

INSPECTION REPORT

ORMSGILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Barrow in Furness

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 131761

Head teacher: Mrs J E Fenwick

Reporting inspector: Mr Richard S Moseley
16886

Dates of inspection: 15-18 January 2001

Inspection number: 230270

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Mill Bank Ormsgill Barrow in Furness Cumbria
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Watt
Date of previous inspection:	Not applicable

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

OIN	Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
16886	R S Moseley	Registered inspector	Science	What should the school do to improve further?
				What sort of school is it?
				How high are standards.
			Physical education	How well are pupils taught?
			Equal opportunities	How well is the school led and managed?
19741	T Smith	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
12631	M McLean	Team inspector	English	Assessment and monitoring of academic performance.
			Music	
			Art and design	
			Children in the Foundation Stage	
22881	G Halliday	Team inspector	Mathematics	
			Geography	
			Religious education	
			Special educational needs	
15474	J Fairclough	Team inspector	Information and communication technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils?
			History	
			Design and technology	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Ormsgill Primary School is bigger than most primary schools with 255 pupils. There are 138 boys and 117 girls. There are 39 part-time children in the nursery. There are no pupils with English as an additional language. A high number of pupils, 54 per cent, are entitled to free school meals. The number of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs is 80, which is above average. There are nine pupils with statements of special educational needs, which is above the national average. Attainment on entry to the nursery is well below average and below average on entry to the reception class. This is a new school, opened in September 1999. It was formed from two separate schools.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school, which has introduced many initiatives and improvements since the school opened. It has many good and very good features. Although standards are below the national average in English, mathematics and science by the time the pupils leave the school, this represents either good or very good progress in these subjects, as last years National Curriculum tests were well below average in English and very low in mathematics and science. The quality of teaching is mainly good with some very good teaching. The staff have developed a very good climate for learning. Pupils' attitudes to their work are good and there are good relationships in the school. The school is well led and managed and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- It provides a very good climate for learning and pupils have developed good attitudes to their work. This is resulting in good progress in English and information and communication technology and very good progress in mathematics and science by the time the pupils leave the school.
- Teaching is good overall, with 71 per cent of lessons being good or better and 22 per cent being very good.
- The school is a caring establishment and makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good and this ensures that pupils' behaviour and relationships are mainly good throughout the school.
- The head teacher is an outstanding leader. Together with her staff and governors, she has established a clear educational direction for the school and there is a commitment to improve standards and provision further.

What could be improved

- Standards in English at the end of both key stages.
- Standards in mathematics.
- Standards in science at the end of Key Stage 2.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED

This is the first time the school has been inspected since it opened as a Primary school in September 1999. It is therefore more difficult to judge any improvements compared to the two previous schools. However, there have been many new and successful initiatives. For example, the head teacher has introduced a system of lesson observation for the monitoring of standards in teaching and learning. The school now uses a new and effective system of lesson planning, which is monitored on a weekly basis. These initiatives have ensured that the teaching is mainly good with some very good teaching. Very good facilities are now available to the school for the teaching of information and communication

technology. Standards in this subject have improved considerably and they are now in line with national expectation at the end of both key stages. New policies have been prepared and introduced into the school. They include policies for behaviour management, anti-bullying, assessment, the curriculum, teaching and learning, health and safety, staff development and performance management and equal opportunities. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been successfully introduced. A more rigorous homework policy has been implemented from September 2000. Every class ensures some homework is given each week. It is given in a more systematic way in Key Stage 2 and provision is made for pupils to stay in school two evenings each week to get help with their homework. The school is well placed to maintain these and many other improvements and has a very good capacity to make further improvements.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	NA	NA	E	C
Mathematics	NA	NA	E*	E
Science	NA	NA	E*	E

Key	
Very High	A*
Well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
below average	D
Well below average	E
very low	E*

NA – not available – new school September 1999

- Many of the new initiatives introduced in the school to raise standards were not in place long enough to affect the National Curriculum test results in 2000.
- The inspection findings indicate that for this year's pupils, in Year 6, standards have risen in English, mathematics and science. Attainment is now just below the national expectation in all three subjects. This represents good progress in English and very good progress in mathematics and science. This is a particularly good achievement when it is remembered that 33 per cent of the pupils have been identified as having special educational needs. These improvements are due mainly to the good implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies, the introduction of a good scheme of work for science and a general improvement in the quality of teaching throughout the school and the introduction of good assessment procedures.
- Standards in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations.
- Standards in religious education are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.
- In all other subjects where judgements could be made, attainment is in line with expectations for their age.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Most pupils are eager to learn and enjoy school. They are responsive and show good attitudes in all they do.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Most pupils are well behaved in the classroom and playground. They are usually polite and courteous to each other and to adults.
Personal development and	Personal development is satisfactory and relationships throughout the

relationships	school are good.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to all aspects of school life, although only a few pupils have developed the skills and confidence needed to work on their own.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

- The quality of teaching is mainly good. Seventy-one per cent of the teaching is good or better. Twenty-two per cent is very good. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. This level of teaching ensures that pupils' learning is good in many areas and they successfully acquire skills, knowledge and understanding of all the subjects they are studying.
- Particular strengths are the teachers' expectations of pupils' work and behaviour and the effectiveness of the teaching methods and ideas they use. Teachers' planning is good and all lessons have clear learning objectives. Teachers' procedures for assessing pupils' abilities are good and they are beginning to use these procedures well to plan future work.
- The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well.
- Weaknesses are that the higher attaining pupils do not always receive specific challenging work. Also, there are only a few opportunities for pupils to develop the skills needed to become more confident in taking responsibility for their own learning. The teachers are aware of these weaknesses and have identified these needs in the school development plan.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a satisfactory balanced and relevant curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good provision. Pupils make good progress. They are very well supported in the classroom and during withdrawal sessions.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. The provision for moral and social development is very good. There is limited provision in the curriculum for pupils to appreciate the ethnic and cultural diversity of British society and to prepare them for life in a multi-cultural society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils well. The school has good strategies to celebrate pupils' successes and their progress. The school's procedures for child protection are effective.

- The school is making a good effort to strengthen its links with parents. At present, however, only a few are closely linked to the school. The governors are aware that they need to raise the profile of the school in the community.
- The quality of information about pupils' progress in their reports is good.

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. Leadership and management by the head teacher are outstanding. She is ably supported by the deputy head teacher. Subject co-ordinators are developing their leadership roles well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The chair of the governing body is very supportive and works closely with the head teacher. The governors support the school well, but the chair is anxious to extend and develop the role of the governing body to be more involved in curriculum matters.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The head teacher, staff and governors are fully aware of the school's performance and have a very clear idea of what they want to improve.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Resources are readily available and used very well. Staff are well qualified and deployed very well. The accommodation is used very effectively. All money available to the school is used wisely and carefully.

- The head teacher has been outstanding in deciding the school's priorities from the moment the school was opened up to the present time. For example, improving the quality of the teaching and the standards of behaviour were early priorities. In both these areas, there has been considerable improvement. The plans identified for the future are also very appropriate. The school's finances are in good order and the school always applies the principals of getting best value in all spending.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fact that their child likes the school. • That their child is making good progress. • That the teaching is good. • That they can approach the staff with any problems. • That their children are expected to work hard and do their best. • That the school is well managed. • That the school helps their children to become more mature and responsible. • That behaviour is good in the school. • That their child gets the right amount of work to do at home. • That the school works closely with parents. • That the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few parents felt that the school did not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons. • A few parents felt that their children did not get the right amount of work to do at home.

Inspectors' judgements support all the parents' positive views about the school. Inspectors judge that the amount of homework is adequate. They agree with parents that educational visits out of school are limited. However, the school is aware of this and has clear plans to develop these further and has identified money to support this development.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1 Ormsgill Primary school was formed in September 1999 and therefore the report only refers to the one set of National Curriculum test results in 2000. In Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading was in line with the national average. In writing and in mathematics, it was below the national average. When these results are compared with schools with a similar intake of pupils, the writing results were above average and the results for reading and mathematics were well above average. The teacher assessments in science at the end of Key Stage 1, in 2000, indicated that the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or above was above the national average but the percentage reaching Level 3 or above was below the national average. In the National Curriculum tests at Key Stage 2, in 2000, pupils' attainment in English was well below the national average and in mathematics and science, very low. When these results are compared to schools with a similar intake of pupils, English was in line with the average but it was well below in mathematics and science. There was no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.

2 The inspection findings indicate that for this year's pupils, in Year 2, standards are similar to the 2000 results in reading, but in writing they are still below. In mathematics, standards have risen well and attainment is now in line with that expected nationally for their ages. In science, the majority of pupils again reach the expected level with more pupils reaching the higher levels. In Year 6, standards are just below those expected for their age in English, mathematics and science. Nevertheless, this represents very good progress in English and even greater progress in mathematics and science from the poor test results in 2000. This progress is even more impressive when it is remembered that 33 per cent of the pupils have been identified as having special educational needs. The school has progressed well towards the targets it has set in mathematics and English.

