

INSPECTION REPORT

KIRKBY THORE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kirkby Thore

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112181

Headteacher: Mrs H McKay

Reporting inspector: Mr D J Halford
12908

Dates of inspection: 19 – 22 November 2001

Inspection number: 196429

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: Community
Age range of pupils: 4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Kirkby Thore
Penrith
Cumbria

Postcode: CA10 1UU

Telephone number: 017683 61497

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr T Soulsby

Date of previous inspection: 1 – 3 July 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
12908	Mr D J Halford	Registered inspector	The Foundation Stage Curriculum	What sort of school is it?
			Equal Opportunities	How high are standards? The school's results and achievements.
			English	How well are pupils taught?
			Art & Design	How well is the school led and managed?
			Music	
			Physical Education	
			Religious Education	
9649	Mrs J Smith	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
17833	Ms K Ardley	Team inspector	Mathematics	How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			Geography	
			History	
14991	Mr A Hardwicke	Team inspector	Special Educational Needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Science	
			Information & Communication Technology	
			Design & Technology	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Kirkby Thore Primary School is a small primary school which caters for pupils aged 4 to 11. It serves the village of Kirkby Thore and is located between Penrith and Appleby. It is part of the Cumbria LEA. There are currently 73 pupils on roll, of which 37 are boys and 36 are girls. Pupils come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds, but an increasing number experience the difficulties of significant economic hardship. Most children benefit from attending the good quality part time nursery provision which is independent of the school, but operating within it. On entry to the school, the pupils' levels of attainment range widely, but the majority show below average levels of skills for their age. There is a significant amount of pupil mobility. Over twenty per cent of the pupils (above the national average) are eligible for free school meals. Currently twenty-four pupils are on the register of special educational needs. This represents one-third of the pupils in school and is also above the national average. Four pupils have statements of special educational need. This represents almost six percent of the pupils in school and is well above the national average. No pupils have English as an additional language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with many strengths and few weaknesses. Good leadership and management ensure that the school has clear direction. The school creates a very positive atmosphere for learning and the needs of individual pupils are very well known by the staff. Good teaching throughout the school has a positive impact on the pupils' learning. Standards in the basic skills of English, mathematics and science are at the expected level by the time the pupils are aged eleven. Pupils achieve well and the school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- There are outstanding relationships between all adults and pupils in this school, which enables the pupils to feel secure, work hard, have very good attitudes to their work and behave very well. The school takes good care of its pupils.
- There is a high proportion of good teaching throughout the school which has a positive impact on pupils' learning and promotes effective achievement.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and assists pupils on the SEN register to make good progress with their learning.
- Pupils' personal development is very good; their social development is outstanding.
- The school has a very good partnership with parents and its local community and it is very effective in securing and using external funds available to it.
- The headteacher provides very clear direction for the school. She is ably assisted by a good governing body who have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

What could be improved

- Develop a more consistent application of the school's policy for 'Teaching and Learning'
 - by ensuring that lessons precisely identify what it is that pupils are expected to learn
 - by ensuring that pupils' progress is accurately tracked as they pass through the school
 - by ensuring that pupils themselves are involved in the process of knowing what it is they need to do next to take their learning forward.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress since it was last inspected in July 1997. The school has made significant progress with its curriculum provision, particularly with its long and medium term planning, in ensuring all pupils have equal access to the National Curriculum programmes of study. Appropriate schemes of work are now in place. The school has significantly improved its provision for music. Progress has been made in the development of the role of subject co-ordinators in evaluation of teaching and learning, but in aspects of targeting and tracking the pupils' performance there is still more to be done.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

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

Key	
Very high	A*
Well above average	A
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

There are only small numbers of pupils in each year group and this makes the statistics generated for the above comparisons unreliable, as can be seen from widely fluctuating comparisons year by year. In 2001, the numbers of pupils on the special educational needs register was above the national average and the test results reflect this. However, when looking at the pupils' performance at the age of eleven and comparing it with their performance at the age of seven, there is evidence of good progress being made by the majority of pupils, particularly in English and mathematics. The present Year 6 group is again small in number, but their level of attainment is in line with that expected for their age in English, mathematics and science. The test results for seven year olds show a similar degree of fluctuations noted for the older pupils. Test results indicate well below average attainment by the age of seven, in all core subjects, but the number of pupils is very small and each pupil carries a significant percentage. The majority achieve the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics. By the age of eleven, pupils standards in information technology and art and design are above average. Standards are generally those expected for their age in all other subjects and religious education.

When children first start school, many have had the opportunity of attending the independently run nursery which operates within the school. They benefit from good quality experience there, but, despite there being a wide range of background experience amongst the children, the majority show below average levels of skill on entry into the Reception Year. The majority make good progress and achieve well. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are supported very well and they make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Their needs are identified at an early stage and very clear arrangements made for them to identify what they need to do next to improve.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils show very good attitudes to school. They come to school eagerly and are careful with school property. They are very keen to learn, settle

	to work quickly and concentrate very well on what they are asked to do.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good in the classes, around the school and in the playground. Pupils are polite and happy to discuss their work with visitors.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between adults and pupils are outstanding throughout the school. Pupils are particularly sensitive to the difficulties of those with special educational needs. Pupils show good levels of responsibility and take initiative when the need arises.
Attendance	Attendance levels are good. The school has good procedures to encourage improving attendance.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good overall and has improved since the last inspection. There is evidence of good teaching throughout the school and a significant proportion of very good teaching for pupils aged 7 and 11. Teachers know the needs of individual pupils and have high expectations of them. This leads directly to the use of perceptive questioning which takes pupils' learning forward. Teachers are ably assisted by support staff of very good quality and the management of pupils in lessons is very good. Support for pupils with special educational needs is very good and in some areas outstanding. This also contributes very positively to the pupils' learning. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. Where teaching was at its best there was a sharp focus on what pupils were to learn in the lessons and pupils had a clear idea of what to do next to improve their understanding.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. There is a good emphasis on literacy and numeracy within the provision of a full curriculum. There is particular good provision in ICT and art.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils' individual needs are very readily identified and the provision of very good support enables them to make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school makes outstanding provision for the pupils' social development and very good provision for their spiritual, moral and cultural development. These areas are a strength of the work in this school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school has very good procedures for monitoring the behaviour and personal needs of its pupils. Their academic progress is monitored

	well.
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The school works very well with parents. They feel very confident in approaching the school when needs arise and they feel that the information provided by the school is very good. There were no indications from parents of areas where they thought the school could do more.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very clear educational direction for the school. She is well supported. All who are involved with the school are committed to it and actively seek its further development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is well informed, very involved in all aspects of school life and carries out its duties well. They fulfil all their statutory requirements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school management and governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are working purposefully to continue to improve the quality of education provided so that the pupils achieve higher standards.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Financial planning is secure, ensuring that funding is allocated to agreed priorities and resources are being used effectively to raise standards. The school is particularly strong at working with other agencies to secure finance to enhance its provision.

Staffing levels are good and higher than in many schools of a similar size. It is a priority of the Governing Body to actively seek to maintain these staffing levels. Staffing levels ensure that pupils spend a high proportion of time in small groups, receiving good quality attention. Governors work hard to ensure that they receive good value for the money they spend. The accommodation has been extended thoughtfully, is clean and is well maintained. The provision for the youngest children is old and limits what the school can currently provide. Equally, the school has to make use of a community hall to undertake physical education lessons. Learning resources are good overall, and particularly good for ICT, where the school has bid successfully for external help.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>Many parents felt that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are happy at school and make good progress. • The teaching is good and children are expected to work hard • The school staff are approachable • Parents feel well informed about their children's progress. 	<p>The parents who responded were generally very content with the school.</p>

The inspectors agree with all the positive points made and are pleased to record that no suggestions for improvement were made.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. To use national test results alone to assess standards is not helpful in this situation, where year groups are very small and there is a larger than average number of pupils on the higher stages of the special educational needs register. Standards for the majority of pupils are generally in line with those expected for the pupils' ages for the present Year 2 and Year 6 pupils and pupils of different abilities achieve well.
2. The national test results for 11-year olds have fluctuated substantially over the last few years, particularly in mathematics and science, with well above average results in 1999 in both subjects. Results were lower in 1998 and 2000, remaining at or above the national average in mathematics but falling below the national average in science on both occasions. Results over time in English have remained closer to the national average and shown rather more moderate movements. The 2001 results levels of attainment which are broadly in line with the average in science, above average in English and well above average in mathematics. Work seen during the inspection amongst the small group of Year 6 pupils shows attainment to be in line with expectations for age in all three subjects.
3. When analysing the trends over time of successive groups of pupils at the age of seven and comparing their levels of attainment at the age of eleven, there is good progress being made. Attainment is therefore high enough by the time pupils reach the age of eleven.
4. The reading and writing national tests for seven-year-olds have shown marked movements in reading and writing. They have been relatively close to the national average and rising slightly above it in 1999, before falling substantially in 2000 and rising again in 2001, although remaining well below the national average. Standards in mathematics have been close to the national average up to 1999 and have fallen for the last two years to a position in 2001 when they are well below average. However, the present Year 2 are attaining at levels that are close to those expected for their age in reading writing and mathematics. Similarly standards in science are in line with those expected for the pupils' age.
5. Children start school showing wide variations in skills, but the majority start in the Reception Year with below average levels of attainment. Many have had the opportunity to take part in the good quality experiences available in the privately run Nursery group which takes place within the school building. This means that a substantial number of children are used to each other and can share items of equipment and take turns. They settle quickly into the school routines. For many their mathematical development and speaking skills are relatively limited when they start school, but good progress is made and most achieve the learning goals anticipated for five-year-olds by the time they start Year 1. Most children show good listening skills and an appropriate knowledge and understanding of the world. When compared to the progress of children reported when the school was last inspected there is evidence that the school has maintained its good provision. There is still some work to do in developing a tracking system so that progress made by these young children can be checked more efficiently.

