

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

**North Lakes School**

Penrith

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112118

Headteacher: Mrs J Horne

Reporting inspector: Laurie Lewin  
22330

Dates of inspection: 3<sup>rd</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> July 2000

Inspection number: 197209

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Huntley Avenue Penrith Cumbria CA11 8NU
Telephone/Fax number:	01768 242150
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Mandale
Date of previous inspection:	June 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Laurie Lewin	Registered inspector	Science, information technology and design and technology	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? Special educational needs. Equality of opportunity. How well is the school led and managed? What the school should do to improve further.
Trevor Smith	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well the school cares for its pupils. How well does the school work in partnership with the parents?
Clive Lewis	Team inspector	Mathematics, history, geography and physical education.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities? Support within the above aspects.
Mary Farman	Team inspector	English, art, music and religious education.	Support within the above aspects.

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

North Lakes School is situated in the town of Penrith. The majority of the pupils attending the school come from the Western side of the town. The school is just below average size with a roll of 205 boys and girls. The number of pupils attending the school has been steadily increasing in recent years. The school has a special educational needs unit (known in the school as the Special Class) that caters for pupils with profound, multiple and severe learning difficulties. Six pupils between the ages of four to eleven currently attend this class and they are drawn from a much wider catchment area than pupils in the rest of the school. For the school as a whole, seven mainstream teachers, a literacy teacher and the headteacher teach pupils in seven classes. In addition, one teacher teaches the pupils in the Special Class. Eighty four pupils (41 per cent) are registered as having special educational needs, which is well above the national average and 20 pupils have statements of special educational need (10 per cent), which is also well above average. Ten per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals and this figure is below the national average. Nearly all of the school's pupils come from white ethnic backgrounds with 2 per cent of pupils coming from other ethnic origins.

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

This is a very good school. Through outstanding leadership and management the quality of teaching has improved significantly since the school was last inspected. As a result, standards of work have risen such that pupils make overall very good progress and attain high standards in English, mathematics and science by the time they are 11 years old. The school provides very good value for money.

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

- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and management for the school, the deputy headteacher provides excellent leadership for organising the curriculum and the staff work together as a highly effective team.
- As a result of high quality teaching, pupils make very good and sometimes excellent progress as they move through the school and achieve high standards in English, mathematics and science. Pupils also do well in information technology, art and physical education.
- The school has exemplary procedures to ensure a high standard of care for its pupils. It makes excellent provision for pupils with special educational needs throughout the school and makes high quality provision for pupils attending the special educational needs unit.
- Pupils behave very well, are enthusiastic and well motivated.
- The school is very successful in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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

There are no significant weaknesses. However, the school should address the following areas within its action plan:

- Although they are very well informed about the curriculum and visit the school regularly, no formalised procedures are in place to assist the governors in gaining a full overview of the curriculum and how it is taught.
- The lack of a corridor means that individuals or classes of pupils have to pass through each other's classrooms and this occasionally causes disturbance to the lessons in progress.
- The air circulation within many of the classrooms is poor.

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

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

The school was last inspected in June 1996. It has very thoroughly addressed all of the key issues for action raised in the inspection report of that time and has moved forward in all areas of its operation at a rapid pace. In particular significant improvements in the quality of teaching have led to sustained improvements in the standards attained by pupils throughout the school. The school has a very good capacity for improvement in the future.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	C	D	A	A
Mathematics	D	E	B	B
Science	E	D	B	C

**Key**

well above average      A

above average          B

average                    C

below average          D

well below average      E

In the above table, the 1999 end of Key Stage 2 national test results show that pupils at age 11 attained well above average standards in English and above average standards in mathematics and science compared to other schools nationally and overall, these results compare favourably with those of other similar schools. Observations of the current cohort of Year 6 pupils reflect a similar picture to that shown by the 1999 results. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have risen in line with the national trend.

On entry to school children show below average attainment. Inspection evidence shows that all pupils including higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs make very good and sometimes excellent progress. By the time they leave the school, most pupils attain high standards in English, mathematics and science and do well in information technology, art and physical education. In religious education, by age eleven, pupils achieve standards that meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. In all other subjects pupils attain appropriate levels for their ages. Appropriate targets are set for pupils' attainment and, due to the very good teaching, pupils reach and often exceed these targets.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are positive, enthusiastic and well motivated.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well both in and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. There are very positive relationships between all members of the school community. Pupils collaborate very effectively with each other.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Pupils enjoy coming to school.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Not applicable	Not applicable	Very good

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

Of the lessons observed during the inspection, 11 per cent were satisfactory, 36 per cent were good, 41 per cent were very good and 13 per cent were excellent.

Overall, the quality of teaching is very good. Teachers show enthusiastic attitudes that engage pupils' interest and encourage them to work hard. Lesson planning is meticulous and teachers are particularly skilled at providing activities that match precisely with the different levels of attainment in each class. Their explanations and directions are very clear and succinct because they have confident subject knowledge and this enables pupils to quickly understand new areas of learning and make rapid progress through the activities provided. Teachers question pupils in a very skilful manner to extend and challenge levels of understanding. In all lessons there is a high level of interaction between adults and pupils. This means that all pupils have frequent and good quality opportunities to learn how to express and develop their ideas either in class discussions or through one-to-one dialogue with the adult concerned. There is a very high level of professional dialogue between all staff in the school that enables the sharing of successful teaching strategies and helps to promote a consistent approach across the school. In all classes, staff who support teachers make an outstanding contribution towards boosting the pace of pupils' learning, particularly when they are working with pupils who experience difficulties with learning or pupils with special educational needs. English and mathematics are taught very effectively and the new national strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy have been very successfully launched throughout the school.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. A broad and well-balanced curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of interesting and relevant experiences. The school provides a very good programme of extra-curricular and outdoor activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Outstanding provision that fully meets the needs of all individuals concerned. High quality specialised provision is also made for pupils in the special class.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. A wide range of opportunities is provided that strongly promotes pupils' awareness of and sensitivity towards the world around them.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Staff know the pupils very well and systems for tracking academic progress are very good. Outstanding procedures are in place to ensure the health and security of the pupils.

The school works very hard to establish and maintain strong links with the parents. As a result, parents are very effectively involved in their children's learning.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Outstanding leadership and management have had a very significant impact and enabled a rapid pace of school improvement. Staff work together as a highly effective team. Subject co-ordinators carry out their roles with great enthusiasm and efficiency.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are well informed, very supportive and actively involved in the school's management. They have rightly identified the need to upgrade systems for them to gain a fuller overview of the curriculum and how it is taught.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school has strongly established systems for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of teaching and learning and uses these systems very effectively to ensure continuous improvement in these areas.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The best use is made of all grants and resources available. Financial planning is very precisely linked to the priorities set for future development and appropriate consultation and comparisons of costs take place when governors make major spending decisions.

Staff are very well trained and deployed throughout the school. The school makes good use of its accommodation that is of a satisfactory standard and very well maintained. However, air circulation in some classrooms is poor and the lack of a corridor sometimes means lessons are slightly disturbed by the need for individuals or classes of pupils to pass through each other's rooms. Learning resources are of good quality, readily accessible and well used by pupils and staff.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>Parents have a high regard for the school and in particular feel strongly that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children are expected to work hard.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• They are kept very well informed about their children's progress.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• Children make good progress.</li> <li>• The school helps pupils become more mature.</li> <li>• Their children like coming to school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A very small minority of parents are not satisfied with the school's provision for homework.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agree with the very positive views expressed by the parents. Inspection evidence shows that at least appropriate and occasionally very good provision is made for homework throughout the school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. End of Key Stage 2 English tests in 1999 show the number of pupils reaching the expected level as being well above average and the number of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 as close to the national average. The performance of the 1999 Year 6 cohort of pupils when considered as a whole was well above average compared both to other schools nationally and also in comparison with other similar schools. In the mathematics tests, the number of pupils reaching the nationally expected level or higher was well above the national average. The attainment of the whole of the Year 6 cohort was above average in comparison to other schools nationally and when compared to other similar schools. In the science tests, the number of pupils reaching the nationally expected level or higher was just above the national average and the number attaining Level 5 was close to the national average. Taking the results of the 1999 Year 6 cohort as a whole, the attainment was above average compared to the national picture and average in comparison with other similar schools.
2. Evidence from this inspection for English, mathematics and science generally confirms the 1999 test results although in some instances in science, pupils perform at a higher level than reflected by the results.
3. Although, as yet, there are no national figures by which to compare the recently published end of Key Stage 2 test results for 2000, they indicate that the level of pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science has been maintained by the current cohort of Year 6 pupils.
4. Overall, the trend in the school's results since 1996 has been one of improvement in line with the national trend. However, looking at the three subjects separately, English and science results have improved at a faster rate than nationally.
5. When compared to the last inspection report, standards attained by pupils have improved significantly in English, mathematics, science, art, information technology, music, physical education and religious education because of improved teaching. Standards have been maintained in design and technology, geography and history.
6. Appropriate targets are set for pupils' performance and, due to the very good teaching, pupils reach and often exceed these targets.
7. In English, older Key Stage 2 pupils achieve well above average standards in speaking and listening and speak with increasing confidence to a range of listeners. They ask and answer questions readily, respond enthusiastically to literature, express themselves increasingly clearly and use a wide range of vocabulary and persuasive language very effectively in discussion.
8. Reading standards by the end of Key Stage 2 are well above average. The more able pupils make very good use of the library to develop their research skills. Most pupils read for pleasure and with understanding at home and at school. They comment confidently on the differences in style between books and make effective use of their developing skills of inference and deduction. All pupils use sources such as dictionaries and thesauruses confidently and accurately. The exceptionally good support for pupils with special educational needs enables them to make very good progress.