3 In English, throughout the school, standards in listening are satisfactory but lower in speaking. There are few planned opportunities for pupils to develop their debating skills and the school has identified this as an area for improvement. In reading, standards are broadly satisfactory in Key Stage 1. There has been a particular emphasis on reading throughout the school and in Key Stage 2, pupils are making good and sometimes very good progress. However, it is mainly the higher attaining pupils in Year 6 who read fluently and self-correct their errors. Although writing is improving slowly, it is still below that expected for their age in Key Stage 1. For example, pupils in Year 2 write in short sentences, and capital letters and full stops are not used well. Pupils in Year 6 are making good progress in handwriting. However, only a few pupils are developing a fluent, joined script and overall, attainment in handwriting is still below expectations or their age. Also, only a few of the higher attaining pupils are beginning to write longer sentences. Some pupils still use grammar incorrectly. Nevertheless, pupils throughout the school and especially in Key Stage 2, have higher standards than those indicated in the 2000 national test results. The improvements are mainly due to the quality of the teaching and the successful introduction of the National Literacy Strategy. These improvements have only been in place for four terms and have not yet had time to raise attainment to national expected levels. Standards in literacy are below expectation at the end of both key stages.

4 There has been good progress in mathematics by age seven and very good progress by age 11. By age seven, pupils' attainment is in line with that expected for their age. This is because they have had the full benefit of the school's successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy since they were five years old. Older pupils have benefited from it only in their later years in school but are also making good progress, even though attainment is still below the national expectation for their ages. There are particular areas in mathematics that are weaker. For example, pupils' use of a mathematics language is developing well but in some classes, pupils had forgotten some words they

had learned in previous lessons. Also, older pupils find it difficult to convert decimals into fractions, and many pupils still find it difficult to collect data and use it to construct graphs. The higher attaining pupils are not given enough opportunity to devise and set up their own mathematical investigations in an independent way. Standards in numeracy are in line with the national expectation at the end of Key Stage 1 but below at the end of Key Stage 2.

5 At the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in science is satisfactory in all the components of the National Curriculum. For example, pupils have a sound knowledge of forces and explain the variety of types of forces used to row a boat or use a swing. They are beginning to learn about a wide range of different materials and can explain the differences between glass, wood, metal and plastics. Knowledge and understanding of science has greatly improved throughout the school but especially by age 11. Attainment is still below the national expectation for their ages but standards have improved considerably since the very poor results in the national tests in 2000. These improvements are due, not only to improved teaching quality but also to the introduction of a good scheme of work, which is giving structure and purpose to teachers' planning.

6 In information and communication technology, attainment at the end of both key stages is in line with the national expectation. Pupils' basic computer skills have improved dramatically over the last few terms. This is due to very good resources in the classrooms and the new computer suite. This is a resource funded for the purpose of improving computer skills within the adult community but it is also used effectively by the school. The school also benefits from good leadership from the subject co-ordinator and the commitment of teachers and teaching assistants. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use computers with confidence. They type their writing into the computer and some use the Internet and e-mail. They change the style and size of their writing and save and recall their work. By age 11, pupils save and locate files and use spreadsheets. They select facts and produce pie charts. For example, one group of pupils did this with information linked to the likes and dislikes of pop groups. The use of computers to support learning across a range of different subjects in the school is underdeveloped. This is mainly because pupils are only just at the stage where they are becoming confident to work on their own and most teachers have not built this aspect into their planning.

7 Standards of attainment in religious education at the end of both key stages meets the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils have a growing knowledge and understanding of world religions. For example, pupils in Year 2 know that Moses was of great importance as a leader to both Christians and Jews. As the pupils have weaker writing skills, the presentation of work in their books is not always at the levels expected but their classroom debating and discussion skills are better. Discussions in religious education are well linked to everyday life and experiences. For example, pupils were heard discussing the childhood of Jesus and relating it well to the need to be cared for within their own families.

8 Within the remaining subjects where a judgement could be made, attainment is broadly in line with the expectation for their ages. Although reading and writing skills are weaker in all subjects, this shortfall is compensated by pupils' enthusiasm which generally ensures that their knowledge and understanding is sound. Throughout the school, pupils' skills in listening are satisfactory but the skills in speaking are still limited. Reading throughout Key Stage 1, in all subjects, is satisfactory but reading skills to support learning in all subjects in Key Stage 2 is below expectation, as are writing skills throughout the school. Numeracy skills in all subjects, in Key Stage 1, are satisfactory but still below expectations in Key Stage 2. Although all these skills are developing rapidly, especially within Key Stage 2, the improvements in teaching and planning that have led to these improvements have not been in place long enough for pupils to develop their own independent learning skills. These skills are still below expectation for their ages.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9 Pupils enjoy coming to school and have good attitudes to learning. Most are well motivated and keen to respond to the challenges offered, pursuing each new task with good levels of concentration. Overall, they listen well to their teachers, or when others are speaking. They contribute sensibly in discussions.

10 Behaviour in and out of class is generally good. Pupils know what is expected of them and usually react accordingly, although many of them do not have particularly high levels of self-discipline. They are managed well by all members of staff. There is some bullying and aggressive behaviour in the school and the rate of exclusions is relatively high. The school is dealing with these problems very well. However, pupils do care for their school. There is no vandalism or graffiti and due respect is shown for equipment and resources.

11 In class, pupils work well on their own when tasks are made clear to them, but have very few opportunities to plan their own activities or to carry out research on their own. They do, however, willingly accept responsibility when it is offered to them, and perform their functions well. For example, pupils in Year 6 have various monitorial roles around the school. Year 6 pupils also appreciate their special break-time privileges and use them sensibly. The youngest children in the nursery and reception classes are starting to develop good work habits. Relationships throughout the school are good. This makes a significant contribution to the quality of education provided. Pupils are polite and always ready to be helpful. They work well together in lessons and share equipment and resources sensibly.

12 Attendance is satisfactory. A small, but significant number of pupils have poor levels of attendance. Unauthorised absence is higher than the national average. Punctuality is generally good. Most pupils arrive on time and are settled in class promptly at the start of sessions.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13 The quality of teaching is good overall, with some very good teaching. Seventy-one per cent of the teaching is good or better and 22 per cent is very good. The rest of the teaching is satisfactory. The quality of the teaching is a strength of the school and is the major reason why this is an effective and improving school. Many of the strategies to improve teaching have only been introduced in the 14 months since this new school was opened. This is not enough time to enable most pupils to reach standards in English, mathematics and science in line with the national average by age 11. However, pupils are now making satisfactory, good or very good progress and standards in the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science are higher than they were in the national tests in 2000.

14 The teaching has many strengths. Most teachers, for example, have a good subject knowledge of most of the subjects they teach. They also understand how to present their subjects well. This ensures that pupils acquire new knowledge themselves and develop new skills in an interesting way. For example, in science experiments, the teacher's good knowledge and approach provides pupils with sufficient information for them to respond to the challenge of finding answers to scientific problems. Teachers have also introduced the literacy and numeracy strategies well and, because of this, they teach the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics effectively in all subjects. Teachers plan carefully, setting down clear learning objectives in the lesson which pupils understand. The planning is structured well in clear learning steps. This good planning means that pupils develop intellectually and physically, work productively and at a good pace. For example, in a literacy period for pupils in Year 6, the teacher's planning was particularly effective to ensure a successful lesson. Pupils were aware that the purpose of the lesson was to analyse why some writing was more effective than others and to find ways of improving their own writing. The teacher began the lesson with science fiction writing, which spoke of "living Martians", "bulging eyes" and

“unspeakable horror”. This approach inspired pupils to analyse other phrases, which in turn produced improved writing by the end of the lesson. Pupils had worked hard and clearly understood the value of using dramatic words and phrases. All teachers are particularly effective in maintaining high standards of discipline. This results in good behaviour in lessons. Pupils want to learn and know what is expected of them and lessons are productive.

15 There are aspects of the teaching that are weaker and still underdeveloped. For instance, although teachers plan well for most of the pupils in their class, on occasions there is insufficient challenge to the higher attainers. For example, in numeracy lessons, there are few opportunities for the more able pupils to devise and set up their own investigations. Also, teachers’ planning rarely identifies the use of information and communication technology to support learning across a range of subjects. This means that there are less opportunities for all pupils, including the higher attainers, to develop the skills needed to become confident independent learners. Teachers’ assessment procedures and the use of this assessment to plan future work for the pupils are in the early stages of development and are not yet fully effective. Some teachers mark pupils’ work well with good supportive comments, which gives pupils a clear picture of what they have to do to improve further. However, this quality of marking is not consistent throughout the school.

16 All staff are very aware of the needs of pupils with special educational needs. There is close teamwork between the special educational needs co-ordinator, class teachers and support staff. Teachers write good quality independent education plans for pupils in their class with the support of the co-ordinator. These plans are regularly reviewed and teachers match pupils work closely with the targets indicated. This enables pupils to make continued good progress.

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

17 Since the school opened in September 1999 a full curriculum has been developed for its pupils. A full range of policies is in place and every subject uses government guidance in its scheme of work. The focus to date has been on securing a sound basis for the education of the pupils and standards are rising. Pupils will soon be ready for the next step from supported learning to greater independence. This could take them beyond the practice of skills in subjects such as in information and communication technology to the use of these skills in explaining and exploring the world of knowledge.

18 Subject co-ordinators have been trained in their role and have time away from their classrooms in order to monitor the work of the other teachers. They are developing their subjects well. There is an overview of what will be taught and when it is to be taught in all subjects. Assessment procedures are used to arrange the setting of pupils in subjects such as English and mathematics and the results of assessment are beginning to be used well to plan learning opportunities for pupils. Where classes include parallel year groups, such as Years 3 and 4, teachers plan the same curriculum for both sets of pupils. This provision is satisfactory and all statutory requirements are met but there are some minor deficiencies. There is no co-ordinator for design and technology and this subject is taught as a part of the topic focus in other subject areas. There is good work in this subject but the link with other subject areas makes it difficult at times to clearly distinguish the principles of design and purpose, for example, when studying the working parts of torches in science.

