

INSPECTION REPORT

SEATON INFANT SCHOOL

Seaton

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112139

Headteacher: Mrs Lesley Grace

Reporting inspector: Steve Bywater
18463

Dates of inspection: 23rd to 26th June 2003

Inspection number: 247187

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	High Seaton Workington
Postcode:	CA14 1NP
Telephone number:	01900 325233
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Trevor Fee
Date of previous inspection:	2 nd February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18463	S Bywater	Registered inspector	English; geography; music; English as an additional language; equal opportunities.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements. How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9306	Colin Herbert	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
24031	Iris Idle	Team inspector	Foundation Stage; science; information and communication technology; art and design; design and technology.	
20301	Peter Isherwood	Team inspector	Mathematics; history; physical education; religious education; special educational needs.	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Seaton Infant School serves a mixed catchment area including small farming hamlets, rented council property and privately owned homes just north of Workington in Cumbria. There are currently 209 pupils on roll (103 boys and 106 girls); this includes the 52 children who attend the nursery on a part-time basis. The number of children receiving free school meals is eight per cent, which is below the national average. When children enter the nursery class their skills are wide ranging but, overall, attainment is average for their age. A significant number have good skills in personal and physical development. Almost all of the pupils are described as white British. No pupils are at an early stage of language acquisition. There are 20 pupils listed as having special educational needs. This is lower than average for the size of school. The majority of pupils with special educational needs have speech and language difficulties but a number have learning and/or emotional and behavioural needs. There is one pupil with a statement of special educational need; this is below average for the size of school.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school. Children get off to a flying start in the nursery and reception classes. By the age of seven, standards in writing, mathematics and science are well above the national average. There are strengths in the very effective leadership of the headteacher, supported by a dedicated team of teachers and effective governors. High quality teaching ensures pupils make good progress. The school offers high standards of care for its pupils and has strong relationships with parents and the community. The school makes a big difference to the way that pupils respond to learning. Pupils have very good attitudes to school and behave very well. Parents are justifiably proud of the education their children receive at this school. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- When compared with all schools nationally and with similar schools, standards by the age of seven are high in writing, mathematics and science
- The overall provision and quality of teaching in the nursery and reception classes is high
- As a result of the effective teaching, pupils make good progress through the school
- The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social, personal and cultural development is very good overall
- Leadership and management by the headteacher and governors are very good
- The school ethos enables pupils to gain a very good attitude to learning. Relationships within school are very good and pupils behave extremely well
- Parents' are very satisfied with the education and care that the school provides

What could be improved

- Standards in reading, which are in line with the national average but well below the average for similar schools

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Seaton Infant School is a far better school than it was when it was inspected in February 1998. The quality of teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) has improved significantly because the school has provided in-service training for teachers to develop greater expertise in and confidence to teach the subject. The quality and range of resources are now good and ICT is a natural part of most lessons. The school now has a manageable, long-term development plan. It includes monitoring and success criteria, is accurately costed, and linked closely to the correct educational priorities. Methods of communicating with parents are effective and parents comment very favourably about the changes in the openness of the school. The governing body is now effective. Individuals and groups confidently carry out their duties very well because their roles and responsibilities are clear and

everyone knows where they are going. The Foundation Stage has been established as a distinct Key Stage and provides a superb start for newcomers to Seaton Infant School.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
Reading	C	C	C	D
Writing	A	A	A	A
Mathematics	A	A	A	B

Key	
Very high (top 5%)	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The table shows that, in the 2002 National Curriculum tests for seven year olds, pupils' performance in reading was in line with the national average. It was well above the national average in writing and mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, standards were below average in reading, well above average in writing and above average in mathematics. The full range of inspection evidence confirms that pupils in Year 2 are on course to achieve similar standards this year. Standards are well above average in writing, mathematics and science. Although reading standards are comparatively disappointing and close to the national average, the children have achieved well in most other subjects and achieve above average standards in art and design, design and technology, history, music, physical education and religious education. Standards are average in geography. These are pleasing results because children have average skills overall on entry to the nursery. Children make very good progress in the nursery and good progress in the reception classes. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their individual learning targets.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy school, develop good work habits and are keen and responsive learners. They concentrate well and show eagerness when responding to the teachers' questions.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are polite and courteous. They are respectful and kind to others during lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Personal development is good and pupils benefit from opportunities to take responsibility.
Attendance	Attendance is above average. Pupils arrive on time and lessons start promptly.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	Very 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 overall quality of teaching is good, with significant strengths in several areas. Teaching in the nursery is of consistently very high quality and children make good gains in learning as a result. Excellent relationships are established, which give children the confidence to take part in the exciting activities given to them, and they learn quickly. Through good teaching in the reception classes, teachers build on this firm start, particularly in the way that they challenge pupils of all abilities at the right level of difficulty. The good teaching continues in Years 1 and 2 with a range of lessons seen from satisfactory to excellent. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen in this inspection. There is some variation between classes, with inspirational teaching seen in one of the Year 1 and one of the Year 2 classes. In the best lessons, pupils were challenged to think and given opportunities to develop their ideas. A strong feature in most classes is the use of homework, which extends pupils' learning.

The teaching of writing is very good but the teaching of reading has some weaknesses. Teachers do not spend enough time listening to pupils and asking questions about what their reading is about. They do not share with pupils or parents how best they can improve their reading. The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is good overall; at times it is very good and excellent. In most lessons the introductory mental and oral starter is very effective. A small number of introductory sessions lack vigour and pace. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well because of the use of good individual education plans and work set at the correct level.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. All statutory requirements are met. An exciting curriculum challenges children in the Foundation Stage. The curriculum for pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 is suitably matched to the needs and interests of all pupils. A good range of exciting activities and educational visits motivate, excite and encourage pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. There is early identification of special educational needs, and regular very good quality assessment procedures are used to ensure pupils make good progress towards their targets. Support is good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. There are good opportunities in assemblies and lessons for pupils to reflect on their feelings. Pupils are encouraged to follow rules and to help each other. The school values and explores different cultures but pupils know little about Britain as a multi-cultural society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The school cares deeply for the well being of all pupils and includes them fully in all aspects of school life. The school has made good developments in assessment and monitoring outcomes of national tests. Although it sets individual targets for pupils, it does not yet share them with pupils and parents.

The school knows pupils very well. Parents and carers have very positive views about the school, and the school works closely with parents. The quality of information provided to them about school events

and guidance on the curriculum is high. There are very good links with parents of pupils with special educational needs.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides very clear educational direction. The strong and shared vision and sense of purpose ensure all staff work together to achieve the school's aims. There is a very good sense of team spirit among the staff and a definite shared commitment to succeed. However, the headteacher is over burdened with roles.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities well. Governors are fully committed to and supportive of the school. They are fully involved in the strategic direction and decision making, especially in developing and evaluating the school improvement plan.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Monitoring of teaching and learning is effective and thorough in English and mathematics. The results can be seen in the maintaining of high standards in most areas, the identification of weaknesses and action taken to deal with these.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The results of spending are very carefully monitored and evaluated. The school analyses its results carefully and applies very well the principles of best value. The school makes good use of its resources and uses monies wisely to impact positively on standards.