9. At the age of eleven, writing standards are above average. Most pupils write in a range of styles and for a variety of purposes. There are good examples of extended writing that are interesting, lively and very well organised. Pupils of all abilities develop, organise and communicate ideas effectively. The spelling of regular and irregular words is usually correct and pupils use a suitably wide variety of punctuation marks accurately. Year 6 pupils have an above average understanding of how to use a range of tenses and figures of speech correctly. Standards of handwriting and presentation are consistently good.
10. The school's implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is very successful and has had a beneficial effect on pupils' progress in English. Pupils make effective use of their developing literacy skills in many other subjects.
11. The strategies for improving the writing of boys have been successful so that boys now achieve similar standards to those of girls.
12. The school has very successfully implemented the National Numeracy Strategy and this is having a beneficial effect upon pupils' work in mathematics. Pupils undertake a wide range of work in shape, space and measures, and have tackled a range of problems involving handling data and investigation. Lesson observations throughout the inspection confirm that pupils make good use of their numeracy skills in other curriculum areas such as science and information technology. Throughout the school pupils are set by ability for their mathematics lessons. By the time they reach the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils in the lower-attaining set have made very good progress with their numeracy skills and are attaining standards equivalent to those expected nationally for their age. Pupils use a variety of mental and written strategies when solving calculations and work at a very good pace. Most round numbers to the nearest tenth in numbers with two decimal places. Pupils in the higher-attaining Year 6 set attain levels above those expected for their age and there is some evidence of very high attainment in this set. The majority convert fractions to decimals with above average speed and accuracy and confidently explain their strategies for working out some of their mental calculations. The presentation of mathematics work in pupils' books is generally good throughout the school.
13. Pupils throughout the school develop good skills of scientific enquiry. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils show good and sometimes very good ability to describe investigations they have carried out and realise the need to repeat observations to verify their findings. Pupils make systematic observations and precise measurements and they record information accurately and neatly. They acquire a wide range of skills, knowledge and understanding in relation to work on life processes and living things. For example, they show a full understanding of food chains in a variety of different environments such as mountain and rain forest habitats and gain a full knowledge of how micro-organisms work in the process of decomposition. Pupils gain a good knowledge of the properties of materials and physical processes for example, learning how to separate mixtures through processes such as filtering and sieving and confidently explaining phenomena such as air resistance and acquire an in-depth knowledge of the way in which sound and light react. Literacy, numeracy and information technology skills are very well utilised and extended during science work.
14. In information and communication technology (ICT) pupils attain above average standards by the end of Key Stage 2. Year 6 pupils are well acquainted with a wide range of ICT experiences. They confidently search for information on the Internet and use computers for a wide range of data handling work. They have a good knowledge of how to write a simple program of instructions to draw mathematical shapes on the computer. They use ICT to help with audience

presentations; for example presenting a video they have made of their science activity, use tape recorders for recording commentaries for 'broadcasting' at a later stage and are well acquainted with the use of digital cameras and data loggers. Pupils generally have a sophisticated understanding of how to use a variety of desk-top publishing techniques to help them enhance the presentation of their work or to design attractive project folders and cards.

15. In religious education, by age eleven, pupils attain standards that meet the expectation of the locally agreed syllabus. They have a good knowledge of Christianity and other world religions. They identify similarities and differences between Christianity, Islam and Buddhism. Pupils show a suitable level and depth of understanding of the different beliefs. For example, they know that Muslims wash thoroughly before praying and that Buddhists do not harm living things. All pupils show suitable understanding of the application of Christian values to everyday life and give clear definitions of what is good and what is bad. Year 6 pupils show a mature level of thought and reasoning when they discuss issues that religion raises for them.
16. Pupils do well in art. They develop a good knowledge of the work of famous artists, use a suitably wide range of media and materials confidently and produce an attractive range of paintings and drawings and good quality three-dimensional artefacts and sculptures.
17. Pupils attain good standards in physical education. Year 6 pupils work well in gymnastics and games lessons and show good awareness of the limitations and strengths in their own and others' performances and use this knowledge to improve their own performance. They engage themselves very effectively in outdoor and adventurous activities such as orienteering. All Year 4, 5 and 6 pupils attend a local swimming pool for one lesson per week for a duration of ten weeks during the school year and by the end of the key stage the majority of pupils are confident swimmers and are able to swim 25 metres easily.
18. Pupils work at appropriate levels for their ages in design and technology, geography and music and make sound progress in history as they move through the school. In design and technology pupils competently design and make a range of products and learn to modify and improve designs through careful evaluation. In geography, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know the basic principles of how some geographical features are formed and gain an appropriate insight into the effect that man has on his environment. In history pupils study a suitably wide range of topics, for example, Year 6 pupils have gained appropriate knowledge and understanding about 'The Ancient Greeks' and 'Britain Since 1948', producing a timeline of events. In music, throughout Key Stage 2, pupils' singing skills are satisfactory and their composing skills are often good.
19. Throughout the school, special educational needs pupils make very good and occasionally excellent progress in relation to their prior attainment and this is a direct result of the outstanding support they receive. There is particular acceleration to the progress of special educational needs pupils in Year 3. The very good progress made by pupils with special educational needs means that by the end of Key Stage 2 they often attain standards that are appropriate for their age. For example, in one excellent lesson with the special educational needs teacher, intensive guidance with pupils' poetry writing enabled them to make excellent progress with expressing imaginative ideas - as with ...'The soft cold snowman waiting sadly because he thinks he is going to melt', produced by one group.
20. Pupils generally achieve very well throughout the school, responding enthusiastically to all of the challenges provided and building on their skills at a very good rate as they move through the school. Strategies such as setting in English and mathematics and the application of booster work for older Key Stage 2 pupils are having a positive impact upon raising pupils' achievement levels.

Teachers' close monitoring of attainment and good individual target setting also enable teachers and pupils to constantly look at ways of improving achievement.

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

21. The quality of pupils' attitudes to work, their behaviour, relationships and personal development have improved since the last inspection, and are now major strengths of the school.
22. Pupils enjoy school and have very good attitudes to learning. They are well-motivated, ready to work and keen to respond to the challenges offered, pursuing each new task with purpose and determination. They listen carefully to their teacher, or when others are speaking, answer questions sensibly, and contribute confidently during discussions.
23. Behaviour in and out of class is very good. Pupils are a credit to their school. They display high levels of self-discipline, clearly know what is expected of them, and usually react accordingly. Incidents of bullying are rare. No incidents were observed or reported during the inspection. There have been no exclusions over the last year. Pupils are genuinely proud of their school and show due respect for its fabric, fittings and resources.
24. Pupils, generally, are confident and articulate learners. They are considerate and fully understand the impact of their actions upon others. They work well independently and make full use of opportunities to carry out their own research productively. Pupils show initiative through their studies and in many other ways. For example, they obtain required resources for themselves in lessons, and if they see a job that needs doing, they will carry out the job without being asked by their teachers. Older pupils organise and maintain their own classroom notice boards. They hear the younger ones read and are also keen to join in activities with pupils from the Special Class during break times. The school council is a very effective body and, together with activities such as outdoor pursuits, significantly enhances pupils' understanding of personal values. The quality of relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and members of staff is very good. This makes a significant contribution to the education provided because it helps to provide a relaxed and harmonious atmosphere within the school. Pupils are friendly, very polite, and always ready to support one another. For example, during a Year 6 science lesson, a pupil with severe learning difficulties was helped to present the findings of a survey by another member of their group. In lessons, pupils co-operate and collaborate very well. At playtime, and when eating lunch, they are friendly and sociable.
25. Attendance remains satisfactory. Unauthorised absence remains very low. Punctuality is good. Almost all pupils arrive on time, and are settled in class promptly at the start of sessions.

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

26. Overall, the teaching in the school is very good. In the lessons observed during this inspection, 11 per cent of teaching was satisfactory, 36 per cent was good, 41 per cent was very good and 13 per cent was excellent. This is a high standard of teaching and marks a significant improvement upon the quality of teaching noted in the last inspection report. The weaknesses highlighted during the last inspection have all been very thoroughly addressed. The school has comprehensive systems in place to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and planning for lessons. All of the information from the monitoring is carefully fed back to teachers to enable them to improve their work and share the good practice in evidence. In addition, the school has extensive assessment systems and information from assessment is carefully analysed to help teachers identify any areas where children have difficulties learning or which teachers find more difficult to teach. The end

result of these systems and procedures is a very high level of professional dialogue throughout the school with teachers constantly comparing notes with one another and discussing ideas for improving teaching and learning.

27. As a result of effective and suitably specific training, teachers generally have very confident subject knowledge. This is translated into an enthusiastic approach in the classroom that in turn motivates pupils. It also enables teachers to question pupils skilfully to pursue and develop their understanding. For example, in an excellent Year 6 lesson, detailed questioning about their experiments with sound provoked intensive thinking with one pupil eventually commenting '...the more tightly packed the molecules are, the more easily sound can travel through an object'.
28. Teachers' planning is usually meticulous and reflects the high expectations set for pupils' work during lessons. The school has adopted a very effective approach whereby subject co-ordinators devise medium term planning in close liaison with all of the teachers and this ensures a consistent approach across the school and assists the process of monitoring. As a result, work planned in lessons matches pupils' attainment levels very precisely and teachers inject a great deal of their energies into ensuring that wherever possible, activities are broken down into tasks that match carefully with individuals or groups of pupils. This approach is further enhanced by the strategy of setting pupils for mathematics. This strong focus placed upon differentiating work for pupils, the very clear learning objectives devised and the careful setting of targets for individual pupils enable them to make rapid and occasionally excellent progress in their learning.
29. In the lessons where teaching is excellent, pupils are particularly motivated by the teachers' enthusiasm. Learning proceeds at a very rapid pace because teachers ensure that no time is wasted and that pupils move quickly and efficiently through the tasks provided. Teachers set high expectations in these lessons, provide skilful and incisive questioning and manage pupils extremely effectively. Such was the case in a Year 3 literacy lesson where the teacher moved the pupils along at a rapid pace in consolidating and increasing their understanding of the use of adjectives in sentences. In this and the other excellent lessons, the high level of interaction facilitated between the teacher and pupils also accelerated the learning and enabled pupils of all attainment levels to become more confident.
30. English is very well taught throughout the school with teachers making full and very effective use of the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers very deliberately ensure that literacy skills are very well promoted in other subject areas with, for example, pupils writing extended written accounts in science and making rapid progress in learning to research either on the Internet or in library books to find out geographical information. Speaking and listening skills are very extensively promoted with pupils learning to confidently address different types of audiences, for example, in classroom discussions and during assemblies.
31. Mathematics is well taught through the school. The National Numeracy Strategy has been very effectively implemented with teachers following the recommended format and programmes of study very closely. Numeracy skills are extensively promoted in other subject areas and particularly in science. For example Year 4/5 pupils carry out careful scrutiny and analysis of data relating to daylight hours whilst investigating the earth's orbit around the sun and in many other classes pupils frequently present results of their investigation in the form of tables and graphs, which they then carefully interpret.
32. Information technology is well taught with pupils being given a wide range of opportunities in other subject areas to extend their skills. This is particularly the case in English, where full use is made of the computers to promote pupils' understanding and use of drafting and editing skills. Very good

use was also seen to be made of video and tape recorders at Year 6, with pupils, for example, recording 'commentaries' on tape for 'broadcasting' at a later stage.