6. When children move to Year 1, they continue to make good progress and achieve well. Pupils aged 5 to 7 are regularly involved in challenging and demanding tasks. They are well supported by experienced classroom staff. Their listening skills are very good and most pupils use them well. Recent work centred upon going on a 'Bear Hunt' was followed up well in a movement lesson in which the pupils participated with much enthusiasm.
7. As pupils move into Year 3 they continue to make progress with their learning. They enjoy particularly good relationships throughout the school, but benefit particularly from this very positive learning environment as they get older. They show increasing confidence in their own abilities. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrated this very effectively in an English lesson where they explored elements of clause analysis. From listening intently to a clear explanation from the teacher, each of the year 6 pupils produced work of a particularly high standard using well-chosen and effective vocabulary. Pupils of all abilities work consistently and are pleased to do well.
8. Throughout the school pupils work in a wide range of subjects benefits from their ability to transfer their literacy and numeracy skills to other subjects, and the older pupils show high levels of skills in using information technology to help their research and their presentation of work. This was seen particularly effectively in some Power Point presentations produced by pupils in Year 6. This is a very good improvement on the position reported when the school was last inspected.
9. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well throughout the school. Their needs are identified at an early stage and appropriate programmes of work are established for them. There is particularly valuable support from classroom assistants working in each classroom. There is a high proportion of pupils who carry statements of special educational need. They receive very good support, and outstanding support in the case of a pupil in the Year 1/Year 2 class who has complex needs. These pupils are regularly seen to be working at the same tasks as their peers. They make good progress with their learning. This position has been maintained and built upon since the previous inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They enjoy coming to school and they talk about their lessons, extra-curricular activities and the staff they work with in very positive terms. Pupils want to learn and they try very hard to succeed. Pupils are attentive, keen to answer questions and undertake tasks enthusiastically. Pupils take pride in their work, their equipment and recorded work in books. They settle quickly to lessons, are enthusiastic and listen well to their teachers and one another. They are able to show responsibility and take initiative when the need arises. The start to the school day is calm and purposeful as pupils apply themselves to activities in their classrooms as soon as they arrive. High quality displays are a prominent feature of the school. This helps pupils to appreciate that their work is valued. Adults in school provide excellent role models for the pupils who are polite, well mannered and tolerant of different view points.
11. Pupils with special educational needs develop very good attitudes to school and their learning. They know they are valued because their teachers, support staff and other pupils take every opportunity to fully involve them in all activities.
12. The pupils' behaviour in lessons, in the playground, when moving around the school and at lunchtimes is very good. Pupils are polite, well mannered and respect each other and adults.

This behaviour contributes to a safe and orderly environment that supports learning and personal development. In classrooms behaviour is very well managed. In lessons pupils move into groups in an orderly way and are quickly ready to concentrate on their work. Expectations of good behaviour are high and teachers constantly highlight and reward examples of individual pupils behaving well.

13. At lunchtimes pupils eat in mixed age groups and older pupils provide excellent examples of good behaviour in their supporting and valuing their younger peers. Midday and kitchen staff treat the pupils with respect and model high standards of polite conversation and care for each other during lunchtime.
14. Playtimes and lunchtimes are civilised occasions when pupils of all ages and both genders play well together. The playground space provides for a range of activities and markings such as the one hundred number square add extra interest for pupils. There have been no incidents of bullying seen or reported in the school for sometime. Pupils are however very clear about what they would do if they became aware of any bullying. They expressed confidence in the staff and the pupil counsellors to deal effectively with any incidences if they arose. Pupils feel safe, secure and cared for at this school. Staff know them well and care about their happiness and development. There have been no exclusions from school.
15. The pupils' personal development and relationships are outstanding. Pupils have appropriate respect for their own and others' property and show respect for others feelings, values and beliefs. Pupils are given many opportunities to explore their feelings and beliefs and to share them with each other. Recent work about remembrance displayed in the school clearly illustrates the respect shown for pupils' feelings. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to work co-operatively and collaboratively. They are able to make good use of these opportunities and they have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Very effective collaboration was seen in a mathematics lesson when pupils worked in pairs to calculate the perimeter and area of a complex shape. Relationships within the school are very good at all levels. Pupils are courteous and friendly towards each other and adults working in the school. They also make visitors feel very welcome.
16. Attendance is above the national average level and there is no unauthorised absence.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. There are many good features in the teaching which are helping pupils to be interested in their learning. The teaching of basic skills of literacy and numeracy are fundamental to the work of the school and pupils throughout the school are beginning to apply these skills to other areas of their work. Teaching is very good in 20 per cent of the lessons, good in 49 per cent of the lessons and satisfactory in 35 per cent. During the inspection no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. This represents a significant improvement when compared to the position reported at the last inspection.
18. In the foundation stage of learning the class teacher and the classroom assistant work effectively together providing an appropriate balance between direct teaching and helping the children to learn from practical experience. For example, good links were made with a recent visit made to the railway station in the nearby town of Appleby, to get the children to talk about a train in the Big Book story they were reading together. Again, when many of the children found the introduction of the word 'gaggle' amusing when it was applied to a group of geese, the teacher followed up well by directing the children's attention to the collective nouns

‘flock’ when applied to sheep and ‘herd’ when applied to cows. She worked well from the children’s understanding. The school day begins well, before registration, with a wide range of boxed games and other activities which the children work with happily. Small groups readily join together to play dice games and demonstrate a good grasp of numbers up to the value of six. These activities are managed well and enable the children to use their developing mathematical knowledge effectively. It is noticeable that the children settle easily to their tasks, often without the direct supervision of adults. A substantial amount of attention is given to the way resources are made available to the children to enable the children to use them with a good degree of independence. There are good opportunities available for children to take interest in books and make attempts at writing. These opportunities are followed up well. For example, a child who had just celebrated his birthday took the trouble to send ‘thank you’ notes, which he had made and decorated, to the other children in the class. The small number of children who do not settle easily, or who still find it difficult to share and take turns, are dealt with sensitively and effectively. Occasionally, tasks lack a sufficiently sharp focus to sustain the children’s interest. This stems from insufficient precision on what it is the children are expected to learn. This aspect of lesson planning could be improved. However, there are many good features to the teaching of these young children and they are well supported in their learning.

19. When they move to Class 2 (Years 1 and 2), the pupils are very well supported within a thoughtfully structured learning environment. The teaching of literacy is particularly strong. Phonic skills are developed very well, as with the group of pupils working with sound buttons. Here the teacher takes a good opportunity to teach letter formation. Group working is strong feature of this class and the pupils are supported very well by experienced classroom support staff who know the pupils well and engage them effectively in appropriate conversation related to their activities. Lessons are well structured and maintain a good pace. This helps to sustain the pupils’ interest and they clearly enjoy the work. The pupils respond well to the story of the ‘Runaway Chapati’. They recall the story well and make good predictions for what might happen next. There is a good emphasis on the importance of books which helps to foster a love of literature in the pupils. Work on the five senses, where pupils have to use their ears to discern the direction of a sound without being able to see where it comes from illustrates how secure the pupils are in the class. They show a great deal of interest in the activity and move on excitedly to make some musical instruments. Through these simple activities they learn that sound travels through the air and cannot be seen; that the pitch of sound can vary and that sound can be produced in different ways. There is a high percentage of pupils on the special educational needs register in this class and the teaching is carefully matched to the needs of small groups of pupils. It enables them to work well. A statemented pupil with complex needs receives outstanding support which enables him to work alongside his peers very effectively.
20. Older pupils in the 7 – 11 age range also benefit from good teaching. In the class with pupils in Years 3 & 4 a purposeful working atmosphere is frequently established, as when the pupils were working in numeracy on fractions. Precise teaching enabled them to recognise that there were several parts used to make up a whole and they developed a clear understanding of fractions as a part of an area. In this lesson, what the pupils were expected to learn was sharply focussed and precisely identified. This was not so in a later lesson when information was sought from the internet about the British Car Rally. Here, too much information was available from a very wide variety of sources and a substantial proportion of the pupils found the activity too demanding. Nevertheless, the pupils worked diligently and with great interest and were very pleased when they found some correct information. In Years 5 and 6 the pupils benefit from a substantial proportion of very good teaching – particularly the pupils in

Year 6 who are sometimes taught as a group by the headteacher. This has a very positive impact on their learning. In a particularly good example, a literacy lesson considered sentence construction using adventurous words. Pupils were asked to work with two simple sentences and produce a compound sentence using connectives. What started as a simple discussion moved effectively on to a consideration of clauses and each individual pupil produced highly effective examples which clearly illustrated their grasp of the lesson. The teacher showed very good levels of subject knowledge and confidence. Relationships are of a very good level and teaching is very effective.