The school's aims do not do justice to the actual work of the school because they do explicitly state the school's obvious commitment to the raising of standards of attainment. There is very effective management of special educational needs throughout the school. The school has a satisfactory level of staffing and provides good opportunities for staff development. The accommodation is satisfactory and is used efficiently. Resources are good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school • The school enables their children to make good progress • The teaching is good • Homework provision • Their children behave well at school • The school is very easy to approach with concerns • Staff have high expectations for their children • The school is well led and managed • The provision for their children's personal development is good 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A relatively small number of parents feel they could be better informed about pupils' progress

Sixty-six questionnaires were returned. This was 32 per cent of those sent out. Twelve parents attended the pre-inspection meeting for parents. The parents think highly of the school and provide very good support. Inspectors support the parents' positive views. The school works closely with parents and the 'open' school policy means that parents can be informed of their children's progress at any time.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 Pupils achieve well at this school. Over the past few years standards have been high in writing, mathematics and science when compared with like schools. However, reading standards have been significantly lower and are below average when compared with similar schools. Throughout the school, most pupils make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of being given work that is well matched to the targets in their precise individual education plans. Teachers and support staff provide additional, high quality help both individually and in small groups.
- 2 Strengths in standards achieved:
 - Children make rapid progress in the nursery class and good progress throughout the school
 - Standards achieved in the national tests for seven year olds were well above the national averages for writing, mathematics and science
 - Standards are currently well above average in writing, mathematics and science
 - Standards achieved by seven year olds are above average in information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology, history, music and physical education. They also exceed the expectations of the local religious education guidelines
 - Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their individual learning targets
- 3 Areas for development are:
 - Improving the reading skills of higher attainers in particular
 - Improving pupils' handwriting
- 4 When children start school, their attainment is in line with that expected for their age in communication, literacy and language, mathematical development, creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world. It is above the level expected in their personal, social and their physical development. All children, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress in the nursery and good progress during their time in the two reception classes. The majority achieve standards above the level expected nationally in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world by the time they enter Year 1. Their personal, social and physical development is well above the level expected for their age. Children with special educational needs are identified early and make good progress towards the targets set for them. They are well supported and included in all activities that take place.
- 5 The results in the national tests and teacher assessments for seven year olds in 2002 showed standards to be well above the national average in writing, mathematics and science. Standards in reading were in line with the national average. When compared with similar schools, standards were well above average in writing, above average in mathematics and below average in reading. There are no marked differences over time in the attainment of boys and girls, and improvements over the past few years have been in line with the national trend.

- 6 Unconfirmed results in the 2003 tests and assessments and findings from the inspection paint a similar picture.
- 7 By the age of seven, pupils' standards in speaking and listening are well above average. Teachers provide many opportunities, in all lessons, for pupils to discuss their work with each other, to answer questions and to give explanations at length. Reading standards are average. Although most pupils read confidently and with good expression, higher attainers do not show good anticipation of the text and their 'reading for understanding' is not as well developed. As a result, reading is in line with national expectations. Teachers use a wide range of suitable and motivating books in literacy lessons and a good range of new books has been purchased. This helps pupils to learn how authors create atmosphere, develop a plot and create interest through the use of different vocabulary. Standards in writing are well above average and pupils' writing is lively, neat and punctuated well. Higher attaining pupils use descriptive words to make their work livelier. This is because teachers are very keen to encourage pupils to enjoy writing in a flowing way and to use wide-ranging and adventurous vocabulary. However, the presentation of pupils' handwriting should now be developed more because no pupils are writing in joined up style.
- 8 Standards in mathematics are also well above average. This is because work is carefully matched to pupils' different needs and because teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to explain their mathematical thinking to help develop their reasoning and build confidence. In mental mathematics sessions, pupils show high levels of interest and are keen to achieve accuracy at speed. Standards in science are well above those expected nationally by the time the pupils leave the infants. They show a very good understanding of the different parts of the human body and the majority have a very good understanding of the properties of materials. Pupils predict very well, understand the principles of fair testing and record their findings well.
- 9 Standards in information and communication technology are above average and staff create plenty of opportunities for pupils to use computers in their everyday class work. Standards in other subjects can be seen in the table below

Subject	By the age of seven
Art and design	Above national expectations – good progress
Design and technology	Above national expectations – good progress
Geography	In line with national expectations – satisfactory progress
History	Above national expectations – good progress
Music	Above national expectations – good progress
Physical education	Above national expectations – good progress
Religious education	Exceeds expectations of the locally agreed syllabus – Good progress

- 10 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their individual educational plan targets because of the high quality of support they receive from teachers and support staff. Pupils with special educational needs have positive

attitudes to their work. They concentrate well on their work, for example in sessions working on weaving in a Year 2 art lesson.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 11 Pupils have very good attitudes to school and to their learning, and they are very well behaved in and around school. The relationships are excellent between pupils and each other and between pupils and adults. Almost all of those parents who responded to the questionnaire or who attended the meeting also had very positive views on the behaviour of their children. The school has maintained the very high standards that were evident at the last inspection.
- 12 Strengths in this area include:
 - pupils are very enthusiastic about school, they enjoy participating in lessons and their behaviour in lessons is very good overall
 - relationships between pupils and each other and pupils and adults are excellent. As a result, no oppressive behaviour, bullying, sexism or racism was observed during the inspection
- 13 Pupils are enthusiastic about school from the moment that they arrive. In the playground each morning or on coming into school pupils of all ages have a smile on their faces. This enthusiasm extends into the classroom. For example, pupils in a Year 1 science lesson were keenly interested in what was going on and they were fully involved in the lesson. Additionally, when the same class paid a visit to the local church, they demonstrated a similar good interest as they made drawings of various artefacts.
- 14 The pupils' behaviour is very good overall. In the classroom the attitudes and behaviour of pupils were good or better in 88 per cent of lessons and very good or better in 76 per cent of lessons. Standards of behaviour in the playground, in the dining hall at lunchtime or in assembly are also very good, and sometimes excellent. Pupils were polite and well mannered towards visitors as they moved around school or when they had dinner with them in the hall. These aspects of school life are closely linked to the high quality provision the school makes for pupils' moral and social development. There was no indication whatsoever of any unsociable or racist behaviour during the inspection. There are no exclusions.
- 15 Relationships between all members of the school community are excellent. All pupils demonstrate a very good understanding of right and wrong. They always show respect towards each other and to all members of the school community. Seaton Infant School is one large happy family where the contributions of all members of the school, whether adults or pupils, are valued. For example, the midday supervisors play happily with the children at break times and also accompany their classes out on visits into the community. The catering manager, in addition to her normal role, takes responsibility for watering the flowers at the front of the building and raising large amounts of money for the school through her cake sales. Additionally, the site superintendent takes time out from his normal duties to show the pupils his new grass-cutting tractor. The impact of these very high quality relationships is that the pupils take very good care of the accommodation and the outside play area and show concern about them. Additionally, the quality of relationships has a very positive impact on pupils' learning, as there is total inclusion of all pupils in all school activities.
- 16 The opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and demonstrate initiative in school are good. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility for a variety of activities such as

playground buddies and designing the willow structures in the playground. They also play an important part in drawing up their class behaviour agreements. In these documents they consider what would be fair behaviour and then agree the consequences if any one in the class makes it difficult for others to learn. These opportunities have a good impact on pupils' personal development.