33. A particular skill noted in many lessons in the school is the way in which teachers vary their strategies and approaches skilfully to maintain pupils' interest and concentration. They often adjust very effectively to the needs of the situation, as was noted in one Year 4/5 geography lesson where the teacher clearly valued the input of ideas from the pupils, who were keen to relay to the teacher their fascination with looking at old maps, but at the same time the teacher ensured that no distraction occurred from the main learning objectives of the lesson.
34. Teachers have a very good rapport with their pupils and make full use of this to encourage and motivate pupils. This also helps teachers to promote a very interactive learning climate in which all pupils feel confident to join in discussions, raise questions or simply air their impressions and thoughts.
35. Most lessons end with some sort of plenary session that enables pupils and teachers to usefully review the learning that has taken place. This period of reflection is also a very useful method of promoting pupils' spiritual awareness towards issues that may have been raised during the lesson.
36. Where the teaching was less than good, occasional lack of clear subject knowledge was noted that slowed the pace of discussion work. Also very occasionally, time targets set for pupils to finish activities were imprecise and pupils worked with less rigour than at other times.
37. The teaching of the special educational needs co-ordinator is excellent and, in a positive, encouraging and sensitive manner, she provides strong motivation for the pupils to succeed and grow in confidence with their work. Lesson planning for individuals and groups is extremely detailed and on-going very detailed assessment enable the teacher to constantly redefine and raise targets set for pupils. In addition the work of the learning support assistants who work with individuals and groups in the classrooms is outstanding. The staff concerned are exceptionally well briefed and in some cases they very effectively mirror the work of the teacher with the group they are working with. Prompting and encouragement for individuals during lessons enable pupils with special educational needs to play a full part in all activities.

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

38. The school provides an appropriately broad and well-balanced curriculum with a very good quality and range of learning opportunities. The curriculum successfully meets the needs of its pupils and is effectively enhanced by a very good range of extra-curricular activities, visits to local places of interest and visitors to the school. The curriculum meets statutory requirements to teach all subjects in the National Curriculum and religious education. Allocation of time to each subject has been carefully considered in the light of the implementation of the daily literacy and numeracy hours, and the school's provision for information technology is now satisfactory. This is a considerable improvement on the situation reported in the previous inspection when the breadth and balance of the curriculum were weaknesses. The governing body has made the decision that sex-education should be a part of the school curriculum and appropriate advice is provided to pupils as they begin to mature. Drugs education is suitably provided as part of the science curriculum.
39. There are policies and schemes of work in place for all subjects and the school has, in most curriculum areas, adopted or begun to adopt the recently published government-recommended



schemes of work for each subject. The school has implemented the programmes of study and schemes of work for the government's recommended National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies very effectively. Rigorous in-service training has been undertaken by all teaching staff and very effective support and monitoring provided by the subject leaders and senior staff with the result that all lessons seen during the inspection took full account of the recommendations for curriculum, lesson format and pace for literacy and numeracy lessons. The school curriculum is successfully enriched through the provision of a very good range of extra-curricular opportunities, including sporting activities, throughout the school year. This is another significant improvement since the previous inspection.

40. The school's provision for equal opportunities for pupils in terms of gender, ethnicity and special educational needs is very good. Good use is made of the specialist skills of teaching staff to ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils and pupils from the Special Class<sup>1</sup> are included wherever possible in day to day curriculum activities and playtimes. The school makes very good provision for personal, social and health education overall. Although the school is currently formalising its programme for personal and social education and has this as a priority on the school development plan for the new school term, current provision, with a very well-established School Council and regular 'circle time' discussions, is, nevertheless, very good.
41. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is outstanding. There is excellent liaison between all parties concerned with special educational needs support. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) visits the school from which the pupils transfer and has established very strong links with the secondary school to which most transfer at age eleven. In this way high-grade preparation is made for supporting the individual pupils concerned. Excellent and highly comprehensive records are maintained of every aspect of the special educational needs programme. This includes detailed assessment records to track the progress of pupils, information that is subsequently very well used to identify weaknesses and to help plan the next steps in a pupil's learning programme. Individual education plans are also very comprehensive and clear. They identify pupils' specific needs and set clearly defined targets, which are regularly reviewed and redefined as appropriate. The SENCO works in very close liaison with all staff and holds regular 'code of practice' meetings to ensure all information is exchanged and kept fully up to date. Very intensive and exceptionally well prepared support is provided for individuals and groups of pupils who are withdrawn from lessons to work with the SENCO and other support staff, and this support makes a very strong impact upon the raising the performance of the individuals concerned. Especially effective work is carried out through the reading intervention programme, through which pupils make very rapid gains in their learning. In addition, strong support is provided during class lessons throughout the school for individual pupils with special educational needs. In particular, the support provided by learning support assistants working with individuals is excellent with pupils being sensitively prompted, guided and encouraged as best fits the situation. The school is extremely rigorous in identifying and monitoring pupils' learning difficulties but rightly recognises the need to review the current criteria for placing pupils on the special educational needs register. Also, the school realises the need to more clearly differentiate between pupils that it feels should be placed on the first stage of the register and others that the school has rightly identified as needing a boost to their learning.
42. Links with the local community have strengthened since the last inspection. Effective use is made of visits to local places of interest to extend the work done in class, particularly in history and geography. A range of visitors, including local residents, also broadens pupils' experiences. The extensive range of outdoor pursuits offered to pupils throughout the school helps them to gain

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<sup>1</sup> The school's special educational needs unit within the school is known as the Special Class by all members of the school community

confidence and enhances their personal development. Pupils' awareness of the needs of others is raised through regular and generous support for a variety of charities. Involvement in local initiatives, such as the Sheepfold Project and Millennium Festival make good contributions to art, music and drama. There are some links with local business and good sporting links with other schools in the area. Close liaison with the local secondary schools ensures the smooth passage of pupils transferring at the end of Year 6.

43. The school's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils is very good. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The school makes very effective use of these aspects to develop, broaden and deepen pupils' social skills, values and experiences.
44. The provision for the spiritual development of pupils is very good. All pupils experience a range of activities that give them many valuable opportunities to reflect and wonder. For example, they grow and care for plants and explore the uniqueness of similar leaves. The school provides a very good range of opportunities for reflection in the daily act of collective worship. Pupils reflect on the meaning of feelings for example, happy memories in the story 'Grandma's Bill'. The school incorporates spiritual opportunities very well into lessons. An example of this is during plenary sessions when pupils reflect on and consider what they have learnt. There is a very good spiritual ethos in assemblies and many lessons. This provides a positive contribution to the thought pupils give to the needs of others within the school.
45. The provision for the moral development of pupils is very good. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. The school is very effective in teaching pupils the principles that distinguish right from wrong. This begins on entry to Year 3 and develops well as the pupils progress through the school. There is a very strong code of moral conduct implicit in all actions. All members of the teaching and non-teaching staff provide good and effective role models. They ensure that their dealings with issues are firm but fair. Teachers talk through any transgression of the school's code of conduct with pupils and, when necessary, with parents. Pupils know and understand what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. They have many opportunities to explore and develop moral issues within the curriculum and assemblies. For example, pupils look closely at the effects of persuasive language in their literacy lessons. The school successfully promotes pupils' appreciation of moral issues concerning other people's property. It encourages them to tidy away equipment and to respect the work and artefacts on display around the school. The school ensures that pupils develop a good understanding of the effects of their actions on other people and on themselves. The pupils respect and value each other, their teachers, adults who work in the school and the children who attend the school's Special Class.
46. The provision for the social development of pupils is very good. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. The school gives all its pupils many opportunities to develop independent attitudes to learning. Teachers build on this and increase these opportunities as pupils become older and more mature. Pupils of all abilities mix well together during break and lunchtimes. This includes pupils who attend the Special Class. All pupils develop their ability to work co-operatively and collaboratively in lessons very well. In art, for example, pupils work together very well when they make and paint friezes to support their work in history. This encourages the effective development of social skills. The school gives all pupils the opportunity to take part in residential visits. This enables pupils to develop a strong sense of group identity and acceptable group behaviour. All members of staff foster good relationships between pupils and between pupils and themselves. The school develops pupils' concept of citizenship through their participation in the work of the school and the wider community. It has a strong and effective school council in which pupils take much pride. Pupils develop their social skills further through their effective involvement

in the wider community. They take part in theatre workshops, in town festivals and give concerts for families and friends. The school prepares pupils very well for their transfer to secondary school.

47. The school makes very good provision for the cultural development of pupils. This is a very significant improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils have many opportunities to develop awareness of their own culture. They visit local places of interest as part of their work in history and geography. For example, pupils visit museums, take part in May Day celebrations and work with the London Festival Orchestra. The school teaches pupils well about other religions, cultures and beliefs. This mainly happens during religious education lessons where pupils learn about Buddhism, Islam and Christianity. Representatives of different beliefs visit the school and the school makes effective use of the cultural mix within its own community. The school is very effective in its teaching of pupils to value and respect a range of faiths and beliefs. It prepares them very well for life in a multi-cultural and multi-faith society.

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

48. This aspect of the school although deemed satisfactory during the previous inspection has nonetheless improved significantly since that time. The level of care provided for all pupils is exemplary. Health and safety procedures are reviewed annually and risk assessments are carried out on a regular basis. This ensures that all working practices fully meet current requirements and that the school functions smoothly. Pupils are supervised closely at all times and lunchtime routines are managed well. There are clear guidelines for dealing with accidents, illness and the administration of medicines, and these are followed meticulously. The building is spotlessly clean and well maintained. Child protection arrangements are effective. The headteacher has responsibility for liaising with outside agencies and is suitably trained to carry out this designated role.
49. Arrangements for supporting pupils' personal development, including pupils with special educational needs are very good and permeate all areas of school life. Staff have a very good rapport with pupils, respond positively to their needs and place a strong emphasis upon building pupils' self-esteem. Praise and rewards are used effectively to encourage effort and achievements are appropriately celebrated. Measures to promote high standards of behaviour are very effective. They are implemented consistently and clearly communicated to parents. Sanctions are fair, and good guidelines are in place to deal with bullying. Any reported incidents are taken seriously and dealt with efficiently. School rules are well understood by pupils, and ensure they act in a sensible way at all times. The school council and activities such as outdoor pursuits significantly enhance pupils' confidence. Pupils enjoy coming to school.
50. The school has very good systems in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and the data obtained is used very well to guide planning. This is very good progress since the previous inspection when a key issue of the inspection was to 'develop assessment to better inform planning'. The school provides very effective support and advice for its pupils, informed by the careful monitoring of their academic progress and personal development.
51. Teachers know their pupils very well and much useful assessment is done on a short-term, day-to-day basis, during lessons. As well as the statutory tests, the school undertakes a wide range of non-statutory tests to aid in giving a full picture of pupils' academic development.
52. The information gained from testing is used very effectively to identify and support pupils with special educational needs and to set pupils for mathematics. Subject co-ordinators analyse the

results of the end of key stage national tests very carefully to identify trends. They analyse the way pupils answer test questions to help in identifying weaknesses in teaching and learning that need to be addressed. As a result of this analysis, a greater emphasis has been placed on writing within English and on mental mathematics, both areas in which significant improvements have been identified. Results of optional 'SATs' tests are effectively used to guide target setting.