19 All pupils are included in the learning opportunities provided by the school. For example, the use of a range of skills from outside agencies ensures that pupils with special educational needs are able to take a full part in the work of the school. Tutors attached to the Cumbria Credits Suite, support pupils in information and community technology. Grouping for classwork, games and positions of pupil responsibility are distributed fairly amongst all pupils. A satisfactory range of extra curricular opportunities are provided for pupils of all ages and include activities such as rugby, football, netball,

rounders, drama, gymnastics, recorders and choir. Year 6 pupils support daytime classes for senior citizens and benefit from a greater sense of purpose in their studies and consolidation of their knowledge as they explain systems to others.

20 Good provision for personal and social education of the pupils comes from circle time, when pupils discuss matters of value or concern to individuals and think about situations of possible conflict in a way that is supportive to everyone. The school provides teaching in sex education and the governors have a policy in preparation. Visiting speakers are used to influence pupils' understanding of health issues, such as drugs and personal relationships.

21 Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory and is promoted mainly through religious education lessons and daily collective worship. For worship, there is a weekly theme for pupils to focus on. An act of worship led by the head teacher serves as a very good model for teachers to follow. She sensitively brought together discussion, hymns sung pleasantly and a prayer, so that pupils reflected maturely on being alone. The school has yet to consider specifically how to develop pupils' spiritual awareness in other lessons, although teachers do take advantage of opportunities as they arise. For instance, in Year 5 pupils reflected well on their personal response to 'The Highwayman' in a poetry lesson.

22 The school's provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The head teacher and staff have worked hard as a team to teach pupils the difference between right and wrong. The school is benefiting enormously from this in its moral climate. Teachers expect pupils to follow the school's prominently displayed code of conduct. They take time to reason with pupils in trouble. In this the head teacher serves as a role model. Pupils themselves are learning the benefits of values such as reason, honesty and fairness. For instance in a religious education lesson young pupils showed a growing understanding of fairness in a discussion about sharing at home.

23 The school's provision for pupils' social development is also very good and is closely linked to how the school promotes pupils' moral development. Teachers encourage pupils to work together responsibly and fairly, especially in lessons such as mathematics, science and physical education. The school's programme for pupils' personal, social and health education makes a good contribution to the development of co-operative attitudes. They learn to discuss issues in formal and informal situations. The school lays great stress on good social behaviour and rewards pupils with recognition, for instance in praise assemblies. Pupils are given planned opportunities to take responsibility for themselves and others. For example, in Years 3 and 4, pupils take charge of the school library. By Year 6 they take on a wide role in the life of the school. Each class is designated two Year 6 monitors, who care for pupils and help the teacher. Others help in the dining hall. They develop responsibility and initiative when they visit a residential centre for outdoor and adventurous activities. The school does much to prepare pupils for citizenship. A 'Building Bridges' programme has been very successful in forming links with the elderly. Pupils contribute harvest festival offerings to the homeless and make donations to the National Children's Homes.

24 The school's provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. They learn of famous artists and musicians in lessons. In geography they are introduced to the problems of less developed countries. They learn of Barrow's past and present. They visit the Docks' Museum. A local artist works with pupils from photographs of the locality and tells them about changes he has experienced since the Second World War. Pupils visit the theatre. A visitor of Afro-Caribbean background gives them a taste of African culture in music and story. However, the school is aware of the need to widen pupils' experiences for preparing them to live in a multi-cultural society.

25 The school fully recognises the need to develop links with the local community in order to extend pupils' learning, and is making good progress with this task. For example, good links have already been established with senior citizens. Pupils have worked with a group of them through Age

Concern in the making of a video, which depicts the spanning of the ages, and there are regular opportunities for Year 6 pupils to help senior citizens develop computer skills in the community computer suite located on the site. Educational visits and visitors to the school are limited, but more are planned, although residential visits are provided for older pupils. Pupils' artwork on prominent display at the Dock Museum helps to raise the school profile within the area. Business links are very limited. Arrangements for transferring pupils to secondary school at the end of Year 6, and links with other colleges and institutions, are satisfactory.

26 The curriculum is organised very effectively for pupils with special educational needs. The high quality support they receive in groups and individually, in class or withdrawn, enables them to make good progress. They are well supported by good quality independent education plans. These give specific information about what pupils need to learn in literacy and numeracy and give targets for those with behavioural difficulties.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

27 The school places a high priority on ensuring the welfare of its pupils. They are supervised carefully throughout the day, and all staff adopt good working practices when carrying out their daily duties. The site is inspected regularly and a few potential hazards have already been identified in connection with the grounds, particularly in respect of steep footpaths. Child protection arrangements are effective and there is good contact with the outside agencies.

28 The school has good procedures for tracking the pupils' personal development and teachers are starting to use them well. Attendance is monitored thoroughly by the head teacher, who has initiated effective measures to ensure that all absences are explained satisfactorily, or investigated fully if they are not. Furthermore, pupils with especially poor levels of attendance are quickly identified and concerns are raised directly with their parents, often with the assistance of the welfare service.

29 The arrangements and practices for supporting and promoting pupils' personal development are particularly good and permeate all areas of school life. Teachers know their individual pupils very well and are fully aware of their needs. They place strong emphasis on building self-esteem and on promoting good behaviour and attitudes to work. A notable example of this occurred last year when some pupils in Years 3 and 4 were identified as needing much more support and were given extra help. As a result their behaviour has improved and they are now achieving well, particularly in mathematics and English. In addition, the school has also run a joint initiative with the Behaviour Support Team from the local authority and this has also helped to raise standards of behaviour generally throughout the school. The school does have some problems with bullying and aggressive behaviour, but has clear guidelines to deal with any incidents that arise.

30 The procedures in place for assessing pupils' academic and personal development are satisfactory and statutory requirements are met. These procedures enable the school to track the progress of any child, from entry to the nursery. National tests are carried out when pupils are seven and 11, and regular assessments are undertaken in English, mathematics, science and information and communications technology. Pupils' personal and social development are also assessed. Teachers record the results of assessments on individual recording sheets for each pupil, which identifies their achievement against the National Curriculum levels of work. This enables teachers to have a very clear picture of pupils' rate of learning. Detailed analysis is made of National Curriculum test results, so that weaknesses in the curriculum, and in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding can be identified and targeted. For example, in English the school has identified weaknesses in handwriting, and a strong emphasis has been put on developing strategies to improve spelling. The results of assessments, particularly in English and mathematics, are used effectively to support pupils' academic progress. For example, the school uses the results of assessments not only to group pupils by ability in classes, but also to organise pupils into ability sets in Key Stage 2. This is effective. Pupils in Year 6

are making good progress and standards are rising. Half-termly assessments in English set clear targets for individual pupils, but these are not always closely related to the school's identified weaknesses, such as handwriting. Not all teachers mark pupils' work sufficiently well against the targets set. Procedures to assess pupils' work in science are sound but these have only just been introduced and are at present underdeveloped.

31 Pupils with special educational needs are supported by very good procedures for checking and recording what they know. This enables teachers to write independent education plans closely matched to pupils' needs. The continued monitoring and analysis of pupils' progress helps teachers in their regular updating of targets for pupils to work towards. The school now identifies pupils who have special educational needs early in their school life. The school makes very good use of the services made available by the local education authority. For instance, the school itself is the base for the authority's Literacy Centre and a support teacher gives a proportion of her time to the school's pupils on a regular basis. Pupils receive good support in their daily lessons from special educational needs assistants and teaching assistants, who give sensitive guidance where necessary on behaviour.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

32 Only a small number of questionnaires were returned and relatively few parents attended the parents meeting prior to the inspection. Nevertheless, the views expressed about the school are mostly positive. Concerns raised by some parents about homework are not supported by inspection findings.

33 Developing links with parents is seen as a priority area for development by the school and it is working very hard to build a partnership with them. Its efforts are beginning to show signs of success, although their involvement is still very limited. The 'Bring your parent to school' initiative, for example, proved very popular and led to a few offers of help in school. There is good support for class assemblies and school productions, and relationships with parents of the youngest children are developing well. Year group meetings, held in the autumn term, were reasonably well attended by parents and response to the home school agreement was good. Two parents have painted murals in the corridors. A Parents, Teachers and Friends Association was recently established and is now starting to organise a few social events.

34 Parents receive good information about their children's progress. Pupils' annual reports give a clear picture about how they are getting on, as well as identifying areas in English, mathematics and science where they could do better. They receive a regular flow of newsletters and correspondence to let them know what is going on in school, although details about the work done in class are very limited. The prospectus is a very well presented document. The governors' annual report, however, lacks necessary information about the election of parent governors, security and arrangements for disabled access to the school.

35 Parents are involved from the beginning of the process of identification of special educational needs and are kept well informed of their children's progress at all stages. Parents are actively encouraged to work in partnership with the school, so most parents take part in the reviews of their children's progress. Those who miss taking part are sent a written invitation to see the co-ordinator at a future date to discuss their child's progress.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

36 Overall, the quality of leadership is good and within this the head teacher displays outstanding qualities of leadership and management. She is well supported by her deputy head teacher, all staff, governors and administrative staff. This joint strength of the school is central to the school's drive for the highest possible standards in all it does. The school was only formed 14 months ago and the many improvements and new initiatives introduced by the head teacher have been in place for a relatively

short time. Nevertheless, these have already changed the reputation and standing of the school with the local education authority and the community. The head teacher has quickly established an extremely clear vision for the development of the school, which is shared by all who work with and support her. The good implementation of the literacy hour and numeracy strategy, an improvement in standards, the raising of the quality of the teaching, an improvement in the behaviour and attitudes of the pupils are all successful examples of these priorities.

