

INSPECTION REPORT

Warwick Bridge Foundation

Primary School

Warwick Bridge, Carlisle

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112404

Head teacher: Mrs H M Park

Reporting inspector: Mr R S Moseley
16886

Dates of inspection: 8 - 11 October 2001

Inspection number: 217117

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School Address:	Warwick Bridge Carlisle Cumbria
Postcode:	CA4 8RE
Telephone number:	01228 560390
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr I Grainger
Date of previous inspection:	October 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
16886	R S Moseley	Registered inspector	Science	What sort of School is it?
			Geography	The school's results and pupils' achievements.
			History	How well the pupils are taught?
			Equal opportunities	How well the school is led and managed?
13462	R Mothersdale	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
				How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23549	H Eadington	Team inspector	English	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Art and design	
			Music	
			Religious education	
			Special educational needs	
18027	S Mawer	Team inspector	Mathematics	
			Information and communication technology	
			Physical education	
			Design and technology	

			The foundation stage	
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London
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Warwick Bridge Foundation Primary school is slightly smaller than the average size of Primary school, with 158 pupils, consisting of 79 boys and 79 girls. It has 22 part-time children in the nursery. There are two pupils with English as an additional language who are appropriately supported. Attainment on entry to the nursery is variable but slightly above average. Attainment on entry to the school is average. This is because a number of children, including a good proportion of higher attainers, return to schools in their own catchment areas. The number of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs is 28 per cent, which is above average. There are five pupils with statements of special educational need, which is above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with a number of very good features. The school has made considerable improvements since the last inspection and standards in English are now above national expectations by the time pupils leave the school. Teaching is good overall, with a good proportion of very good teaching. Pupils have developed very good attitudes to their learning. Relationships throughout the school are also very good. The school is well led and managed by the head teacher and governors and it provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Strong teaching, which is mainly good with some very good teaching in both key stages, is having a positive effect on pupils' learning.
- Standards have risen since the last inspection in English, mathematics and science and are now satisfactory in mathematics and science. This is mainly due to the effective teaching. Standards in English are particularly strong.
- The provision for spiritual, moral and social development is very good.
- Pupils have developed very good positive attitudes to their work. Their behaviour is largely good and their relationships are very good.
- The arrangements the school makes for the care of its pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs, is good.
- The head teacher and governors are providing good leadership and a clear educational direction for the school.

What could be improved

- Further development of the areas of learning in the reception class to reflect more effectively the principles and practice of early years education.
- Standards in information and communication technology by the time pupils leave the school.

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 October 1999. It was at that time judged to be giving pupils an acceptable standard of education but had some serious weaknesses. A monitoring visit by Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools in January 2001 confirmed that the school has made reasonable progress in addressing some of the issues and good progress in addressing others. The school

has now fully overcome all the weaknesses identified and has made good progress since the last full inspection.

With reference to the key issues in the last report, the school has improved standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science. It has raised the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 and throughout the school by a programme of observation, monitoring and evaluation. The management of the school has improved by devising a good quality management plan, which is evaluated regularly and by giving subject co-ordinators and governors more leadership opportunities. Financial planning is now linked closely to the need to raise standards. In addition, the leadership has introduced other improvements. For example, all staff now work as a close team with a shared commitment to improvement and demonstrate a capacity to succeed. The school has successfully introduced and developed the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, including the setting of targets for all pupils in English and mathematics. The school is well placed to maintain these and other improvements and has a good capacity to make further improvements.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			Similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	E	C	A	A	well above average A above average B Average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	D	C	C	D	
Science	C	C	A	B	

- The results in English in 2001 were well above average. In science they were well above average and in mathematics they were average. This represents a very good improvement in English and in science. These improving results on the previous years tests were not only due to improved teaching, the introduction of the literacy strategy and booster classes, but also because in that year there was an exceptional proportion of higher attaining pupils who attained the above average Level 5. When the results are compared to similar schools, they show similar results for English, slightly lower in science but below average in mathematics. The school has recognised this weakness and has targeted mathematics for specific development. There has been an improvement in all three areas since 1999.
- The inspection findings indicate that for this years pupils, in Year 6, standards are above average in English and, at present, average in science and mathematics. However, the school has yet to start its booster classes, which is expected to raise standards further as it did last year.
- In information and communication technology, attainment is still below the national expectation by the end of Year 6.
- In all other subjects, attainment is in line with the national expectation at the end of Key Stage 2.
- In religious education, standards are in line with the locally Agreed Syllabus.

- Standards in numeracy are average. Standards in literacy are above average. The school had set appropriate targets and has met or exceeded all it's targets.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Most pupils are eager to learn. They are responsive and show very positive attitudes in all they do.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The behaviour of most of the pupils in lessons and around the school is good. They are polite and courteous to each other and to adults.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships at all levels are very good and contribute very well to pupils' very good personal development.
Attendance	Good.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. Most demonstrate very good attitudes to all aspects of school life. They care about each other and respect each other's views. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, are beginning to show confidence by the time they leave the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

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

- The quality of teaching is mainly good overall with a significant proportion of very good teaching. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection where there was a significant amount of unsatisfactory teaching.
- The quality of teaching in the foundation stage is very good in the nursery. In the reception it is satisfactory with strengths outweighing any weaknesses but with a few areas in need of further improvement. The development of the children's social skills is a priority throughout the foundation stage and staff provide good opportunities for children to learn to work and play together. In the other areas of learning, activities are very well taught in the nursery, but in reception there is sometimes not enough challenge for a few children to achieve as they could. For example, children in the nursery have full access to the range of creative activities through the well-resourced outside play area but at the moment, reception children do not benefit from this. Also, the range of activities in the reception is sometimes over directed by adults, and, on a few occasions there is not enough emphasis on talk, enquiry and structured play.
- The present level of teaching for pupils in Years 1 to 6 ensures that learning is good in many areas and pupils successfully acquire skills, knowledge and understanding in most of the subjects they are studying.
- Particular strengths are the effectiveness of the methods and ideas teachers use. Most lessons proceed at a good pace. However, some teachers include a colouring in session as part of the lesson and often this has no obvious purpose. This slows the pace at this point, giving rise to missed teaching opportunities. Teachers use resources well and they work very closely with all support staff. Another strength is the way that most teachers use their very good relationship with pupils to support and motivate them. All these strengths encourage pupils' intellectual, physical and creative effort, ensuring most lessons are productive and that pupils retain interest to the end of the lesson. Teachers know their pupils well and in English and mathematics in particular, provide them with appropriate work for their abilities. The work is linked closely to pupils' individual targets, which are set for

these subjects. Teachers' planning for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. Homework is set appropriately but, on occasions, it is not marked and these pupils may not be aware of how well they have done. Computers are beginning to be used to support learning but generally, this is underdeveloped and standards are not as high as they could be by the end of Key Stage 2. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. It is particularly well enhanced by a wide range of visits out of school, visitors into school and extra-curricular activities, making the whole range of learning opportunities which pupils experience, good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is good. Teachers and support staff work very closely together. These pupils are very well integrated into the lesson.
English as an additional language	School is providing sound provision.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The provision for spiritual, moral and social development is very good and that for cultural development is good. Effective systems are in place to support pupils' personal development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils well and the procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good.

A particular strength is the way the school has utilised the environment and the local community to support children's learning. They have developed good links with the local secondary school. There are very effective links with parents and the quality of information provided for parents, particularly about pupils' progress is also very good. The Parents Association is very active and is very supportive.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Overall, leadership is good. Within this, the head teacher now provides a very clear vision and educational direction for the school. She is ably supported by her deputy head teacher and the co-ordinators for English and mathematics. The role of the curriculum co-ordinators is developing well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The chair of governors is very supportive and works closely with the head teacher. The governors support the school well and fulfil their statutory requirements.
The school's	The head teacher, staff and governors have a very good awareness

evaluation of its performance	of the school's performance and this has enabled them to address the weaknesses from the last report and to plan very well for the future.
The strategic use of resources	Good – Resources are readily available and used well. All money available to the school is used wisely and carefully.

Staff are well qualified and deployed well. Some of the classrooms and the hall are small but the staff use the space available as well as they can. Resources are satisfactory and used well. As this is a small school, teachers often have more than one subject to lead and little or no curriculum time to carry out their monitoring duties. However, the co-ordinators for literacy and numeracy have been particularly effective and the co-ordinators for science, history and geography have established sound plans to develop their subjects further. The plans for information and communication technology are in need of full implementation. The leadership has ensured that money spent is linked closely to the raising of standards and in getting the best value for its pupils.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their child likes the school. • Their child is making good progress • The teaching is good. • They can approach the staff with any problems. • Their child is expected to work hard and do their best. • The school is well managed. • The school helps their children to become more mature and responsible. • The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. • Their child gets the right amount of work to do at home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few parents felt that their children were not getting the right amount of homework. • A significant minority of parents felt that the school was not well led and managed. • A few parents felt that they were not kept well informed about how their child is getting on. • A significant minority felt that the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons. • A very few parents felt that there were not enough sporting activities.

Inspectors support parents' very positive views of the school. They also judged that, although leadership is good overall, the head teacher and governors acknowledge that they have not yet been able to reassure the worries of a significant minority of parents. Three quarters of the parents questioned were happy with the way the school is led and managed. Inspectors judged that the amount of homework given was satisfactory, although it is not always marked. The inspectors felt strongly that the school provides a good range of activities to enhance the curriculum both inside and outside lessons, that parents are well informed about the progress their children are making and that there is a satisfactory range of sporting activities.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 In the National Curriculum tests at Key Stage 1 in 2001, pupils' attainment in reading was above the national average, in writing well above, but in mathematics it was average. This shows a very good improvement on the previous year in reading and very high improvement in writing standards. The results in mathematics have also improved.