- 17 The rate of pupils' attendance has recently improved and it is now above the national average. The rate of unauthorised absence is below the national average. Punctuality to school is good.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 18 The overall quality of teaching is good and as a consequence the quality of learning is also good. 82 per cent of all lessons seen were good or better, 58 per cent were very good or better and 15 per cent of lessons were outstanding. The high proportion of very good and excellent teaching in Nursery, one Year 1 and one Year 2 class represents a good improvement since the last inspection. Teaching is also consistently good in both reception classes and there are many examples of good teaching, and occasionally very good teaching, in the other Year 1 and Year 2 classes.
- 19 Strengths in teaching and learning are:
- teaching is very effective in the Foundation Stage
 - the teachers have high expectations, both of what pupils can achieve and how they should behave
 - teachers' subject knowledge is secure and the use of very good resources result in very good learning in several subjects
 - the way that teachers' skilfully link subjects together and make good use of pupils' skills in information and communication technology
 - teachers use adult support effectively so that all pupils in class benefit
 - Pupils with special educational needs are taught well because of the use of very good individual education plans and work set at the correct level
- 20 Areas for development are:
- Placing more emphasis on the teaching of reading comprehension skills
 - Sharing targets of how to improve reading with pupils
- 21 Children in the Foundation Stage receive very high quality teaching in the nursery and children make rapid gains in learning. There is good teaching and learning in the reception classes. In nursery and reception classes, the excellent relationships which teachers establish with children help to give them confidence and enable them to learn quickly. Teaching in the nursery shows that the teacher and the nursery nurse know these children well and have a thorough understanding of the learning needs of young children. They use this knowledge well to organise the classroom and the outdoor area into stimulating learning environments that, quite correctly, encourage play, investigation and the development of children's independence as central features. There is a good balance between the activities that pupils choose for themselves and those organised by and led by adults. The reception classes are also organised well and children have opportunities to make choices. The differences in provision are mostly that the nursery teacher and staff tend to intervene more in 'child-chosen' activities and children's play. This is a good thing to do. In both nursery and reception most lessons are characterised by clear explanations, demonstrations and questioning. Staff pose questions well to encourage children to talk about what they are doing and provide time for activities to develop.

- 22 Very good relationships and strong systems for managing pupils are key strengths of the teaching in the great majority of lessons. Teachers rightly expect high standards of discipline so that they do not have to waste time controlling their classes. Staff work hard to gain and hold pupils' attention, to motivate them to concentrate and show effort in their work. Pupils respond very well to this and, as a result, most classrooms are happy working environments where pupils find it easy to learn and they consistently try their best. However, although all staff work equally hard at this, in the occasional lesson in one Year 1 class, pupils responses to these approaches are immature and can slow learning for all.
- 23 The teaching of numeracy is stronger than the teaching of literacy. All teachers show a very good understanding of the teaching of the basic skills of number. The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced only during the last academic year and teachers are confident in teaching the three-part lesson. In particular, the introductory mental and oral starter is used very effectively in most lessons. Literacy skills are taught well, but writing is taught better than reading. Although teachers effectively teach pupils the basic skills, such as reading unfamiliar words by sounding out the words and letters, they have been less successful at teaching higher order reading skills, especially the reading comprehension skills. In some classes, the guided reading session is not taught very well. Pupils do not sufficiently grasp what the text is about and do not make thoughtful predictions about what they think will happen next. Marking is regular and encourages pupils but it is inconsistent and does not always give information about how pupils can improve their work. A further area to develop in some literacy lessons in one class is when the teacher 'fills in time' by asking pupils to do a picture. This is not a suitable task for bright pupils who have finished their work!
- 24 Teachers have secure subject knowledge and make it clear what they expect pupils to learn. As a result, pupils are focused on their learning. It is particularly useful when teachers use the end part of lessons to assess how much pupils have gained, in order to plan future work. In the best lessons, teachers give detailed explanations, demonstrations and instructions to pupils and use challenging and technical vocabulary. This was seen to good effect in a Year 2 geography lesson as pupils talked about 'urban' and 'rural' environments. Lessons often have a good mixture of astute questioning and discussion which effectively includes all pupils, a significant amount of direct teaching to the whole class and a brisk pace. A good feature of teachers' planning is the use of links between subjects. For example, there is a good link between design and technology and music as pupils consider and make a range of musical instruments. Pupils are given opportunities to apply their knowledge, skills and understanding, and to realise that learning is not an isolated experience. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught throughout the other subjects and there are very good links with information and communication technology, for example in researching a variety of subjects using the Internet and CD ROM.
- 25 There is very early identification of special educational need, starting in the nursery class. There are good quality individual education plans. Most targets are clear and measurable, for example being able to read a certain number of words or work with particular numbers in mathematics. The individual education plans are linked effectively to both the English and mathematics aspects of the National Curriculum. In lessons, pupils with special educational needs are well supported both by teachers and support assistants, by ensuring work is set at the correct level to meet their needs. Staff are skilled in modifying their questions to these pupils so as to challenge them, whilst at the same time allowing them to achieve the success they need to

bolster their self-esteem. This support ensures that these pupils make good progress in their learning.

- 26 Homework is a strong feature in many lessons. It is consistently given in many subjects to support pupils' learning.

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

- 27 The school offers a good range of learning opportunities to all its pupils. The curriculum is broad and balanced, relevant and meets statutory requirements for all subjects in the National Curriculum and in the religious education syllabus used by local schools. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. Policy documents and schemes of work have been improved. All aspects of the information and communication technology curriculum are now taught fully.
- 28 Areas of strength
- The Foundation Stage curriculum is very good
 - Learning experiences are effectively planned to meet the needs of the pupils
 - The strategies used to teach mathematics are very good. Those for English are good overall and very good in writing. The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is good
 - The curriculum for personal, social and health education and citizenship is good
 - Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good
 - Relationships with other schools, colleges and the local community are very good
- 29 Areas for development
- There are no significant areas for development
- 30 The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. Teachers' planning is very thorough and focuses clearly on interesting activities that give the children very high quality experiences in all the areas of learning. These are closely linked to the early learning goals designed for children of this age.
- 31 In Years 1 and 2, subject leaders have prepared policy documents and schemes of work that help to promote the development of skills and increase pupils' knowledge and understanding in the National Curriculum subjects. Particularly good attention is paid to developing problem solving and enquiry skills in mathematics and science.
- 32 The strategies for teaching writing and mathematics are very good and ensure that basic skills in these areas are very well developed. Pupils are given many opportunities to develop their writing skills in different subject areas, for example when they write about famous people in history and record their thoughts after a church visit in religious education lessons. The strategies for teaching reading are not as well developed and, as a result, pupils do not attain as well as might be expected. The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is good. Pupils develop their mathematical skills very well by using computer programs and they research topics, such as in history and religious education.
- 33 Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is good. This work underpins much of what goes on in school, and plays an important part in the very good personal and social skills shown by the pupils. There is a mixture of discrete lessons and aspects that are taught within other lessons, including religious

education and science. The school deals very sensitively with sex education and relationships. Questions are answered honestly at a level appropriate to the pupil's age. The 'Healthy Heart' programme includes work on taking tablets and other substances. This is not made very clear in school documentation, a fact recognised by the school.