53. Procedures for monitoring and supporting academic progress are very good. Pupils are given, and made aware of, individual and group targets for their learning. For example, pupils in Year 6 have been 'data handling' their own assessment data, identifying areas of the 'pie graph' where they are aiming to improve: 'We want to make this part of the pie bigger by the end of the year', for example. The school has a policy for feeding back information about progress to pupils and a considerable amount of work has been undertaken on 'formative' assessment, sharing learning intentions with pupils. This was seen clearly in most lessons during the inspection; learning objectives were discussed at the beginning and during the lesson and progress towards these discussed in 'plenary' session at the end of the lesson. Many examples were seen of teachers' marking in pupils books with clear comments on pupils' progress towards the learning intentions and on ways in which pupils could improve their work: 'To succeed in this you will need to ...'.

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

54. Parents express strong support for the school and are very happy with the standards achieved. They consider that it works closely with them and indicate they would feel comfortable approaching staff with any worries or concerns. Parents are actively encouraged to support their children's learning. A large number of parents have already signed up to the home school agreement. Suitable amounts of homework are provided on a regular basis and most parents express satisfaction with what is set. Reading diaries are used very effectively and provide good communications between teachers and pupils' homes. A good number of parents, together with grandparents and other volunteers, help in school, especially with reading and swimming. Some use their expertise to aid pupils' learning. One parent, for example, who is a librarian, has re-catalogued the library whilst another plays the piano in assembly. A parent, who is an artist, also helps to run an after school art club. Many others support family assemblies. The Parent Teacher Association is active and gives generous support to the school through organised fund-raising and social events. Parents of new starters are introduced to the school with understanding and given clear guidance about its routines and expectations.
55. Overall, parents are kept very well informed about their children's progress. There are sufficient opportunities for them to consult with teachers on a formal basis and annual reports are generally informative. They give a clear indication about how pupils are getting on, although they rarely identify where they could do better. Reports do, however, provide good opportunities for parents and pupils to comment on the year's achievements. Parents are kept fully informed about life generally in school through monthly newsletters and various other forms of correspondence. They also receive good termly details of class-work. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are properly involved from the time the teacher has an initial concern, and kept well informed about subsequent progress.

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

56. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and management of the school. She has an extremely clear view as to the educational direction of the school and this view is shared by staff and governors. The headteacher has created a climate in which staff work together as a highly effective and mutually supportive team with their targets set on the clear central purpose of

improving the quality of education and driving up the standards achieved by all pupils. In this way the school's aims are thoroughly clear and appropriate. This strong situation has enabled the school to thoroughly address the key issues raised by the last school inspection and to make substantial and rapid improvements in all areas of its operation. The headteacher is fully supported by all staff and governors. In addition, the deputy headteacher fulfils his role very effectively. In particular he has played a central role in upgrading and co-ordinating curricular provision and planning, providing excellent leadership in this area. The quality of the leadership and management of the school has been thoroughly strengthened since the school was last inspected.

57. The priorities for improvement expressed within the school's development and management plans are clear, specific and meet the identified needs of the school. There is a clear, well-managed and effective approach across the school to improving standards in all subjects. The headteacher and all members of staff work closely with parents to promote, establish and develop positive attitudes to learning and behaviour. This has a very marked positive impact on pupils' values and standards. All teachers have responsibility for managing one or more curriculum area. They discharge these duties effectively and are successful in identifying what is necessary in order to improve standards.
58. Subject co-ordinators play an important part in the management of their subjects. They have suitable responsibilities, regularly review their subjects and audit the subject's resources. All the subject co-ordinators write policies, schemes of work and monitor planning in their subject areas. They monitor and evaluate provision and standards effectively. All members of staff work together as a team. They make a very positive contribution to the quality of education and the school's ethos. The analysis of assessment results and the introduction of target setting are having a positive impact on standards. The monitoring of teaching is thorough and rigorous. Strengths and weaknesses are identified and teachers receive individual feedback on their performance.
59. The school makes effective use of the special needs support service in the identification of pupils who need extra help. It provides support for higher attaining pupils as well as those with learning and behavioural difficulties. This has a beneficial effect on learning, progress and standards. The co-ordinator for special educational needs manages this area very well. The governor responsible for special educational needs gives a good level of assistance. The school analyses and costs the budget for special educational needs very carefully.
60. The governing body generally fulfils all of its statutory duties with the minor exception that some items of information are missing from the annual report they produce for parents. Governors are well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have a strong determination to take the steps necessary to raise standards. Governors are well informed, very supportive and actively involved in the school's management. They have rightly identified the need to upgrade systems for them to gain a fuller overview of the curriculum and how it is taught. The governors show a strong interest in the school's work and in the school's involvement with the local community. There are suitable committees in place. These have clear terms of reference. The school has specific governors for key roles and they visit the school regularly. The school has a very good improvement plan. It has suitably high targets for raising standards and it is in a good position to meet them.
61. The standard of the school's financial planning is very good. The best use is made of all grants and resources available. Financial planning is very precisely linked to the priorities set for future development and appropriate consultation and comparisons of costs take place when governors make major spending decisions.

62. The day to day efficiency of the school's administration is very good. The school's administration officer provides very effective yet unobtrusive support for the headteacher and staff.
63. There is a very good match of teachers and support staff to the needs of the curriculum. All staff, including support staff, are well trained and provided with regular opportunities to keep up to date with their areas of responsibility.
64. The school has very good strategies in place for staff appraisal and performance management. There is a very high degree of commitment to staff development that has resulted in very good improvement in this area since the previous inspection, especially in the development of the role of the subject co-ordinators. Although formal appraisal systems are currently 'on hold', annual 'teacher conferences' are held with the headteacher during which, progress during the previous year and longer-term career developments including training needs are discussed. The school has a very detailed staff handbook, which is updated annually. The headteacher undertakes a great deal of monitoring of teaching, as do 'core' subject co-ordinators, who have provided in-service training, undertaken 'exemplar' lessons and worked within classrooms with teachers. Staff are provided with very good opportunities to attend a wide range of courses, largely on a 'school needs' basis.
65. Very good systems are in place for the induction of newly qualified teachers to the school. The two newly qualified teachers in the school during the inspection have been supported very well during their first year of teaching. They have been provided with a 'mentor', given opportunities to observe teachers within the school and have visited other schools to observe lessons. The school has good potential for initial teacher training and welcomes a number of students to the school each year.
66. There is sufficient accommodation to deliver the planned curriculum, but since the last inspection the building has been modified internally. The original open plan design has been redesigned as separate classrooms. This is an improvement, but, due to a lack of corridors, teaching is sometimes disrupted by the need for pupils or adults to pass through classrooms during lessons. Also, the air circulation in some classrooms is poor, leading to these rooms having a stuffy atmosphere that is not conducive to encouraging full concentration. Standards of cleaning and general maintenance are very high. Displays are well presented and used effectively to celebrate pupils' achievements. The large playing field and both playgrounds are also in good repair.
67. The school has a good range of resources to support teaching and learning. These resources are well organised, readily accessible and well used.

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

68. The school has no significant weaknesses but should address the following areas within its action plan:
- Produce formalised procedures to assist the governors in gaining a fuller overview of the curriculum and how it is taught. (paragraph 60)
  - Ensure that all relevant items of information are included in the governors' annual report to parents. (paragraph 60)

- Pursue all possible ways of reducing the disturbance sometimes caused to lessons through the need for individuals or classes of pupils to pass through each other's classrooms. (paragraphs 66 and 144)
- Pursue possible methods of improving the air circulation within the classrooms where it is poor. (paragraph 66 and 130)

**THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS UNIT  
(KNOWN IN THE SCHOOL AS THE SPECIAL CLASS)**

69. The school's Special Class currently provides full time education for six primary age pupils with severe and profound learning difficulties. Pupils' ages range from Reception Year to Year 6. The range of learning difficulties and disabilities in the class is very wide.
70. Overall, pupils achieve well and make good progress. Some pupils make very good progress in particular areas of their development. All pupils learn to communicate well. Some read words and know letters by their phonic sounds. Pupils with profound learning difficulties use eye contact and, where appropriate, switches to show that they understand questions and instructions. All pupils have an understanding of very simple numeracy. Most of them understand that times of day and days of the week proceed in sequence. Some pupils count to five and more, and recognise shapes such as square, circle and triangle. All pupils develop a fair working knowledge of the world about them, for example how plants grow and that they need warmth and water.
71. Pupils' attitudes to school are good. They like to come to school, they often show a great interest in their lessons, and apply themselves well to work. Overall, they behave well in lessons. Occasional outbursts of poor behaviour are usually the result of pupils' deep-seated problems. Teachers and support assistants ensure that other pupils can get on with work when such outbursts occur.
72. Teaching is very good. Lessons for the whole class, groups and individuals are carefully planned and prepared to match the very varied capabilities and needs of individual pupils. The class teacher and learning support assistants make up a very well organised team. Routines and responsibilities are very clear; all have a sharp understanding of what and how the pupils are to learn. Pupils are constantly challenged with questions to encourage them to think about what they are learning. Lessons proceed at a good pace and pupils are well motivated to work at the tasks devised for them. Teaching methods are carefully considered, and often very imaginatively devised. The teaching team understands well how to apply approaches that involve all the pupils' senses. Written learning programmes for each pupil are well detailed and on hand to ensure that teaching focuses on essentials and that pupils' achievements are recorded. The teaching team adopts a consistent approach to managing pupils' behaviour. They show very good skills in helping pupils to concentrate on the task in hand, and in diverting potentially disruptive behaviour. The team has excellent knowledge of each pupil's strengths and weaknesses. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good. Time allocated for lessons is used very well. Also, very good use is made of a wide range of aids to learning, for example puppet characters and large pictures to reinforce stories, materials for sensory stimulation, and electronic aids for communication. Staff make very good use of photographs of work in progress and of particular events. These contribute very well to pupils' learning about their environment, families and events both past and present.
73. Pupils' learning is good, and in some areas it is very good. Overall, pupils acquire new knowledge and develop essential skills well, according to the realistic targets that are set for them. Positive teaching ensures that they work as hard as they are able, and produce good attempts at writing, drawing and model making to aid their learning. As far as possible, pupils develop a fair understanding of what they are doing, and why they are doing it, together with an appreciation of their own success in achieving.
74. The provision of education for the Special Class is very well organised and led by a teacher who is well qualified and experienced in special education. The curriculum is very broad and embracing.