37 The governing body is supportive in many ways. The chair of the governing body is fully committed to the school and engages in professional dialogue with the head teacher on a regular basis. A few of the governors visit the school and support curriculum activities from time to time. For example, there are governors linked to literacy, numeracy and the support for pupils with special educational needs. However, many are new to their roles and the chair is anxious to extend the role of the governors to be more active in all aspects of school life. The governors have a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are closely involved in the planning for the next year. The chair also has a longer term vision for the school and has identified important plans for the future, such as development of the school grounds and a complete restructuring of the library facilities. He is working hard to secure extra funding from the community and is committed to increasing the involvement of parents in school life. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties well but there are a small number of items missing from the governors' annual report to parents. The governors and head teacher ensure that the aims of the school, its values and policies, are implemented well within a framework of equal opportunities.

38 The head teacher is involved in regular monitoring and evaluation of all the teaching. She has supported all teachers very well to improve planning and assessment opportunities and to develop their expertise and confidence. This has resulted in the quality of teaching being mainly good with some very good teaching. However, her great strength is that she has enabled her deputy head teacher and subject leaders to share leadership responsibilities. All staff now work very well together to strive for constant improvement. Although the school has only been in existence for a short time and many aspects of leadership are still in the early stages of development, nevertheless, progress is rapid.

39 The school has a good blend of teachers and support staff and they are used well to meet the needs of pupils when delivering the whole curriculum. In particular, learning for pupils in information and communication technology is improved by the use of teaching assistants funded by Barrow Community Learning Partnership. Co-ordinators have been given greater responsibility for their subjects and they are now monitoring the work of other teachers to improve further the learning of the pupils. However, there is no co-ordinator for design and technology and although standards for 11-year-olds are judged to be in line with those expected for their ages, the subject lacks leadership.

40 Learning resources are satisfactory in providing for the teaching of the curriculum. There is good provision for religious education, art and design, and physical education. However, there is a need for more fiction library books for pupils in Key Stage 2. There are very good resources for information and communication technology from the networked classroom computers and the access to the Cumbria Credits Suite but there is a need for further control and sensing equipment in order to develop better use of information and communication technology in subjects such as science. Resources for the children in the nursery are good, except for the lack of large equipment with soft landing beneath, for inside and outside activities.

41 The school is housed in a new purpose-built building that provides a high quality of accommodation for its pupils. Displays throughout the school are well presented and contain significant quantities of pupils' own work.

42 All staff understand the requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs. The school fully complies with the Code of Practice and fulfils all legal

requirements. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides very good support for staff. There are a good number of support staff to assist in the teaching of pupils. Many are trained for the support of pupils with special educational needs. They are used well to support pupils in their learning and undertake their work professionally. The co-ordinator is very experienced and handles the work very effectively and efficiently. Very good procedures are in place for identifying pupils with special educational needs early in their school lives. The co-ordinator liaises with the governing body closely so that the governors can fulfil their responsibilities and be fully aware of the success of the school's provision for these pupils.

43 Very careful financial planning supports educational developments and priorities very well. The school uses the money at its disposal wisely and the chair of the governors' financial committee and the school administrator are very aware of the need to get the best value for pupils, linked to the needs of the school and the priorities identified in the school development plan. The school provides good value for money. For example, it has obtained a grant to set up an information and communication technology suite to serve the community but it is also used by the pupils. A massive investment in computers throughout the school has raised pupils' basic skills in information and communication technology so that they are now in line with the national expectations by the end of both key stages. The school's finances are in good order, although the school's budget has not yet been completed for one full year until the end of March. The quality of financial control by the school administration and the chair of the governors' financial committee is very good. The governors are anxious to run the school even more efficiently and the governors have set performance targets for the head teacher and the deputy head teacher. The management systems now in place, especially the outstanding leadership from the head teacher, have ensured major improvements in a short time and have a very good capacity to maintain a successful and effective school and introduce further improvements.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

44 To maintain the quality of education and promote further development, the governing body, head teacher and staff should:

Continue to raise attainment in English in both key stages by:-

- Further development of all aspects of writing.
- Improving the quality of handwriting and the presentation of pupils' work.
- Developing and improving the school library and in particular extending the range of fiction books available.
- Planning more opportunities for pupils to develop their independent learning and research skills in English using books and computers.
(These are indicated in paragraphs 35, 54 57 and 58)

Continue to raise attainment in mathematics by:-

- Providing a wider range of activities to challenge the more able pupils throughout the school.
- Improving the skills of pupils in Key Stage 2 in data handling and in the use of fractions.
(These are indicated in paragraphs 4 and 68)

Continue to raise attainment in science in Key Stage 2 by:-

- Continuing to fully implement the new scheme of work.
- Implementing fully the procedures for assessing pupils' abilities and using these records more consistently to plan future work.
- Planning activities for pupils to carry out more independent work and research in science using books and computers.
(These are indicated in paragraph 72)

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

- Extend and develop the role of the governing body.
- Enrich the curriculum further by extending the range of educational visits and the number of visitors into the school.
- Improve the play facilities for children under five in the foundation stage to provide large play apparatus and soft landing surfaces in the outside play area.
- Begin to develop the use of computers more fully to support learning across a range of subjects.
- Extend opportunities for pupils to appreciate more fully the richness and diversity of British society.
- Ensure that the few minor items of information not listed in the governors' annual report to parents are included.
- Continue to increase the numbers of parents who contribute to children's learning at home and at school.
- Continue to develop assessment procedures and ensure they are used consistently across the curriculum to monitor and support teaching and learning.
(These are indicated in paragraphs 6, 15, 24, 25, 30, 33, 34, 37, 38, 51, 98)

NB. Apart from the reference to the Governors' Annual Report to Parents, all issues above have been identified in the School Development Plan as areas for further development.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	58
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	22	48	29			

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	19.5	255
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	137

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	78

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	25

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.7

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.7

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	24	13	37

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	19	23
	Girls	13	12	13
	Total	34	31	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92%	84%	97%
	National	84%	85%	90%

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	17	23
	Girls	13	16	13
	Total	32	33	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86%	89%	96%
	National	84%	88%	88%

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	15	18	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	4	6
	Girls	13	12	12
	Total	18	16	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	55%	48%	55%
	National	75%	72%	85%

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	5	7
	Girls	12	14	13
	Total	17	19	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	52%	58%	61%
	National	70%	72%	80%

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	253
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	19	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 – Y 6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28.3
Average class size	28.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	210

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.7

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	43.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	6.3
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year (half-year)	Sept. '99 – March 2000
	£
Total income	299,060
Total expenditure	285,329
Expenditure per pupil	1,041
Balance brought forward from previous year	N/A
Balance carried forward to next year	13,731

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	230
Number of questionnaires returned	49

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	73	27	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	71	22	6	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	41	4	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	31	11	9	7
The teaching is good.	75	25	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	55	35	10	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	81	17	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	23	6	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	53	35	6	0	6
The school is well led and managed.	53	41	4	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	33	4	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	45	17	15	6	17

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

45 Children in the foundation stage are taught in a nursery class, a reception class and in a mixed reception and Year 1 class. However, teachers plan well together to make sure that all the children receive a curriculum appropriate to their stage of development. As a result, all the children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. When children start in the nursery their level of attainment, taken overall, is well below average for their age. They make good progress in their learning but nevertheless, by the time they move into Year 1, many children are still working below the levels expected for five year olds.

46 Children's good progress is the result of good teaching, a well planned curriculum, and the good partnership started with parents in the nursery. Children quickly settle into school life, and they have positive attitudes to school and learning. Teachers provide a good range of worthwhile learning activities for the children to select from, in addition to direct teaching sessions. They have a good knowledge and understanding of children's needs and how they learn. Children are managed well so that the classrooms are calm and ordered, allowing children to concentrate on their activities. Teachers keep a very good check on how well the children are progressing in their learning. This helps them to plan work that moves all the children on in their learning. Staff teamwork is good and all adults working in classes make a good contribution to children's learning, including support for children with special educational needs.

47 Children make good progress in personal, social and emotional development. In nursery, children take responsibility for hanging up their coats when coming into the class. At snack time, they are given responsibility for washing up the cups after they have had their milk. A new child entered the nursery during the time of the inspection. Children took care of her by holding her hand and sharing resources, without coaxing from adults. Teachers and other adults work well together and provide good role models for the good relationship children develop with each other and adults. Children settle quickly and happily into daily routines, such as registration and attending assemblies. There are high expectations of children's behaviour, and resources are organised well to enable children to take responsibility. Through lessons in religious education, children are developing a good awareness that some actions are right and some are wrong. They are learning to care for each other. In the mixed reception and Year 1 class, children are learning from their older classmates, and their personal and social development is very good. They are very confident and during lessons, it is difficult to tell which children are still in the foundation stage.

48 Children make good progress in communication, language and literature from a very low starting point. In nursery and the reception classes, children are encouraged to develop their speaking skills through teachers' skilful questioning. This builds upon the vocabulary children have, but speaking skills are still below the standard expected by the end of the reception year. In a literacy session in reception, children were interested in sharing a Big Book, but talked in short phrases about the pictures, saying phrases such as "A doll in there". Many opportunities are provided for children to listen carefully to instructions. The majority of children sit quietly and enjoy stories, but only a few respond well to questions. This shows that children's listening skills are slightly better than their speech. Children enjoy sharing books with adults and each other. However, many children have poor concentration skills and quickly lose interest. Through good teaching, where teachers provide a range of activities, all children learn to recognise and sound out letters. The majority of children handle books correctly and are aware that print has meaning. Higher attaining children in the reception and Year 1 class recognise some familiar words and confidently read simple books. Children are encouraged to share books with parents at home and they are expected to practice forming letters of the alphabet. In nursery, children are developing an understanding that writing is an important way of communication.