2 In the National Curriculum tests at Key Stage 2, in 2001, the results in English were well above average. In science they were well above average and in mathematics they were average. This represents a very good improvement in English and in science compared to the previous year. These improved results were not only due to improved teaching, the introduction of the literacy strategy and booster classes, but also because in that year there was a significant proportion of higher attaining pupils. When these results are compared to similar schools, they show similar results in English slightly lower in science but below average results in mathematics. The school has recognised this weakness and has targeted mathematics for specific development. There has been an improvement in all three areas since 1999.

3 By the end of the foundation stage, the children achieve all the early learning goals. In the area of communication, language and literacy they attain beyond the expected levels in reading.

4 For this year's pupils, at the end of Key Stage 1, attainment is in line with the national expectation in reading, writing, mathematics and science. A significant minority of pupils are, however, achieving higher levels similar to last year's National Curriculum tests but as the class contains over one third of pupils who have special educational needs, this brings the average level down. For this year's pupils, at the end of Key Stage 2, standards in English are above average and in mathematics and science, they are in line with the national expectation for their ages. The increase in the quality of teaching, and the successful introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies, has enabled pupils throughout the school to achieve well, especially in English. These levels of attainment are not as high as those indicated in the last National Curriculum tests but this is a different group of pupils who have not yet had the booster classes, which are not planned to start until the end of this term. These should help to raise standards further as they did last year.

5 In English, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening are sound for seven-year-olds. They contribute to discussions and listen to adults and each other attentively. By the time they are in Year 6, standards are above average and pupils express their views logically and succinctly and listen well. In reading, standards are satisfactory at the end of Year 2, although the higher attaining pupils have developed good word recognition. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' reading skills are above average and they read more complicated text accurately, fluently and with good expression. In writing, standards are broadly satisfactory in Year 2, although this particular year a third of the pupils have special educational needs which affects the overall level. Many pupils however, do write sentences independently and usually use full stops and capital letters correctly. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average. Pupils set out their ideas well with a good range of writing styles, including persuasive writing. They create characters and atmospheres effectively and frequently use complex sentences. Most older pupils use a handwriting style, which is joined, legible and fluent. Standards in literacy are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and above at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils are now achieving well at Key Stage 1 and often very well at Key Stage 2, as a result

of the good introduction of the literacy hour and the improvement in the quality of the teaching. The targets set in English have been appropriate and have been fully met.

6 In mathematics, standards in all aspects are in line with the expectations for pupils' ages but still low when compared to similar schools. By age seven, a majority of pupils use numbers up to 100 in a wide variety of situations. Pupils use many different ways to explore and solve problems and can explain how they have arrived at their answers. By age 11, pupils work confidently with numbers. They use fractions and percentages successfully. For example, to work out how much space is taken up with advertisements in a newspaper. Pupils have a sound understanding of shape and measurement and explain three-dimensional shapes in terms of faces and edges. Standards in numeracy throughout the school are satisfactory and pupils are now achieving well because of the good introduction of the numeracy strategy and an improvement in the quality of the teaching. These improvements have not yet had time to bring even higher standards by the time pupils leave the school.

7 In science, standards are satisfactory at the end of both key stages and pupils are now achieving well, especially in investigative science. This is mainly because of an improvement in the quality in the teaching of science. These improvements have not yet had time to bring even higher results by the time pupils leave the school. Pupils have a sound knowledge of materials and their properties, physical processes and life processes and living things. For example, pupils in Year 6 are able to classify animals by their features, characteristics and habitats. They use key systems to identify species and were seen creating their own keys. A majority of pupils in both key stages have above average skills in setting up and carrying out investigations. Pupils use a well-developed scientific vocabulary.

8 In information and communication technology, attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is average but is below average at the end of Key Stage 2. This is a deterioration in standards since the last inspection. Achievement is sound in Key Stage 1 but pupils are not yet achieving as they should by the time they leave the school. Nevertheless, the school is developing the subject well but many of the computers are new and aspects of the curriculum, such as setting up databases, control devices and sensor work, have not been covered sufficiently. The use of computers and CD-ROMs to support learning across a wide range of subjects is still underdeveloped and this, therefore, limits the opportunities for pupils to extend their skills. By age seven, however, pupils are confident in using the mouse and keyboard and by age 11, most pupils have sound word-processing skills. For example, pupils' work on display demonstrated that they change and alter letter fonts and are able to import pictures and clipart. Some older pupils are beginning to be confident in using the Internet.

9 In religious education, attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus at both key stages and pupils are achieving soundly. By age seven, they explore issues of care and responsibility. They know about Christianity and Sikhism and the features of churches and Sikh temples. By age 11, pupils have a deeper understanding of Christianity and know about aspects of Judaism. Moral and social values are embedded in lessons and pupils understand them. Pupils talk fully about their experiences and feelings.

10 In the remaining subjects, attainment is in line with that expected for pupils' ages, apart from in physical education at the end of Key Stage 1, where attainment is above expectations and pupils are achieving well. For example, pupils have a good awareness of space when running or moving and they are well co-ordinated. In gymnastic lessons they work out movement patterns with a partner and change directions effectively. They are able to demonstrate their skills to others with pride.

11 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well in relation to their previous learning. They are meeting the targets set in individual education plans well. This is due to the effective way in which the school identifies their needs and regularly reviews their progress. Specific learning targets and the close match of activities to pupils' needs, particularly in English and mathematics, also have a positive impact on their learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12 Pupil's attitudes to school are very good and they come to school keen to work and well motivated. Pupils are willing to persevere to improve their work, and like the school's system of providing them with targets on cards for English and mathematics. The wide variety of extra-curricular activities and clubs in the school all have a good following amongst pupils and this has a sound impact on learning and social development. When spoken to, nearly all older pupils could name at least two clubs that each belonged to. Pupils are interested and attentive in lessons, most are keen to join in discussions and confident enough to ask questions about a subject for clarification.

13 Pupil's behaviour in the school is generally good and there have been no exclusions in the school. Pupils behave well in lessons and in the playground, and they are naturally friendly to visitors without having to be reminded to be courteous and polite. In discussion with pupils, most agreed that there were occasional instances of bullying, but felt that the school dealt with this effectively and that it did not reflect the general standard of behaviour. Occasionally, in lessons where pupil's attention is not fully engaged on their work, a few pupils can become distracted and noisy. Overall, pupils follow classroom routines sensibly and their good behaviour has a positive impact on their ability to organise their own resources and work independently.

14 Pupils' personal development and relationships in the school are very good. Older pupils are very caring to younger pupils in the school. For example, at lunchtime, two older pupils each oversee a table in the dining hall and make sure that younger pupils cut their food up or pour a drink out carefully. In the playground, the Buddy system works very effectively to help younger pupils learn to make the transition from the more sheltered climbing frame play area, into the main playground. Pupils show a great deal of consideration for each other. For example, an older pupil was seen to sponge the knee of a younger pupil who had bruised herself in the playground. In a religious education lesson, pupils display a very strong sense of fair play, and are careful to share out sweets evenly in order to reflect the importance of a shared meal in Sikhism. Two pupils recently won awards from the Health and Safety Executive for posters depicting safety issues on farms. Pupils share a number of responsibilities in school such as taking the registers back to the office, making sure that the table is in place for assembly, tidying up the physical education cupboard and making sure that the plants are watered and cared for in the school. Photographic displays around the school reflect the very good teamwork shared by pupils on their residential experiences. Pupils co-operate well and work sensibly together. For example in an English lesson, pupils were seen sharing ideas and commenting positively on each other's writing. Pupils in the school are very considerate of the needs of others, and older pupils gave a detailed presentation to their classmates to persuade them to choose a local charity to direct their fund raising efforts.

15 Attendance at the school is good and nearly all pupils are on time for lessons every day. A few pupils are taken on holiday by their parents during term time, which can affect pupils' progress at times.

16 Pupils with special educational needs have a positive attitude to learning and school generally. Their relationships with other pupils and with adults in the school are usually very

good. All pupils in the school are valued, and consequently pupils with special educational needs develop self-esteem and confidence, and take a full part in school life.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

17 The quality of the teaching is mainly good throughout the school with a considerable proportion of this being very good. In 74 per cent of the lessons, teaching is good or better, with 30 per cent being very good or excellent. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents about two percentage points. However, this shows a very good improvement since the last inspection where the majority of teaching was only satisfactory and 10 per cent was unsatisfactory. Teachers have worked hard to improve their teaching. They have had good support from the head teacher and the co-ordinators for English and mathematics, particularly in the teaching of literacy and numeracy. The local education authority and a link school in South Cumbria have also contributed a great deal to this improvement by giving advice and support. In fact, the strategies used to plan for literacy and numeracy have helped to give a more consistent structure to planning in other subjects. The improvement in the quality of teaching has resulted in a good improvement in learning as pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and the pupils with English as an additional language, acquire skills, knowledge and understanding in all of the subjects they are studying. This is the main reason why pupils are now achieving well, even though standards are average in a number of subjects. The improved teaching has not yet had time to bring about even higher standards by the time pupils leave the school. All teachers demonstrate an approach which ensures all pupils are included well in lessons.

18 The teaching of literacy has been a major focus for the school during the last two years and it is now well established. The quality of teaching in this area is mainly good or better, including some very good and excellent teaching. This has raised standards very well since the last inspection. Teachers deliver the basic skills well. Written planning is well done and includes appropriate work for the varying needs of pupils. Teaching methods are at least good, ensuring pupils are well motivated and maintain concentration to the end of the lesson. This was seen in a literacy lesson for pupils in Year 5. Pupils were doing follow-up work after a visit from a "Master Tale Teller" the previous week. The teacher managed the discussion section in the lesson well to ensure a high level of challenge through well prepared open-ended questions. The teacher encouraged pupils to think deeply with appropriate prompts and suggestions. This ensured that pupils were enthusiastic and eager to work hard for the whole period.