21. Throughout the school, pupils listen well, and make every effort to undertake the tasks asked of them. They behave well throughout and concentrate effectively on their lessons. Teachers and classroom assistants know their pupils very well, and the pupils themselves know they are well supported. Pupils are at ease and confident in their school and with their classroom staff. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. Where improvements could be made they are to be found in the consistency with which aspects of teaching are applied to the classroom. The school has a good policy for 'Teaching and Learning'. It clearly outlines precise guidelines for effective classroom practice. Many of its recommendations can be seen in practice. For example, very good teaching was frequently observed where lesson planning was sharply focussed on what pupils were to learn next. Also, the school has made some progress in providing effective targets for individual pupils' improvement. However, in both these areas, of sharply focussed learning for pupils and effective targeting of individual pupils' improvement the school's current provision is inconsistent. Equally, whilst the school's marking policy is good, it would also benefit from a more consistent application to help pupils themselves know what it is they need to do to take their learning forward.
22. Throughout the school there is effective support provided for pupils with special educational needs. The teaching of pupils with special education needs is good, and they learn well. Teachers are very good at providing appropriate activities for pupils with special needs, and meeting the requirements of their individual education plans (IEP's). IEPs are kept to hand and are working documents alongside the overall planning of class teachers. The very good working relationships between teachers and support staff ensure that the best support is provided. Support assistants work very well with their designated pupils, and also make a positive contribution to the work of the class as a whole. Class teachers are skilled at ensuring that pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all aspects of the work and life of the class, and, such is their expertise that it is often difficult for a visitor to be aware of the presence of these pupils, as they work unnoticeably alongside the other pupils. Pupils with statements of special educational need are also very well integrated, and participate fully in lessons, as a result of teachers' skilful planning, and the very good use of guidance and advice from appropriate outside agencies.
23. There is little doubt that the quality of the teaching is having a positive impact on the pupils' learning. This can be seen in the pupils enthusiasm for their tasks and the manner in which they listen actively in their lessons. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been fully embraced in the school and these lessons keep to the recommended structures well. Teaching has shown significant improvement since the last inspection. Besides there being no unsatisfactory teaching seen, it is pleasing to report the higher proportion of very good teaching which is now apparent.
24. Homework is used effectively to extend the work that is happening in school. Most pupils complete it successfully. Parents are happy with the school's arrangements for work that is to be completed at home.

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

25. The school provides a curriculum which is broad and balanced, and which meets statutory requirements. Appropriate provision is made for religious education. The last inspection found deficiencies in some areas of planning, absence of some schemes of work, and underdevelopment in some aspects of the role of subject managers. The school has worked hard to address these issues and they are now much improved, although short term planning is still in need of further improvement.
26. Policies are now in place for all subjects, and the national literacy and numeracy strategies, and national guidelines for other subjects are used by teachers when planning their lessons. This ensures that skills, knowledge and understanding are taught in a progressive way, and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are taught in mixed age classes which are small in numbers, and teachers are good at providing work which is tailored to the needs of individual pupils, whatever their ability. Some lesson plans do not make clear what pupils are to learn, and teachers' marking of pupils' work does not always provide sufficient guidance on how they can improve. These shortcomings together make it difficult for teachers and pupils to see where to go next in learning.
27. Provision for personal social and health education is good. The school has a good policy for sex education and for dealing with issues of awareness of drugs and other harmful substances. The school nurse attends regularly and, with parental permission, gives talks to girls and boys in Year 6 on aspects of growing up. Some aspects of health education, including healthy eating, and human development are included in the science curriculum. In physical education pupils also learn about the benefits of exercise, and its effects, for instance, on the heart.
28. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with a broad and balanced curriculum, in line with the requirements of their IEP's. Pupils with statements of special educational need are also given access to a curriculum which appropriate to their needs. Regular reviews take place, and the class teacher, SENCO, headteacher and parents are all fully and appropriately involved.
29. The school's strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are good. Teachers are confident in adapting the national guidelines to meet the needs of their pupils. Support staff are very well used in these lessons, in particular to ensure the full inclusion of pupils with special educational needs.
30. The range and quality of extra-curricular activities are very good. Pupils of all ages are involved in a wide range of clubs and activities. Sporting activities include football and netball clubs, a sports club for Year 1 and 2 pupils, tag rugby, Kwik Cricket, and gymnastics clubs. Pupils also have opportunities to take part in musical activities both during school time and outside. During the inspection week Year 5 and 6 pupils took part in a good recorder group session. A wide variety of visits to places of interest also takes place, and these play a valuable part in enriching the school's curriculum. Recent visits, to St. Bees on a residential, geographical field trip in Bradford, to gain first hand experience of a town with many people of another culture, have both been very worthwhile in supporting different aspects of the curriculum. Visits have also been made recently to Kendal Museum, Tullie House in Carlisle, and the Rheged Centre, which have supported work in a range of subjects including environmental science, history and art and design.

31. Links with other local schools are good. The school has links with local small schools, with pupils exchanging emails and taking part in sporting events. The 'Small Schools Working Together' initiative is a continuing commitment which includes exchanges and links with St. Bees School. Pupils from Years 5 and 6 visit the local secondary school and teachers from there come to talk to pupils in Year 6. Year 7 pupils also return to the school to talk about life in their new school.
32. The school has developed a wide range of links with the community. The CREDITS Community Development Centre has created a great deal of interest locally, as well as providing the school with a very valuable information and communication technology resource. The centre recently won a national award, and representatives from the school went to London for a presentation. Each year the village holds a Field Day, with activities for all local residents. The school plays a full part in the day's activities, to the benefit and enjoyment of all. There are good links with local churches, with representatives visiting the school, conducting assemblies and talking to the children. School carol services are held at the church and chapel, and parents and other local residents are welcomed. The school works hard to sustain these local links and is looking at ways to develop them further. Links with local industry are seen as a possible future development.
33. Provision for pupils' personal development is very good overall. That for pupils' social development is excellent, while spiritual, moral and cultural development are all very good. Assemblies meet statutory requirements, and pupils are given opportunities for quiet reflection on the issues raised. There are also opportunities for pupils to experience awe and wonder in the course of their day-to-day work. In a Year 1 and 2 lesson, for example, a child was amazed and delighted when he succeeded in filling the shape of Barnaby Bear on the computer screen, with the colours he had chosen. In examples of pupils' written work displayed around the school many examples were seen of the appreciation of the wonders and problems of the world around them. Time for discussion in lessons also give pupils opportunities to think about personal issues and the way they get on with others.
34. Pupils' social development is excellently promoted at all stages in the school. The high expectations of the teachers and other adults, and the way they work together for the benefit of everyone provide a strong role model for the pupils. In lessons seen during the inspection the high quality of the relationships between adults and children, and consequently between the children, were consistent features. Pupils therefore become increasingly aware of the needs and feelings of others. They care for each other in ways which are often more mature than their ages would suggest. They listen very well and with understanding when others talk about their feelings, such as when the older pupils talk in assembly. They accurately describe their feelings of loneliness when away from home on a residential visit. In the playground and around the school pupils are considerate of others, courteous, and play together well. There is a scheme for the older pupils to help the younger ones during lunchtime. In lessons where sharing and co-operation are required, pupils are very good at taking turns and listening to the opinions of others. In a Year 5 and 6 science lesson, for example, a visitor came to talk to pupils. They listened attentively and then asked questions sensibly and politely, showing excellent social skills.
35. Spiritual development is very well promoted. As well as in assemblies, many opportunities are taken in a variety of subjects to consider spiritual aspects. In work about Remembrance Day pupils wrote about the sacrifices of war, and showed a spiritual dimension to their work in the way that they considered the deeper meaning of the issues raised. In art and music pupils are

also given opportunities to think about the beauty of a piece of music, a picture, or sculpture. As they come in to assembly there is often soft music playing, and pupils sit calmly and enjoy a few moments of quiet thought. As they grow older and move through the school pupils are given many opportunities to develop their spiritual understanding.

36. The school ensures that pupils develop a very good understanding of moral issues. In response to the parents' questionnaire one hundred percent of parents agreed with the statement 'The school helps my child mature'. The inspection agrees with this view. Pupils are clearly taught the difference between right and wrong. They are regularly rewarded through praise, both for hard work and for their behaviour and helpfulness around the school. The practice of a weekly Celebration Assembly gives everyone an opportunity to enjoy the successes of their friends. The values of honesty and fairness are continually promoted by all the staff, and they provide very good role models for their pupils. In lessons which deal with aspects of health education, pupils can discuss possible dilemmas, which they may encounter as they grow up. As a result, they can develop their own ideas on dangerous aspects of life such as smoking and the misuse of drugs.
37. Pupils' awareness of their own and other world cultures is also very well developed. Participation in local events such as the annual village Field Day and carol services, as well as their local studies work in history and geography, give them a very good understanding of their own cultural heritage. By taking part in visits such as that recently undertaken to the Hindu Mandir and Multi-Faith Centre in Bradford pupils are also given a better understanding of the cultural diversity of the wider world. Pupils' writing about dressing in saris showed a growing understanding of the richness of cultural differences, and very good development of cultural understanding.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. A strength of the school is the way in which all staff work together to provide a secure and happy learning environment. The school not only takes very good care of pupils but successfully encourages pupils to take good care of each other. The work of the support staff is a significant element in the school's very good provision of care. Daily communication between parents and teachers ensures that any problems which arise are quickly identified and dealt with. Parents value the very good care their children receive.
39. The location of the local nursery in the centre of the school and the good links which the school has with it help to make the transition of children to the reception class very easy. There are very good arrangements to ease the transition of Year 6 pupils to secondary school. The school has good procedures for ensuring the health and safety of pupils. A governor with responsibility for health and safety carries out regular risk assessments of the premises and the school acts promptly on any concerns identified. First aid arrangements are good. Lessons in personal, social and health education help pupils to learn more about their personal safety and how to look after themselves. Older pupils are taught some first aid. Lunch-time organisers take good care of pupils at lunch time and in the playground. The school has good child protection procedures and all staff are fully aware of child protection issues.
40. There are very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. All staff have consistently high expectations of pupils' good behaviour. Pupils respond very well to these expectations by demonstrating a high level of self discipline. The school's good discipline policy aims to promote consideration for others which it does successfully. The strong ethos of care and consideration for others which the school has established is very effective in

preventing bullying. However there are very good procedures in place to deal with any bullying which might occur.