- 34 Teachers ensure that all pupils are included in all aspects of the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs are identified at a very early age and programmes are put in place to ensure they receive effective support that allows them to access the whole curriculum. This support ensures that pupils with special educational needs make progress in line with their peers.
- 35 The very good links with the local community contribute very well to pupils' learning. A very wide range of organisations, including local businesses and 'The Friends of The Lake District', have donated a large amount of money, which has been used to enhance the outside grounds. Pupils' citizenship skills are very effectively developed by the visits of the local police and fire services. There are excellent links with local churches and chapels, and this has a very positive impact in developing pupils' understanding of religions and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- 36 There are also very good links with other educational institutions. The links with a local private nursery and a junior school ensure that pupils transfer with the minimum disruption. Older pupils visit the junior school to take part in a mathematics lesson and staff from the junior school teach the Year 2 pupils in the infants' school. Trainee teachers train in school and there are a large number of work experience and college students who work with the pupils, giving pupils many very good experiences.
- 37 There is a good range of extra-curricular activities and visits out from school. The choir encourages pupils to enjoy singing and has a very positive impact on developing a love of music. Teams take part in football competitions. Visits out to local churches, Mirehouse, Whinlatter and Haig mining museum have a positive effect on pupils' learning. The many visitors into school, including artists, puppeteers and dancers, help pupils to develop their creative and social skills.
- 38 The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural is very good overall. This shows good improvement since the previous inspection when the overall judgement was good.
- 39 Areas of strength
- The school gives pupils many varied opportunities to develop an understanding of the beauty of the world and allows them time to think and reflect
 - The school involves pupils and parents very effectively in developing a clear moral code
 - From the moment they enter nursery and throughout the school, children are given many opportunities to work together and to consider the views of other people
 - Opportunities for the development of pupils' own cultural heritage are very good

- 40 Area for development
- Extend opportunities to learn about living in a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic society
- 41 Pupils are given many very good opportunities to develop a sense of spiritual awareness. On arrival at the front of the school the beauty of nature is seen in the window boxes, planters and garden. This sets the tone for the school where everyone and everything is valued. Displays in school are very good and show the pupils that the adults respect their work. Music and art are used very effectively to develop spiritual awareness, for example the use of Beethoven's 'Für Elise' as pupils enter the hall for their act of corporate worship. Worship is used very effectively to help pupils think and reflect. The use of a candle allows them to focus their thoughts. Prayers are used to allow pupils to give thanks for the world around them. In lessons there are moments of awe and wonder. In a nursery session, children became absolutely spellbound as bubbles were created using small bottles. Pupils in Year 1 are given a wonderful opportunity to develop spiritual awareness when they visit a local church and have two minutes to reflect on the silence. In religious education, pupils are given opportunities to talk about their feelings.
- 42 The school's approach to moral values is very good. There are very positive values and clear expectations of high standards of behaviour, and pupils respond well to these. Pupils of all ages, from the nursery up, are involved in establishing their own codes of behaviour. These codes and the school rules are all positive but they ensure that pupils understand that there are consequences if you do not follow the code. The use of certificates helps pupils to work hard to ensure that their behaviour is good. Teachers ensure that pupils know that their actions may affect others. In a group session on the carpet, a teacher asked a pupil who was kneeling rather than sitting what the effect was for the children behind him. The pupil realised that they could not see and immediately sat down. In games, pupils develop an understanding of the need for rules, for example when they play football or 'tunnel ball rounders'.
- 43 Opportunities for pupils to develop social skills are very good. The school works very hard and very successfully to develop high quality relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults. Everyone in school is regarded as a friend and pupils think about others when they carry out actions. There are many opportunities to co-operate together in all lessons. Pupils are allowed to work in groups without direct supervision. At break-times a very successful 'buddy' system ensures that pupils do not remain on their own or become isolated. Relationships between adults in the school are very good and there are very good role models for the pupils to emulate. Team games and the school choir allow pupils to work very well together.
- 44 Opportunities to develop cultural awareness are good. Pupils are given a very good understanding of their own cultural heritage. They study the local area and visit nearby places of interest, including Mirehouse and the Haig Mining Museum. They are given opportunities to listen to music from around the world, and visiting artists and dancers have a very positive impact on cultural development. In religious education, pupils learn about the cultural traditions of world faiths. Work on food enables pupils to look at different countries of the world. The pupils' understanding of living in a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic society is not as well developed as other cultural areas. The school has recognised this and is working on ways to develop pupils' awareness.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 45 Seaton Infant School continues to provide very high levels of care for the emotional and physical needs of its pupils. There are also good procedures in place for the promotion and monitoring of attendance and very good procedures to promote and monitor behaviour. At their meeting all parents expressed the view that their children were well cared for by the school.
- 46 Strengths in this aspect are:
- that the school provides a very high level of care for its pupils
 - that very good procedures are in place for child protection and all aspects of health and safety
 - that very good procedures are in place to promote good behaviour and to ensure the absence of oppressive behaviour, sexism or racism in school
 - assessment procedures are good overall and very good in the Foundation Stage
- 47 The school maintains appropriate records for first aid, fire drills, accident recording and the emergency contact of family and friends in case of an emergency. The procedures for child protection are very effective and the designated teacher ensures that all members of staff have an appropriate understanding of it. Additionally, the governing body has also nominated a representative to monitor this aspect of school life.
- 48 The governing body takes its responsibility for health and safety very seriously. Through its Health and Safety/Buildings and Maintenance committee, and the nominated health and safety co-ordinator, it has introduced a management system that was described as 'excellent' in a recent local education authority audit. Risk assessments are carried out before all visits into the community and it was particularly noticed how well adults supervised pupils as they visited the local church.
- 49 The school promotes and monitors attendance well. The impact of this is that the rates have recently improved. Additionally, the school has introduced a first day contact procedure for any pupil who has not arrived at school. The school promotes and monitors behaviour very well through the very good provision for moral development and the way that it is implemented consistently throughout school. The procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are good and underpinned by the knowledge that staff have of pupils and the high quality of relationships in school.
- 50 The school looks after pupils very well at dinnertime and in the playground. The midday supervisors, proudly wearing their colourful uniforms, are a very effective and important part of the school family.
- 51 The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. In the Foundation Stage, assessment procedures are very good. Very good use is made of the new Foundation Stage profile, and daily ongoing assessment is used well to inform planning. Pupils are assessed four times a year in the core subjects. This is the first year that pupil targets have been set for literacy and numeracy. Effective systems for assessing pupils are in place for most subjects.
- 52 The use of assessment to support planning is good. In the majority of lessons seen, good differentiation is in place and the tasks set match the needs of individuals and groups of pupils.
- 53 Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are satisfactory. Although targets are set in literacy and numeracy, these are not in place for science or ICT. The tracking and monitoring of pupils' progress is not being fully extended to

include pupils and parents as part of this process. Pupils do not know what they have to do to improve their work and this is not discussed in detail with parents.