19 The teaching of numeracy has received specific attention and a good format for lessons has been established throughout the school. The quality of the teaching is again mainly good or better, with well-planned work linked to pupils' specific needs. This was seen in a numeracy lesson for pupils in Year 1. More able pupils had to make up 10 or 15 pence with as wide a variety of coins as possible, whereas the less able were using coins to make up five pence. The teaching also encourages problem solving in numeracy lessons, wherever possible, linked to examples in real life. This ensures that the work is relevant to pupils' experiences which maintains their interest.

20 Overall, teachers have good subject knowledge, although some have less secure knowledge of information and communication technology and are undergoing training. This is developing well but standards are still below expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. In all subjects, schemes of work are clear and help teachers with their subject knowledge well. This ensures that teachers ask relevant questions and can answer more searching questions with authority.

21 Teachers' short-term lesson planning is mainly good. It is planned in carefully structured learning steps with clear learning objectives and well thought out activities. For example, pupils in Year 3, during a history lesson on Tudor food were asked to model a lump of marzipan into the shape of a fruit and then paint it in the appropriate colour with vegetable dyes. This type of food was popular on the tables of rich people of that time. The idea gave meaning and interest to the lesson. Occasionally, however, teachers plan a short section of their lesson, which consists of colouring-in, which has no obvious value. This often results in slowing the pace of the lesson. However, these periods do not last for a long time and the rest of the lesson often proceeds at a good and sometimes a very good pace but opportunities for further learning are missed during these short sessions. Only a small amount of teachers' planning refers specifically to the use of computers to support learning. This area is underdeveloped. Many of the computers have only just been introduced into the school and much of the software is also new. The school has identified this area for further development in this current year.

22 The management of pupils in lessons is usually very good. This ensures good behaviour in almost all lessons. Also, most teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and expect improving standards at all times. This ensures that most pupils have developed positive attitudes to their work, have a desire to improve and give of their best throughout the lesson.

23 Teachers have a sound knowledge of the needs of all the pupils they teach and their day-to-day assessment of how well pupils are learning is usually right. On occasions, teachers even change their planning for the next lesson if they feel that some pupils have not fully understood the objective of the present lesson. The pupils have personal learning targets in English and mathematics and teachers use these well. This ensures pupils make sound progress in most lessons against their targets. The quality of marking is satisfactory throughout the school, with some good helpful comments provided on occasions. This helps pupils to see what they have to do to improve. However, work done for homework is not marked consistently and then pupils may not be aware of how well they have done.

24 The teaching in the foundation stage is very good in the nursery and satisfactory in reception with a few areas in need of further development. The development of the children's social skills is a priority and the staff provide good opportunities overall for the children to learn to work and play together. In the other areas of learning, activities are very well taught in the nursery, but in reception, on occasions, there is not enough challenge for the children and they do not achieve as well as they could. In the teaching in reception there are also not enough choices for the children to make decisions for themselves. In their physical development, the reception children miss out on the valuable teaching opportunities that the nursery outdoor area provides. Very good use is made in the nursery of using assessments to plan the next stage of children's learning. In reception this is satisfactory. Staff in the nursery work particularly well together and this benefits the children enormously. In reception, more guidance is sometimes needed to help adults to work more effectively with the children in providing more purpose and challenge in their support.

25 The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers plan lessons according to the specific targets set for pupils in their individual education plans. These plans are used to match work, particularly in literacy and numeracy, to pupils' individual needs. Pupils with special educational needs are given good opportunities to contribute to lessons because questions and explanations are adapted to make sure they understand. Teachers and learning support assistants know pupils very well, and work closely together to make sure pupils achieve their targets, and to build their self-esteem and confidence. When pupils are withdrawn for additional support by the special educational needs co-ordinator or learning support assistants, they are well taught.

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

26 The school's use of the community makes a very good contribution to pupils learning and pupils benefit from the wide range of visitors who come into the school. The school encourages families and friends from the area to come into school to contribute to the teaching, such as, for example, a grandmother who was an evacuee. Pupils share their talents with the community, such as performing to local groups, taking part in public performances, carol concerts, harvest festivals and public acts of remembrance such as Poppy Day.

27 The school has a good relationship with other partner institutions. Many students from local schools and colleges come to gain work experience in the school and there is an active inter school sports programme taking in cross-country, rounders matches and tag rugby contests. There are sound links with the secondary school.

28 The school provides a good range of learning opportunities, which are relevant to pupils' needs, and meet National Curriculum requirements. The recent curricular changes are being implemented effectively. The planning and provision for children in the foundation stage is very good in the nursery, and satisfactory in reception with strengths outweighing weaknesses but with a few areas in need of further development. Children move smoothly from the nursery to the reception class. Pupils of all abilities have equal access to the whole curriculum and the school has a good policy to include all pupils in every aspect of school life.

29 The school has schemes of work for all subjects and these are effectively used to support teachers' planning. The national literacy and numeracy strategies are well embedded in the curriculum and consequently standards of attainment in both subjects are rising. Booster classes in English, mathematics and science have also raised the standards of work of higher and lower attaining pupils. However, opportunities for pupils to practice comprehension skills, and the skills of extended writing and writing in depth, require further development in subjects across the curriculum. Information and communication technology is insufficiently used to support learning across the curriculum. Work in some subjects is not always planned to match pupils' abilities. This is done well in literacy and numeracy. The school is currently introducing a good new scheme for the development of personal, social, health education and citizenship, including sex and drug awareness.

30 A particular strength of the curriculum is the way it is enhanced by many activities, both within and outside the school. These include a wide range of visits, and the contribution made by the many visitors who come into the school to work with pupils. For example, in the week before the inspection, a 'master tale-teller' had enthralled pupils with his stories. This stimulated Key Stage 2 pupils' enthusiasm for writing, and extended their understanding of how 'powerful' words can make their writing more vivid. Educational visits are organised very well and are closely linked to topics. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, provided by most of the staff, available to pupils after school, including sport, country dancing, orchestra, a textile club and cookery.

31 Provision for pupils' social, moral, and spiritual development is very good. It is good for cultural development. In the last inspection, provision for social, moral spiritual and cultural development was judged to be good.

32 Pupils are given many opportunities to reflect and wonder, including trips and residential experiences in the countryside where they learn to appreciate the wonders of the natural world. Religious education lessons and daily acts of worship are very well used to promote spiritual development, and for pupils to reflect on fundamental issues such as the

importance of valuing people. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. All adults in the school provide very good role models. They treat pupils and each other with respect, and ensure their dealings with issues are firm but fair. This helps pupils to understand the differences between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. There are many opportunities to explore moral issues within the curriculum and acts of worship. For instance, in a religious education lesson about 'The Prodigal Son', Year 3 pupils discussed the meaning of forgiveness and the importance of saying 'sorry'. The school successfully promotes pupils' understanding of moral issues concerning property. Pupils respect and value each other, their teachers and other adults in the school.

33 They are given many opportunities to develop good social skills and positive attitudes to learning. In lessons and extra-curricular activities they are encouraged to collaborate and work harmoniously together. This was clearly seen in a Year 4 and 5 music lesson when pupils co-operated well in composing and performing music representing sea creatures. The successful 'Buddy' scheme illustrates how well most pupils can take responsibility. Residential visits promote the development of a strong sense of group identity, and opportunities to meet and talk with visitors to the school increase pupils' social and conversational skills very effectively. Pupils contribute well to the community through visiting residential homes for the elderly and through initiatives, such as designing Christmas cards to raise money for local charities.

34 Opportunities for cultural development are good. Through visits to local churches, galleries and museums pupils are developing a good awareness of their own and other cultures. Understanding of some of the world's major faiths is effectively promoted through the study of Christianity, Sikhism and Judaism. Music and literature strongly support cultural development as pupils enjoy music, stories and rhymes from other places and times.

35 Curriculum planning for pupils with special educational needs is good. Class teachers devise the individual educational plans in co-operation with the learning support assistants and the special educational needs co-ordinator, and this ensures that pupils' targets are relevant and realistic. In English and mathematics lessons, classes are organised into ability groups in order to match work more closely to the needs of all pupils. The school makes a very good effort to ensure that all pupils are included in every aspect of the curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36 Overall, the school takes good care of pupils and has good procedures in place to ensure their safety and well-being. The school's procedures to monitor pupils' personal development and well being are good. Pupils have close relationships with their teachers and feel confident to approach staff and talk to them informally when they are worried about an issue. The school is formally addressing the pupils' well being through the healthy school's initiative, and is introducing circle time across the school and holding discussions with pupils to set up a school council. Pupils welcome this initiative as they feel it will give them a voice in the school and an official channel for their requests and suggestions. The school has good health and safety procedures in place, for example, qualified first aiders on the staff, regular fire drills and electrical checks. In lessons, close attention is paid to safe procedures, for example in physical education pupils follow appropriate warm up and cool down routines and are told to be conscious of each other's safety. The school's residential visits are made to approved establishments that have made comprehensive risk assessments of all activities that the pupils pursue.

37 The school's procedures to ensure that child protection issues are properly addressed in the school are satisfactory. The head teacher is the designated person and has received up

to date training in child protection issues. The school does not have a child protection policy that is specific to the school, and all staff have not yet received recent and relevant training in child protection procedures.

38 The school's procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour are good. An important strategy is home contact, and the school uses either a message in reading diaries to flag up concerns in the first instance, or it may set up a home/school diary to target discussions between home and school on behavioural or personal issues. Different awards, stickers and certificates have a high profile in the school to reward and encourage good behaviour. All classes have their own set of values and rules. The lunchtime supervisors effectively monitor pupil's behaviour at lunchtime and they have their own 'I've been helpful' stickers to reward pupil's good behaviour. There have been some instances of bullying but the school has good procedures to deal with these issues, and pupils spoken to felt safe in the school.

39 The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good. The school works closely with the education welfare officer to follow up any reasons for absence amongst pupils that are giving them concern. The registers are checked on a daily basis by the administrative staff, and regularly by the head teacher. The school has recently adopted a new format of registers that gives adequate space to explain reasons for pupil's absences. The school regularly praises good attendance in assemblies and celebrates very good attendances with certificates and stickers.

