieve it. Written marking does not always help pupils to improve the standard of their work. There is good use made of homework to further develop pupils' learning. There are many opportunities for them to develop the skills of working collaboratively to solve problems, which effectively supports their personal and social development.

73. The quality and range of the curriculum is satisfactory, with the pupils being offered a variety of relevant and interesting activities. There is satisfactory leadership and management, but the subject co-ordinators role in monitoring and evaluating the subject is an area that the school wishes to develop.

The planning and assessment arrangements are satisfactory and these enable the teachers to chart pupils' progress and determine their standard of attainment. The pupils with special educational needs are given extra support and make good progress, as a result of the work of the specialist teaching assistant. Pupils are given opportunity to use their literacy skills to support their work when they read questions and then discuss strategies for finding solutions. They also have opportunity to use their numeracy skills in other subjects, as seen in Year 6 science work on taking accurate readings from a thermometer to record changes in temperature when investigating which material was the best thermal insulator. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

SCIENCE

74. It is inappropriate to compare the pupils' results in science with national statistics, or with the statistics of similar schools, as there are too few pupils in the Year 2 and Year 6 classes to enable comparisons to be meaningful. The standard of attainment of the majority pupils currently in Year 6 and Year 2, match the national expectation and their achievement is satisfactory.

75. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, with teachers showing secure subject knowledge, which allows them to ask relevant questions to develop the pupils' thinking. They prepare their lessons well, so that the pupils have appropriate resources to use during their activities. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are taught how to observe objects closely, as is evident when they observed the rate of growth of a sweet pea over a set period of time. In their investigations, the pupils are given the opportunity to work together, for example, when they were planning an investigation to find out if plants need sunlight for healthy growth. In this lesson, the teacher effectively reviewed previous work about plant growth so that the pupils could use their prior knowledge to support their new learning. The teacher appropriately went through the process of an investigation and gave pupils a writing frame to use as a basis for recording their findings. Although this resource was helpful in this lesson, in general, however, use is made of too many worksheets and this limits the pupils' independent recording skills. The school has good plans in place to provide more opportunities for pupils to be involved in structured investigations to develop such skills and to further their knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas. As a result of the satisfactory progress that pupils make, by the time that they are at the end of Year 2, the majority of them know how to make a simple electrical circuit and identify and name different sources of light. They show appropriate skills in carrying out a simple fair test, with some help from the teacher. The pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and their behaviour is good. They enjoy their work and respond with interest and enthusiasm, especially when involved in practical activities.

76. The pupils in the Year 3 and 4 class make better progress than in the other two classes because of the good quality teaching that they receive. This was evident in a lesson when learning that seeds are important in the life cycle of a plant, and that plants are organisms that have parts with different jobs to do. The teacher was enthusiastic and the activities given to the pupils captured their interest and imagination. She intervened skilfully in their group work, to challenge their thinking and develop their understanding. Consequently, the pupils showed a great deal of enjoyment in their work, being curious and keen to ask questions to further their learning. They listened carefully, concentrated well and were appreciative of the contributions of other pupils.

77. These positive attitudes were also shown by pupils in Years 5 and 6 when working on a project that is linked to work that Year 6 pupils would do, when they transfer to the secondary school. The objective of the lesson was to design a filter to separate out suspended solids. Because of the teacher's carefully explanation, the pupils developed their own ideas and worked well, independently of the teacher. They showed good collaboration skills during the practical activity, keeping on task and having a high work rate. When recording their findings, the standard of presentation was not good enough however and there is a need for higher expectations from the teacher of what pupils are able and

expected to do. By the time that they are at the end of Year 6, most pupils have a satisfactory ability to identify the need for a fair test and to be able to plan and carry one out independently of the teacher. In so doing, they show a secure understanding of reversible and irreversible changes and what materials make good thermal insulators. There are good plans in place to develop further the pupils' investigation skills so that they are better able to interpret information, identify trends and also make conclusions that are evaluative rather than being a description of what they have done. Throughout the school there are times when the learning intention of the lesson is not explained fully and, as a result, pupils are not always clear of the target that they are working toward in order to raise standards. Neither does written marking consistently direct the pupils how they may improve the quality of their work.