- 54 The school identifies special educational needs at a very early stage. Teachers ensure an individual education plan is put in place. The procedures for assessing pupils with special educational needs are good. The special educational needs co-ordinator, class teachers and support assistants regularly review the individual education plans to ensure that pupils are making good progress towards their targets. The school has good contacts with outside learning support services and uses their advice effectively to develop pupils' learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 55 The school promotes itself very well to its parents, and those who responded to the questionnaire or who attended the meeting had very positive views about many aspects of school life. It is very clear that parents hold the school in very high esteem. The quality of information provided for parents is good. There has been an improvement in this aspect of school life since the last inspection.
- 56 Parents particularly like;
- that their children like school
 - the good progress that their children make at school
 - the good behaviour of their children in school
 - that teaching is good
 - the high expectations that the school has of their children and
 - that the school is well led and managed
- 57 All these positive views match the team's judgements.
- 58 The contribution of parents to school life is very good. All of them have signed up to the home/school agreement. In the Foundation Stage, relationships with parents are very good. Parents speak very highly of the quality of learning provided for their children and talk happily with teachers and support staff at the start and end of each day. The two reception classes are very busy at the start of the day because keenly interested parents share books with their children and support their early reading skills. Many other parents have been involved in initiatives such as the story sacks and the support for cake sales is very good. Other parents help out in school on a regular basis and many more provide effective support for visits into the community.
- 59 The information provided by the school is good overall. In particular the newsletter is very good. It is full of very useful information about events and activities and it is very attractively designed. The school has also produced its own website which parents are able to access. Information on topics to be studied is posted on the notice board and the school intends to improve this by sending details home to parents. Annual reports on pupils' progress are satisfactory and contain appropriate targets to enable pupils to make further progress.
- 60 Teachers inform parents at an early stage if there are problems with a child's learning. Parents are kept very well informed about their child's progress. Individual education plans include a note on what parents can do to help their child. Parents are involved in reviewing their child's individual education plans.
- 61 The school values all the support given by its parents and it has a good impact on pupils' learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 62 The quality of leadership and management are very good. The headteacher provides very clear educational direction and leads by example. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and the quality of education provided is good. Governors have a very good grasp of their responsibilities and provide very good support for the school. Standards have improved significantly since the last inspection.
- 63 Strengths in this aspect are:
- very good leadership by the headteacher and a shared commitment to improve
 - very good support by some key staff with management responsibilities
 - good support by the governing body
 - good monitoring and evaluation
 - educational priorities are supported well through financial planning
 - the school provides good value for money
- 64 Areas to develop:
- Improving the wording of the school aims to more accurately show the commitment to achieving high standards
 - Reconsidering the delegation of responsibilities to other staff to ease the burden on the headteacher
- 65 The general quality of leadership and management is very good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and a clear sense of direction. She has carried out a useful audit of important features of the school's work, such as the teaching of reading, in order to form a good assessment of what the school is doing well and what needs to be improved. With the support of the deputy headteacher, she has developed a very good team spirit and brought staff together by means of school-wide policies on matters such as target setting and the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. While some work remains to be done in each of these areas, the school has made impressive progress in a relatively short time. The school improvement plan, drawn up in consultation with all members of staff and governors, is a useful working document that sets out appropriate priorities and targets. Links with the school budget, however, could be made more precise.
- 66 The headteacher has helped to enhance the role of subject co-ordinators. She is the English co-ordinator. Along with co-ordinators in mathematics, science and information and communication technology they have had time to update policies. They also have definite plans to develop their subjects and make this clear in their contributions to the school improvement plan.
- 67 This input from coordinators has been crucial in English and Mathematics because the school has only recently introduced the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies. Co-ordinators monitor teachers' planning in their subjects. Some have been able to form an overview of the standards being attained throughout the school by a scrutiny of work and of displays around the school. Not all have carried out a rigorous work scrutiny, however, and co-ordinators have not yet been able to observe teaching and learning in their subjects. While the role of subject co-ordinator is more fully developed than was the case at the time of the last inspection, there remains room for further development.
- 68 The headteacher also acts as special educational needs co-ordinator. She performs the role very effectively, meeting the recommendations of the Code of Practice for

special educational needs. There is a very good system of identification and reviewing need. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection because the much earlier identification and intervention has a positive effect on addressing pupils' learning needs. The Foundation Stage is also very well led and managed by a Foundation Stage co-ordinator. This is a major improvement since the last inspection. The opportunity for teachers to work collaboratively on Kitemark has been significant in improving provision, particularly in achieving a timetabled outdoor play session for all children.

- 69 Whilst delegation is judged as good, the headteacher is overburdened with two major roles as well as the onerous task of the overall school leadership and management. This matter should be reconsidered.
- 70 The governors provide very good support for the school on the basis of very good understanding and knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses. They are active in planning for the strategic development of the school and strongly support the school's aspirations to raise standards of attainment. In this regard, it should be noted that the school's aims, while unexceptional in many ways, do not do justice to the actual work of the school because they do not explicitly state the school's obvious commitment to the raising of standards of attainment.
- 71 Designated governors have initiated procedures for managing the performance of the headteacher and have set appropriate targets. Likewise, the headteacher has re-started the system for the appraisal and management of the performance of each member of staff, and the headteacher and a local adviser have observed each teacher teaching and provided valuable feedback. The deputy headteacher has been given overall responsibility for the professional development of non-teaching staff and has carried out an audit of their needs. Further training and development of teaching and non-teaching staff should help the school to continue along the path of progress and renewal it has embarked on since the arrival of the headteacher.
- 72 Taking into account the effectiveness of the education provided, Seaton Infant School provides good value for money.
- 73 The school uses its specific grants well. For example, the money received from initiatives such as the National Grid for Learning has been spent wisely to improve the ratio of computers to pupils. There are good procedures to match the allocation of funds to planned projects, and the school is well supported, through a service level agreement, to provide the services of a bursar to assist in financial planning and budgetary control. The school made the decision earlier this year to control its own catering and ground maintenance. This is a very good example of the understanding that it has of the principles of best value. Already, by careful planning and financial control, benefits are emerging from these two areas, which will have a positive impact on school finances in the future. The school makes very good use of new technology in the office, which is very well organised. The school secretary makes a valuable contribution to the day-to-day running of the school.
- 74 There is a sufficient match of qualified teaching and support staff overall to meet the demands of the curriculum. The provision and match of staff are good for the teaching of mathematics and in the Foundation Stage.
- 75 The adequacy of accommodation is currently satisfactory. It will shortly be enhanced by the completion of the new library, which will be in use at the start on the new school year in September. In particular, the quality of the outside play area has been