40 The school's systems for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. Class teachers keep records, which include significant events and achievements. Pupils contribute to their own records of achievement, and to annual reports, which are sent to their parents. A reference is made to pupils' personal development in their annual reports.

41 The school's systems for assessing pupils' attainment are good overall. In English and mathematics they are very good. However, in science and information and communication technology, assessment procedures are not yet satisfactory and are in the early stages of development. The school is aware that structured assessment systems are needed in these subject areas. Assessment systems in English and mathematics provide a wide range of relevant information about pupils' attainment. The school uses this information very well to develop and modify the curriculum. The analysis of test data is systematic and informative and provides a very sound basis for setting targets for further improvement. This area has been improved well since the previous inspection. In non-core subjects and religious education there is little or no assessment and the school is hoping to work towards developing this as appropriate. The school has a well-structured policy for marking pupils' work. However, not all teachers use the marking policy consistently for marking homework and consequently, pupils do not always receive the guidance needed to improve this aspect of their work. There are effective systems for assessing the attainment of children under five years old. Pupils are assessed carefully in the nursery in relation to the early learning goals at the foundation stage. Baseline assessment continues this process, providing evidence of levels of achievement. Assessment information is very well used to guide curricular planning in the nursery, and is satisfactorily used in the reception class.

42 The school uses appropriate procedures for identifying pupils who have special educational needs. The Code of Practice is fully implemented. Formal tests are used to help identify them when they start school and at regular intervals thereafter. Teachers assess pupils' progress, particularly in literacy and numeracy, and work closely with learning support assistants to assist in meeting pupils' individual needs. When there is need for intervention from an outside agency, the special educational needs co-ordinator follows the local authority guidelines and uses all the support available. One of the school governors, with responsibility for special

educational needs, is involved in monitoring classroom provision for these pupils. All individual education plans are reviewed well.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43 The parent's views of the school are generally good, and most parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school.

44 The school has very effective links with parents that create a strong partnership. The school takes every opportunity when writing letters to parents, to invite them into the school to help or accompany school trips where this is appropriate. Notice boards for parents are in prominent positions in the school. Detailed information goes out to parents on curriculum topics and there is good use of the home/school reading books to record day-to-day information between home and school. Information to parents complies with statutory requirements and parents appreciate the very detailed annual written reports they receive about their children. Parents with children who have just started in the nursery are invited in to discuss how their children have settled in school and the school holds three consultation meetings for parents of pupils in the primary school. Parents are welcome into school at the beginning and end of the school day to discuss any concerns. The catering team in the school has worked closely with the school to provide parents with advance copies of the lunch menus at school, and has even invited parents into school to share in the lunchtime experience. The school is very aware that many parents have extended demands on their time due to work commitments, and assists the work of the after school club for pupils by providing access to school facilities, use of resources and help when necessary. The school believes in researching issues with parents and is currently reviewing the interest and support from parents for the provision of a breakfast club for pupils. The new curriculum to support issues surrounding relationships and personal development has also been discussed and consulted with parents. So far the response is positive.

45 The parents' involvement in their children's learning continues to be a strength of the school. The school has inspired and supported a number of parents who have wanted to follow up the help they give in class by studying formal learning support qualifications. Parents are encouraged to help with homework and all pupils have an expectation of the amount and type of work they are to do at home. The school has benefited from resources funded by the work of the Parent Association and works closely with their association to identify areas of support, such as contributions to trips, theatre visits and Christmas gifts. The home/school contract has underlined the expectations that exist between home and school.

46 Parents of pupils with special educational needs are properly involved from the time the teacher has an initial concern. Parents are aware of the targets the school sets for their children, and all parents attend their children's review meetings. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs attends parents' evenings to be available to talk to parents who may have anxieties about their children.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47 Leadership overall is good. At the last inspection it was unsatisfactory. This, therefore, indicates a very good improvement. Within this, the head teacher now provides a very clear vision and educational direction for the school. She has had a great deal of support from the co-ordinators for literacy and numeracy and recently by the new deputy head teacher. She has been successful in developing an agreed sense of purpose amongst the staff. All have a very strong commitment to improve and a very good capacity to succeed. This has resulted in the creation of an effective school. In addition, she has enabled others over the last two years to develop their leadership roles well. A small but significant number of parents, who answered the questionnaire or attended the parents' meeting, stated they were not happy with aspects of the school's leadership. The head teacher knows this and has acknowledged their concerns but has not yet been able to reassure their worries. Three-quarters of the parents questioned are happy with the way the school is led and managed. The head teacher has also ensured that the school's priorities for development are very appropriate. The successful implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies and the raising of standards, particularly in English, are successful examples of these priorities. She has had valuable help and guidance in the last two years from the local education authority and the head teacher and staff from a successful school in another part of the county.

48 The governing body is supportive in many ways. The new chair of the governors is fully committed to the school and has worked closely and guided the head teacher well. He is involved in the life of the school, visits often and engages in professional dialogue with the head teacher on regular occasions. A number of other governors visit the school and support aspects of the curriculum. The support from the governors with a responsibility for special educational needs, literacy and numeracy, have been particularly effective as they have worked closely with the co-ordinators and been involved in, and aware of, improvements. Most governors have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are closely involved in the production and evaluation of the yearly management plan, the action plan devised after the last inspection and the longer term development plan. All these plans are of good quality as they are clearly laid out, indicate the name of the responsible person, are costed well and state a time by which the development should be completed. Most governors fulfil their duties well, all statutory aspects are in place and many contribute well to pupils' learning in a variety of ways. Some governors are very new to their posts and the chair is anxious to develop their roles and their involvement further.

49 The head teacher has been involved in the monitoring and evaluation of teaching. There has been an agreed timetable of observations set against an established range of criteria. Feedback has been provided and the outcome of the observation discussed with teachers. This has been effective as the quality of the teaching has improved since the last inspection.

50 The role of the curriculum co-ordinators is understood but not yet fully developed. Being a small school, some teachers, including the head teacher, have the responsibility for at least two subjects. The school has also concentrated on the development of literacy and numeracy over the last two years and, consequently, a number of subjects are now in need of a specific focus and development. The leadership shown and the support given by the co-ordinators for literacy and numeracy has been of high quality. This has also helped to raise the quality of the teaching, as well as raising standards. This approach will provide a good model for other co-ordinators. The school has planned to focus on science, information and communication technology and history and geography in this current school year. Its arrangements for performance management are well implemented.

51 The aims of the school set out in the prospectus, its values and policies, are all implemented well in the life of the school. The leadership has developed a good ethos in the school where pupils have very good attitudes to their work, are enthusiastic and enjoy school. There are very good relationships and there is a commitment by the leadership to raise educational standards and include all pupils in every aspect of school life within an atmosphere of equal opportunities.

52 The adequacy of the school's accommodation to deliver the curriculum is satisfactory. The hall is not big enough and this makes it more difficult to deliver the full range of the physical education curriculum for pupils aged between eight to 11 years old. There are some limitations in access to water for practical aspects of art and design, design and technology and science, in a number of classrooms, although several classrooms can use a shared area, with water, outside two classrooms. The small size of some classrooms is especially noticeable when there are a large number of pupils. However, the accommodation remains sufficient to enable the National Curriculum to be taught and the school does benefit from a large, purpose built nursery. The number, qualifications and experience of teachers and support staff are sufficient for the curriculum to be taught effectively, although the school is aware of further development needed for information and communication technology. The quality and quantity of the school's learning resources are satisfactory overall and are good in English, science, music and religious education. Resources for mathematics have improved since the last inspection. New hardware for information and communication technology has been recently introduced and the school is now improving the range of software to support different areas of the curriculum. It is in the early stages of implementation and although developing, is not yet fully effective.

53 The special educational needs co-ordinator provides very good management in the identification of pupils with special educational needs, and in the support of learning assistants to help them. There are good home and school links with parents; liaison with outside agencies is good, and records are extremely well maintained and accessible. The special educational needs co-ordinator has an efficient system for recording pupils' progress. The good quality support from the co-ordinator, class teachers and learning support assistants makes a significant contribution to the progress these pupils make.

54 Careful financial planning supports educational developments well. For example, the school has spent wisely on new computers in linking the computers between classrooms, and purchasing new programs. This is beginning to raise standards in information and communication technology, even though these additions are very new and have not yet had time to raise standards sufficiently by the time pupils leave the school. The quality of financial control and school administration through the school secretary and chair of the governors financial committee is of high quality. Since the school became a grant maintained school some years ago, it manages its budget very wisely and is fully aware of the need to get the best value for pupils. The management systems now in place have ensured a number of good improvements since the last inspection. The school has a very good capacity to maintain an effective school and introduce further improvements.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55 To maintain the quality of education and promote further development, the governing body, head teacher and staff should address the following issues:

(1) Continue to improve the provision for children in the reception class to reflect more effectively the principles and practices of early years education by:-

- providing more challenges wherever possible to the higher attaining pupils
 - putting greater emphasis on talking, enquiry and structured play activities
 - developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world by increasing practical activities
 - planning better access to the very good outside play area
 - extending the range of creative activities that are not over directed by adults
 - continuing to improve the use of individual assessment records to plan future work.
- (Paragraphs 56 - 64)

(2) Continue to raise attainment in information and communication technology by:-

- fully implementing the planned programme of provision and skills development for pupils in Years 3 to 6.
 - planning more opportunities for computers to be used to support learning across a wide range of subjects
 - further development of teachers' own confidence in using computers
 - implementing and using the assessment procedures.
- (Paragraphs 83, 87, 97, 98, 100 and 102)

In addition to the above issues, the following more minor weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Standards in data handling need further development.
 - Some homework is not always marked.
 - Assessment procedures not yet fully in place in science.
 - Presentation skills in experimental science.
 - A greater emphasis on the design element of design and technology.
 - A written policy for Child Protection is not yet in place, although procedures are sound.
 - Continue to try to reassure the parents who have some concerns about the leadership.
 - Further development of the role of some curriculum co-ordinators.
- (Paragraphs 23, 37, 47, 50, 76, 82, 84 and 90)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	42
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	41