41. Pupils with special educational needs are very well cared for by the school. As the school is small, pupils and teachers all know each other well, and a caring ethos is very well promoted. Systems are in place, such as that by which the older pupils look after the younger ones during lunchtime, which ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are well cared for.
42. The school monitors attendance effectively and attendance and punctuality are good. The registration period is well used and provides a calm, productive start to the day. On arrival, parents help to settle their youngest children and all pupils set to work very sensibly on work related activities.
43. The school supports pupils' personal development very effectively. Teachers know pupils very well. Good guidance is provided in personal, social and health education lessons and also in circle time which provides an opportunity for teachers to discuss with younger pupils any incidents of inconsiderate behaviour which might have occurred. Good work and other types of achievement are encouraged and celebrated through good work assemblies and through "the star of the week".

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. Parents strongly support the school. The parents' questionnaire reveals an exceptionally high level of confidence in all aspects of the school's work. Parents particularly value the good teaching their children receive and the way they are expected to work hard. They strongly appreciate the way the school is helping their children to make progress not just in their work but also in their personal development. They agree that teachers are very approachable. Parents who attended the parents' meeting were similarly very positive and said they like the way the school is moving forward and improving. They did not raise any concerns.
45. The school's very effective partnership with parents makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning. There is very good communication between home and school. In addition to good informal daily contact between teachers and parents the school often invites parents to come into school to look at pupils' work and displays. The regular informative newsletters help parents to feel closely involved with the school. The school is prompt to contact parents if their children are making especially good progress towards their targets or if there are any problems. Annual written reports for parents on their children's progress are based on teachers' very good knowledge of pupils. Clear judgements on progress in English, mathematics, and science are outlined in detail and there is good coverage of other subjects. Useful targets are included and where these relate to specific weaknesses in core subjects they are particularly useful.
46. Parents' involvement with the school has been greatly strengthened through the Community Development Centre courses organised through the CREDITS initiative which numerous parents have done. Parents speak very highly of this good initiative which has not only enabled them to gain qualifications in ICT but has helped them to support better their own children's learning. Parents provide good support for their children's work at home by listening to their children read and supporting them with their homework. The very good regular contact between teachers and parents of pupils with special educational needs effectively helps pupils to make steady progress towards their targets. Parents provide very useful support to the

school by helping in classes and with computers and practical activities. A parent runs the after school computer club and parents sometimes give talks to pupils, such as the interesting talk on outer space given by one father. The school values the work of the parent support group which organises a lottery and supports school activities.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The headteacher is very much at the heart of this school. She has a strong presence in school and is well respected by the governors, her colleagues and the parents. She has a very clear vision for the school within its community and she is ably supported by a good governing body and a hardworking staff in shaping the direction of the school. She has a clear picture of the priorities for development and is active in monitoring the teaching and learning taking place in the school. At the time of the last inspection the leadership of the school was described as effective and the current position represents a further improvement on the last report.
48. This inspection took place at a time when a senior teacher at the school, who shared the teaching duties of the oldest pupils with the headteacher, had very recently been seconded to a neighbouring school as Acting Headteacher. This inevitably meant that her co-ordinating roles had been somewhat hastily re-assigned to other colleagues, some of whom already carry significant co-ordinating roles.
49. The school shows a good level of commitment to its aims. Pupils show very good levels of interest in their work and are keen to do well. Pupils achieve well and are demonstrating good levels of attainment in the standards of much of the work they produce.
50. The headteacher is very effective in generating additional funds for the school to support the curriculum provision and the needs of the local community. A significant amount of effort has been directed towards the school's recent successful link with the CREDITS initiative. This is a Cumbria initiative centred upon supporting communities in disadvantaged areas of the county. Through this initiative the school has been provided with finance to re-model part of the building to house and equip a large computer suite which the school uses during the day and the community use at other times. Members of the local community are using the facility and working towards national qualifications. The headteacher currently runs the training courses in the evening. This initiative has been an outstanding success. It has brought members of the community to work in school with a real purpose, has enabled the pupils to attain high standards of computer skills and provided opportunities for employment in an area of some disadvantage. This is just one example of a number of such initiatives which help to finance this small school very effectively.
51. The school development plan is drawn up effectively after a good analysis of the school's needs have been undertaken. Priorities are carefully identified and are well known by governors and staff. All the adults working in school are strongly committed to its success and know the part which they play. There is a strong sense of working to a common purpose. Because the school is small many members of staff have responsibility for many areas. There is, overall, a good level of evaluating taking place, particularly in the core subjects of the national curriculum, and some governors have been actively involved in monitoring aspects of teaching and learning.
52. Good use is made of technology as a tool to help manage the school. Pupils' records and individual progress is logged on computers, although more consistent use could be made of some of the assessment information gathered to take pupils' learning forward and set

appropriate targets for pupils to work towards. There is effective day-to-day administration, with a dedicated clerical assistant who keeps detailed records of transactions in long hand, but who ensures that matters run smoothly.

53. The governors contain an interesting mix of experienced and new people. They are anxious that the school should continue to prosper. They have an appropriate number and range of committees which enable them to be in a good position of knowing the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They meet their statutory obligations and are a source of effective support for the staff.
54. The school is carrying a substantial budget surplus. Building plans have been passed and the LEA is supporting the establishment of Foundation Stage provision for young children on the school site. There is currently a privately run nursery operating within the school building and the plans are to combine this with the Reception class. Both these groups operate in the oldest part of the building, which is not ideally suited to their needs. The budget surplus is identified to make a substantial contribution to the building costs. The governors manage the funds prudently. The governing body are committed to maintaining good levels of staffing in school and give careful consideration to the impact spending is having on the standards attained and the quality of the provision made.
55. Staffing is generous for a school of this size. Teachers are well deployed, including a newly qualified teacher who works closely with the headteacher. Many pupils have a significant amount of time spent in small groups – particularly in Year 2 and in Year 6. This means that pupils receive a high proportion of individual help and their needs are very well known. At the time of the last inspection some concern was expressed that the a full time teaching commitment. This has now been significantly reduced, but she undertakes a substantial teaching commitment with the oldest pupils. There is a large number of classroom assistants, all of whom work very well alongside class teachers in meeting the needs of the pupils. Many offer support to individual pupils on the special educational needs register. They give very good quality support to the pupils in their care. The role of the special educational needs co-ordinator is well developed. The present co-ordinator has only been in the post for approximately a year, but she has gradually taken over from the headteacher, and this arrangement has worked well. She has taken part in appropriate training courses, and is developing her understanding of special needs teaching through an ongoing professional development programme. Regular meetings are held with outside agencies, and the specialist advisor for autism, for instance, visits frequently so that regular discussions can be held. All aspects of the administration of special needs are well conducted, and documentation and procedures meet the requirements of the Code of Practice. Additionally, the school makes good use of staff with particular expertise, for example in music and art. Teachers with these skills work in school for short periods of time and have a very strong impact on the quality and standards of the pupils' work.
56. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. Parts of the school offer very good accommodation, particularly where classrooms have been extended and in the newly acquired computer suite. The area currently used by the Reception Class is not ideally suited to the needs of young children. Space is rather cramped to enable active movement around the room for these young children and the classroom is separated from the hall by an elderly fold-away screen. The hall is not used for physical education lessons, partly because of its size and partly because it is in constant use for other purposes, notably to accommodate the nursery children each morning. The school have hired the Memorial Hall, in the village, for PE lessons and this involves a relatively long walk and the transporting of appropriate equipment to enable

the curriculum to be fully covered. The accommodation is, however, well maintained and kept to a high order of cleanliness by the caretaker and her assistant.

57. Learning resources are good for almost all subjects and very good for information and communications technology. The resources throughout the school are used well.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. To raise standards of achievement further, the school should:

Raise the teaching beyond its present good quality by ensuring that:-

- a. lessons precisely identify what it is that pupils are expected to learn
 - i. (Paras 18, 20, 21, 26, 68, 79, 86, 95)
- b. pupils' progress is accurately tracked as they pass through the school
 - i. (Paras 21, 79, 90)
- c. pupils themselves are involved in the process of knowing what it is they need to do next to take their learning forward.
 - i. (Paras 21, 26)

The school has a 'Teaching and Learning Policy' of good quality which outlines how many of these features can be achieved. At present this good quality policy is not consistently applied throughout the school.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

36

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

8

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	7	18	11	0	0	0
Percentage	0%	19%	50%	31%	0%	0%	0%

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

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	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/a	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/a	24

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	17
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7%
National comparative data	5.6%

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0%
National comparative data	0.5%

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	3	7	10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	3	3	3
	Girls	4	4	5
	Total	7	7	8
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70 (57)	70 (43)	80 (86)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	3	3	3
	Girls	4	4	5
	Total	7	7	8
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70(43)	70 (43)	80(57)
	National	85(84)	89(88)	89(88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	5	5	10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	4	4	4
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	9	9	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90(75)	90(75)	90(75)
	National	75 (75)	71(72)	87(85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	4	4	4
	Girls	4	3	4
	Total	8	7	8
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80(67)	70(75)	80(75)
	National	72(70)	74 (72)	82(79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	57
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	13.5
Average class size	18.25

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	6.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	124

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.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	193 382
Total expenditure	177 783
Expenditure per pupil	2 470
Balance brought forward from previous year	28 397
Balance carried forward to next year	43 996

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2.0
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

26.02%

Number of questionnaires sent out	73
Number of questionnaires returned	21

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	32	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	68	32	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	42	5	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	47	5	0	11
The teaching is good.	68	21	0	0	11
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	74	21	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	89	5	0	5	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	26	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	53	37	0	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	58	32	0	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	68	32	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	37	37	0	0	16

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

59. Children enter the school in the September of the school year in which they are five years of age. Many have attended the good pre-school facility which operates within the school building, but which is not a provision maintained by the Local Education Authority. When they start school, the children show a wide range of attainment, but the majority show below average levels of attainment, particularly in aspects of communication, language and literacy. By the end of the Reception Year many of the children have made considerable progress. The majority have reached the expected level of attainment but some have not yet achieved all the Early Learning Goals expected by the start of Year 1.