considerably improved with the addition of the adventure trail, willow sculptures and a raised garden. The outdoor facilities now provide a stimulating and fun area for pupils to play. The site superintendent and his staff are very effective members of the school family and they ensure that the school is very well maintained. The adequacy of resources is good overall, and very good for the Foundation Stage.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 76 In order to raise standards and improve the quality of education, the headteacher, staff and governors should improve reading standards by:
- 1) Making better use of the guided reading session to improve pupils' skills in 'reading for understanding' and 'deducting from text'
 - 2) Having made good developments in monitoring outcomes of national tests, the school now needs to take development further by setting individual targets for reading with pupils and sharing these with pupils and parents
 - 3) Providing a wider range of books and more opportunities for pupils to read independently
- (paragraphs: 7, 23, 32, 53, 106, 107, 109)
- 77 The school should also consider the following minor points:
- reconsider the school's aims so that they reflect more explicitly the school's commitment to the raising of standards of attainment (paragraph 70)
 - reconsider the delegation of responsibilities to lighten the load of the headteacher (paragraph 69)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	34
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	27

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	5	15	8	6	0	0	0
Percentage	15	44	23	18	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	158
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	No meals	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	7	13
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	1

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	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	5.7
National comparative data	5.4

School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	26	30	56

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	24	26
	Girls	29	29	30
	Total	52	53	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (90)	95 (90)	100 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	26	26
	Girls	29	30	30
	Total	53	56	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (88)	100 (100)	100 (90)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	137	-	-
White – Irish	-	-	-
White – any other White background	-	-	-
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	-	-	-
Mixed – White and Black African	-	-	-
Mixed – White and Asian	1	-	-
Mixed – any other mixed background	-	-	-
Asian or Asian British - Indian	-	-	-
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	-	-	-
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	-	-	-
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	-	-
Black or Black British – Caribbean	-	-	-
Black or Black British – African	-	-	-
Black or Black British – any other Black background	-	-	-
Chinese	-	-	-
Any other ethnic group	-	-	-
No ethnic group recorded	-	-	-

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	80.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002-03
	£
Total income	420,464
Total expenditure	450,860
Expenditure per pupil	2,147
Balance brought forward from previous year	46,814
Balance carried forward to next year	16,418

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	209
Number of questionnaires returned	66

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	33	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	67	30	0	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	41	2	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	38	9	2	9
The teaching is good.	76	21	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	38	17	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	27	2	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	36	2	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	41	52	5	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	56	41	2	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	32	0	0	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	44	26	9	2	19

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

- 78 The school has improved the standards described in the last inspection. Teaching is very good and the staff provide a very rich, exciting curriculum that is firmly based on all the areas of learning and religious education.
- 79 Strengths in the Foundation Stage are:
- Outstanding practice in the nursery, which enables all children to make very good progress
 - Very good planning and assessment, which ensures that all activities are matched closely to the needs of each child, provision of a very wide range of learning opportunities and high quality resources
 - Very good leadership and very good relationships between adults and children, and between children themselves
 - Excellent teamwork throughout the three classes
- 80 Areas for development in the Foundation Stage are:
- The lack of children's understanding of the difference between letter names and letter sounds
 - The development of early reading skills
 - Lack of opportunities to develop children's independence when dressing and undressing, particularly in the nursery
- 81 The quality of teaching is very good overall and some excellent teaching was seen in nursery. This is an improvement since the last inspection. A very positive attitude to learning has been established where learning is fun and enthusiasm is infectious.
- 82 All of the teachers and the support staff have a very good understanding of how young children learn and this is reflected in all the work they do. No opportunities for learning are missed, particularly in the nursery. The team work very well together, considering that this is their first year together, and their relationships with the children are very good. Very comprehensive assessment records are in place and ongoing assessment is used very effectively to guide future learning. Assessment results are analysed carefully to identify any areas of weakness.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 83 The quality of teaching, learning and progress made by the children is good. By the end of Reception, children's attainment is well above that expected for children of this age.
- 84 Children cannot wait to come to school, They are confident, independent, happy and secure in all three classes. They know the routines very well, particularly in the nursery, and confidently select tasks themselves, staying on task for an extended period of time. They show a keen interest in all activities and are very confident to talk to adults and visitors. Children demonstrate very good social skills when working independently in small groups. For example, three reception children make music together when they both sing and play, taking turns to sing on their own while the other two dance and play their instruments. They organise their own activity, value each other's contributions and work in harmony.

- 85 The children's behaviour is excellent in the nursery and very good in the reception classes, and they have very good attitudes to learning. They all feel valued and are confident to try new activities, initiate ideas and speak and sing in front of the group. This is due to the very good relationships they establish with their teachers and the support staff. They confidently approach visitors and are happy to share their books. Children respond quickly when they hear music being played. They know that this is the sign for clearing away and do this very well without being reminded by the teacher. They know where to find materials and show good independent skills. During snack time, children are polite, say 'thank you', take turns, share well and listen carefully to others. They are sensitive to the needs of others. For example, when a child gets wet watering plants, another child helps to brush the water off. Very good opportunities are created for older children to share their feelings of being lost and feeling frightened as they learn about the parable of the sheep that was lost. They sit very quietly and have time to reflect as they listen to classical music. There is a strong emphasis on the importance of being friends and this sets the tone for all the work undertaken in the Foundation Stage.

Communication, language and literacy

- 86 The quality of teaching in this area is very good and children make good progress. Most children achieve above the level expected when they enter Year 1.
- 87 Many opportunities are planned to extend speaking and listening skills. Teachers speak very clearly when teaching initial letter sounds and make sure that children listen carefully to recognise and speak the sound accurately. The nursery teacher reinforces children's understanding of letter sounds very well as she describes the activities for the day and asks children to identify the first sound of words such as glass, plastic, brilliant and friends. In Reception, they consolidate their understanding of letter sounds well when children all have letter cards and have to move round the room, saying the sound of their letter and listening carefully to others in order to identify the same sound and group together. Their knowledge of letter names is not as good.
- 88 Many of the children in the nursery class write their own first name with a good degree of accuracy. The higher attaining children write their name to show that they have completed an activity while the average attainers use magnetic letters to form their names, using a name card to support. The excellent skills of the nursery staff quickly identify when this is achieved. This achievement is further challenged as the children identify the letters in their names, using the computer well to match the letters. Children know that writing is used as a means of recording when they 'write' a list at the writing table. In their handwriting, children develop sound pencil control. Their work shows good progress, developing through simple mark making to write their own names and simple sentences by the time they leave the reception classes.
- 89 Children in both the nursery and reception classes enjoy looking at books. They listen well, offer their own ideas and identify the characters and events correctly in the story 'The Bear Hunt.' They happily share books with visitors, describing events in the book using picture clues well. Children in Reception begin to read individually with increasing confidence. They use their knowledge of letter sounds well to build three-letter words correctly. However, many children could be challenged further to extend their reading skills. They know that their reading is more exciting when they use a different voice for speech and when asking a question. Parents of children in the

Foundation Stage appreciate the opportunity for children to take their reading books home on a daily basis and support this work well.