78. The curriculum is satisfactory. It makes a positive contribution made to the pupils' personal and social development because of the opportunities for them to be involved in collaborative group work activities. They are also given appropriate opportunities to use information and communication technology to support their learning. For example, pupils used the computer appropriately to record information on a graph, which showed the average time taken for sugar to dissolve in different temperatures of water. Pupils make satisfactory use of their numeracy skills when taking measurements during investigations, and of their literacy skills when recording their findings.

79. Although the leadership and management are satisfactory the school recognises that the subject co-ordinator's role in monitoring and evaluating provision is underdeveloped. There are good plans in place to improve this. Planning and assessment procedures are satisfactory and provide teachers with clear information about the key learning objectives and skills to be taught. The accommodation and resources are adequate and allow an appropriate range of practical activities to be carried out. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

ART AND DESIGN

80. By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils including those with special educational needs attain standards that match those expected for their age. The pupils' achievement is satisfactory. There is insufficient evidence available to make a judgement on the quality of teaching and learning.

81. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop their skills in using a range of media. They learn how to make close observational drawings and how to mix paints to make another colour. In Years 3 to 6, the pupils make appropriate use of sketchbooks to develop their artistic skills. In Years 3 and 4, they make satisfactory use of printing blocks to create a repeating pattern. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 show that they are satisfactorily developing their understanding of perspective when making drawings of buildings. They have also made drawings of musical instruments and small areas of buildings to a pleasing standard. They make evaluations of their work and, in the light of these, make improvements to it. They have a secure understanding of famous artists from the past and the style in which they painted.

82. The curriculum is satisfactory and is enhanced by visits to art galleries and museums along with opportunities for pupils to take part in art workshops. There is satisfactory leadership and management of the subject, but the school recognises that the subject co-ordinator has had limited opportunity to monitor and evaluate provision in the subject. There are appropriate planning and assessment procedures in place. Resources are adequate to support the demands of the National Curriculum and they are used satisfactorily by staff. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

83. By the time that they are at the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils including those with special educational needs attain standards that are appropriate for their age. The pupils' achievement is satisfactory. As no lessons were observed it is not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching and learning.

84. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils learn about the properties of different materials and how best to shape, assemble and join them. They also have opportunity to develop their skills in making models out of construction kits and to make simple evaluations of the finished product. Older pupils are given the opportunity to develop their skills in using a wider range of materials and tools and to develop their ability in evaluating their work and making modifications as it progresses. In Years 3 and 4, the pupils have used papier-mâché and card in a satisfactory way to make Viking helmets and Viking ships, as part of their work in history. They also show a sound understanding of the need to work hygienically when involved in food technology tasks, as is evident in their work on designing and making a healthy sandwich. In Years 5 and 6, the pupils have made a variety of hats using a range of materials, such as card, paper and ribbon. These are of good quality and show that pupils are proficient in their finishing techniques. Pupils also show satisfactory skills in their work on designing and making a moveable fairground ride.

85. The curriculum is satisfactory and supports other subjects such as science and history well. Leadership and management are satisfactory but the subject co-ordinator's role in the monitoring and evaluation of provision is underdeveloped. This is an area of development identified on the school improvement plan. Planning and assessment procedures are satisfactory and provide teachers with clear information about the key learning objectives and skills to be taught. There are adequate resources which are used satisfactorily. Visitors to the school effectively enhance the curriculum. For example, puppeteers visited the school to work with all pupils to develop their skills in puppet making. Pupils comment how much they enjoyed this activity. There has been satisfactory improvement made since the last inspection.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

86. By the time that pupils reach the end of Year 6, the majority of them, including those with special educational needs attain the standards expected for their age in both subjects. There is only sufficient evidence to make a judgement on the satisfactorily quality of teaching in history for Years 3 to 6 pupils. There is insufficient evidence on which to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching and learning in geography throughout the school.