Personal, social and emotional development

60. When they start school, a significant minority of children show below average levels of personal and social skills, although many have had the opportunity of good quality pre-school learning experiences. Some still experience difficulty in sharing and taking turns. The class teacher and her assistant work hard to provide a caring and interesting environment, where children feel secure and well known personally. Good progress is made in a relatively short time, and this can be seen to good effect at the start of the day when many of the children easily move into group activities before registration. Groups of two or three play readily at boxed games with a dice or work together with construction equipment. A child who had just celebrated a birthday had made his own 'thank you' cards. They were decorated with printed shapes, and he gave them out excitedly to his friends. Good opportunities are offered to allow children to grow in confidence. The children achieve well and many attain the goals expected for them by the time they start Year 1.

Communication, language and literacy

61. A strong emphasis is placed on developing children's skills in language and communication in the Reception Year. Many children listen for increasingly long periods of time, although some still find this difficult. The good listening skills which children develop stay with them throughout their time in school. The majority recognise vowel sounds well and some recognise initial phonic sounds. Many can also recognise the ending sounds of rhyming words, and clearly anticipate these when the teacher reads from a Big Book. The teacher skilfully uses the pupils own experience when explain the meaning of words they find difficult. Many children clearly enjoy these activities and make good progress.
62. Children's speaking skills are not so well developed as their listening skills. The majority are not confident speakers, choosing to speak in single words or short phrases, although some are keen to express themselves. Most try hard to explain what they are doing and they do not lack confidence when speaking with visitors, but many show a very limited vocabulary and some are relatively shy.
63. Most children have a clear idea that words carry meaning and there is a good level of interest in books. Whilst reading a Big Book about a railway journey the teacher made good use of a recent visit made to the railway station in the nearby town of Appleby. Most recalled the story quite well and placed the events in the correct sequence. Again, progress is good in this aspect of learning. Overall, children's reading skills are better than their writing skills. Most

children hold pencils correctly, write their name and copy simple sentences, shaping letters with a good level of accuracy. Good overall progress is made in this area of learning, but not all the children confidently achieve the expected goals by the time they begin Year 1.

Mathematical development

64. Overall, the children show better levels of skill with mathematical development than with language and literacy. The children are provided with a wide range of opportunities for counting, sorting and matching. Most children have a secure understanding of number values to ten and some can count confidently beyond ten. They know the numbers in sequence, know the value of the numbers and many know, for example, that five is one more than four. There are appropriate activities to encourage the children to add and subtract which enable many to achieve a clear understanding. Children are again well supported in their number work and some work accurately with a good degree of independence. Most make good progress in this area of learning and go on to reach the goals expected for them by the time they start Year 1.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

65. Some children have a wide general knowledge when they first start school, but the majority do not. They do however show good levels of curiosity. They have regular access to computers which several children used with appropriate levels of confidence. They manipulate the mouse and move the cursor with a good degree of accuracy. They successfully create pictures and print them with help. The classroom assistant offers good levels of help to children in their computer work. There are many opportunities offered to children to build and construct, either using construction equipment or making models from boxes. There is an appropriate play area which is used as a shop or ticket office at different times. Many children show good levels of confidence in handling money. Good links are often made with other areas of learning, for example with shape and space and with aspects of physical development in gluing and sticking with precision in making their models. Most children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the start of Year 1.

Physical development

66. When children enter the Reception Year, most have appropriate physical skills for their age. They have many opportunities to develop their fine motor skills, using pencils, scissors and brushes. Most children use these with increasing levels of confidence. Many are adept at completing simple jigsaw puzzles, which some do speedily, sometimes working on more than one at the same time. The children have access to outdoor activities in the school playground, but they were not seen using tricycles and other large moving equipment. Opportunities for gymnastic activity are rather limited, since the children are unable to use the school hall and the school makes use of a Memorial Hall in the village. This is some distance away from school and a long walk for very young children. Equally, the space available in the classroom is rather limited for the use of large construction equipment. Despite some limitations in the accommodation the children do make good progress in this area of learning. Most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the start of Year 1.

Creative development

67. Most children make good progress in this area of learning. The teaching provides a good range of opportunities for children to develop this area through painting, music and play. There are a wide range of examples of children's paintings displayed well around the classroom.

They have used bright bold colours which virtually all can recognise and name. Creative play in the shop is regularly featured in the children's activities. Here children successfully take on a wide range of role play, buy and sell and give the correct change. There is also a good range of opportunities for children to work creatively, independently and in small groups, with construction equipment. Children have many opportunities to sing, assisting them to recognise recurring patterns of shape and sound. Most are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they reach Year 1.

Teaching

68. The quality of teaching is good overall, with the class teacher and her assistant working well together. They know the pupils well and manage them effectively within area which is rather limited in its scope. The teaching makes good use of the resources available and some children follow up activities at home which they have undertaken in school. The teacher's knowledge of the needs of young children is generally satisfactory and lessons are planned appropriately. Good links are made with the teaching of basic skills, but some lessons lack precise planning. A sharper focus on what children are expected to learn would improve the quality of some lessons. Children with special educational needs are well supported in the Reception Year. They make good progress in their learning.
69. Overall, the children make good progress in their learning. Many show a great interest in what they are asked to do, and a significant number can work independently and concentrate well. This is seen particularly well at the start of the day before registration when children work effectively in small groups.
70. When the school was last inspected the provision in Reception was reported as satisfactory and often good. The school has maintained this strong position, despite the fact that pupils entering the school still display a wide range of skills and levels of attainment when they enter the school.

ENGLISH

71. This is a school where the number of pupils in a year group frequently falls below ten and the statistical evidence must be viewed with caution since each pupil's achievement contributes a substantial proportion to the whole school results. Additionally, there are a higher than average number of pupils in the higher stages of the register of special educational needs and this can have unduly negative influence on the school's results..
72. The national tests for 11-year olds shows that the school's results in English have shown some fluctuations in the last few years, but regularly maintain a position which is above the national average. In 1999 results were well above the national average. The results in 2001, when there were ten pupils in the year group were above the national average and well above the average for schools with a similar percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals. The percentage of pupils gaining the higher levels in the tests was below the national average but broadly in line with the average for pupils in similar schools. There was no significant variation in the performance of boys and girls in English. Most pupils in the current Year 6 group are attaining the expected standards for their age in English.
73. The national test results for 7-year-olds show greater variations over time, with a significant dip in 2000, when results in reading and writing fell to a very low position when compared to the national average. Results in reading and writing in 2001 rose a little, but remain well below

the national average and well below the average for similar schools. The majority of the present Year 2 pupils are attaining the expected standards for their age in reading and writing, although standards in reading appear rather stronger than standards in writing.

74. Throughout the school, pupils' listening skills are very strong. Pupils listen very well in almost all lessons. The school uses this strength to good advantage and teachers take time to explain new work clearly. For example, pupils in Year 1 and 2 listened with real interest and enthusiasm to the story of the 'Runaway Chapati'. They could recall aspects of the story well, and used their phonic knowledge effectively in the follow up work on vowel sounds. They could recall the events in the story of 'Going on a Bear Hunt' and used that knowledge well later in the week during a Movement session in PE. They recounted the events in sequence and told them expressively. Pupils in Year 6 listened intently to a description of complex clause analysis and as a result demonstrated their understanding very effectively as they moved very effectively from simple to complex sentences which fulfilled all the requirements of the task. These pupils benefited from being taught regularly together as a small group.
75. Generally, throughout the school, pupils' speaking skills are not so advanced as their listening skills. They are quite capable of making themselves understood and are happy to speak to the whole school in assembly. This was illustrated particularly well when older pupils, who had recently taken part in a residential visit to St Bees, spoke to the rest of the school of their feelings as they recalled various periods of time and activities they had undertaken on the visit. Some of the oldest pupils in school were very open with their peers about their feelings of excited anticipation as they prepared for their visit; of their anxiety at leaving their parents; of their feelings of loneliness at night and of their satisfaction at successfully completing the tasks they undertook. These pupils speak clearly and can express themselves adequately, but often, pupils conversations are regularly short and to the point. They rarely explore the richness of spoken language by saying more than they really need to do. They speak in a matter-of-fact manner rather than an adventurous one.
76. Standards in reading are generally good, particularly for older pupils. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 make appropriate progress in their reading. They often read with expression and understanding and can use their knowledge gained in one lesson in other subjects. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 try hard in a lesson in the ICT suite as they search for information about the British Car Rally. The task is a complex one and the pupils have a wide range of information to access through the Internet. Many use their reading skills effectively as they search through indexes and web pages to find specific factual information. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 use books well and read effectively. They are currently using a text by the author Philip Ridley, and many seem to enjoy it. Year 6 pupils were regularly seen to be reading it together, before registration, at the start of the day. Pupils throughout the school show positive attitudes to their reading.
77. Writing standards, overall, are broadly in line with nationally expected levels for the pupils' ages, although there are some examples of very good quality writing. Pupils throughout the school have many opportunities to write and most pupils are showing appropriate writing skills by the time they are seven. They know that sentences start with capital letters and end with full stops and the majority of pupils show their understanding through their writing. There are many good opportunities offered to older pupils to write for a wide variety of purposes and many examples of good quality writing displayed throughout the school. For example, an exercise on 'active' and 'passive' verbs has been effectively undertaken using part of the text of 'Cider with Rosie'. Past work shows that pupils have successfully re-written a section of