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	12	18	11	0	0	0
2%	29%	43%	26%	0%	0%	0%

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Yr – Yr 6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	11	158
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Yr – Yr 6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	44

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	5.0	School data	0.1
National comparative data	5.6	National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	16	18	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	15	14
	Girls	18	16	17
	Total	30	31	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88% (88%)	91% (88%)	91% (94%)
	National	84% (84%)	86% (88%)	91% (88%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	14	14
	Girls	17	17	17
	Total	29	31	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85% (88%)	91% (75%)	91% (100%)
	National	85% (84%)	89% (88%)	89% (88%)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	15	13	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	10	13
	Girls	12	8	13
	Total	22	18	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78% (66%)	64% (70%)	93% (88%)
	National	75% (75%)	71% (72%)	87% (85%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	8	9
	Girls	12	11	11
	Total	22	19	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78% (59%)	68% (78%)	71% (72%)
	National	72% (70%)	74% (72%)	82% (79%)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	156
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	111

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	66
Number of pupils per FTE adult	5.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000 - 2001
	£
Total income	452,300
Total expenditure	465,402
Expenditure per pupil	2,601
Balance brought forward from previous year	34,713
Balance carried forward to next year	21,611

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	158
Number of questionnaires returned	102

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	54	42	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	44	49	4	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	54	4	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	43	12	6	4
The teaching is good.	48	46	4	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	44	16	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	54	35	9	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	44	4	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	30	56	11	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	21	50	15	12	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	37	51	7	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	39	26	7	9

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

56 The provision in the nursery for children in the foundation stage is very good and better than it was at the previous inspection, with strengths in all of the areas of learning. In reception it is satisfactory with strengths outweighing any weaknesses and similar to the last inspection. The main weakness in reception at the previous inspection was a lack of challenge for the higher attaining children in some areas of learning. This weakness still remains on occasions. There is a need to continue to improve the areas of learning further in reception, so that they match the principles and successful practice of the early years education. Progress overall for the children in the foundation stage is good.

57 The school follows the local authorities admission procedures of admitting foundation stage children once a year. There are 22 part-time children in the nursery who attend for a morning session but are given the option of attending in the afternoon as well. There are 20 full-time children in the reception class. As this is an area nursery that feeds into several schools, about a third of the children transfer to the reception classes of other schools within their own catchment area. A significant proportion of these children are of a higher ability. This means that, although the level of attainment on entry to the nursery is broadly above average, the children's attainment on entry to reception is average. By the end of the foundation stage, the children achieve all the early learning goals. In the area of communication, language and literacy they attain beyond the expected levels in their reading. Good care is taken to ensure that children make a smooth transition from home to the nursery and from the nursery to reception.

58 Planning is very good in the nursery with all abilities challenged and follows closely the recommended foundation stage curriculum, with the approach and emphasis on talk, enquiry and structured play. In reception where the planning is satisfactory, this approach is sometimes missing. Children are regularly assessed against the early learning goals as well as the results of the baseline profile. Assessments are used particularly well in the nursery to plan for the next stage of learning and to record achievements. In the reception class, the use of assessment is satisfactory, but on a few occasions it is not always used to plan the next stage of learning.

Personal social and emotional development

59 As a result of good teaching overall, in this area and especially in the nursery, the children make good progress in developing their personal and social skills and achieve well. Nearly all, by the end of the foundation stage, attain the early learning goals. The high staffing levels in the nursery and excellent relationships with the children are a significant factor in this progress. There is a very good focus at the beginning of the year in helping the children to adapt to their new environment and relate to adults and each other. The staff work with great skill to help the children gain the confidence and self-esteem they need to take part and succeed in their learning. This was well demonstrated in the role-play area in which spring cleaning became the chosen focus of the activity. Not only are language skills extended well but the children also learnt to plan and work together. Even though these children have only been in school for a few weeks, they are already very well settled and happily remain on task to complete their work successfully. For example a small group worked with very good levels of concentration for over fifteen minutes on a collage with an autumn theme. They have learned quickly to share equipment and take turns. Snack time is planned and used very productively to develop important social skills. In reception, the children are more confident and usually settle

quickly to their work. They listen well and are eager to learn when the work is sufficiently challenging. On a few occasions, when this is not so challenging, the children can lose interest and concentration. All children take good care of the classroom equipment and tidy up afterwards. Their positive relationships show that they have a good awareness and respect for each other and adults. Children clearly know the difference between right and wrong.

Communication, language and literacy

60 Most of the children by the end of the foundation stage attain all the early learning goals and achieve beyond this in their reading. Progress and teaching are very good in the nursery and satisfactory in reception. The nursery staff have a very good understanding of how children gain their language skills and provide positive and effective support. A wide variety of activities are carefully chosen to maximise the opportunities for children to experience and extend their spoken language. Photographs of the children working are well displayed around the room and provide a good focus for discussion. There is a high adult presence during role-play activities and at snack times to promote speaking and listening. Many children are already beginning to speak confidently to each other and adults. In writing, in the nursery, most children are making marks on paper with varying degrees of success. Most can write their first names and hold the pencil correctly. In the very attractive library the children enjoy sharing books, and even at this early stage in the year they recognise the titles of some books from the pictures and have a good awareness of a few letter sounds. The very good displays help the children to learn their sounds quickly. In reception, the higher attaining children use a good range of vocabulary to express their ideas and are quite fluent and confident speakers. A few children, which includes those with special educational needs, lack fluency in their speech and they are helped well to acquire new skills by a support assistant. The reception teacher uses the literacy strategy soundly to increase the children's speaking and listening skills. However questioning skills in these lessons are sometimes not challenging enough for the children to extend and express their own opinions and ideas. Because of this, some children lose interest in what the teacher is saying and do not listen as well as they could. Role-play areas also need further focus and development to help the children learn more effectively. The teaching of early reading skills is good in reception, with the focus on learning phonics and key words from the reading scheme. Most children have a good sight vocabulary and understand what they read. Now that guided reading has been introduced, more books are needed to interest the children as well as a system of assessing the progress they are making. The children at this time of the year are at the early stages of emergent writing, but by the end of reception, many can write a simple sentence with some punctuation. Handwriting skills are regularly practised and children form their letters well. Past work shows, however, that there are too few opportunities for children to write about their work across all areas of learning. The higher attaining children are also not being challenged sufficiently. For example, too many simple work sheets are given that consist of colouring in exercises. A real and meaningful context for their writing is needed more often. A good example of where this was done well was with the party invitations that were completed by the children.

Mathematics

61 By the end of the foundation stage most children attain the expected levels in this area of learning. Progress and teaching are very good in the nursery and satisfactory in reception. In the nursery, many children can sort and match objects and recognise and count numbers up to ten. They are taught the use of simple mathematical language as well as number, shape and colour recognition through all the areas of learning. For example, as the children print their apple shapes, they count the number of prints they make and describe the shapes and sizes correctly. Reception children count reliably up to ten and many go beyond. They know the missing numbers on a number square and higher attainers record simple addition and subtraction sums formally. The children are currently working on recognising the difference in height of various objects. Expectations in the reception are, on occasions, low and the activities do not always stretch the higher attaining children enough. For example, in one of the activities, the support assistant measured the height of the children and pinned their name labels at the correct height on the wall. The teaching input finished at that stage without any further discussion or observation and the children went on to another activity. A very valuable learning

opportunity to increase understanding was missed. Mathematical concepts in the reception are also not extended sufficiently when playing in the sand and water.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

62 By the end of the foundation stage, the children attain the early learning goals in this area of learning. Teaching and progress are very good in the nursery where the staff make sure that the children have a wealth of very meaningful experiences through visits, activities, displays and stories. They explore their senses through a 'walk' in the local area, which concentrates on sound. Children investigate taste and learn about different foods around the world, with a visit from a Greek and Italian chef. Their multicultural awareness is extended when they make Diva lamps to celebrate Divali. All aspects of learning in this area are covered extremely well. Already this term the children have learnt to control the mouse on the computer and are learning important facts about the properties of magnets. In reception, the teaching and progress are satisfactory. Although some of the activities from the nursery are developed further, there is too much emphasis, on occasions, on colouring in work sheets. Not enough importance is placed on developing the children's learning and natural curiosity through practical experiences. There are not enough interactive displays where the children can find out things for themselves, or investigate different materials and equipment. However, one lesson seen did provide some good practical opportunities in the lesson for the children to learn about the preparation and the cooking of gingerbread men.

Physical development

63 Most children, by the end of the foundation stage attain the early goals in their physical development. Very good progress is made in the nursery, along with very good teaching. The children have full access to the range of activities recommended for this age group through the outside play area. At the moment the reception children do not benefit from this very valuable facility. This area is well resourced especially with large play equipment, and wheeled vehicles and an outside garden and environmental area is in the planning stage. The children in the nursery develop their climbing and balancing skills well. They have a good awareness of space for themselves and others. Teaching and progress in reception are satisfactory. The formal music and movement lesson enables the children to develop sound control and co-ordination of their movements. Most children from nursery through to reception manipulate pencils, scissors, brushes and other tools and toys with good control and competence.

Creative development

64 Children have many opportunities to express themselves creatively, particularly in the nursery where the teaching and progress are very good. By the end of the foundation stage most attain the early learning goals in this area. The very good levels of support the children receive in the nursery help them to mix their own paints for their pictures and patterns and choose their own materials for collage designs. In reception, the teaching and progress is satisfactory. Although there are some good examples of art and craft activities linked to topics such as handprints and face collages, the range of activities children undertake are often over-directed by adults. There are not enough opportunities for children to make choices and decisions about their own learning. Most children express themselves creatively through music making. They add actions to their songs, keep to the rhythm by clapping and are beginning to hold and name a few of the instruments correctly. The songs that are frequently sung often have a strong mathematical or language focus, which benefits the children's overall development considerably.