Mathematical development

- 90 The quality of teaching is very good and children make good progress in this area of their learning. The majority are in line to exceed the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.
- 91 The majority of children in the nursery successfully count from one to ten and many count beyond this. For example, they are changed to mice by 'magic powers' and count the number of children present in the class, always remembering to add themselves if they count individually. They count on from a given number to ten and order numbers from 1 – 20 with confidence, in pairs. The hesitant children know that they have the book 'How Many' to help them if they forget the next number. They even manage to repeat the colour pattern of the pegs they use to hold the number cards on the line. Number songs, with actions, are used well to reinforce children's understanding of taking away in ones and twos. They understand 'biggest' and 'smallest' when comparing bottles. They talk about, recognise and create patterns with confidence.
- 92 In the reception classes, children count correctly from 10 to 100 in tens, show a good understanding of counting in 2s and understand how a tally chart is used to record numbers. For example, they carried out a traffic survey and recorded the different colours of the cars passing school. They record their findings on a class graph and also create a graph, in their groups, on a computer to show the most popular car colour. They understand 'smaller than' and 'larger than' when counting on or back. They begin to use everyday words to describe position, direction and movement of objects. Children demonstrate their understanding clearly as they move in front of, behind, at the side of and under an object. They sort and match objects, shapes and pictures and justify why they have sorted them in a particular way. They use ICT well in their numeracy work to complete number and picture squares after a demonstration by the teacher using the interactive white board. Outdoor play is linked well to children's number work when they count out the number of plastic blocks to match the numbers up to 20 on the body of the painted snake. Every opportunity is taken by teachers to link children's learning to first-hand experiences, building on prior knowledge, and this enables children to make good progress.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 93 The quality of teaching, learning and progress is good. The highest calibre provision offers children an exciting range of experiences to develop their understanding of the world and their immediate environment. They have very good opportunities to 'play' at gardening, filling pots with soil and using small hand tools. Children have a good understanding of how plants grow and sequence pictures to demonstrate this successfully. They use their literacy skills well to label the different parts of a flower. Their work shows very good opportunities to develop an understanding of early scientific skills when they test cars down different ramps and know that a pram is pushed and that a horse on wheels is pulled. Teachers plan very good opportunities for children to work together. This enables them to develop both their speaking and listening skills as well as encouraging them to think carefully as they design and make wheeled vehicles, using a range of construction materials. They test their vehicles on a small world mat to make sure that they are strong and that the wheels work well.

They learn about Road Safety Week and the many different road signs. They understand that red signs mean danger and that they must obey these. These rules are put into practice well when they work outside with road signs and zebra crossings. In role-play, they 'make a new roundabout for the supermarket' using imaginary drills and shovels. They think carefully about safety and 'work inside a wooden fence in case a car comes.'

- 94 All children have good opportunities to work on the classroom computers and show good skills when using the mouse. They are familiar with the keyboard and create their names and simple words, using drawing programs, simple graphs and number and letter games.

Physical development

- 95 Children make good progress in this area and are well above the expected standards by the time they reach Year 1.
- 96 Nursery children have their own secure play area with an additional grass area and garden. Both nursery and the reception classes also use the large playing area after the older pupils have had their playtime. The outdoor play areas provide children with an excellent range of opportunities to develop their physical skills. A wide range of small and large play apparatus is available and children use this very confidently. They use space safely when riding wheeled vehicles, keeping to the painted agreed route and all go in the same direction. They develop good eye-hand co-ordination playing with bats and balls and when throwing beanbags into hoops. Teachers' very good interactions enable all children to extend their physical skills.
- 97 Reception children move confidently in their own space when using the hall. They are aware of the changes that occur in their bodies as a result of exercise. Children follow instructions very quickly, listen carefully and know the routines when they work with apparatus. They use the large climbing frame imaginatively, the majority working with a good degree of independence. They show good understanding of position when commenting that 'I'm under the ladder.' Children demonstrate good balancing skills and vary the ways in which they move as they balance. They support each other willingly by holding hands if a child is less confident when travelling across the bar. Children demonstrate good dribbling skills when moving balls round cones and practise 'being Tim Henman' when working with bats and balls. The other reception class go on a bear hunt, well linked to their literacy work. They express their feelings well through movement when they 'push through the long grass' and 'plough through deep water.' They link a small sequence of movements together very well to demonstrate their understanding of the story. Music is used very well at the end of the lesson to calm pupils and to encourage them to listen while they get dressed. Many children still struggle with socks and buttons and need more opportunities to gain confidence and speed when changing.
- 98 Children's fine motor skills are developing very well through a range of activities. They manipulate beads well when threading, show good brush control when painting and the majority of children hold their pencils correctly. Staff provide excellent opportunities to develop these skills through the use of different fixing methods when using a range of construction materials, and through model making.

Creative development

- 99 The quality of teaching and learning is very good in this area of learning. By the end of Reception the attainment of most children is above the level expected when children enter Year 1.
- 100 Very good provision is made for children to use crayons, pencils, glue and paint on a regular basis. The very good learning environment and the very good teaching stimulate them to want to express their own ideas in their creative work. Children have free choice where to work in these areas and use these opportunities well. The younger children have excellent opportunities to use magnifying lenses to observe shells closely. In Reception, children's work is carefully planned to link their learning to their literacy work. They use paint and sponges very well to print trees and tall grass pictures for their Bear Hunt display. They create winter trees using screwed tissue and glue and make good pencil drawings of the bear. Paint is available each day and children create their own pictures, sometimes linked to work in the classroom but sometimes just for the pleasure of using colours and finding new colours. Children always have a quiet area outside where they can write, draw and look at books. They use 'magic paint' [water] to practise letter formation on the school wall and on the paving stones. Chalks are a favourite material to create rainbow patterns on the blackboard.
- 101 Music is an integral part of learning in the Foundation Stage. All the children have excellent opportunities to develop their appreciation of music through singing, playing instruments, listening to music and clapping rhythms. They sing a range of songs well, linked to their language, number and topic work. The younger children have the confidence to sing on their own, adding lovely actions to their songs. Their enthusiasm is infectious and the wonderful teaching in music is a joy to observe. They enter the nursery each day to music and sit so quietly on the carpet, listening carefully and moving gently as they become dancing flowers. They have great fun when the teacher cannot make a sound on the keyboard and they think of all the things that she needs to do in order to achieve this. When she is successful, they are spellbound! Older children experience listening to the 'Moonlight Sonata' in a very spiritual atmosphere. They think carefully about the picture being painted by the composer through his music. Children use musical instruments very well to accompany class singing and when working in small groups. They confidently organise their activity and hold the instruments well when playing. However, when one child was asked what instrument they had, the response was 'I'm playing a tangerine!'