Where possible, it relates to the mainstream curriculum. Recent national curricular initiatives are being included, for example the emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Pupils' learning is also geared to a multi-sensory approach that enables them to learn not only by looking and listening, but also through touch, taste, smell and movement. The curriculum is presently being reviewed in order to refine and streamline provision in order to ensure that steps in learning are fine enough and that they enable all pupils to progress well over time. Assessment of pupils' achievement and progress is good. Staff carefully record all aspects of pupils' education, including physical and medical matters, and behaviour. Home-school books are used effectively.

75. Pupils in the Special Class join in some lessons with mainstream peers where possible. Also, the school provides excellent social experiences for both Special Class and mainstream pupils. At break times and in some extracurricular activities, they meet and work together. The inclusion of the Special Class in the school is highly regarded by many parents and pupils. The curriculum also includes good opportunities for pupils' spiritual and cultural development, for example through seeing and making prayer mat designs, and by thinking about different age groups in family photographs. Relationships with both the feeder infant school and the secondary school are good. Very good induction arrangements are made for pupils in Year 6. Also, through shared activities, for example swimming, early relationships with the secondary school staff are ensured. The Special Class enjoys very good relationships with the wider community and particularly with the parents of the main school who together raise substantial funds to help enrich resources.
76. The Special Class is supported satisfactorily by the psychological service, essential therapy teams and by the teacher of pupils with visual impairments. Medical attention is on hand when necessary. However, pupils would benefit from a stronger input of speech therapy.
77. The two criticisms stated in the previous inspection report have been rectified. Pupils now have good access to computers and electronic aids to facilitate communication and control. The efficiency of teaching and support staff for pupils' feeding programmes is now good, as a result of re-location of accommodation and better deployment of staff.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	65
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	52

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
13	41	36	11	0	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	-	205
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	-	27

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-	20
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	-	84

#### **English as an additional language**

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.4

#### **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 2*

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999	30	18	48

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	28	25	25
	Girls	17	15	16
	Total	45	40	41
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	94 (58)	83 (48)	85 (62)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	16	25	25
	Girls	10	16	13
	Total	26	41	38
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	54 (58)	85 (56)	79 (58)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	0
White	202
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: Y3– Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.29
Average class size	25.62

#### **Education support staff: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	6.6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	150

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	441181
Total expenditure	469768
Expenditure per pupil	2292
Balance brought forward from previous year	56850
Balance carried forward to next year	28263

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	210
Number of questionnaires returned	88

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	41	3	1	3
My child is making good progress in school.	52	42	3	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	56	1	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	48	17	1	6
The teaching is good.	59	35	3	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	35	8	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	26	1	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	35	3	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	50	42	5	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	55	42	1	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	40	1	2	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	49	42	7	0	2

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

### **ENGLISH**

78. In the 1999 tests for eleven-year-olds, the pupils' attainment was well above the national average. The percentage of pupils exceeding the national requirement and attaining the higher Level 5 was close to the national average. The performance of pupils in comparison with those from similar schools was well above average. This level of achievement is a very significant improvement in standards since the previous inspection.
79. The inspection evidence confirms the 1999 test results. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 achieve results well above the national average. This reflects the ability of the cohort and the quality of teaching. There is a significant improvement in standards since the previous inspection.
80. The school's implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is very successful. This has a beneficial effect on pupils' progress. There is a marked improvement in the quality of pupils' speaking and listening skills. They demonstrate an improving ability to speak clearly and with expression when, for example, pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 give talks to the rest of the class. They lead discussion and question and answer sessions very well and evaluate their own and others' performances. This is a direct result of the impact of the literacy strategy and the improvement in the quality of teaching. On entry to the school, pupils' achievements are low. They make rapid progress as they move through Year 3, experience a widening range of reading material and learn specific reading skills. They read more accurately, with greater confidence and expression and reach the expected levels by the end of Year 3. This improvement continues at a rapid rate of progress as pupils move through Key Stage 2. They demonstrate an improving command of skills in writing, and use an increasing range of punctuation correctly. Most pupils make very good progress in the development of their ability to use increasingly complex sentence structures and in developing their handwriting. The strategies for improving the writing of boys are successful. Boys achieve similar standards to those of girls. Improvement since the previous inspection is very good.
81. Throughout the school pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in their learning. Their teachers give them specific tasks in reading and writing to help meet their identified educational needs. They have outstandingly good and effective support. This has a positive impact on their learning and progress. The work for higher attaining pupils throughout Key Stage 2 is challenging and shows high expectation of achievement. This enhances the quality of the pupils' learning and progress and raises their attainment.
82. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2, they achieve well above average standards in speaking and listening. Most pupils speak with increasing confidence to a range of listeners. They ask and answer questions readily, respond enthusiastically to literature and express themselves increasingly clearly. Pupils in Year 3 use drama very effectively when they explore the life of the prophet Mohammed. Year 6 pupils discuss and debate the merits of different work by the same author. They use a wide range of vocabulary and persuasive language very effectively in discussion. This ensures full engagement of the listeners. All literacy sessions end with a discussion about what pupils have learned during the lesson. Teachers encourage pupils to read out completed work. This reinforces learning and increases pupils' confidence.
83. Most pupils make very good progress in speaking and listening. The teachers use suitable technical vocabulary during lessons in other subjects, such as mathematics, religious education and

science. An example of this was in a religious education lesson in a Year 3 class where the teacher and pupils explored the meaning and use of words such as minaret and Muezzin. All pupils learnt well as they answered and raised questions about story content. They built very successfully on their skills of speaking and listening. In Year 6, pupils take advantage of opportunities for discussion as they put forward and debate points of view. This develops their learning about how to put forward reasoned arguments very well. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in developing their skills of speaking and listening.

84. At the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have well above average reading standards. They enter the school with low standards in reading, reach expected levels for their age by the end of Year 3 and achieve well above average standards by the end of Year 6. This is a very good level of achievement. The more able pupils make very good use of the library to develop their research skills. This is a very good improvement since the previous inspection. Most pupils read for pleasure and with understanding at home and at school. They comment confidently on the differences in style between books and make effective use of their developing skills of inference and deduction. All pupils use sources such as dictionaries and thesauruses confidently and accurately. This helps their knowledge and understanding and makes a positive contribution to their standards of learning.
85. Pupils of all abilities make very good progress in learning how to read for different purposes. The strong focus on reading in the literacy hour enables pupils to learn and make progress more rapidly. Parents support the school very well by hearing their children read at home. This helps them make better progress. The exceptionally good support for pupils with special educational needs enables them to make very good progress.
86. At the age of eleven, writing standards are above average. Standards for the more able pupils are well above average. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The more able pupils are achieving well in the quality, range and content of their work. Most pupils write in a range of styles and for a variety of purposes. There are good examples of extended writing in English and most pupils use paragraphs accurately to link their stories. Pupils use story structure, such as chapters and episodes, effectively and well in their work. An example of this is when pupils write stories about life in Ancient Egypt. Their writing is interesting, lively and very well organised. Pupils of all abilities develop, organise and communicate ideas effectively, for example, in their book reviews. These are good quality reviews with well-reasoned arguments. The spelling of regular and irregular words is usually correct and pupils use a suitably wide variety of punctuation marks accurately. By Year 6 pupils have an above average understanding of how to use a range of tenses and figures of speech correctly. Standards of handwriting and presentation are consistently good. Most pupils use ink in their writing.
87. Pupils make very good progress in developing their writing skills. They enter the school with well below average skills in writing and spelling. Pupils learn well in a structured and purposeful learning atmosphere and make very good progress. The implementation of the literacy hour is having a significant impact on the quality of their learning. As they move through Year 3 their rate of learning and progress accelerates quickly. The school maintains this rapid rate of learning as the pupils progress through Key Stage 2. Pupils use the computer for direct word-processing, for example when they compare different styles of the same author. This increases their learning and progress in drafting and re-drafting. Pupils increase their competence in spelling and grammar very well.

88. Pupils make effective use of their developing literacy skills in other subjects. They write up the results of their experiments in science and write clear factual accounts in history. An example of this is the work on the Ancient Egyptians by pupils from Years 4 and 5.
89. The pupils' response to work in English is overall very good. Most pupils listen very carefully to their teachers. They try hard to answer questions, join in discussions and work well. They are eager to contribute to discussions and keen to extend their knowledge. Pupils listen to each other very well. They value and respect the contributions their classmates make. They enjoy sharing their work with each other and with adults. Most pupils work very well together. They share ideas and thoughts confidently and sensibly with each other. By Year 6, pupils concentrate very well for lengthy periods, strive to finish their work on time and take pride in the finished product. They are proud of their work and are eager to discuss it with visitors. Pupils with special educational needs respond very well to the activities provided for them in reading and writing. They make a positive contribution to the class discussions. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
90. By the age of eleven most pupils have skills in literacy that exceed the national average. All pupils are confident and very competent in speaking and listening. They raise and answer questions and join in discussions with a high degree of maturity. Most pupils speak clearly, expressively and demonstrate a suitably mature level of thought in their discussions with each other and adults. By Year 6, most pupils read fluently, with understanding and expression. Pupils of all abilities know how to use the library system to find books. They understand and use the glossary, index and contents correctly. Most pupils refer to chapters when talking about books. All pupils know a story has to have a beginning, middle and end. The quality of handwriting is mostly very good. By Year 6, all pupils use joined script and ink. They use their reading and writing skills successfully across a range of subjects. The implementation of the literacy strategy is having a positive effect on raising standards throughout the school.
91. The quality of teaching is very good overall. In six out of 16 lessons the teaching is excellent. Teaching is very good in six out of sixteen lessons and good in two out of sixteen lessons. This very high quality of teaching manifests itself in the standards pupils achieve. Hallmarks of this outstanding teaching are the stimulating and interesting activities that the teachers plan. The teachers ensure that all pupils are fully engaged in their work and that the level of challenge is suitable for all ability groups in the class. The management of pupils is very good and the teachers use high quality assessments of learning and progress to inform and adjust future planning. In these lessons the lesson pace is brisk and maintains pupils' interest and enthusiasm. This ensures that the pupils make very good progress in their learning. There are clearly defined learning targets for pupils. These have clear learning steps and the pupils work hard to achieve them. Most teachers plan work to extend pupils' skills in subjects across the curriculum. Where teaching is less than good there is some lack of clear subject knowledge and a slowing of lesson pace during the group sessions. This leads to pupils becoming disinterested and learning and progress slows. The school deploys its support assistants very effectively. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' progress. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is consistently excellent. There is a significant improvement in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection.
92. The school uses a range of very effective assessment procedures in English. These are having a positive impact on raising standards. The quality and use of assessment is consistent throughout the school. The school has a portfolio of annotated and levelled work in English. This enables teachers to make accurate assessments of progress and achievement. The library is well organised and attractively presented. It has a good stock of fiction and reference books and pupils



make effective use of it. It provides a calm and restful place in which to read and carry out independent research. This is a very good level of improvement since the previous inspection.