87. In history, the pupils in Years 1 and 2 are helped to develop their understanding of time, by listening to stories about the past and of famous people. Earlier learning is reinforced by the use of books, photographs and historical artefacts. Through the use of these resources pupils are taught how to recognise similarities and differences through the years. This was seen in a display in the hall, in which they have compared seaside holidays today with those fifty and a hundred years ago. They identify differences in traffic, clothes and the kind of things people do on holiday then and now. They have visited a local toy museum to find out how toys in the past differ from those today. The teachers of older pupils have secure subject knowledge and are able to organise and manage their classes well, so that pupils have a good work rate. There is clear explanation of the ideas to be taught and teachers place emphasis on pupils using correct historical vocabulary, which enables them to communicate their ideas in a confident manner. There is good use of time and effective use of questioning to find out what pupils know and understand. This enables activities to be matched to the needs of pupils of different abilities, so that they are appropriately challenged. This was evident in a good lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4 when learning about when the Vikings. The teacher's expertise enabled her to maintain the pupils' interest and concentration and, consequently, they made good progress in

developing their knowledge and understanding of this period in British history. In this lesson, as in others, the pupils' attitudes to learning were positive, being able to sustain concentration and willing to ask and answer questions. They were well behaved and willing to listen to the views and opinions of others. The pupils are taught how to use evidence to find out about the past and how things change over a period of time. There is emphasis placed on pupils developing an understanding of the significance of historical artefacts and how by examining them they can find out more about the past.

88. In a lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, the teacher used information and communication technology (ICT) well to develop their understanding of how pop groups in the sixties differ from those of today. The pupils showed appropriate research skills in this lesson when using the Internet and CD-ROMS to find out information about the different groups. Through their work on Ancient Greece these pupils also have a secure knowledge about the differences between life in Sparta and Athens. They have an appropriate understanding of the main changes that have taken place in Britain since 1938, such as in transport and education.

89. In geography, the pupils in Years 1 and 2 have satisfactory mapping skills that enable them to plan a route from home to school. They label places on a map of the United Kingdom and know that London is a capital city. There is appropriate development of the older pupils' ability to extract information from secondary sources and sound progress is made in the acquisition of correct geographical vocabulary, so they can talk confidently about their work. This was seen in a good quality lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4 when learning about food and trade in Pakistan. The teacher encouraged pupils to find information from a variety of reference books and intervened well during group activities to promote good quality discussion. By the end of Year 6, most pupils use lines of longitude and latitude to locate places on a map. They give a reasoned argument on environmental issues, such as if there was a need for traffic lights and a zebra crossing near a local supermarket. Activities such as these make a good contribution to pupils' social and moral development. Pupils' make satisfactory use of information and communication technology as a means of recording their findings of a local traffic survey.

90. There is satisfactory curricular provision in both subjects, so that all pupils are able to enjoy a range of relevant experiences. Visits to places of educational interest, such as the Roman Museum in Maryport and the Mayor's parlour, as well as studies of the local environment, are used well to provide further learning opportunities. Leadership and management are secure and there are good plans in place to improve monitoring and evaluation procedures. Planning and assessment arrangements are satisfactory. In terms of using their literacy skills, pupils are provided with appropriate opportunities to engage in open-ended research and produce sustained independent writing. However, the standard of presentation of this writing is not good enough particularly in Years 5 and 6 and teachers need higher expectations of what pupils' can achieve in this aspect of their work in history and geography. Written marking is not used satisfactorily to inform pupils of how they might improve the standard of their work in both subjects. Pupils use their numeracy skills in geography when using co-ordinates in their map work and in history when sequencing chronological events on a timeline. There has been satisfactory improvement in both subjects since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

91. By the time that pupils are at the end of Year 6, the majority including those with special educational needs attain standards that match those expected for their age, having made satisfactory progress and achieving satisfactorily as they pass through the school.

92. Though only limited direct teaching was seen, it is clear from other evidence that the quality of teaching is satisfactory. While pupils are in Year 1, there is an appropriate emphasis given to

developing the pupils' basic skills in the subject and they are taught that computers can be used to make words, pictures and to assemble text. By the end of Year 2, pupils know how to change the type and size of text and to retrieve, process and display information. The teacher provides pupils with the opportunity to use ICT support their learning in other subjects, such as in mathematics when using a paint programme to create symmetrical drawings. In a lesson on learning how to use the 'paint fill' function, the pupils' attitudes to learning were positive. They were well behaved, listened carefully and concentrated well.