For example, children were writing out prescriptions when pretending to be doctors in the health centre role-play area. Many children form letters such as 'o' and 'd' incorrectly, and too many children mix using capital and lower case letters when writing independently. A few children consistently write their own names with some capital letters in the middle, throughout the foundation stage. In the reception and Year 1 class, one higher attaining child wrote her own name correctly. She very proudly explained that she had not looked at her name card at all. Although most children are making good progress, many will not attain the Early Learning Goals for the foundation stage in this aspect.

49 Mathematical development is taught well, and all children make good progress. Teachers plan a variety of tasks to address the existing weakness in skills identified by early assessment tests. Teachers and nursery nurses constantly introduce and reinforce mathematical language. In nursery, children complete a daily calendar, naming the day of the week and the date. Most children recognised the number 15, but only a few could select the number 5 to place alongside the number 1, to make 15. At snack time, children count how many children should sit at one table, and they learn the different names for the various shaped tables. In reception, children gain confidence counting in numerical order. All the children count to ten, and beyond in numerical order. A few children order numbers forwards and backwards, and higher attaining children count one more than, and one less than. Most children recognise the basic shapes of a circle, square and triangle. Higher attaining children order objects by size and use appropriate mathematical vocabulary, such as 'bigger than' or 'smaller than'. Although most children are making good progress, many will not attain the Early Learning Goals for the foundation stage in this aspect.

50 Most children enter the nursery with poor general knowledge. At snack time, some children did not recognise cubes of cheese, and one child said "pears". They make good progress, and this was particularly evident in the nursery. Children observed at the start of the inspection did not know the names of some vegetables, nor could they recognise the difference between vegetables and fruit. On a later visit, children working with the teacher were naming fruit, such as kiwi fruit, correctly. Children have done homework with their families, completing charts of the favourite food of their parents, grandparents and themselves. Children are also learning about other cultures. In nursery there is an interactive display about Chinese culture, food and utensils. In reception, children learn about changes over time in relation to their own growth and development, and about taking care of their teeth. Children develop satisfactory skills using computers to support their learning, particularly about numbers and letter shapes. In reception, one child independently moved the cursor to access a program, confidently checking that the program was loaded. Although most children are making good progress, many will not attain the Early Learning Goals for the foundation stage in this aspect.

51 The nursery outdoor area is used well to develop children's confidence, co-operation and co-ordination. They control a variety of small-wheeled vehicles safely. This provision is not available to children in reception, although all children in the foundation stage have regular access to the school hall for physical activities. Children's physical development is well below expectations, in nursery. Few children use space confidently, and their co-ordination skills are poor when playing games, using cones and bean-bags. Many follow instructions well, but a few children need a lot of adult support. There is no large, soft play apparatus, to support children's confidence in climbing and balancing. The outdoor area does not have a soft landing surface, but the school has identified this as an area for development. Children use construction sets to make a farmyard with model animals and they use play dough to mould shapes. Although most children are making good progress, many will not attain the Early Learning Goals for the foundation stage in this aspect.

52 Children's creative work is valued and displayed well. Children mix paints to create shades and tones of one colour, for example when painting portraits. They cut, and stick, a wide range of materials to make collages of "Winter" scenes. The majority of children in the nursery, recognise and name colours, such as red, blue and green. In the reception and Year 1 class, children excitedly prepared materials to tie-dye, and others worked carefully to print shapes of different colours to create

patterned fabric. Children enjoy joining in singing songs and action rhymes. Children in nursery regularly sing a rhyme “Snack is coming”, tunefully and with appropriate rhythm. Children in reception practice and refine clapping rhythms, sometimes accompanied with percussion instruments. Children’s imaginative play is promoted well through ‘home’ corners and settings, such as the Health Centre. These are used effectively to develop children’s imagination and to promote their language and mathematical development. Although most children are making good progress, many will not attain the Early Learning Goals for the foundation stage in this aspect.

ENGLISH

53 Standards in English are below what is expected of seven and 11-year-olds, although standards in reading are broadly average for pupils in Year 2. These judgements match the results of the national test for seven-year-olds in 2000. Standards have improved for eleven-year-olds, from being well below what is expected in the national tests in 2000, to now being below what is expected. This improvement is largely due to the results of assessments for these pupils being used accurately to ‘set’ pupils by ability, and the very good teaching seen in some lessons. One teacher teaches all the Year 6 pupils. This supports planning for all these pupils, which builds progressively on their previous learning. The school has also implemented the National Literacy Strategy well.

54 Standards are not high enough for several reasons. When children start in the nursery they have very limited speaking skills. Despite the good progress they make in the foundation stage and the steady progress through Years 1 and 2, their limited language and literacy skills do not catch up for their age. Throughout the school, there are only a few opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills, or to practice their writing skills in other subjects of the curriculum. Handwriting and the presentation of pupils’ work is poor at times. In Key Stage 2, there is a narrow range of fiction and pupils are not taught reading skills to support independent research sufficiently well.

55 Pupils listen quietly in the literacy lessons but only a small percentage of the same pupils offer answers to questions. Many pupils talk in short phrases and teachers seldom push pupils to develop more sophisticated replies. All classes have lessons aimed at promoting pupils’ personal and social development. These are beginning to make a good contribution to pupils’ speaking and listening skills. In one lesson, pupils were encouraged to share their feelings with each other and they were expected to remember what they had said. There are few planned opportunities to develop skills in debating or role-play across the curriculum. The school has identified the need to improve pupils’ speaking and listening skills.

56 The school places a particular emphasis on developing and improving standards in reading, particularly in the foundation stage and Key Stage 1, where there is an emphasis on developing letter sound skills. In Year 2, standards are broadly in line with that expected for their ages. Some pupils misread words such as “shoot” for “shut”, and they do not self correct their errors. Pupils learn the sounds that letters make, but older pupils who have not had this experience, have difficulty in building up words that are new to them. For example, one pupil could not read the word “Miranda”. In Year 6, pupils know how to use contents and index pages, but they do not understand the purpose of a glossary. Pupils’ understanding of the school library organisation is variable from class to class. The majority of pupils choose books from small class libraries. They seldom use initiative to select appropriate non-fiction or to find information from books. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 read fluently and self-correct their errors, such as when misreading “shrilly”, and they use their understanding of the text to explain the meaning of unfamiliar words. Other pupils frequently misread words, such as “sampsom” for “samosas”, and lower attaining pupils do not take care in using punctuation. These pupils often miss out words they cannot read. In Year 6, pupils reading a play script in the literacy lesson, read fluently, but a few pupils in the group lacked expression when reading their part. Reading diaries indicate few parents’ comments about pupils’ reading at home.

57 Pupils write for a range of purposes, including stories, poetry and letters. In Year 2, pupils write in short sentences, and capital letters and full stops are not used well. Spelling is generally poor. For example higher attaining pupils spell “coming”, as “cuming”. Only higher attaining pupils are beginning to attempt letter joins. The quality of handwriting and presentation of written work is sometimes poor. Writing is often crossed out, and low attaining pupils do not space words well with some letters being reversed or capital letters being used incorrectly within words. There are good displays in Years 5 and 6 of pupils writing persuasively, and writing summaries. They have made attractive illustrated zig-zag and pop-up books. In Year 6, only higher attaining pupils write using a joined, fluent and legible script. These pupils use a range of punctuation well, and are beginning to organise their writing into paragraphs. However, they are just beginning to write longer sentences. The remaining pupils use a narrow range of punctuation, but are beginning to use capital letters and full stops consistently. All pupils, in Year 6, are making good progress in handwriting and the presentation of written work. However, many pupils use grammar incorrectly. For example, “If you find anyone acting “suspicious” contact ...”. There is an inconsistent approach to pupils’ use of pens or pencils, when writing. Writing skills are not being sufficiently developed in other subjects. For example, pupils do not always write about what they think might happen in their science experiments, and their written work in religious education is limited. The school has identified improving handwriting as a priority in the school development plan.

58 Teaching in English is good. This is because teachers have good subject knowledge, and confidently follow the literacy framework strategies in their lessons. They identify clear learning objectives, which are shared with pupils at the start of lessons. This means pupils know what they are expected to do, and it makes a good contribution to their learning. For example, when they are doing group activities, pupils are able to work independently of the teacher, who is then able to concentrate on the planned teaching focus for this part of the lesson. Only occasionally are these objectives too general. When this happens, the rate of learning slows for some pupils who are not so sure what they have to do when working independently. Resources are used well to support pupils’ learning. For example, in one lesson in Year 6, the teacher had selected a range of poetry texts, and matched these accurately to the pupils’ abilities. As a result, pupils were interested in the task set, and worked hard on a challenging yet achievable activity. At present, computers are not used often to support English.

59 When pupils with special educational needs are withdrawn for specialist support in small groups, the teaching is good and they make good progress. Good teaching was seen with a group of Year 3 and 4 pupils, withdrawn for additional literacy support. The teaching assistant supported these pupils well in their learning, through good questioning techniques and activities, which were matched well to their previous learning.