ENGLISH

65 The national test results for the year 2001 indicate that standards in English have risen since the previous year. At the end of Year 2 standards are broadly in line with national

expectations, and by the time pupils are 11 years old, standards are above the national average in all aspects of English and they are achieving well. This is as a result of good planning and teaching. The literacy booster classes for higher and lower attaining pupils have not yet started. These are likely to raise standards further. The national literacy strategy has been implemented well. Pupils are highly motivated by the individual literacy targets they are set.

66 Standards of speaking and listening are satisfactory for seven-year-old pupils. They make good progress as they contribute to discussions, and listen to adults and each other attentively and with respect. By the end of Year 2, most pupils speak clearly and audibly, the most able using well formed sentences to talk about their work. By the time they are 11, the majority of pupils are confident when joining in discussions, and use an appropriate range of vocabulary, depending on the subject. Higher attaining pupils usually express their views logically and succinctly. There is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this particular year which affects the overall results.

67 Pupils make good progress and achieve well in reading as they move through the school and very well by the end of Key Stage 2. At all ages they readily participate in shared and guided reading sessions, where they enjoy reading and experience a wide range of texts. In Years 1 and 2, high attaining pupils develop good word recognition skills and all pupils become increasingly aware of letter sounds and blends. The majority know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. High attaining pupils talk about the main events and characters in a story and can retell what happened. They read aloud with expression, and understand the implications of full stops, commas and question marks. They begin to use the index and contents pages in non-fiction books to find appropriate chapters or locate specific information. As they move through the school pupils build on their earlier learning. They experience a wide range of texts and by the time they are 11 years old the majority read accurately, fluently and with expression, observing punctuation appropriately. They discuss their favourite authors and can identify and empathise with story characters. Pupils use dictionaries to check the meanings of words, and the majority confidently refer to the contents and index pages of non-fiction books. The school is aware of the need to give pupils more opportunities to practise reading comprehension skills in subjects across the curriculum.

68 Pupils make good progress and achieve very well in writing by the end of Key Stage 2. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection and reflects the high priority which the school has given to writing since then. By the time they are seven most pupils write simple sentences independently, and usually use full stops and capital letters correctly. The majority of pupils use a joined handwriting script, although letter size is often erratic. Most use their personal dictionaries to improve their spelling, and when spelling errors do occur, these are frequently phonically acceptable. Pupils write in different styles for a range of purposes including narratives, descriptions and poetry. As they go through the school pupils begin routinely to plan and redraft their work to improve it, and to write with increasing confidence in many styles. For instance, following the reading of 'The Silver Sword', Year 4 pupils wrote thoughtfully on life in a prison camp. By the end of Year 6, higher attaining pupils sustain their ideas well in a range of writing styles, including persuasive writing; they create characters and atmosphere effectively, and frequently use complex sentences and imaginative vocabulary to give their writing greater impact. Most pupils use a handwriting style, which is joined, legible and fluent.

69 Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress in literacy development in relation to their abilities. This is because their individual education plans are well written and have clear targets and areas for development. Consequently, work is well focused and matched to pupils' needs.

70 Teaching and learning are never less than satisfactory and are frequently good or very good. Occasionally teaching is outstanding. Teaching and learning are most successful in lessons that take place in an atmosphere of very good relationships, which ensures pupils' good behaviour and close attention to the lesson. Supportive comment enables pupils to be confident and not afraid to try out new ideas. Teachers know the subject and their pupils very well, so that good planning provides pupils with tasks which they recognise as relevant. The level of challenge is usually high and most lessons are briskly paced, so that pupils are kept involved and interested. Skilful questioning with suitably open questions, draws in pupils of all abilities, keeping them attentive and eager to participate. Explanations, instructions and demonstrations are usually clear so that pupils know what is expected of them. As a result they settle quickly and concentrate well, producing good work. A good example of this was seen in a class of pupils in Years 4 and 5, where they worked at the sequence of tasks given them without fuss, and mostly with minimum supervision, until they returned to the whole class, keen to discuss what they had been doing. When teaching and learning are less effective, it is because the lesson lacks pace or because learning objectives are not clear enough and the lesson loses focus. Consequently, pupils' attention wanders and progress becomes slower. Pupils benefit from taking their reading books and spellings home to reinforce their learning, but insufficient use is made of homework to support the development of writing skills. Whilst information and communication technology is used to produce finished pieces of work, mainly by older pupils, it is insufficiently used in the planning and drafting of writing, or to support the literacy development of younger pupils.

71 Literacy is very well organised and all efforts are directed at improving standards. Assessment arrangements are very good. The results of assessments are carefully analysed and plans are drawn up for subsequent teaching programmes. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked and appropriate targets set. Thus pupils know what is expected of them and work conscientiously to achieve their goals. Leadership of the subject is very good, and teaching and standards are regularly monitored, thus identifying areas for further development. The very good choice of texts and well managed discussions ensure that literacy makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

MATHEMATICS

72 The inspection findings indicate that standards overall at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with national averages, but with a larger number of pupils achieving the higher Level 3. However, attainment is still average overall as a third of the pupils have learning difficulties and are on the special educational needs register. Most of the remaining children are above average in their attainment and achieve well. At the last inspection, standards were judged to be in line with the national average.

73 Inspection evidence for the current Year 6 shows that standards are in line with the national average. Pupils do well, especially at the higher Level 5. At the last inspection standards were below the national average. Booster classes in mathematics start at the end of this term and are likely to raise standards further.

74 Over the past two years a wide range of methods have been introduced, which now enable pupils to make good progress and achieve well, although these improvements have not yet had time to raise standards further. The very effective co-ordinator, with the support of the head teacher has been instrumental in raising the profile of mathematics and bringing about the important improvements that are outlined in this report. These improvements have not yet had time to bring even higher standards by the time pupils leave the school.

75 By the age of seven, many pupils demonstrate the improving standards and good progress they have made, through their understanding and accuracy in using numbers to over a 100 in a wide variety of situations. At the last inspection, there was a weakness in problem solving. This has been addressed. Pupils can now use many different ways to explore and solve problems and explain how they work out their answers. This approach, through stronger teaching has challenged these pupils to achieve well. The large numbers of special educational needs pupils are very well supported and this helps them to acquire new skills. They are included in all activities. These pupils are at the early stages of adding and subtracting to ten. All pupils gain important skills of measuring, through a good range of practical activities. The higher attaining pupils in the current Year 2, who have only been in class for a few weeks, can already tell and record the time accurately. Pupils are sometimes given the opportunity to collect information and make and interpret simple graphs. The use of information and communication technology to enhance this area of learning has been a weakness in the past but is slowly improving.

76 As pupils move through the school, the good progress is maintained. By the age of 11, the effective teaching of the numeracy strategy is helping pupils to work much more confidently in applying their mathematical knowledge to problem solving. Teachers give pupils the responsibility for planning and carrying out investigations themselves. This has significantly improved the opportunities for the higher attaining pupils to be challenged in their learning since the last inspection. In basic numeracy, most pupils are developing a good mental facility to work competently on a wide range of calculations. The 'booster classes' and 'springboard' have helped to improve standards since the last inspection. Approximately 30 per cent of pupils in Year 6 are expected to achieve Level 5 in the tests at the end of the year. These pupils are already using fractions and percentages successfully to work out how much space is taken up with advertisements in a newspaper. Pupils have had some opportunities to present and interpret information in different ways. However, standards in data handling are not as high as they could be because information and communication technology is just beginning to be used to support this area of learning.

77 The quality of teaching and learning is good and is having a positive impact on standards and achievement. This is a much better picture than at the previous inspection when teaching was unsatisfactory. The impact from intensive training and very good levels of support from the co-ordinator has resulted in much higher expectations of what pupils can do and achieve. A much wider range of methods are used to help pupils learn more productively. Just occasionally, especially in the independent tasks, there is too much dependence on work sheets that occasionally provide dull and repetitive tasks for the pupils to complete. When this happens, the usually brisk pace of lessons slows, the pupils lose interest and achieve less well than expected. A strength of the teaching is the very good relationships established with the pupils and the encouragement given to them to behave well and work hard most of the time. Nearly everyone takes a pride in the presentation of their work, and levels of concentration in lessons are usually high. Pupils are very keen to learn and put a lot of effort into their work. This is a strong feature in the good levels of progress and improving standards throughout the school.

78 All teachers have a clear understanding of the objectives of the numeracy strategy and are confident in their teaching of the basic skills of numeracy. The numeracy strategy has been effectively introduced into all classes and this is raising attainment. There is a stimulating environment in classrooms where numeracy has a high focus and where good displays remind pupils of the rules and language of mathematics. Resources, which have improved since the last inspection are used successfully to enhance the teaching of skills and are particularly well used for the mental starter. Numeracy skills are practised soundly across the curriculum and in science are used well. There is scope to develop these links further, especially in design and

technology, geography and history. Literacy skills however are promoted very well in mathematics through discussion, explaining mental strategies and recording information. Some very good examples of writing stories from number statements were seen in Year 2. Parents are generally happy with the levels of homework that are set.

79 Assessment procedures and practises for mathematics are very effective. Because teachers now have a reliable picture of how well pupils are doing, they have been able to set individual targets to help them improve their work further. Although marking is an important feature of the assessment process, there are one or two teachers who are not using marking as productively as they could.

SCIENCE

80 Only three lessons of science could be seen during the inspection and none in Key Stage 1. However, evidence obtained from looking at pupils' work, teachers' planning and an interview with the co-ordinators, indicates that attainment is in line with those expected nationally and pupils are achieving soundly at the end of Key Stage 2. At the last inspection, pupils' attainment was in line with the expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 but judged to be unsatisfactory by the time pupils left the school. Standards have therefore improved. The 2000 National Curriculum tests confirm these rising standards, with standards well above average in 2001, where a high proportion of pupils reached level 5. This improvement in standards and the good achievements now made by the pupils are due to a good improvement in the quality of the teaching throughout the school and a specific focus on the improvement of science provision. The introduction of booster classes, in science, are due to start at the end of this term and are likely to raise standards further.