'Macbeth' in the form of a dialogue. Writing on display shows that pupils are able to express their feelings and reactions well to the recent tragedy in New York. 'Some people were jumping out of windows at extreme heights. I think this is petrifying!' Some very high quality writing on the subject of Remembrance is prominently displayed in the corridor, and a poem of high quality about a wolf is displayed near the main entrance. It contains some effectively chosen language. 'He took the heart-stopping howl from the wind'

78. Most pupils appear to enjoy their literacy work and it offers an appropriate level of challenge. Older pupils develop a love of literature and enjoy writing. As they pass through the school most pupils make good progress and achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported. Those at the higher stages of the Code of Practice and who receive individual support can regularly be seen to be working at the same tasks as their peers. They make good progress in their learning and achieve well.
79. The consistently good quality of the teaching makes an important contribution to the pupils learning. This is seen throughout the school, but is particularly the case for the older pupils. Pupils are engaged on challenging tasks and are offered opportunities to use their developing skills in many different ways. The pupils generally rise to the challenge and frequently give of their best. Occasionally, lesson planning does not focus sharply enough on precisely what the pupils are to learn in a lesson and the approach to setting targets for improvement for individual pupils is not consistent enough to have a positive impact on all the pupils as they pass through the school.
80. Literacy skills are used effectively in other subjects. This can be seen in work in science, ICT and geography, where pupils' written explanations are clear and show good levels of understanding.
81. Learning resources are good, with a good range of books available to the pupils and effective use made of information and communication technology to help pupils with their researches. The subject is well managed with effective information available to all staff about priorities for improvement.

MATHEMATICS

82. Standards attained by 11 year olds have been well above or very high compared to the national average for the last four years apart from in 2000 when they matched the national expectation. In 2001 their results were well above the national results and very high when compared with similar schools. When considering the attainment of the 2001 cohort at the age of 7 (1997 national tests for 7 year olds) they have made better than expected progress from the ages of 7 to 11. The current year 6 has pupils who entered the school between the ages of 7 and 11. The school has set a realistic but challenging target for this year to account for these pupils. Some pupils are attaining at level beyond that expected for their age. Boys and girls perform equally well in the mathematics tests.
83. The standards attained by 7 year olds have been below the national average for the past four years except in 1999 when the standards matched the national average. The 2001 test results for 7 year olds were also below the national average. Baseline scores show that attainment on entry to the school is below the national average. However there are some pupils who score highly in the baseline tests showing good levels of attainment on entry and this is accurately reflected in the number of pupils attaining the higher levels (Level 3) at the age of 7. Given the small numbers of pupils in each cohort in the school it is not helpful to identify trends or any

differences in gender. The results in mathematics in both key stages are similar to those achieved at the time of the last inspection and the school is still achieving a good standard in mathematics.

84. At the age of 11 pupils with higher attainment have a thorough grasp of most of the key skills required for the higher level (Level 5) of the national Curriculum. Year 6 pupils answer oral questions on most aspects with assurance and confidently offer contributions in their lessons. They use a variety of calculations effectively to arrive at a target number and use a calculator successfully to check their answers. Many calculate the perimeter and area of regular and complex shapes accurately. They have rapid recall of multiplication facts and are able to complete complex mathematical calculations. They are able to use appropriate mathematical vocabulary accurately and with confidence. They are provided with good opportunities to develop the skills of working collaboratively with others to solve problems. They use these opportunities well and work together readily.
85. At the age of 7 pupils are developing their skills well in mathematics using mental activities. Examples were seen in a year1/2 lesson on developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of using money by using appropriate resources such as coins, shopping cards, tills and items to purchase. Pupils in year 2 can recognise the value of coins to £1, add amounts of money and correctly calculate the change required from given amount. In lessons all pupils including those who are the most able and those who have special educational needs make progress in their learning and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.
86. The quality of teaching and learning is always satisfactory throughout the school and is often good or very good. This is a better picture than in the last inspection. Pupils are taught in ability groups within their classes from Year 1 which is an effective strategy to maintain the high standards and deploy support staff most usefully. In the best lessons the tasks are carefully planned to match the needs of the differing levels of ability within the class to challenge the more able pupils and to support those with less confidence. These tasks are well matched to the planned learning for the lesson and pupils' progress towards this learning is carefully reviewed during and at the end of the lesson. The oral and mental warm up to the mathematics lesson is well paced, challenging and fun. In some lessons however, the learning is not fully or effectively reviewed either as the lesson proceeds or at the end. The starter activity for some lessons was not essentially oral but required pupils to listen to the teacher and write their responses. In these starter activities pace, engagement and fun were less evident. In all lessons all pupils make progress with their learning and achieve well.
87. For pupils throughout the school emphasis is placed on practical activities and on developing correct mental strategies to help their calculations. In all lessons observed the pupils' ability to use correct mathematical vocabulary was good. Pupils' use of mental calculation skills and their ability to explain methods used to find the answers to problems is well developed. The teachers' planning identifies tasks to suit different ability groups and targets support assistants very effectively to help pupils learn best. The planning does not always clearly identify what is to be learned in that lesson but concentrates on what is to be done. Marking is usually regular and sometimes praises pupils for their efforts although there was little evidence seen of teachers' comments about progress towards the learning intentions for each piece of work or of targets being set to help future learning. Good emphasis is placed on the development of numeracy skills in mathematics lessons. There is also evidence of these skills being used in other subjects for example, science, information and communication technology, design technology and geography. Numeracy skills are sufficient to support the activities undertaken in these other subjects for example in calculating the cost of a family holiday in a geography

activity. Literacy skills are being used in mathematics lessons as teachers identify key vocabulary and in most lessons use it consistently and expect pupils to do so as well. Opportunities are made to extend speaking and listening skills when pupils are asked to explain how they arrived at an answer.

88. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has resulted in a consistent approach to teaching mathematics from 5 to 11. Teachers are secure in their knowledge of the subject and build on previous work done by the pupils. Where teaching is at its best pupils are given challenging questions that require them to explain their methods clearly and use a range of mental strategies that they have been taught in order to give accurate answers, for example putting a number into their head and counting on to find the correct change from £1. In some lessons, “What we are learning today” is made very clear at the beginning of the lesson to keep pupils’ minds focused on what they are expected to learn and achieve. Teaching and learning are at their best when teachers finish their lessons by referring back to the planned learning to review pupils’ understanding. Pupils could be more closely involved in reviewing their own progress made in each lesson.
89. Behaviour management is very good and teachers use effective strategies to keep pupils focused in lessons. Pupils’ interest is maintained by keeping up a brisk pace and deploying learning support staff effectively to work directly with groups of pupils. This helps to ensure that pupils keep focused on their tasks. Pupils often work co-operatively in pairs or small groups, talk freely and naturally, sustain concentration on their work and make good gains in learning. The presentation of work is satisfactory. Resources are well prepared, easily accessible and help pupils to develop a good understanding of mathematical concepts.
90. The curriculum planning is good with the pupils being offered a variety of interesting and relevant activities. Planning follows the framework of the National Numeracy Strategy and is effective in ensuring continuity and progression in pupils’ learning after the age of 5. Planning could more sharply identify the learning for each lesson matched to the tasks. The subject leader for mathematics has only very recently been given responsibility for the subject throughout the school and has had little time to become fully aware of the responsibilities involved. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and teachers keep appropriate records of pupils’ progress and National Curriculum objectives covered. However, insufficient use is made of summative information to set clear expectations for individual pupils based on their prior attainment. These expectations could then be used as a basis for targets for individual pupils at the end of each key stage (ages 7 and 11). Teachers could then track progress more consistently to ensure that individual pupil’s attainment is in line with the national expectation. The setting of homework supports the learning in mathematics. The new co-ordinator should now be supported to set a clear vision of how the subject should best be led and managed in order to maintain the high standards.

SCIENCE

91. At the time of the school’s last inspection standards were found to be those expected for the pupils’ ages at the ends of Year 2 and Year 6. The latest National Curriculum test results for Year 6 pupils showed standards to be broadly in line with those found nationally, and above average in comparison to similar schools. The results of the latest teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils show standards to be well below those found nationally for pupils achieving Level 2 and above, but above average for those reaching the higher Level 3. Overall the Year 2 pupils achieved standards a little below those found nationally. Because of the small

numbers of pupils involved, and the frequency of pupils leaving and arriving, however, it is necessary to treat these results with caution.