60 Some very good teaching was seen in Key Stage 2. Activities are carefully planned to provide pupils with challenging, yet attainable, tasks. Very good questioning techniques encourage pupils to express their personal feelings. For example, in a lesson where pupils were sharing the poem “Daffodils” by Wordsworth, they were encouraged to share their personal feelings evoked by the poem, following on from the teacher’s good explanation of her own feelings. Teachers use the end of literacy lessons well to check how well pupils have achieved the learning objectives. However, a few teachers are not fully using this information well enough to guide their planning of future lessons, to ensure pupils build progressively on what they have learnt. Teachers manage pupils very well. This results in good behaviour. Pupils work collaboratively in pairs or small groups.

61 Assessment in English is satisfactory but there are a few weaknesses. The school has developed manageable, and effective, strategies, which enable teachers to know clearly what pupils can, or cannot do. Teachers regularly set targets for individual pupils. However, not all teachers mark pupils’ work well enough against these targets. English is very well led and managed, and the areas for improvement have been identified well. There is a very good capacity for continued improvement in the subject.

MATHEMATICS

62 Pupils' attainment throughout the school has improved since last year's national tests. Inspection results show that by the age of 11, pupils' attainment is still below national expectations. This still presents very good progress from the very low results in 2000. By the age of seven, pupils' attainment is typical for their age. This is because they have had the full benefit of the school's successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy since they were five years old. Older pupils have benefited from it only in their later years in school, but are also making good progress now. The school has done well to bring about these improvements in standards, especially considering the large number of pupils with special educational needs.

63 Teachers are working hard and effectively to improve the quality of pupils' learning in mathematics throughout the school. They are enthusiastic and positive in their teaching. This promotes good attitudes in pupils. At the beginning of a lesson in reception and Year 1, the teacher enthused the pupils when they all sang their mathematics song 'We all have calculations in our heads' to the tune of 'She'll be coming round the mountain'. Pupils' motivation remained very high throughout the lesson so that they worked hard and made good progress. Teachers are careful in their response to wrong answers and take the opportunity to make a teaching point sensitively to help the pupil get it right. For instance, in a Year 2 lesson, this helped a pupil correct his thinking about 10 and 34 by counting on from 10 to 20, to 30 and then to 34.

64 Teachers' positive attitudes are linked to the good relationships that exist between teachers and pupils. Pupils know that teachers value their contribution to discussion and thus are willing to listen and learn. Teachers have an implicit expectation that pupils will behave well and, as a result, pupils respond positively and work hard. Lessons take place in a good working atmosphere with lots of mathematical thinking and discussion. This enables pupils to make good progress. The enthusiasm teachers generate in lessons normally leads pupils to work conscientiously. Occasionally, teachers do not exploit pupils' conscientiousness sufficiently and let the pace of pupils' productivity slip.

65 During discussions, teachers encourage pupils to think mathematically and to use a variety of strategies. They require pupils to explain their thinking. In a reception and Year 1 lesson, on being asked, 'How did you do it?' a pupil explained, for $6 + 2$, 'I started at 6 and counted on 2'. Teachers encourage finding the easy way, as a good strategy, among others, so that $6 + 2$ is easier than $2 + 6$. In Year 2 the teacher encouraged pupils to look for number combinations that jump out at you. This gave pupils a clear focus to make adding a string of digits. For instance when adding $3 + 6 + 7$ they first looked at $3 + 7$ to make 10 before adding 6. As they get older this enables pupils to deal with larger numbers with growing confidence. Thus when the teacher in Year 5 asked a pupil to explain her mental addition of 398 and 440 she showed a good understanding of breaking the numbers into $300 + 400$ as 700, 90 and 40 as 130, making 830, then adding the 8. By Year 6 pupils know, as the teacher explains, 'if you know one fact you know another', as in $8 \times 3 = 24$ and the inverse, $3 \times 8 = 24$.

66 Teachers introduce pupils to the use of correct mathematical language. Pupils in Year 1 know and use the word zero in preference to nothing. The teacher in Year 5 made sure pupils knew the phrase 'commutative law' when she taught them that $135 + 97 = 97 + 135$. She took care to emphasise the phrase 'the most significant digit', so that pupils would consider the largest number in place value first when adding $17 + 340 + 53$. However, the school is aware that the area of mathematical language needs developing. For instance, by the end of a lesson in Year 5, pupils had progressed well enough in the use of factors. However, they had forgotten what the word factor meant.

67 A very good feature of teaching is the way teachers introduce the aim of a lesson at the outset. The aim is already written clearly for pupils to see and teachers repeat it to emphasise what

the lesson is about. This gives pupils a clear focus as they learn step by step. As they begin their tasks they then write the aim into their books. This helps both teacher and pupils when checking how well they have done in the lesson.

68 A good feature is the methodical way teachers check pupils' progress through the school with a range of tests. They analyse the results of tests to show weaknesses in pupils' learning and adjust their planning for this. Inspection findings confirm the school's view of the need to strengthen the teaching of handling data and the conversion of fractions for older pupils. For instance, many pupils find difficulty with collecting and recording data then using the information to construct graphs. With the information teachers gain from test results they form pupils into teaching groups. Most older pupils are taught mathematics in sets, one class of higher and one of lower ability. These arrangements help teachers to aim more accurately at the right level. Pupils with special educational needs are targeted very effectively. They are well supported by hard-working teaching assistants and this enables these pupils to make the same good progress as others. Higher attainers, however, are not systematically fully stretched. They are not always provided with sufficient opportunities of a greater challenge as independent learners, such as devising their own investigation and this prevents them from achieving all they are capable of. Teachers do not provide pupils with sufficient opportunities to use information and communication technology in mathematics.

69 The school is now showing a good improvement in standards of mathematics. This is due to the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, the teamwork of all staff, improved teaching quality and the good support from the subject co-ordinator. With the clear direction shown by the school leadership, the school is in a good position to continue this upward trend.

SCIENCE

70 Standards in science are in line with the national expectations for their ages at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils are making steady progress and are developing their general knowledge and understanding of all aspects of science. For example, in a Year 2 lesson on forces, pupils explain the variety of types of forces used to row a boat or use a swing. Some pupils describe the more complicated forces used to ride a bicycle. An inspection of pupils' work in their books also indicated that they have a sound knowledge of materials. For example, they explain differences between objects and divide them into groups, such as those made from wood, metal, textiles, stone and glass. They are also able to state that some materials can be bent, squashed or stretched and they will then return to their original shape, whereas other objects do not. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are also developing their scientific enquiry skills by asking questions and making useful observations. However, one weakness is with their ability to make a sound record of their observations and measurements. This is partly due to their weaker writing skill but also because teachers use a variety of different methods to make recordings and the guidance given is inconsistent.

71 At the end of Key Stage 2, standards are below the national expectations for their ages. This is still a good improvement on the results obtained in the National Curriculum tests in 2000, where the results were very low. This progress is mainly due to an improvement in the quality of the teaching and in the attitudes pupils have to their work. However, pupils' knowledge and understanding of science is still below that expected. This is partly because the school has only just begun to use a comprehensive nationally approved scheme of work, which covers all aspects of the science curriculum. Pupils' understanding of investigative and experimental science is, however, stronger than other areas and their ability in this aspect is in line with the expectation for their ages. For example, pupils in Year 4, are able to investigate why two or three bulbs in an electric circuit are dimmer compared to just one bulb, which was very bright. They are able to set up the circuit, using bulbs, batteries and wires and predicted what the outcome might be. They also understand how important it is to make the test fair and only change one factor at a time so that their scientific discoveries are accurate. As with the younger pupils, their ability to record the results of their investigations is

inconsistent in quality. In some lessons, the aspect is done well but the quality varies, as teachers do not always use the same approach.

72 The quality of the teaching in science, throughout the school, is mainly good with some very good teaching. Teachers are planning their lessons well using the new scheme of work. This is resulting in adequate coverage of all areas of the science curriculum. Particular strengths in the teaching are seen in the way experimental and investigative science is taught. For example, most teachers give enough information and support in order for the pupils to have a clear picture of what they have to investigate. However, teachers make sure that enough information is held back in order that pupils will become excited about finding out. This approach works well and pupils are motivated to work hard, to enjoy their science work and persevere well until they have discovered some of the answers to the challenge that has been set. Another strength is the way teachers use opportunities to develop literacy skills through an insistence on using the correct scientific words. A good scientific language is seen in pupils' books and on displays in most classrooms. Most teachers also begin their lessons well by a good session of question and answers. This reminds pupils of what they have learned previously. Teachers have good class control and lessons proceed at a good pace. This ensures that pupils are motivated and are expected to give of their best at all times. Teachers have recently introduced a good assessment scheme, where the ability of each pupil is recorded. Teachers need to fully implement these procedures to enable them to match pupils' learning needs to future work. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well supported in science. For instance, support staff for these pupils are well briefed by the class teacher. A particular weakness is the underuse of information and communication technology. This is used on occasions but few opportunities are planned for pupils to develop their own independent learning skills using computers. For instance, there is limited use of computers to display their scientific findings in graph form or to help research work in science using CD-ROMs. Scientific books, including those in the school library, are also underused for independent and group research work.

73 Leadership of the subject is sound. The co-ordinator has a clear yearly action plan for further development and has built up a satisfactory range of resources. He is aware that there is only a very limited range of educational visits out of school to places of scientific interest and only a limited use of the school grounds for scientific study. However, some visits are made which are valuable. For example, pupils visit Grisedale Forest for study and younger pupils undertake a farm visit. A local quarry is used, on occasions, for the study of rocks. The school has already identified in its school development plan the curriculum is in need of further enrichment by an increase in educational visits out of school.