## MATHEMATICS

93. In the 1999 end of Key Stage 2 national tests, the number of pupils reaching Level 4 or above was well above the national average. The attainment of the whole of the Year 6 cohort was above average in comparison to other schools nationally and when compared to other similar schools. These results are confirmed by observations made during this inspection of the current cohort of Year 6 pupils. The trend of the school's results in recent years shows standards in mathematics improving in line with the national trend of improvement. Lesson observations during the inspection, a scrutiny of work undertaken during the current school year and discussions with pupils during lessons indicate that the current cohort of Year 6 pupils have made very good progress in comparison to their attainment on entry to the school in Year 3. The majority are on course to attain standards in mathematics above those expected nationally at the end of the key stage with a minority achieving well-above national expectations for their age. This is a significant improvement in standards since the school's last inspection.
94. During the current school year, the school has adopted and implemented the National Numeracy Strategy very well. Under this new scheme of work and curriculum pupils undertake a wide range of work in all areas of mathematics. Samples of pupils' work during the year demonstrate that pupils have undertaken a variety of work on shape, space and measures, and have tackled a range of problems involving handling data and investigation. Lesson observations throughout the inspection confirm that pupils make good use of their numeracy skills in other curriculum areas such as science and information technology.
95. Pupils throughout the school are 'set' by ability for their mathematics lessons. Most Year 3 pupils in the higher-ability set demonstrate above average numeracy skills. They are able to 'round' up and down to the nearest 100, have good recall of the nine times table and are aware of a variety of strategies for subtraction. They understand that subtraction is complementary addition and can be checked by working backwards. Year 3 pupils in the lower-ability set, all of whom were below average or were barely attaining expected standards in mathematics on their entry to school, whilst remaining below average in their attainment overall, have, from evidence in their exercise books, clearly made good progress, and in some cases, very good progress during the year. Most pupils know that answers in the five times table always end with a five or a nought, and know that to multiply by 10, 'you add a zero'. A small minority of pupils in this set independently find a small difference between two numbers lying either side of 100 by counting on, although a significant minority need considerable support in this. Most Year 4 pupils in the higher ability set attain well using known number facts to multiply and divide, show good recall of their three, four, five, six and 10 times multiplication tables and use appropriate strategies to work out answers for tables calculations where they do not know the answer from memory. The majority demonstrate above-average confidence in articulating their methods for calculations and many find their own strategies for problem-solving. Although the majority of pupils in the lower-ability Year 4/5 set provide the 'double' of 12, 14 and 30 and half of 8, 10 and 24, a significant minority, most of whom have significant special educational needs, find these calculations very difficult. By the time they reach the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils in the lower-attaining set have made very good progress and are attaining standards equivalent to those expected nationally for their age. Pupils use a variety of mental and written strategies when solving calculations and work at a very good pace. Most round numbers to the nearest tenth in numbers with two decimal places. Pupils in the higher-attaining Year 6 set attain levels above those expected for their age and there is some evidence of very high attainment in this set. The majority are converting fractions to decimals with

above average speed and accuracy and know, for example, know that  $\frac{1}{3}$  is 0.33 'recurring' as a decimal number, that  $\frac{3}{5}$  is equivalent to 0.6 and that  $30\% = \frac{3}{10}$  and  $65\% = \frac{13}{20}$ . They confidently explain their strategies for working out some of these mental calculations. The presentation of mathematics work in pupils' books is generally good throughout the school.

96. Pupils make good progress in their learning and this is directly linked to the good quality of teaching seen. Teachers ensure pupils are well motivated, the overall pace of the lessons is at least satisfactory and frequently very good. Teachers' classroom management skills are effective in ensuring pupils concentrate on their work and teachers utilise a good range of strategies to motivate and interest pupils. They follow the recommended numeracy lesson format and programmes of study very closely and with enthusiasm, plan lessons well, provide a good range of resources and use praise and questioning well. They ensure all pupils are paying appropriate attention, use correct mathematical vocabulary and terminology and provide good opportunities for pupils to explain their methods and to practise what they know. In one excellent lesson seen, the teacher made excellent use of questioning based on very thorough subject knowledge that promoted and accelerated pupils' knowledge. The teacher had a very encouraging and enthusiastic approach that motivated pupils very well and as a result, all pupils thoroughly enjoyed working to their full potential for the duration of the lesson.
97. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in mathematics lessons range from excellent to satisfactory and are very good overall. Pupils enjoy and are very enthusiastic about their mathematics work, especially the mental and oral activities. They respond very well to their teachers and work together well without the need for constant teacher-intervention.
98. The school has implemented the 'Numeracy Strategy' very effectively. There is a good range of resources for the subject and funding has been allocated to purchase additional resources to support the numeracy strategy. The co-ordinator for the subject is very enthusiastic, has undertaken comprehensive monitoring of the teaching of mathematics throughout the school and provided useful 'model' lessons for staff.

## SCIENCE

99. In the 1999 end of Key Stage 2 national tests the number of pupils reaching Level 4 or above was just above the national average and the number attaining Level 5 was close to the national average. Taking the results of the 1999 Year 6 cohort as a whole, the attainment was above average compared to the national picture and average in comparison with other similar schools. Science results have shown a good trend of improvement since 1996. Results for 2000, that the school has just received, show a further strengthening of this picture with more pupils reaching the higher levels than in 1999. Evidence from this inspection generally confirms these results although in some instances pupils perform at a higher level than reflected by the results. The current cohort of Year 6 pupils has made very good progress and most pupils attain above average levels.
100. Standards, teaching and learning, pupils' attitudes and overall provision have improved significantly since the school's last inspection.
101. Pupils throughout the school develop good skills of scientific enquiry. They develop a confident approach towards carrying out investigations. For example, with help from their teacher, Year 3 pupils competently discover that the outside leaves of a bunch of celery stalks are greenest and they deduce that this is because these leaves are more exposed to the light. Year 4 and 5 pupils use good skills of recording and analysis to investigate the relationship between the change in daylight hours and the earth's orbit around the sun. During a Year 6 'science conference', pupils

showed good and sometimes very good ability to describe investigations they had carried out and realised the need to sometimes repeat observations to verify their findings. Many pupils showed that they were clearly identifying crucial elements within the investigations and using previously acquired scientific knowledge to make predictions and draw conclusions. For example, in an investigation into noise levels, one group observed ...' this classroom was the loudest because it had the fewest pupils and no furnishings to absorb the sound'. Pupils make systematic observations and precise measurements for example using equipment such as a data logger and they record the information accurately and neatly.

102. Throughout the school pupils acquire a wide range of skills knowledge and understanding in relation to work on life processes and living things. Younger Key Stage 2 pupils gain a very full insight into the way in which plants live. For example, they learn how plants draw water up through their stems and many show a good basic understanding of the principles of photosynthesis. Year 4 and 5 pupils gain a full knowledge of the structure of flowering plants through dissecting flowers and producing detailed diagrams and descriptions. Year 6 pupils show a full understanding of food chains in a variety of different environments such as mountain and rain forest habitats. Amongst many other areas of study, they gain a full knowledge of how micro-organisms work in the process of decomposition.
103. Year 3 pupils gain a good knowledge of the properties of materials and physical processes. They competently investigate the suitability of certain materials for different tasks, and gain and use a wide vocabulary of appropriate words such as 'flexible', 'rigid', 'strong', 'light' and 'heavy'. They gain a good basic understanding of how shadows are formed and how shadows change with the movement of the sun. Year 4 and 5 pupils have a good knowledge of processes such as evaporation and condensation and confidently recognise how certain change processes like these can be reversible. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils acquire a comprehensive knowledge in areas including separating mixtures through processes such as filtering and sieving, they explain phenomena such as air resistance and acquire an in-depth knowledge of the way in which sound and light react.
104. Pupils show very good progress with their learning as they move through the school because facts, information and activities are presented to them very clearly. Their rate of learning is accelerated by the frequent opportunities provided for them to discuss ideas so that their understanding is very well extended before they begin to write about work they have done. This solid approach to learning is further consolidated by the fact that activities are written up neatly and clearly. Presentation is often very good with pupils clearly taking a pride in their work. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress with their learning and often receive excellent support from learning support assistants. As a result, very few achieve lower than the nationally expected level by the end of Key Stage 2.
105. Literacy, numeracy and information technology skills are very well utilised and extended during science work. For example, the 'science conference' mentioned above included a group of pupils showing a video they had made of their work, a range of graphs of the results and the use of equipment such as a data logger. Pupils often write extensive and accurate accounts of their investigations.
106. In all of the lessons observed pupils show thoroughly positive attitudes to their work and apply themselves with enthusiasm and full concentration on most occasions. They enjoy science projects and develop confidence and independence in carrying out the work so that by Year 6, many pupils begin to show initiative in the way that they approach work.

107. Teaching is very good. Teachers show confident subject knowledge that enables them to make clear and succinct explanations and ask precise questions that pursue and extend pupils' ability to think in a scientific way. For example, in an excellent Year 6 lesson detailed questioning about their experiments with sound, provoked intensive thinking with one pupil eventually commenting '...the more tightly packed the molecules are, the more easily sound can travel through an object'. Teachers plan in detail and work is geared to accommodate the full range of attainment levels within the classes. Resources are very well prepared so that pupils can access activities with the minimum of delay. This was seen, for example, in Year 3 science lessons where pupils used a wide range of carefully prepared resources to assist them with their activities and moved with great efficiency from one phase of their lessons to another. Teachers have a very good rapport with pupils and use this to promote very effective interaction and discussion. Where the teaching was less than good, this was usually because time targets set for pupils to complete work were imprecise and pupils therefore worked with less rigour and urgency.
108. The subject is very well led and managed. The co-ordinator monitors teaching and planning very effectively and precisely identifies the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning so as to accurately inform the next phase of planning. A good range of resources is available. These are neatly stored and well used by teachers and pupils.