92. This inspection finds that standards reached at the ends of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with those found nationally. The school has therefore maintained satisfactory standards overall since the last inspection, despite the high level of pupil turnover and percentage of pupils with special educational needs.
93. By the time they reach the end of Year 2 pupils have begun to carry out their own investigations successfully, with appropriate adult support. They have learned about the senses, and have recorded the results of taste and smell tests with a good degree of accuracy. They have also learnt about the diets of different animals including humans. They know about a range of living things, and what they need for survival.
94. Pupils at the end of Year 6 have continued to develop their understanding across a broad science curriculum. They have investigated materials, for instance making their own accurate predictions, and then investigating the mixing of different materials. Most pupils describe correctly the properties of various materials, while some apply their understanding well in suggesting how mixtures can be separated.
95. The teaching of science is good throughout the school. Teachers show good subject knowledge, which enables them to explain scientific ideas clearly to their pupils. They are also good at using correct scientific language, and expect their pupils to use it too. Most pupils respond well to this. In some lessons seen teachers did not give pupils long enough to respond fully, when explaining their ideas, or to talk sufficiently about what they were doing. There is sometimes too little clarity about what teachers want their pupils to learn, and this leads to uncertainty about where to go next.
96. All the teachers know their pupils very well, and they manage their classes very efficiently. Time is very well used and there is no slackening of pace as pupils move from one activity to another. Teachers and support staff work very effectively together and the support assistants play a very valuable role in ensuring that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, can participate fully in the work. In a Year 1 and 2 lesson on sound, for example, pupils made musical instruments. The support assistants ensured that the large proportion of pupils with special needs pupils in the class were fully included in all the activities and made very good gains in learning. The teacher kept everyone involved and interested, and used very good teaching strategies to make the lesson enjoyable and worthwhile for the whole class. Effective teaching strategies such as these ensure that pupils of all abilities are given appropriate work, and so make good progress.
97. Pupils generally enjoy their work in science, particularly when it is done in the form of interesting practical investigations. They are good at working together, and are sensible when working with potentially harmful equipment. Most pupils are also good at sustaining their concentration. They work productively, and try hard to improve, particularly when the teacher explains to them the purpose of the lesson. In a Year 3 and 4 lesson on materials, for instance, pupils were investigating how some solids can behave like liquids. They poured salt and bark chippings through a sieve and observed how the salt dissolved but the chippings did not. The teacher had already discussed the purpose of the lesson at the start, and this now helped the pupils to focus on what they had to investigate. The effective teaching strategies and good preparation ensured that all the pupils enjoyed what they were doing, and learned well.

98. The subject is effectively managed, although the co-ordinator has only held the post for a short time. She has made a good start to managing the subject, but needs more time to be fully aware of the full range of her responsibilities. The school's accommodation is satisfactory overall and used well, although space for practical activities in the younger classes is limited. Resources are well organised, put to good use, easily accessible and safely stored. They are generally of good quality and sufficient for the school's needs. Systems are in place for the replacement of consumable items, and there is an annual budget for new resources.

ART AND DESIGN

99. Although the number of art lessons observed during the inspection was limited, the quality of art work is striking and well displayed in school. There is a good range of drawing, painting and clay work to be seen. The school has improved on the standards in art reported when the school was last inspected, despite the fact that more time is now spent on other subjects. Standards of attainment are above those expected for the pupils' ages.
100. Pupils in Year 2 have created very effective paintings of the way in which wild animals are camouflaged. They have painted these effectively and with great care. Good use of colour and pattern have helped to create these works which are prominently displayed in the school' entrance corridor. The corridor is also used well to show a wide range of art work created by older pupils. Claywork figures of an unusual design are displayed near the main entrance and an effective mural of glazed tiles create a very effective display directly opposite the door. Other items of pottery, which have been fired in the school's own kiln are also prominently displayed. These are of good quality and the pupils explain clearly how they have been made and the different ways in which they have been glazed.
101. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 have also worked on very impressive water colour paintings which are particularly impressive in the way they have re-created the movement of the human body in illustrating differing athletic movement. Good links with design and technology are also seen in the construction of puppets and masks. There is a very wide range of effective artwork to be seen in this school, and by the time the pupils reach the age of eleven their level of attainment in art is above that expected for their age. The pupils clearly enjoy this work achieve well and are generally pleased with the results of their efforts.
102. Teaching is good. The headteacher co-ordinates the subject and is knowledgeable and skilled. The school also has the advantage of being able to use the skills of a volunteer who herself possesses good skills in art and music. The school make good use of this good subject knowledge and skill to promote effective learning for the pupils. There is a great desire to help the pupils extend their own developing skills and the pupils are provided with a very wide range of opportunities to accomplish this.
103. Resources are good and are put to good use and much care and attention is given to displaying pupils' work effectively in many parts of the school. The subject is well managed and provision has clearly improved since the last inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

104. There was insufficient evidence found during the inspection to make a judgement about the quality of teaching and learning. Other evidence, however, including pupils' previous work seen, discussions with pupils and teachers, and work seen in other subjects, confirms that standards are those expected for the pupils' ages at the ends of Years 2 and 6. Much of the work in design and technology takes place in lessons in other subjects, but the requirements of the programmes of study for design and technology are adequately covered.
105. A great deal of work which involves designing and making objects, and then evaluating their quality, takes place in the context of art lessons. In a Year 5 and 6 topic on puppets, for example, pupils have recently been making masks. The teacher made great emphasis on evaluating their designs and asked questions such as 'What techniques did you use?' 'Were they the best ones to use?' The teacher showed very good subject knowledge and drew all the pupils into a valuable discussion on how to evaluate their work. Pupils responded well and identified a good range of ideas and made accurate judgements of the effectiveness of their designs. They were keen to participate, and share information. Although the lesson was mainly concerned with art, there were many links to aspects of the design and technology curriculum. Pupils were working through all the stages of designing, making and evaluating an object. The teacher repeatedly referred back to previous work, asking questions such as 'Is your mask just right? Is it like your plan? What changes did you make?' The very good teaching ensured very good learning for all the pupils.
106. Pupils in the Year 1 and 2 class have also recently done work about movement in their PE lessons. This has led to work on the ways that joints work, and how hinges are one way of joining two objects. This work also makes a useful contribution to the design and technology curriculum as pupils constructed simple moving parts in models..
107. The subject is effectively managed. The co-ordinator has been responsible for the subject for the past two years. The school has adopted the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines, and currently plans to look at ways of using design and technology skills in other curriculum areas. She feels that the school makes good use of its kiln, and has produced some good-quality work. There are plans for a community project which will provide good opportunities for design, possibly to take the form of a 'tree of life'. The range and quality of resources are good and are put to good use. There are no formal assessment procedures for the subject at present, but teachers assess their pupils informally at the end of topics.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

108. Because of the timetabling arrangements for this term it was not possible to observe any lessons in history, neither was it possible to review sufficient of the pupils' work to reach a clear judgement on the standards attained in the subject or the quality of teaching. A review of teachers' plans, however, gave a clear indication that the history curriculum was appropriately covered over time and that statutory requirements are met.
109. In geography, by the ages of 7 and 11 pupils attain the nationally expected standards for their age. They achieve appropriately. This is a similar picture to the last inspection.
110. During the inspection it was only possible to observe a small amount of teaching in geography. Evidence was collected from looking at teachers' planning, at pupils' work and displays and from discussions with pupils.

111. By the age of 11 pupils have a growing understanding of geographical features and are developing knowledge of some different countries of the world. In years 1 and 2 pupils are aware of the school environment and buildings that lie in close proximity. This awareness is increased as appropriate understanding and early geographical skills enable them to develop their knowledge of the local area and to consider how and why settlements grow and differ. The pupils successfully interpret simple maps and plans, use geographical terms, follow simple compass directions and use photographs and pictures to obtain geographical information. This introduction to geography is further developed in years 3 and 4 where pupils extend their knowledge, skills and understanding about the formation of physical features, such as waterfalls. In year 5 and 6 pupils further develop their mapping skills and their increasing understanding of the countries of the world, for example, through a study of the physical and economic features of Pakistan. There are very good links made to other subjects through geography. Some examples of these include numeracy skills used to work with grid references, research and retrieval skills in information and communication technology and links to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the study of different countries of the world. There are also excellent links made with art. For example a display consisting of ceramic tiles made by all pupils in the school depicts the village of Kirkby Thore in a creative and highly effective manner whilst highlighting the occupations of residents and the impact on the surrounding environment. Display makes a positive contribution to pupils' interest in and understanding of geography and discussion with pupils shows they have a good understanding of them. A wall hanging in the hall incorporating textiles and collage depicts the local landscape including the British Gypsum plant. This plant is also portrayed in a series of photographs around the school which highlight how physical and human processes impact on the environment.
112. Extra curricular trips and residential visits also make a very positive contribution to pupils' attitudes and learning in geography. Pupils talk with enthusiasm and understanding about residential visits to London and St Bees which have added positively to their understanding of the world around them.
113. The subject has a clear and useful policy document drawn up by the co-ordinator. The curriculum is planned across the key stages to provide for continuity and progression in geographical experiences and meet the requirements of the national curriculum. There are sufficient resources which are used well to support the delivery of the curriculum and pupils' learning and progress.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

114. The school's last inspection report spoke of pupils' attainment being in line with expectations at the end of Year 6. This position has been improved and pupils' standards of attainment are now above those normally expected for their age. Over the last two years the school's provision for information and communication technology has been dramatically improved through the building of a new computer suite, under the CREDITS scheme. This has provided a Community Development Centre, within the school, which is available for the use of both the school and the local community. The scheme has been very successful, and has recently won a national award. The development of this facility has provided the school with 14 networked Personal Computers with internet connection, software, printer, and furniture. These new computers, in addition to those already in school, mean that the school's resources for information and communication technology are now very good indeed.