ART AND DESIGN

74 Standards in art and design are in line with expectations for pupils' ages at the end of both key stages. Pupils are given suitable opportunities to develop their skills, and work with a range of materials and tools.

75 Pupils in Year 1 are able to look at examples of the work of famous artists, such as Renoir, before painting portraits. They choose a variety of materials to create a collage representing their ideas about the story "The Rainbow Fish". In one lesson, pupils looked at, and talked about, a variety of printed fabrics. They did this well. They selected their favourite, and talked to classmates about their choice. Pupils then experimented using a range of printing techniques on plain fabric. Some pupils make patterns printing different colours and shapes. Other pupils work with the teacher preparing material for tie-dying, whilst others used crayons to make a design. This work was sound and well linked to pupils' science work about materials.

76 In Years 3 and 4, some pupils have made good black and white drawings of the Iron Man, from the story of that name. Pupils use their observational skills well to make drawings of the

attractive still life displays around the school. They use sound techniques with pastels to create tone and shadow. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils experiment well with the basic techniques of building three-dimensional forms from clay. They mould and roll out clay slabs, and used coils of clay to build up forms. Other pupils used sketch-books to make observational drawings of a variety of containers displayed in the classroom. These are satisfactory. In Year 6, pupils demonstrate the progress they have made by using pencils to shade and create perspective when making observational drawings of different containers and trainers. They sketch ideas for theatrical headwear imaginatively, in preparation for their end of term production.

77 Teaching is good. In the lessons seen, teachers have good subject knowledge. Lessons are planned well, with a range of activities for pupils. Teachers organise lessons well, with a good balance between teacher demonstration and opportunities for pupils to experiment, practice and refine their skills. Teachers take care to teach safety factors such as when pupils are using knives to cut clay, and when the teacher is supervising pupils preparing to dye materials. Pupils are encouraged to be creative, with teachers reassuring, and supporting them, well. Pupils enjoy art and design activities. They work hard, behave well, and handle resources with care.

78 The school has begun to use the nationally recommended scheme of work as a framework for art and design. Teachers have recognised that planning from this scheme is helping pupils to develop their skills in a more systematic way. The co-ordinator who is supporting the subject well, is an art specialist, and has attended recent in-service training, which has been shared with all the teachers. Resources are good, and they support the art and design curriculum well.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

79 Standards are at the expected level at the end of Key Stage 2. However it was not possible to observe lessons and so there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on standards at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils' work, on display, show that they have made a variety of constructions in Key Stage 1. For example, decorated and glazed clay pots, fabric pictures, filled fabric cushions, pop-up books and glove puppets. Attainment in design and technology is in line with the national expectation for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2.

80 Year 6 pupils responded well to the challenge of designing a shelter. The majority used a key to illustrate materials and most labelled their design and indicated jointing methods. Imaginative methods of forming joints were developed and a variety of materials were used for the framework. Various solutions were found to problems of rigidity, appropriate materials were selected for cladding and the models were assembled to regular dimensions. However, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were less successful in evaluating the design and construction of torches. They focused mainly on the construction of the torches and did not consider such ideas as the purpose of the carrying loop or the effectiveness of the reflector.

81 Analysis of display shows that the majority of teachers are confident in teaching design and technology and pupils produce attractive and varied work. At Key Stage 2, teaching is satisfactory overall with very good teaching observed in Year 6. It was not possible during the inspection to make a judgement on attainment at the end of Key Stage 1. At the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is in line with the national expectation for their age. The very good teaching presented the pupils with the problem of constructing a shelter and ensured that all pupils had ideas from which to begin their designs. Good subject knowledge meant that pupils were guided through a variety of possibilities and that appropriate materials were available to make pupils exercise choice about methods of construction. In response, the pupils were quickly interested and made constructive suggestions about coverings, fastening and support. Their designs were imaginative, mainly achievable and labelled with information about joints and construction methods. Good interaction by the teacher during construction ensured that pupils of all abilities worked with a sense of purpose and confidence. However, the less

successful teaching presented pupils with the task of disassembling and re-assembling torches without clear focus on the purpose of features that make some torches better for a purpose than others.

82 Although pupils clearly enjoy design and technology and there is a good range of work on display the subject lacks the leadership of a co-ordinator. This means that the teaching of design and technology is not monitored for a clear focus on the principles of the subject when it is taught as a part of the topic sequence in the school. As a result, the study of torches as part of a science topic on electricity means that the focus is on the scientific workings of the torches; 'how' they work is given more importance than 'why' they are designed as they are.

GEOGRAPHY

83 Pupils' attainment in geography is in line with the national expectation by ages seven and 11. Teachers engage pupils' interest with a clear programme of study based solidly on national guidelines, so that pupils learn effectively step by step.

84 A developing feature of teaching is the use made of fieldwork in the school grounds and the locality. Teachers begin to build up the geographical skills of younger pupils by looking at what they know, such as their route from home to school. They identify features of the locality well on a large-scale map and draw their route. Teachers also make use of the locality to develop older pupils' geographical skills, for instance, in carrying out studies into problems caused by traffic. They learn to draw maps and construct graphs from their research findings. These maps are sound. In Year 6, pupils undertake a residential field study centre visit, where they use their mapping skills soundly for orienteering.

85 Teachers take younger pupils on a journey in spirit with their soft toy 'Barnaby Bear' to introduce them to the wider world, when they identify photographs of his visits to Barrow. In a lesson in Year 1, the teacher imaginatively introduced pupils to the wider world when she took them on a trip Barnaby made to Australia in December 2000. Packing his suitcase caught the attention of a restless class, which gave the teacher the opportunity to discuss his journey with the aid of a globe and wall map. With the use of photographs, including one of Barnaby having Christmas lunch on a warm sunny beach, pupils gained an awareness of the contrasts between Barrow and Australia.

86 Teachers promote pupils' concern for the environment and introduce older pupils to the concept of environmental change. In a Year 5 lesson the teacher overcame the conditions of a cold and frosty playground and enthused pupils in a discussion about proposed housing a few metres away. The reality and immediacy of the issue caught pupils' interest. They disregarded the cold while they carefully recorded features of the landscape, for future comparison with a changed environment. Such a study gives a local dimension to pupils' earlier learning about the problems of environmental change in a developing country. In a Year 6 lesson the teacher prepared pupils for a forthcoming field study day around Coniston. However, the teacher was not able to raise pupils' enthusiasm sufficiently because of a lack of Ordnance Survey maps and photographs. Thus pupils were unable to follow the teacher's details of a walk from Coniston village to the summit of Old Man and missed the opportunity to develop their geographical skills.

87 Teachers make interesting links with other subjects. For instance, in Years 3 and 4 they link pupils' learning in geography with the history topic. They do not, however, make enough use of information and communication technology and the library facilities for research purposes.

88 The school is making progress in the development of geography. Teachers have implemented the new guidelines successfully, though the amount of time allocated to teaching the subject is barely adequate. There is no audit of resources to show whether the school's geography resources match

the requirements of the new scheme. Nevertheless, the successful implementation of the scheme puts the school in a position to improve standards.

HISTORY

89 Standards in history are at the expected level at the end of both key stages. This judgement has been made after analysis of pupils' work in class-books and on display.

90 Seven-year-old pupils represented the life of Florence Nightingale in pictures and short sentences and placed key points in her life in order according to a timeline of the period 1800 to 1900. Eleven-year-old pupils represented their knowledge of the Aztec civilisation with pictures of ceremonial headdresses, evaluative writing about life in the civilisation and interpretation of religious ideas and beliefs of the Aztec people. During the one lesson observed, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were able to observe differences between the homes of the rich and the poor and between the past and the present but they were not able to answer questions about the construction of timber houses in Tudor times.

91 The enthusiasm for history is reflected in the good teaching at both key stages and is shown in the variety of pupils' work and the content of the displays throughout the school. The better teaching uses English skills well in giving pupils tasks, such as comparing the culture of Athens and Sparta in comparative writing. Good learning takes place for older pupils when they write at length about the battle of Marathon and make good use of facts about the life of a Spartan soldier. The use of information and communication technology helps with the editing and presentation of this work. However, the less successful teaching did not make as much use of research skills, such as evaluation, explanation and interpretation and focused mainly on factual accounts of the period under study. A lesson about Tudor houses made comparisons between the homes of the rich and the poor but missed opportunities to discuss features of buildings, such as the differences in construction or materials used.

92 The co-ordinator for history is developing the subject well. The curriculum is planned in a series of topics that alternate with geography and a two year cycle has been developed for the mixed age classes in Years 3 and 4. An action plan has been produced that identifies the need for more artefacts for the pupils to examine and more visits to sites of interest.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

93 Standards in information and communication technology are rising. Since the opening of the school in September 1999, the pupils have made good progress and standards in both key stages are now at the expected level. This is due to the good leadership of the co-ordinator and the commitment of teachers and teaching assistants in making good use of the very good information and communication technology resources and accommodation that are now available in the school. Opinion from parents is that pupils get a very good start in information and communication technology from an early age. Year 6 pupils work on computers with senior citizens and gain benefit in consolidating their own skills and in gaining greater sense of purpose to their learning.

94 Pupils at Key Stage 1 are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about all uses of information and communication technology. They type their writing directly into the computer and speak of using the Internet and e-mail both at school and at home. When writing into the computer they change the style and size of their writing and save and recall their work. The majority of pupils in Year 2 program a computer floor turtle to follow a sequence of instructions that move the toy around a series of obstacles. They plan the route, anticipate what will happen and then use trial and error to change the instructions.