## **ART**

109. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils make very good progress and produce above average quality artwork. This is a very good level of improvement since the previous inspection. The pupils are confident in their use of art materials and, from the beginning of their entry to the school, have opportunities to evaluate and improve their work. They make very good progress in developing their knowledge of the work of famous artists such as Lowry, William Morris and Clarice Cliff. This develops their understanding of different styles and techniques very well and is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils use a suitably wide range of media and materials confidently. They experiment with colour to achieve different shades and tones and use a range of techniques confidently. An example of this is the work pupils do when they make three-dimensional artefacts and sculptures.
110. The school provides a well-balanced and carefully planned curriculum that covers both elements of the National Curriculum for art. The scheme of work gives a good and effective level of support that enables teachers to plan and teach effectively. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and the quality of work on display. There are effective structures in place to systematically monitor pupils' development of skills. Pupils evaluate their own work on a systematic and structured basis. This gives them the opportunity to look critically at their work and suggest improvements. The school keeps portfolios of work for each year group. This enables the teachers to make informed judgements about learning and progress. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.
111. All pupils make very good progress in the development of skills and techniques. Pupils experiment with materials to create collage pictures and three-dimensional artefacts to support work in history. They learn about famous artists from a variety of cultures. This broadens their experience very well. The pupils apply their learning and knowledge well when they paint pictures in the style of Lowry and Clarice Cliff. They apply a range of media confidently and to good effect. An example of this is the printing in the style of William Morris. As pupils progress through Key Stage 2 they build on and develop their skills well. They show increasing control when using a variety of media. They make good use of sketchbooks to outline and develop initial ideas and are confident in their use of pencils when they amend and extend their ideas. Pupils

transfer their ideas into larger scale work very well. They observe and discuss their work critically and suggest ideas for improvement. The pupils have well-developed observation skills. They use these well and give increasing attention to detail and accuracy when, for example, they use pastels to sketch plants and flowers. Pupils with special educational needs work confidently and competently alongside their classmates. They make very good progress in developing confidence, skills and techniques.

112. The quality of learning and the consolidation of skills, knowledge and understanding are very good. The pupils use and apply their knowledge of techniques, such as using modelling materials, pencil and fine brushwork to good effect. They make very good progress in understanding and learning about the properties of a range of media and materials. An example of this is their ability to select suitable materials for their work. All pupils show an increasing level of control when sketching and in their ability to experiment with shade. They make marked gains in their ability to critically evaluate, change and improve their work. Pupils with special educational needs receive a very good level of support from adults and pupils. This enables them to learn quickly and increase their creative skills and abilities very well.
113. Pupils show much enthusiasm for the activities and find their work in art stimulating and interesting. As a result they work hard and productively. They behave very well in lessons and co-operate well together. The pupils demonstrate mature levels of discussion and reasoning when they appraise work. All pupils take considerable pride in their own work, show interest in, and respect for, that of others and enjoy talking about the practical activities. They have opportunities to take responsibility and show initiative in developing and using their own ideas.
114. There is a very significant improvement in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. It is consistently very good. All teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding and are confident in their teaching of art. They are enthusiastic and transfer this to the pupils. Planning is thorough and detailed. It has clear learning objectives and outcomes that meet the needs of all pupils. Expectations of achievement are high. The teachers make very effective use of questions and discussion to move pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding forward. The teaching of skills is systematic and carefully structured. This ensures pupils develop them well. The teaching about artists and their art is good. It enables pupils to develop an increasing awareness of the wide range and variety of art from many cultures. Teachers provide a good balance between direct teaching of facts and opportunities for pupils to discuss and reflect on art and artists. The work in art provides valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their cultural and spiritual awareness.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

115. It was only possible to observe one Year 6 design and technology lesson and one Year 6 science lesson that contained significant strands of design and technology during the period of this inspection. However, this evidence, along with the evidence of work scrutinised around the school shows that pupils make at least sound progress in this subject and work at appropriate levels for their ages. This is a broadly similar picture to that reported during the last inspection of the school. There is not enough information from the evidence gathered to make overall judgements about teaching and learning and pupils' attitudes to the work.
116. Previous work carried out shows that Year 3 competently design and make hygiene and safety posters. They list ingredients for making sandwiches, make the sandwiches and then carefully evaluate the work. Year 4/5 produce designs of an appropriate quality for chariots in association with their topic about Egypt. The finished models made from card have axles and also work with a 'cam' to give an appropriate up and down motion as the chariot moves. Pupils also

make pop up books, using computers to assist in producing the text and attractive book covers and quite complex folding designs to make the pop up item function when the book is opened. In carrying out this work pupils begin to take account of the preferences of whoever views the product and the items are carefully cut out and fixed together. Year 6 pupils confidently evaluate biscuits taking into account cost, taste and packaging. They carefully consider how the design of the packaging suits the purpose for which it was intended and test them for strength - carefully evaluating which designs are strongest. Much intensive discussion is involved in this work, enabling pupils to explore their ideas in full.

117. An appropriate scheme of work supported by the nationally produced guidelines for this subject is in place to help teachers with their planning. Resources for teaching and learning are satisfactory.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

118. Three geography lessons, at Year 4/5 and Year 6, were observed during the inspection. A scrutiny of pupils' work in folders and on display around the school, photographic evidence provided by the school and discussions with Year 6 pupils suggests pupils make appropriate progress in geography as they move through the school and attain standards that are appropriate for their ages. This is a broadly similar situation to that reported during the last inspection.

119. In the lessons observed, Year 4 and 5 pupils, following a talk from a local resident about current issues affecting the estate, are asked relevant questions which they had carefully prepared in advance. In another Year 4 and 5 lesson, pupils were looking at maps of different times and scales and, on an old map of Castletown, were able to recognise features such as the park and the school. They realised that the map was old because some features have changed, noting, for example, that the housing estate in which their school stands was depicted as a field on the old map. Pupils are beginning to competently use 'keys' in annotating maps and identifying places. They are describing and interpreting their surrounding using appropriate geographical vocabulary and are using and deducing information from maps of different scales, learning about human and physical features that give the local area its character. Year 6 pupils, studying a topic on rivers, gain appropriate understanding and know, for example, that the start of a river is termed its 'source' and that the landscape at the source is hilly or mountainous. They understand and competently explain the water cycle and understand that rivers receive water from a large area and usually flow into the sea or a lake, creating distinctive landscape features. They are developing a suitable understanding of how people try to manage the environment, considering how people can both damage and improve the environment.

120. Teaching in geography lessons seen was consistently good. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and interest and motivate the pupils well. They prepare and plan lessons very well, with clear learning objectives. They use questioning well, allowing pupils to put forward their own ideas, for example, on how the area in which the school is situated has changed when considering an old map of the area, but not allowing this to deflect from the learning intentions for the lesson. This good quality of teaching motivates pupils well and leads to good quality of learning. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in geography lessons are at least good, and were excellent in one lesson seen. Pupils enjoy their geography lessons and ask and answer questions enthusiastically.

121. Geography is organised so that units of work alternate with history topics. The school has adopted aspects of a government-recommended scheme of work for geography in preparation for changes to the National Curriculum at the beginning of the next school year. There is a satisfactory range of resources for the subject.

## **HISTORY**

122. No history lessons were observed during the inspection. There is therefore insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about pupils' attitudes and behaviour or the quality of teaching and learning in the subject. Evidence provided by a scrutiny of samples of pupils' work, photographs of work undertaken and discussions with Year 6 pupils, however, shows that pupils have undertaken an appropriate range of work in history during the current school year, make sound progress as they move through the school and attain appropriate levels for their ages. This evidence shows that provision and quality of work are at least as good as at the time of the last inspection. Pupils are given suitable opportunities to develop their sense of chronology and learn about key events in selected periods of history. They study local history and learn about the past from a range of resources. By the end of the key stage, pupils are able to describe characteristics of past periods and societies and recognise changes within and across them and are able to suggest consequences of the main events and changes.
123. Pupils in Year 3 have gained appropriate knowledge and understanding about 'The Romans in Britain' and 'World War II' during the current year. For their study of the Romans in Britain, pupils, whilst at Eden Valley on a residential visit, competently compared the life of the Romans and Celts, looking at such aspects as their dress, beliefs, language, technology and art. Year 4/5 pupils have studied 'The Victorians', reporting effectively on changes in houses now and then. Work seen showed some good examples of extended writing and pupils have worked well with projects concerning 'The Ancient Egyptians', looking at maps of Ancient Egypt and comparing toys today and then. Year 6 pupils have studied 'The Ancient Greeks', suitably comparing Athens and Sparta, considering the contribution of the Greeks to the alphabet, for example, and 'Britain Since 1948', producing a timeline of events. A range of visits, usually one visit per topic, is arranged to motivate and extend pupils' learning. Resource boxes of artefacts are loaned from a local museum and visitors are invited to the school to talk about life in the area or undertake 'role play', for example, dressing in Elizabethan clothing.
124. The school has adopted the government-recommended scheme of work for the subject and history units of work are alternated with geography units, with some joint geography/history topics. There is a satisfactory range of resources for the subject, augmented by museum loan resources and teachers' personal resources.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

125. All aspects of information technology, including the teaching and learning, pupils' standards of attainment and the provision of hardware and software have improved significantly since the last time the school was inspected. Pupils now make very good progress and by the end of Key Stage 2 they attain an above average standard in information technology.
126. Year 3 pupils show average skills with using computers to edit text. They understand from their work that information and communication technology (ICT) can be used efficiently to help them improve the content of the text that they create. They link their work usefully with literacy, generating and amending text and learning the process of editing and drafting. They talk confidently about changing font type, size and colour and know how to save and retrieve work as required. Year 4 and 5 pupils gain appropriate understanding about using graphics programs, learning how to select tools, copy and paste and move, rotate or flip items on the computer screen. Pupils gain an above average knowledge concerning the concept of graphical modelling to help solve real life problems. They carry out a desk based activity to make and design a town by

cutting and pasting pieces of paper for their model. In this way they are well prepared for trying the same task on the computer and thereby comparing ICT solutions with other methods of solving a problem. Year 6 pupils are well acquainted with a wide range of ICT experiences. They confidently explain how they have searched for and used book reviews on the Internet and used computers for a wide range of data handling work including interrogation of databases and drawing graphs. They research for information on CD ROMs and have a good knowledge of how to write a simple program of instructions to draw mathematical shapes on the computer. They use ICT to help with audience presentations; for example presenting a video they have made of their science activity. They also use tape recorders for recording commentaries for 'broadcasting' at a later stage and are well acquainted with the use of digital cameras and data loggers. Pupils generally have a sophisticated understanding of how to use a variety of desk-top publishing techniques to help them enhance the presentation of their work or to design attractive project folders and cards.