81 By the end of Key Stage 1, although standards are average, this is mainly because the Year 2 class contains quite a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. In fact a good proportion of the pupils have a good knowledge of all aspects of science and are achieving well. For example, many pupils have a good understanding of materials and how they can change. Work seen in their books indicate that they investigate different materials, such as playdough, sponges, rubber balls, elastic bands and can state if these materials are able to be stretched, twisted, squashed and whether they will then return to their original shape. Pupils study plants; they name a range of animals and know that they require food and water and need to move and reproduce themselves. Pupils also have a good basic understanding of the use of electricity around the house and are able to construct a simple electrical circuit.

82 At the end of Key Stage 2, standards are in line with those expected for pupils' ages and they are achieving soundly. They have a sound knowledge of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes. For example, pupils know that shadows are caused when an object does not allow light to travel through it. Pupils understand the phases of the moon and its association with light travelling from the sun. Pupils' understanding of investigational and experimental science is particularly good. For example, they investigated the requirements needed for successful seed germination by placing seeds in different conditions, such as in the classroom, outside and in the refrigerator. Within this, pupils were able to predict what might happen and were fully aware of how to make the test fair by only having one variable feature. Literacy skills are developed well, with a strong emphasis on good scientific language. Presentation skills are weaker and pupils compile their results in a variety of ways, sometimes with little guidance.

83 In the three lessons seen during the inspection, the quality of teaching and learning is mainly good. Particular strengths in the teaching are found in the way experimental and investigative science is taught. Planning for these lessons is good. Teachers make the

instructions and objectives clear. They encourage pupils to predict what might happen, insist they make the test fair and ensure the pupils are given a good range of resources. Also, they do not over-prescribe to the pupils what to do but encourage them to make suggestions during the introduction and planning session. This ensures that pupils become totally involved and interested and work hard, often in small groups, to carry out the investigation with enthusiasm and enjoyment. This was seen to good effect in a lesson for pupils in Year 4. In their human body topic, they had to prove that bones grow, so many decided they would measure various bones, such as lower arm, feet or leg bones of children in the reception class, their own bones and those of pupils in Year 6. They devised various ways of ensuring the investigation was fair and that the results recorded would provide accurate answers. Pupils were encouraged by the teacher to use pictograms or graphs to illustrate their work. Teachers' planning has many strengths, such as providing a range of well thought out ideas, with a good question and answer session at the beginning to consolidate previous knowledge. Plenary sessions summarise the work well. The planning does have a few weaknesses. For example, although all pupils are encouraged to play a full part in the lesson, very little specific work is planned to meet the needs of different abilities of pupils. Sometimes, therefore, progress for the more able or the less able is not quite as good as it could be. Also, planned opportunities to use information and communication technology to support learning in science are underdeveloped.

84 The co-ordinator leads the subject well but has only been in this position for a year. She monitors the teachers' planning but is aware she still needs to monitor the work in pupils' books. Resources have been developed well and are of good quality. Assessment procedures are in place and this consists of end of topic tests. The co-ordinator is planning to improve and revise assessment procedures to link them more with the development of skills. Homework is given appropriately on occasions. The science curriculum is enhanced in a number of ways, such as visits to the Hancock Science Museum in Newcastle. The school grounds have been developed with a pond and wildlife garden and are used as a resource for learning. The school has a greenhouse but at the moment this is not used. The co-ordinator is aware that visits out of school to enhance learning in science are limited at present.

ART AND DESIGN

85 No art and design lessons were seen during the inspection and it was therefore not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. Examples and photographs of pupils' work were examined, and discussions held with the subject co-ordinator and a small number of pupils. The standards of work seen were mainly in line with those usually found in pupils of similar ages at the end of both key stages. Some of the work from Years 5 and 6 is of a higher standard. The standards found during the last inspection have been maintained well. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make steady progress and achieve soundly.

86 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have opportunities to experiment with line, texture and colour and use these skills effectively in their drawings and paintings. They learn to mix primary colours to create secondary colours, and use these to produce specific effects in their paintings. In Year 2, observational drawing develops well, and is effectively used to support pupils' work in other subjects, such as literacy and religious education. Between the ages of seven and 11 pupils become increasingly aware of shape, space and form, and pupils in Years 4 and 5 make good use of these elements in their drawings of Victorian houses, furniture and clothes. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 6 they understand how to use perspective in their paintings, and they use tonal values and shading effectively in their sketch books. Pupils are given opportunities to work with a range of media, including clay, fabric and pipe cleaners, and links are made with the works of famous artists such as Renoir, Kandinsky and Matisse. These help to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of different styles and work.

87 The co-ordinator's subject knowledge is good and she supports colleagues well with advice. She is currently developing a programme of progressive skill development, in order to provide more structure to the teaching of art and design. Teachers' planning is monitored. Resources are good and are well used to support teaching and learning, but there is insufficient use of information and communication technology to develop the subject further. Art and design contributes well to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

88 At both key stages, standards are in line with national expectations and progress and achievement are sound. These standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. The new co-ordinator is well aware of the improvements needed to develop the subject further and these are planned to begin next year. They will include time for her to monitor the teaching and learning. The school has already introduced national guidelines and these ensure an appropriate breadth and balance in pupils' experiences across the curriculum.

89 Year 2 pupils have just started to think about the design for a model tractor. After experimenting with different materials, techniques and construction kits, they begin to know the difference between a fixed and moving axle. The models they make show a satisfactory level of skill in assembling the kits. Afterwards, they discuss the moving parts and use some technical knowledge to explain how they will use this information about axles to design their own tractor. The hand puppets that the Year 2 pupils made earlier in the year show a good developing design element with information in the sketches about the materials to be used and the shape to be achieved. The finished article was reasonably well made and compared quite well with the design. Afterwards, the pupils evaluated the design with their completed puppets and tested them out by performing a puppet play together. Year 1 pupils created a moving picture to illustrate a story. These were satisfactory.

90 In Key Stage 2, there are some good examples of pupils developing their skills in designing and making. Last term Year 6 pupils designed and made slippers and carefully evaluated them afterwards, especially for their durability. The slippers were generally well made and joined using a range of techniques that worked. At the moment the pupils are preparing their designs for different shelters. Most plans contain enough detail, although only a few are drawn to scale. Last year the class used electrical circuits as a source to light their shelter and this will be done again this year. In other classes pupils are making purses and picture frames. It is clear from the plans and making techniques that not enough attention is given to the design element and the requirements needed for the finished article to succeed. For example, Year 4 are making purses for an evacuee. The designs and product fail to reflect this information and the pupils are not aware that certain requirements are needed to make the product successful for the purpose.

91 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. However there are some inconsistencies in the levels of teachers' expertise and skills in delivering the different aspects of the subject. The lesson observed in Year 2 was very good, with the work carefully planned and targeted to help the pupils meet the challenge of designing a moving toy. The teacher displayed a high level of confidence and offered practical support, encouragement and guidance throughout the lesson. The pupils, through a practical focus, learnt the skills and techniques they needed to move forward with their designs. They showed very high levels of concentration and interest. In another class in Key Stage 2, the teacher only just managed to keep the large number of pupils motivated when explaining the design requirements for a picture frame. These pupils needed more opportunities to generate their own ideas in a practical way.

92 There are some meaningful links being developed with other subjects, such as the nest boxes to enhance the environmental area of the school. English is promoted well through discussion and the evaluation of the products being made. Less use is currently being made of mathematics and information and communication technology to support the subject.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

93 It was only possible during the inspection to see two lessons of history in Key Stage 2 and one lesson of geography in Key Stage 1. However, evidence obtained from looking at pupils' work, teachers' planning and an interview with the teacher who is the co-ordinator for both history and geography, indicates that attainment is in line with the expectation for pupils' ages. It was a similar picture in the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs achieve soundly.

94 In geography, a lot of the work in the school is based on pupils studying other areas and cultures and comparing it to their own area. They are often asked to express their feelings about their likes and dislikes. This is ensuring that they develop an awareness of places beyond their own locality and recognise that people affect the environment in which they live. This was seen to good effect in the lesson for pupils in Year 2. They are studying a fictitious island linked to a story they are reading in literacy lessons. However, the island is based on the real Scottish Island of Coll. Pupils are able to describe the jobs that are likely to be done by the people living there. This was based on their good knowledge of the climate, the sea and land formations. They are able to compare this with jobs done by their own parents in Cumbria and even explain why there were differences. The teacher encouraged pupils of all abilities to contribute to the discussion. The higher attaining pupils could even state that if the tourist industry brought too many visitors to the Island, this could spoil aspects of the environment by increased road and traffic. In Key Stage 2, pupils study mountains and rivers, including those in the Lake District. They are able to compare these to large mountain chains and ranges in other parts of the world. Work seen in pupils' books indicate that teachers link the effect of weather in mountain areas to a useful study of weather around the school. This ensures that pupils analyse what they observe out of the window and keep effective records. This makes geography real and linked to their own lives.

95 In history, pupils have a sound knowledge of past times and particular periods. For example, pupils in Key Stage 2 study Ancient Greece and the history of Tudor England. In a lesson for pupils in Year 3, pupils are able to describe many differences in the way of life of rich and poor people living in Tudor times. They compare this to their own lives. During the lesson they made a particular study of the variation of foods eaten by rich and poor. A particularly effective idea introduced by the teacher was to make shapes of fruit made out of marzipan. These were then painted with edible dyes. This was the type of food prepared in a rich persons kitchen in Tudor times and the idea brought meaning and reality to the study of history.

96 The quality of teaching and learning seen in geography and history was mainly good. Teachers often introduce lessons with a good question and answer session, which consolidates previous knowledge well. The planning for the lesson is sound and the learning objectives are usually shared with the pupils so that they are fully aware of what they are doing and why. There is a strong emphasis on using an appropriate geographical and historical vocabulary. This ensures that the basic skills of literacy are extended well. A moderate amount of independent and research work is encouraged, which develops pupils' ability to take responsibility for some of their own learning. This was seen to good effect in a lesson for pupils in Year 6 who are studying life in Ancient Greece. Pupils use a range of well prepared extracts, as well as books, to find out about Greek Gods and their links to everyday life like farming and education.