93. As they pass through Years 3 and 4, the pupils are taught how to use data handling programmes to create a variety of pie charts and bar graphs, as is evident in their recording of a survey to find their favourite kind of sandwich. They learn how to choose a font and a font size and how to use the bold key to improve their word processing skills. They show good skills in using the flip and rotate tool when creating repeating patterns. In Years 5 and 6, pupils produce more sophisticated graphs and charts and learn how to interpret the information displayed, as seen in their graphs of a traffic survey of Cockermouth. These pupils made satisfactory progress in learning how to import information from the Internet. The specialist-teaching assistant had very good subject knowledge, which enabled her to clearly explain how to incorporate text and images in a document. She also effectively explained the meaning of terms such as 'search engine' and 'html/url' to extend the pupils' technical vocabulary. By the time that they are at the end of Year 6, most pupils use information communication technology (ICT) to enhance their work in subjects such as English, mathematics, science, history and geography, but the school has identified this as an area for further development. In these activities, the pupils are able to use information technology to organise and present their ideas and show confidence and enjoyment when using computers.

94. The school recognises the need to ensure more structure in timetabling ICT lessons, so that basic skills are taught more effectively. The subject makes a positive contribution to the pupils' personal and social development, as they are able to work collaboratively in pairs and small groups on computers. There is sound leadership and management but the school is aware that the subject co-ordinator has had limited opportunity to monitor and evaluate the quality of education provided. Planning and assessment arrangements are satisfactory, and there are good plans in place to improve them by incorporating guidelines from Cumbria Local Education Authority for teaching ICT to classes of two age ranges. Resources are adequate, but the school is keen to improve them and has just ordered three new computers and associated software. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

MUSIC

95. There was very little direct evidence of music available during the inspection and the musical activity observed was a hymn practice for pupils in Years 1 to 6. Therefore it is not possible to make a secure judgement on standards, achievement or teaching and learning in this subject. During hymn singing however, the pupils sang well following the good example of the teachers who enthusiastically led the activity.

96. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Since the previous inspection a new programme of work has been introduced and the quality and range of resources have improved. Improvement therefore is satisfactory. The school has an appropriate range of musical resources that are stored carefully and are looked after well by the pupils. The subject contributes satisfactorily to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils learn songs from different cultures and sing together for a variety of audiences. The curriculum is planned carefully using a nationally agreed scheme of work and assessment and recording procedures are also satisfactory. The monitoring and evaluation role of the subject co-ordinator is under developed, although she does have the opportunity to hear all pupils sing during singing practice.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

97. During the inspection there was no opportunity to observe any physical education lessons and therefore a secure judgement on standards, achievement or the quality of teaching and learning cannot be made. However from the teachers' planning it is clear that over the academic year pupils receive a full physical education curriculum. The majority of pupils by the age of 11 can swim to at least the expected standard for their age in line with the requirements set out in the National Curriculum. Outdoor activities are undertaken in the spacious school grounds.

98. The pupils throughout the school clearly enjoy physical activities as was seen during the sports afternoon. All ages of pupils joined in the different races with enthusiasm, not worrying if they were first or last. It was a very good social occasion where pupils cheered loudly and provided encouragement for each other. Many parents came to watch this activity and it is plain that it plays an important part in forging good links with the community. Sporting activities make a good contribution to pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

99. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The useful programme of work in place ensures that learning is continuous throughout the school and effectively supports teachers' planning. Assessment and record-keeping procedures are also satisfactory. Over the year pupils have the opportunity to partake in a number of after-school activities including rugby, football, cricket, swimming and cross-country. The school is particularly proud of pupils' successes in competitive sporting events when considering the size of the school. The monitoring and evaluation role of the subject co-ordinator is under developed. Resources are satisfactory and they are used well by all staff.