127. Learning proceeds at a good pace in this subject because ICT is involved and planned into so much of the work pupils do and they regard the computers and other ICT equipment as important tools to help them with their activities.
128. Pupils talk about their work confidently and enthusiastically. They enjoy using the computers and generally concentrate fully on the tasks they are given.
129. ICT teaching is good. Teachers show confident subject knowledge and provide pupils with very clear explanations as to how to make the best use of computers to enhance and advance their skills knowledge and understanding. The way that teachers plan the use of ICT is very good and occasionally excellent. For example, the use of video and a data logger in a Year 6 science lesson provided very strong support for pupils' work. In addition, teachers make particularly good use of ICT to promote work in literacy - making especially good use of the computers' editing and drafting facilities. Generally very good use is made of ICT to support work in many other areas of the curriculum.
130. ICT is well led and managed and the co-ordinator has worked hard to improve teachers' confidence with using the equipment. The school has a good range of equipment, which is well used. The ICT suite is frequently used and well maintained by the efficient work of the ICT technician who also provides very effective support for the teachers and pupils during lessons. However, the room is very cramped and with nine computers working and a lack of good air circulation, the atmosphere becomes quite unpleasant during whole class sessions. A fully detailed and realistic development plan is in place for ICT and is kept under constant review. The co-ordinator has rightly identified the need to upgrade assessment procedures in this subject area.

## **MUSIC**

131. Pupils throughout the school make good progress in developing skills and understanding in music. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. By the age of eleven they reach standards that are suitable for their age. The scheme of work covers all elements of the National Curriculum and provides clear support and guidance for teachers. Work in music makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. This is a good level of improvement since the previous inspection.
132. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils achieve standards that meet those expected for pupils of similar age. Throughout the key stage their singing skills are satisfactory. They maintain the correct pitch when they sing in unison and two-part round. All pupils pay attention to posture,



breathing, diction, dynamics and phrasing. They develop their ability to control their voices well as they progress through the school. Pupils' composing skills are good. They use graphic notation well to devise their own scores and perform to each other with confidence. They understand the need to practise in order to improve their performance. They play a range of stringed instruments to a satisfactory standard.

133. Pupils make good progress in their learning. They consolidate and develop their musical knowledge, skills and understanding well. This begins in Year 3 and continues through to Year 6. All pupils build well on their skills of performing and polish them to a suitably high level. Most pupils work hard to improve their composing skills. They make good progress in producing graphic scores. The school builds effectively on these skills as pupils progress through to Year 6. By the age of eleven, pupils have well-developed skills in listening and are increasing their ability to appraise musical compositions.
134. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work and respond well to music throughout the school. They listen carefully to different styles of music and to each other. All pupils show respect and value for the efforts of others. They have good levels of perseverance and work with determination to produce work of a suitably high quality. They co-operate well together in lessons and work collaboratively when necessary. An example of this is in Years 4 and 5 when pupils collaborate to produce and perform compositions that illustrate how to build up layers of sound. Pupils of all abilities, including pupils with special educational needs have suitable opportunities to consolidate their skills and understanding of music.
135. There is satisfactory use of information technology to support work in music. Pupils have opportunities to use the computer to carry out independent research into musical instruments and the lives of composers. They use computer programs to compose pieces of music.
136. Standards of teaching in music are consistently good. Half of all teaching is very good. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers show an increase in confidence since the previous inspection. They plan their work well and provide a very carefully balanced range of activities. These include listening to, appraising, performing and composing throughout the school year for all classes. Where teaching is very good pupils respond very well to the lively and enthusiastic teaching. They develop good levels of expertise and a love of music.
137. The school provides equality of opportunity and access to the whole music curriculum. This includes pupils with special educational needs. Pupils have suitable opportunities to perform to the wider community. Resources for music are good and readily accessible for use by staff and pupils. They are suitable for the needs and age range of pupils. Staff and pupils make effective use of them. There is a good level of improvement since the previous inspection.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

138. Observations of physical education lessons in Year 3 and Year 6 indicate that pupils make good progress overall in physical education as they move through the school and show above average skills for their ages, a significant improvement on the situation at the time of the last inspection.
139. Pupils in Year 3, in outdoor games lessons, confidently develop and refine their basic techniques in jumping and running. They use a variety of equipment well, and make good progress with improving their hurdling and jumping skills. They appreciate the need for a 'warm-up' before exercise and understand the effects of exercise on the body. Pupils in another Year 3 games

lesson show good development with their throwing, bowling, catching and fielding skills. Pupils competently practise and improve their own performance and analyse and evaluate their own and others' performance, applying their observations to improving their own skills. Year 6 pupils in a gymnastic lesson in the school hall demonstrated good awareness of the short-term effects of exercise on the body and talked confidently about particular muscles, explaining which exercises are best for which muscles and why this is important. Pupils understand and play small-sided versions of recognised games – volleyball – and demonstrate, for example, 'the ready position', 'backhand', 'forehand' and 'overhead shots'. They show good awareness of the limitations and strengths in their own and others' performances and use this knowledge to improve their own performance. In another Year 6 lesson, pupils orienteering around the school grounds engaged themselves very effectively in outdoor and adventurous activities, pursuing problem-solving challenges with others, relating ground features to those on their maps and navigating around a course. All Year 4, 5 and 6 pupils attend a local swimming pool for one lesson per week for a duration of ten weeks during the school year and by the end of the key stage the majority of pupils are confident swimmers and are able to swim 25 metres easily.

140. The quality of learning in the lessons observed was very good overall due to the high quality of teaching that motivated pupils very well. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in their physical education lessons are similarly very good overall. Pupils participate enthusiastically. They work together very effectively, relating well to their peers and to adults and, in most cases, take part in the activities very confidently. Pupils enjoy their physical education activities, respond very well to their teachers' instructions and cues and support each other very well.

141. The quality of teaching in physical education lessons was very good overall and was never less than good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Where teaching was very good, the teachers demonstrated very good subject knowledge and used praise appropriately and very well. Teachers showed high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour, gave very clear instructions and maintained a very good pace throughout the lessons, changing activities frequently to maintain pupils' interest and enthusiasm.

142. The co-ordinator for the subject is very enthusiastic and well informed and has undertaken valuable in-service work with staff to improve their confidence and subject-knowledge. This has suitably addressed the criticism raised in the previous inspection concerning teachers' lack of subject knowledge at that time. There is an overall good range of resources for the subject and although the school hall currently does not have suitable wall bars, this situation will be resolved during the forthcoming school holidays and, in their absence, the school makes good use of link school facilities for this purpose. The school provides a very good range of sport-related extra-curricular activities throughout the year, in addition to the residential visits where outdoor and adventurous activities are undertaken. Pupils also benefit from involvement in a wide range of sports fixtures played against other local schools.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

143. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils achieve standards that meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for pupils of eleven years of age. A key issue from the previous inspection identified the need to improve attainment and progress. The school's achievements represent a very good level of improvement since the previous inspection.

144. By the age of eleven, pupils have a good knowledge of Christianity and other world religions. They identify similarities and differences between Christianity, Islam and Buddhism. Pupils show a suitable level and depth of understanding of the different beliefs. For example, they know that Muslims wash thoroughly before praying and that Buddhists do not harm living things. Year 3

pupils understand that Muslims pray five times a day and know that Muslim children attend the Mosque school each day. They know about the call to prayer and use a suitable vocabulary, such as Muezzin and minaret, accurately. Pupils know that Buddhists value all life and understand the need for contemplation. They reflect well on their learning but this is disrupted when other pupils pass through the classroom on their way to other parts of the school. All pupils show suitable understanding of the application of Christian values to everyday life and give clear definitions of what is good and what is bad. They know that a church is a place of worship and also the home for a family of Christians. Pupils know that religions other than Christianity have special places for worship as well as holy books and sacred artefacts. Pupils understand that Christians and members of other religions have a set of rules by which they live. They develop this knowledge to devise their own code of conduct. Year 6 pupils show a mature level of thought and reasoning when they discuss issues that religion raises for them.

145. Pupils make good progress in their learning about religions. They are developing a good understanding and awareness of the similarities between religions. They show good progress in developing their ability to understand that all religions celebrate similar events. Year 3 pupils compare the life of a Muslim boy effectively with their own lives, and make good progress in learning about his daily routine. By the age of eleven, pupils show a good level of increase in their ability to use and apply ideas they learn from religious practices. They discuss and rationalise these with an increasingly mature level of thought. All pupils effectively develop their ability to understand the need to care for others as well as themselves. Pupils with special educational needs receive effective support in the classroom. This enables them to make very good progress in their learning.
146. Pupils respond well to work in religious education. They value and respect the ideas and opinions of others and are confident in sharing their thoughts. They are enthusiastic and eager to put forward their own ideas. Most pupils concentrate well and ask sensible questions. They discuss feelings and emotions at a mature level and co-operate well together. Pupils relate very well to their teachers and to each other. By the time they reach Year 6 pupils are sensitive to the feelings of other pupils and value each other's opinions and contributions. They have good levels of motivation to learn and enjoy the depth of challenge in their work.
147. Throughout the key stage pupils use and apply their writing skills very effectively to produce interesting pieces of work about religious events. The presentation of this work is above the expectation of standards from pupils of similar ages.
148. The teaching of religious education is, overall, good. Seventy five per cent of teaching is good or better. Twenty five per cent of teaching is very good. This is a very good level of improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers are confident in the subject and prepare their lessons carefully and thoroughly. All have clear and specific learning objectives and share them with the pupils. They give very careful thought to providing a calm and reflective atmosphere in the classroom for the teaching of religious education. This helps pupils to think and contemplate and makes a positive contribution to their spiritual development. Planning follows the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and gives a good level of attention to the defined areas of learning. The school provides a wide and varied range of opportunities to enable pupils to become aware of the religious element in life. Teachers encourage pupils to reflect on their own experiences and to relate them to those of other people. They are sensitive to sacred religious artefacts and insist on pupils treating them with respect and care. An example of this is when the teacher ensures pupils know why the Qur'an is kept in a high place. The teacher insists on pupils washing their hands before touching the Qur'an and handling it with care and respect. The school's scheme of work gives teachers clear guidance and suggestions to assist their teaching.

Teachers keep records of the areas of work that pupils cover and of pupils' attitudes towards religious education. Improvement since the previous inspection is very good.