97 The subjects are well led by the co-ordinator, and the subjects of geography and history are a focus for further development during this academic year. The policies and schemes of work for both subjects are due to be updated shortly. The co-ordinator has inspected teachers' planning and is aware that more emphasis is needed on the use of information and communication technology to support learning in these two subjects. Appropriate homework is given occasionally. Both subjects are enhanced well by a number of educational visits out of school. For example, a number of classes study the local environment, including the flood defences of the river Eden. They visit the seaside town of Silloth and compare the area to their own village. History visits are made to the Roman Vinlanda and the Toy Museum in Cockermouth.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

98 Standards of attainment are in line with national expectations by the time the pupils reach the age of seven, but are below the expected levels by the age of 11. At the previous inspection, standards were in line at both key stages. However, new computers and software have just been introduced and the pupils and some staff are only just beginning to use them. Computers are not used enough across the curriculum and because of this pupils are not achieving as well as they could in Key Stage 2. A similar weakness was noted at the last inspection. Satisfactory progress has been made in Key Stage 1, but in Key Stage 2, because of a lack of coverage in the past, progress is unsatisfactory at the moment. Although the standards are currently below what they should be at Key Stage 2, a considerable amount of training has occurred recently, and with the introduction of new hardware, the school is now set to make big strides in skill development across all aspects of the subject. No specific teaching of information and communication technology was seen during the inspection so a judgement on this aspect could not be made, although it is adequately planned for.

99 Pupils in Key Stage 1 are being taught an appropriate programme of skill development with the new computers. Their keyboard skills and use of the mouse are satisfactory in making simple commands. Year 2 pupils are typing sentences, which are linked to the story they are studying in literacy. Most pupils can edit, save and print out their work independently. The large numbers of special educational needs pupils in this class are very well supported with an additional teaching assistant and with this help are given the same opportunities to gain the skills they need as the rest of the class. In the past, the other aspects of information and communication technology that were covered, was the use of the floor turtle for direction work and exercises to practise mathematical skills. Provision is now improving, with a balanced programme of skill development taking place.

100 In Key Stage 2, the pupils have only recently begun to work towards a full programme of provision and skill development within the scheme of work. New software is being bought to support this planning. In the past very little attention was given to teaching and learning about databases, control devices, modelling or sensor work, but this now forms the planned work for the rest of the year. Pupils' skills in these areas are still underdeveloped, in spite of a very valuable residential visit for pupils this term to practise these aspects. Most pupils are now becoming familiar with procedures for writing and editing text, as well as understanding and using the Internet and electronic mail. This is helped by many of them having computers at home. All pupils can effectively use CD-ROMs to research information about the current topic on the Ancient Greece.

101 Pupils are very well motivated and enjoy the time they spend on the computer. They use the equipment well and happily share the knowledge they have learnt with each other.

They quickly settle to their tasks and apply a lot of intellectual effort to their work. Behaviour is very good at all times.

102 In the past, many of the teachers lacked confidence and expertise in the subject and were unable to help the pupils to gain new skills. Recent training, which is continuing this term, is making them aware of the considerable potential of information and communication technology across all areas of the curriculum in promoting pupils' learning. The school has a very good grasp of what needs to be done to improve standards further and the co-ordinator has drawn up a good quality action plan to help address the shortcomings. With the help and support of the co-ordinator, the teachers are now beginning to positively address these weaknesses in their teaching and have gained the confidence to challenge the pupils and raise expectations. An assessment system is in the process of being introduced and the co-ordinator has planned to closely monitor the teaching and learning of the subject during the year.

MUSIC

103 Two lessons were observed during the inspection, one in Year 1 and one in Year 5. In these lessons pupils were on course to attain standards in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Further evidence was drawn from the quality of music during acts of worship, and from an orchestra rehearsal. Pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs, achieve well and make steady progress.

104 During the Year 1 lesson, pupils repeated rhythmic and melodic patterns demonstrated by the teacher. They are beginning to understand the importance of spaces and silence in music, and their singing is clear and tuneful. Year 5 pupils use musical terms such as quaver, crotchet and score, and play tuned and untuned percussion instruments with control and imagination when composing and performing. They record their compositions, using graphic notation, and devise ways of indicating increasing or decreasing tempo and playing loudly or quietly. The atmosphere during acts of worship is enhanced by the use of music. Pupils enter the hall to music from a range of cultures, and sing tunefully and rhythmically, with contrasting loud and quiet dynamics.

105 Pupils listen well, offer sensible ideas and share instruments, willingly passing them to others on request. In both the lessons seen, pupils followed instructions readily and settled quickly to work. Their behaviour was good, and because the activities were stimulating, pupils enjoyed the lessons and worked hard. Pupils respond very enthusiastically to extra-curricular musical activities, such as the very good orchestra which includes strings, brass and woodwind instruments. The curriculum is further enhanced by the many opportunities pupils are given of singing in local churches and residential homes, and joining regularly with other schools in local musical events.

106 The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and she supports colleagues well. The school makes effective use of the 'Carousel' commercial scheme, which offers pupils a wide range of musical experiences, including composing and performing, and listening to and singing music from other times and places. There are currently no opportunities for the co-ordinator to monitor teaching and learning. Information and communication technology is insufficiently used to support the subject. The school is aware of these weaknesses and has recognised them as areas for development in the school's plans.

107 Music makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

108 During the inspection, gymnastics and games lessons were observed across the school. Planning shows that over the course of the year all areas of physical education are fully covered.

109 At Key Stage 1, standards in gymnastics are above expectations while at Key Stage 2 they are in line with those expected for this age group. Pupils at Key Stage 1 have improved their skills since the previous inspection while the picture at Key Stage 2 remains the same. Progress for all pupils is good at Key Stage 1 and pupils are achieving well. They are satisfactory at Key Stage 2 and pupils are achieving soundly.

110 By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good awareness of space, and are well co-ordinated. Most are able to successfully plan and carry out with good control a sequence of four different movements with a partner. This includes changes in directions and levels. Pupils practise hard to improve their performance and listen carefully to the instructions of the teacher. When asked to demonstrate, they take pleasure and pride in their performance.

111 By the end of Year 6, pupils in their lesson on rugby skills are well aware of the effects of exercise on their bodies and the importance of co-operating and working safely together. They pay particular attention to the good demonstrations from their teacher and their peers and improve the quality and precision of their own skills. By the end of the lesson they understand simple tactics, can select appropriate techniques with the ball and apply the rules of rugby. Pupils' swimming skills are satisfactory. By the end of Year 4, 70 per cent of the pupils swim the minimum requirement of 25 metres and some do more than this.

112 The quality of teaching and learning is good at both key stages. Lessons begin with an effective warm up and move on at a brisk pace. This maximises the period for pupils to be actively involved in learning skills. However the hall is small and this limits the opportunities that the older pupils have to extend and improve their performance in gymnastics and dance. Because of this, the pupils in the larger classes in Key Stage 2 do not achieve as well as they could. Teachers have very clear procedures towards safe practices and the lessons are well managed and controlled, especially in view of the lack of space. All teachers demonstrate at least a secure level of expertise and in the case of the Year 6 teacher, a very good level of understanding of how to teach rugby skills. In most cases teachers are clear about what it is that pupils should learn and provide them with good opportunities and positive feedback to practise and improve their performance. This encouragement helps pupils to work even harder and acquire new skills. The pupils show a high level of consideration for others when working together and listen carefully to instructions.

113 The school grounds provide good facilities for physical education with both hard and grassed areas. In addition, the pupils in Key Stage 2 have the opportunity for outdoor and adventurous pursuits through the valuable experience of two residential visits. The range of out of school activities and clubs is good and contributes effectively to pupils' personal, social and sporting development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

114 Attainment in religious education is in line with the requirement of the locally Agreed Syllabus for pupils aged seven and 11. The standards found in the previous inspection have been maintained. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve soundly and make satisfactory progress.

115 By the time pupils are seven years old they explore issues of care and responsibility well. They understand that their actions can affect others, and that everyone should be respected and valued. They learn about Christianity and Sikhism and know that there are other world faiths which have their own traditions. They know a number of stories from Christianity and Sikhism which they enjoy retelling. Pupils learn about the main features of churches and Sikh temples, and understand the significance of many symbols and rituals.

116 By the age of 11 pupils have an understanding of the beliefs and practices of Christianity and can compare these with the rules of life under Sikhism and Judaism. They know that light, food, and celebrations such as baptism and marriage, are important in all faiths. They explore moral and social issues, often through parables and other stories, and consider the effect of their behaviour on others. Pupils talk more fully about their experiences and feelings, and write thoughtfully about their own beliefs as, for instance, when Year 6 pupils write about 'What Christianity means to me'. Moral and social values are embedded in lessons and acts of worship, enhancing pupils' awareness of the spiritual dimension of life.

117 Attitudes to learning are positive and pupils enjoy their lessons. They behave well and most express their ideas and opinions confidently in class discussion. Written work is well presented and pupils try hard to do their best.

118 Teaching and learning are good. Planning for lessons is thorough, with learning objectives clearly identified. Teachers demonstrate their skills in leading discussions, and use challenging questions very effectively to extend pupils' thinking. Work is almost always well matched to pupils' varying abilities, including those with special educational needs. A good range of resources is well used to support teaching and learning.

119 The policy document and the scheme of work are based on the local authority's Agreed Syllabus, and they support teaching and learning well. Pupils' work at all levels is being collected for moderation with other local schools. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. She supports colleagues well. There are good links with local churches, and the vicar conducts acts of worship in the school. Visits to Carlisle Cathedral and a mosque further develop pupils' understanding of major faiths. Religious education makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.