95 Pupils at Key Stage 2 are not as confident, since they have had a short period of time in which to gain their skills. They are familiar with all uses of information and communication technology but classroom assistants, teaching assistants and teachers support much of their learning. Skills in file management are used to save and locate files. Correct spreadsheet vocabulary is used as pupils use cell references and labelling to construct simple formulae that will perform numerical calculations. Pupils use other software to produce charts that represent information that they have gathered about personal likes and dislikes. They select individual facts and produce pie charts that illustrate favourite pop groups and show different choices between boys and girls. Some also have used e-mail and occasionally search the Internet for information, as well as using publications software to produce abstractive news bulletins.

96 Teaching and learning is good at both key stages. Teachers ensure that pupils have experiences in the basic skills of information and communication technology and that they have a few opportunities to use these skills in other subject areas such as English, mathematics and history.

97 At Key Stage 2, teaching is well organised, shows good knowledge of the subject and gives clear instruction at a careful pace that allows all pupils to keep up with the lesson. Accurate vocabulary is used and tasks are constructed well to provide success for pupils at all levels of ability. Following this carefully structured teaching, pupils work well. They follow the instructions with care and learn well about text and combination with graphic images. When working on a spreadsheet they practise the use of formulae and investigate the effects of changing the information and its effect on the answers produced.

98 However, much of the learning has to be carefully supported and there is a need for other teachers to have the confidence to organise independent learning opportunities for their pupils. Although there is independent access to computers for the pupils, much of this is given as reward time for the pupils and is not focused on using computers to learn. Opportunities are missed to plan tasks of enquiry that would make greater use of information and communication technology in other subjects and would help pupils to develop their skills using sources of information such as CD-ROM and the Internet. At Key Stage 2, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to write directly into the computer and so develop their editing and presentation skills. Furthermore, there are limited resources and opportunities for the teaching of control technology such as monitoring heart, pulse rate or temperature that would link with the science or geography curriculum.

99 This subject is led well by a co-ordinator who has developed an overview of what is to be learnt and when it is to be taught. There is an action plan for information and communication technology that is providing teachers with training and increasing their confidence. Standards have risen as a result. However, links between information and communication technology and other subjects in order to give greater independence to the pupils in their use of information and communication technology skills, are underdeveloped. Resources for teaching control and sensing technology are limited.

MUSIC

100 Standards in singing are average for pupils' ages. In assemblies, pupils sing tunefully and with attention to rhythm. The curriculum is broad, although there are few planned opportunities for pupils to use graphic notation to save, practice or improve their own compositions. Pupils make steady progress overall. In lessons where teaching is very good, pupils make very good progress. In Year 1, pupils sing with attention to rhythm and a few pupils maintain a steady rhythm when clapping and singing together. In Year 2, pupils practice clapping rhythms in small groups, and they are beginning to be aware of maintaining their rhythm, when other groups join in.

101 In Years 3 and 4, pupils explore the elements of Tudor music. Higher attaining pupils recognise and explain the term ‘madrigal’. Pupils listen carefully to “Pastyme with Good Companye”, exploring the rhythm of the music. In Year 6, pupils use notation to sing accurate notes and control pitch. They interpret the words of a ‘sea shanty’ into a real life situation. However, they lack confidence playing chime bars and the xylophone in time to a newly composed simple tune. They listen to, and appraise, music from different cultures.

102 Teaching is good overall, with some very good teaching seen at both key stages. Where teaching is very good, teachers have good subject knowledge, and use musical terms, such as ‘pulse’ and ‘rest’ correctly. They share the objective of lessons with their pupils, and this supports pupils’ learning well. There are high expectations of pupils’ behaviour, lessons move at a brisk pace with a good variety of activities, which challenge and interest the pupils well. Good cross-curricular links are made with other subjects, such as history and English. For example, one teacher challenged pupils to explore lyrics written in ‘olde’ English and questioned pupils as to “Why could King Henry VIII not have recorded the music he listened to?”. Pupils behave well and enjoy music activities. Some younger pupils are given responsibility for choosing instruments. Older pupils are encouraged to value the opinions of each other.

103 The school has begun to use the nationally recommended scheme of work for music. At present there is little use of information and communications technology to support music. There are extra-curricular recorder groups and a choir, and the local education authority peripatetic service provides music tuition for some pupils in upper Key Stage 2. These activities enrich the curriculum well.

104 Year 6 pupils have composed and written lyrics for a ‘Barrow Rap’ as part of an initiative with local Senior Citizens to produce a video depicting the local area through song. Pupils worked in a recording studio to produce the music. The video recording is professionally produced and this work has made a valuable contribution to the school’s music curriculum.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

105 It was only possible to see a small number of lessons during the inspection and it is not possible to make a judgement on attainment over the full range of the curriculum. In the lessons seen, standards were in line with those expected for their age, although a significant minority demonstrated higher standards.

106 Pupils in Key Stage 1 work enthusiastically in lessons, for example, through actions involving stretching, curling and traveling. They thoroughly enjoy their exercise and work co-operatively with others very well. They show increasing control when balancing and holding their position. For example, pupils in Year 1 make and hold effective shapes with their body when they curl up like a hedgehog. Pupils in Key Stage 2 were seen practicing the skills needed for rugby. They use their bodies well to move and swerve. Most catch and throw well and a significant minority can do this very well and modify and refine their skills and techniques to improve their performance.

107 Pupils explain and apply basic safety principals in preparing for exercise. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are learning to swim and most can swim unaided for a sustained period of time over a distance of at least 25 metres by the time they leave the school. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 were seen participating in a challenging activity with a parachute cloth. They demonstrated that they could work together well as a team to meet various challenges. For example, all the class controlled the circular parachute cloth to determine the movement of a bouncing ball. They also undertook various complicated movements whilst the rest of the class had to maintain the height of the cloth.

108 The quality of the teaching is mainly good. The teachers' planning is good, with clear learning objectives in each lesson linked to a new national scheme of work for physical education. This is ensuring that all areas of the National Curriculum for this subject will be covered over a period of two years. This is good planning for pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and enables all to learn the skills being taught. Teachers assess pupils' performance in lessons, give them feedback and occasionally ask them to demonstrate to others. This ensures that pupils know what they have to do to improve. All teachers have very good skills to ensure class control and to conduct lessons at a good pace. This ensures that pupils are motivated and perform all exercises safely.

109 The subject is well led by the well-qualified co-ordinator. She supports the other teachers effectively by examining all the teachers' planning. She has organised training for the teachers with the help of the local education authority adviser. Staff have recently attended a mini basket ball course. Pupils participate successfully in local school competitions in football, rounders and netball and a number of Year 6 pupils take part in challenging outdoor and adventurous activities during a residential visit to a local outdoor education center.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

110 Pupils' attainment in religious education at both key stages is in line with that expected by the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils study three main world religions in depth, Christianity, Judaism and Buddhism, and aspects of others.

111 Teachers use the guidelines of the Agreed Syllabus effectively in their planning of what pupils need to know and learn, so that they learn step by step as they become older. For instance, pupils in Year 2 are taught about Moses as a leader of great importance to both Christians and Jews.

112 Teachers are confident in their teaching because they have a secure understanding of the subject. This enables them to make lessons interesting and to get the point over to pupils in ways that make them think. In a Year 6 lesson the teacher encouraged pupils to close their eyes to deepen their contemplation of her description of how mediaeval pilgrims approached the Christian shrine at Walsingham. Pupils' reflective silence, while they listened and thought, gave them an insight into the spiritual nature of the pilgrimage. Pupils in Year 2 found difficulty articulating their thoughts in naming, with reasons, people in school whom they considered 'special'. Most named a friend, but could not give a reason beyond 'because she plays with me'. With persistent and sensitive questioning the teacher was able to tease more fundamental reasons out of them, such as, 'because he helps me not to fight'. Teachers use these lessons not only to develop pupils' knowledge of religions, but also to develop pupils' spiritual and moral understanding. In a lesson for pupils in Year 1, the teacher explained to pupils the idea of Jesus as a child needing to be cared for in a family, like us. She helped pupils work out their feelings about family squabbles. 'How does it feel? Is it worth it when you get angry and say things?'

113 Many pupils find difficulty expressing their thoughts clearly and teachers work diligently towards helping them to do so. Discussions make up a large and important part of religious education lessons. Sometimes the open-plan nature of classrooms allows noise to intrude on lessons which require a quiet, reflective atmosphere. This was the case in a Year 2 lesson. However, the teacher's skilful handling of the discussion retained the interest of pupils as they strained to hear what others had to say. Teachers use vocabulary suited to the purpose of the lesson and expect pupils to do so. Pupils in Year 2 use the word Sabbath when they compare Christian and Jewish special days. In the Year 5

topic on leaders the teacher introduces the words democracy for the people's choice and theocracy for God's choice. The teacher helps prepare pupils to play an active role as citizens. In their learning about Moses as a leader they interview adults about the roles they themselves play in society.

114 The school organises a range of visits to deepen pupils' understanding of what they learn. Though this provides pupils with valuable experiences, there are insufficient of these opportunities to broaden their outlook. Nevertheless, pupils benefit well from their contacts with the local parish church and vicar and with a nearby Buddhist place of worship.

115 The co-ordinator's leadership role is sound. However, pupils' recorded work shows that teachers do not have a clear consensus view of what pupils should record, if anything, and for what purpose. Teachers do not give pupils sufficient opportunities for them to carry out independent research using computers.