115. Throughout the school pupils are given a range of worthwhile experiences which build their understanding of the different aspects of information and communication technology. By the end of Year 2 they have learned to control the computer by means of the keyboard and mouse. Most carry out routine operations effectively such as saving their work or accessing the software they need. They have used simple software correctly to enable them to create text and pictures, and to combine them when necessary. The school has a programmable toy, which gives the younger pupils appropriate experience of making things happen by giving a series of instructions. Pupils can use it effectively.
116. By the end of Year 6 pupils have experienced a wider range of information and communication technology. They have learned to use the internet effectively, both as an information source and also to send messages by electronic mail. They have made good use of software such as 'Crystal Rain Forest' to explore decision-making. The school's very good computer resources ensure that all pupils have regular access to the computers. In a Year 5 and 6 lesson in the computer suite pupils were using the internet to find information about Maryport. Pupils showed good levels of skill. They used the browser to navigate web links, and copied text and images accurately into a word-processing document. They saved work well into their own folders on the school network. Older pupils are skilful in putting together effective Power Point presentations in which they demonstrate high levels of skill.
117. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers manage their classes very well, and show good knowledge and understanding of most aspects of the subject. They have high expectations, and teacher and support staff work very well together. Information and communication technology is now taught through a mixture of specialist lessons in the computer suite, and various computer activities in individual classrooms. During the inspection a number of lessons were seen where classroom computers were used to support learning in a variety of subjects, for instance where Year 5 and 6 pupils looked at a website, while learning about the reasons for day and night as the earth rotates, in a science lesson. However, such experiences were in the minority, and there were many occasions where computers were left unused throughout lessons, when they could have made valuable contributions to pupils' learning. The school needs to give attention to further integrating computer activities into lessons in all subjects, so as to give pupils greater insight into how information and communication technology can be used as a tool for learning. Pupils enjoy working on the computers and many now work confidently when using a variety of hardware and software. Many work co-operatively, sharing and taking turns as required, and the work makes a good contribution to their social development.
118. The subject is effectively managed by the headteacher, who has overseen the introduction of the new information and communication technology suite and the adoption of the guidelines of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. A newly qualified member of staff is now working alongside the headteacher with a view to taking over responsibility for the subject in the future. Resources are now very good overall, but plans are in hand to purchase data logging equipment, so as to extend the work in this area.

MUSIC

119. Attainment in music is in line with the expected levels for the pupils' ages by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils have good opportunities and achieve appropriate standards in singing, composition and musical appreciation. The school employs two part-time teachers, both of whom have expertise in music. They have a positive impact on the pupils' learning.

120. In both key stages pupils sing well and show good levels of enjoyment in their singing. They sing with accurate pitch, singing in time and together and they sing the words clearly. When singing in assembly, all pupils enjoy themselves and they sing from memory without the aid of printed words. In class lessons, pupils of all ages have good opportunities to explore pitch, rhythm and sound as they make good use of a wide range of household utensils which they use effectively as percussion instruments. They make and distinguish successfully long and short sounds, loud and quiet sounds and sounds made on metal and wooden objects. Younger children are able to take turns and wait for each other. They listen carefully to the sounds produced by each other. Throughout the pupils show very good levels of listening skills, which they use effectively in many lessons. Older pupils develop an appropriate understanding of musical notation. They know the musical value of crochets, quavers, minims and semibreves. They demonstrate their knowledge well by writing out short themes using the correct musical notation. They have good opportunities to listen to pieces of work by famous composers and write effectively about which pieces they like and why. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 have recently been comparing and contrasting pieces of work by Smetana and Prokofiev.
121. The quality of teaching and learning is good. This is an improvement on the position reported when the school was last inspected. Teachers are experienced, confident and show good levels of expertise. They encourage pupils to try and experiment with sounds and require pupils to provide precise explanations of how and why certain sounds are created.
122. The requirements of the National Curriculum are met and are supported by an appropriate range of good quality resources. Good use is made of taped music, but there was little evidence of computer programs used to enhance learning. The pupils' listening skills are well developed and used effectively in many subjects throughout the curriculum.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

123. During the inspection week it was only possible to observe a small number of lessons. In these lessons standards of attainment were those expected for the pupils ages. Only two lessons were observed, one in dance and one in indoor team activities. However, plans indicate that a full range of activities are undertaken, including swimming, and that the majority of pupils are able to swim by the time they leave the school.
124. Pupils in Class 2, Year 1 and 2, were observed during a dance lesson in which they recounted the story of going on a bear hunt. They clearly enjoyed the activity, recalled the story well and moved expressively to the sequence of the story. There were good links with literacy as the teacher encouraged the pupils to think precisely about how they could express particular words – like whirling and twirling – in movement, and as the pupils established a rhythm to the activity as they chanted the words in time to their actions. Good use was made of percussion instruments to set a pace for the movement and to express large or fine movement in response to the mood of the story. The pupils tried hard to execute the movements accurately and most were successful.
125. Pupils in Class 3, Year 3 and 4, took part in team games with small apparatus. The lesson was well structured with an appropriate warm-up activity involving movement in time to taped music. Each pupil had a ball and had to negotiate a sequence of steps around the ball, which remained stationary throughout. The step sequences included increasing levels of difficulty, and the pupils tried hard to maintain the rhythm and the timing. Team activities then followed as pupils moved in and out of several cones, keeping the ball under close control. Pupils were then challenged to work in pairs synchronising their movements whilst keeping the ball above

ground level. The lesson proved very challenging and the pupils had to work hard meet the challenge. They worked well with interest and enthusiasm. Many successfully met the expectations of the lesson, but it was too demanding for a minority. There was an appropriate sense of teamwork in the group activities and pupils worked well in pairs.

126. The teaching was always satisfactory or better. Teachers' explanation were clear and lessons generally showed good planning, structure and sequence. The dance lesson involving the younger pupils perhaps lacked a sharpness of focus as it progressed. The pupils practised the same routine three times during the course of the lesson and some of the movement did become rather jaded towards the end of the lesson. There were few opportunities taken for pupils to seek to improve the quality of their performance.
127. The subject is appropriately led and managed. There is appropriate documentation which provides an appropriate structure for teachers' planning. The school has some difficulty with accommodating PE lessons. It is not possible to use the school hall, as this is in use for other purposes, notably to accommodate the children of nursery age, and lessons take place in the Memorial Hall in the village. The school rents this community room which is a significant walk away from the school building. Apparatus for use in lessons has to be transported to the Hall before lessons begin and in cold and wet weather the walk is arduous, particularly for the younger pupils. However, the pupils clearly enjoy the lessons and take part in them with some enjoyment and enthusiasm.
128. The PE curriculum is supplemented by an appropriate range of extra-curricular activities which involve both boys and girls. Satisfactory provision was reported at the time of the last inspection and the school has maintained this position.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

129. Only two lessons in religious education were observed during the inspection, but from those lessons and other work seen it is clear that the pupils attain the expected levels of the agreed syllabus by the ages of seven and eleven. The school follows the locally agreed syllabus, which provides effective subject coverage. It is appropriately delivered and pupils make satisfactory overall progress.
130. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 took part in the re-enactment of a Baptism. Several pupils took individual parts and all the rest were involved either as godparents or family members. They acted out the ceremony successfully and discussed the significance of the main symbols well. The play was enhanced by the use of real Christening Robes which had been provided by the staff. The pupils knew that the robes were precious to the staff who had brought them and the pupils looked after them with particular care. Good links were made with the history curriculum as the pupils gained an awareness of the passage of time as the staff indicated the ages of the children who had used the robes for their own baptism.
131. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 took part in an interesting discussion of who to ask if they had problems. Pupils made sensible suggestions from within their own experience. Family members, doctors, teachers and police were all suggested and many pupils were able to explain effectively why they had selected these groups of people. Some pupils suggested that books, the library or the internet were appropriate places to seek help. The discussion widened to where Christians would seek help and the pupils responded with the Church, the vicar or the Bible. Pupils displayed a good knowledge of aspects of the Old and New Testaments. They knew about the Ten Commandments as the law of God, and they knew that

the Bible was translated into language which was sometimes difficult and sometimes understandable. A useful discussion ensued on the appropriateness of rules. A task to re-write part of the story of the Prodigal Son was effectively summed up by one pupil who said – ‘we have to write this story in easier words!’ Pupils engaged well to the activities, made good suggestions and produced effective descriptions using ‘easier words’.

132. The school makes very good provision for pupils to gain an understanding of the beliefs and life-styles of other cultures and religions besides Christianity. A recent visit to Bradford is well documented in school and has made a significant impact on the pupils. They met a wide range of people, visited shops, tried on articles of clothing associated with Hindu life and beliefs. The pupils gained good first-hand experience on this visit. They now speak knowledgably about a wide range of elements in a Hindu community.
133. In the two lessons seen the quality of the teaching was good.. The purpose of the lessons was clear and the tasks outlined effectively for the pupils. The pupils took an active part in both lessons, worked with interest and showed good levels of understanding.
134. The subject is appropriately managed and generally effectively resourced. Good links are made with other subjects of the curriculum and the content of school assemblies contributes positively to the school’s work in religious education. The last inspection report indicated that the school should seek to raise the profile of the subject in the daily life of the school and had identified this as a priority for development. The school has been successful in its attempts to do so, and the provision for religious education contributes well to the pupils’ personal development, which is a strength of the school. The provision has clearly improved since the last inspection.