ENGLISH

- 102 Pupils enter Year 1 with above average standards in literacy, having made good progress throughout the Foundation Stage. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading are average but standards in speaking and listening and writing are well above average. Overall, pupils continue to make good progress in speaking and listening and writing, and satisfactory progress in reading. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Their success is largely related to targeted, well-matched work set by the teachers and the positive impact on their group work from the good support staff. Overall, there has been good improvement since the last inspection.

- 103 Strengths in the subject are:
- The overall good quality of teaching
 - The high quality of writing
 - The use of 'talk' partners across the curriculum, which promotes good quality speaking and listening
 - Good links established with other subjects of the curriculum
- 104 Areas for development are:
- To provide more opportunities for pupils to read independently and to read a wider range of material
 - To improve the guided reading session of the literacy hour to improve pupils' understanding
 - The effectiveness of target setting to inform pupils (and their parents) how they may improve their work
 - To improve the quality of presentation of pupils' writing by joining letters
- 105 Inspection evidence shows that, at the end of Year 2, standards in speaking and listening are well above average. The pupils listen very carefully to their teachers and to each other. As a result, pupils know and understand what they are to do and can hold conversations with each other. 'Talk' partners provide very effective opportunities for speaking and listening and, as a result, pupils gain in confidence, share their ideas and contribute to each lesson. Teachers encourage pupils to talk by introducing puppets, for example Thaddeus the shark in Year 1! By Year 2, pupils can talk about their favourite subjects with a well-developed range of vocabulary.
- 106 The National Literacy Strategy has been in place for less than a year. Teachers are relatively new to the principles of guided reading. Although training has taken place, some teachers still struggle with this approach, whilst others are outstanding. The school has recognised that reading is a weaker aspect of English and this is a priority for improvement in the school development plan.
- 107 Standards in reading are average at the end of Year 2. The pupils enjoy books and handle them with care and respect. The school has recently increased its stock of interesting books for pupils so that, in Year 1 and Year 2, pupils become increasingly familiar with a range of books. They read simple stories and plays in shared reading time with their teachers and begin to understand the main features of a play. Year 1 pupils recognise the characters, setting and the dialogue of *Olly the Octopus*. The pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. Groups of pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 are taught to sound out their words and learn to read more successfully as a result. All pupils now have a guided reading time with their teacher, with the result that pupils learn about authors and different types of literature. Pupils practise reading and re-reading texts and develop their word recognition. This needs to be extended to allow individual pupils to choose their own reading material on a more regular basis in order to promote independent reading at home and at school. Pupils need more opportunities to read a range of books of increasing difficulty so that they become more fluent readers. This is especially the case for higher attaining pupils, whose interest and enthusiasm is not channelled into reading independently at school. Parents are involved in their children's reading from an early age but their value in helping pupils to improve their skills has not been fully realised. For example, the school does not provide a two-way 'reading diary' to form a vital communication link between home and school. Teachers do not yet share with parents clear targets for improvement in reading so that they know what is expected and how they can assist their children to improve.

- 108 In writing, standards are well above average by Year 2. Pupils enter Year 1, with an enthusiasm for writing. This is the result of the rich and varied opportunities for free choice in writing in the Foundation stage. This is developed in Year 1, where links with other subjects are strong and a range of writing opportunities is available to pupils. As a result, pupils fluently write and record songs, make lists, write instructions and begin to write character profiles. Teachers ensure there is a purpose to writing and writing is often linked to familiar stories in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 1 write sentences to describe characters in the story of *Joseph and his Multi-Coloured Coat*. By Year 2, pupils write accurate phrases and many use capital letters, full stops, speech marks and bullet points. Lower attainers work hard to remember finger spaces. The teacher collects from the pupils a list of vocabulary; as a result, the pupils use these words in their phrases and sentences. Lower attaining pupils and pupils identified as having special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants. Consequently, these pupils make good progress. Higher attaining pupils make good progress because they are given enough opportunity to extend their writing in subjects such as science and religious education. However, no pupils are joining their letters at present and this target has not been set by the school. Higher attainers in particular should have the opportunity to join their writing by now in order to write more efficiently and productively.
- 109 The quality of teaching is good overall, with strong features in a number of classes and areas to develop in others. This promotes positive attitudes to learning and good levels of interest in literacy throughout the school. As a result, pupils work hard and concentrate for sustained periods. The teaching of basic skills is good. The National Literacy Strategy supports teachers' planning but the organisation of some parts needs a little attention. Teachers use a good range of teaching methods to ensure speaking and listening are practised in most lessons. Good questioning ensures pupils are actively involved and a brisk pace is maintained. Teachers set good examples for writing to ensure pupils own writing is well structured. However, marking is inconsistent and does not always give information about how pupils can improve their work. On other occasions, one teacher asks pupils to do a picture when they have finished. This should be avoided. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and manage pupils' behaviour very well. They use praise and encouragement to motivate pupils. Teachers' use of assessment to inform planning is good in writing but, in reading, it is satisfactory and needs to focus more on National Curriculum levels so that higher attaining pupils make faster progress.
- 110 The very good leadership and management of English have led to significant improvements in a short time. There is rigorous and systematic monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning and effective action to remedy weaknesses identified. A long-term vision for the future is in place with the commitment from key staff to improve standards. The introduction of the literacy strategy, guided reading and target setting are good examples of the action the school is taking.

MATHEMATICS

- 111 Standards in mathematics are well above average by the end of Year 2. This is borne out both by the most recent national tests and inspection evidence. This shows good progress since the previous inspection when standards were above average. Pupils make good progress throughout the school and achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs make progress in line with their classmates because work is set at the correct level and, when necessary, mathematical targets are included on the individual education plans. There is no significant difference between the attainment and achievement of boys or girls.

- 112 Areas of strength
- The well above average standards and good achievement in mathematics
 - The basic skills of number and problem solving are very good
 - The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and is very good or excellent at times
 - Pupils show very good attitudes to the subject
 - The quality of the leadership and management of the subject
- 113 Area for development
- Raise the satisfactory quality of teaching to match the good and very good teaching found in most classes
- 114 By the end of Year 2, pupils at all attainment levels work very confidently with two- and three-figure numbers. The majority of pupils count to 1000 and beyond and record these numbers in mental mathematics sessions. They apply the four rules of number very well when answering problems, for example 'If 35 children were split into 5 groups, how many would be in each group?' They use the correct symbols for multiplication and division. Most of the pupils work with fractions including $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{3}{4}$ and one-third. Pupils have a sound knowledge of negative numbers when working with thermometers. They have a good understanding of time and measure accurately both using rulers and containers. Higher attaining pupils estimate and measure capacity to 1000mls while lower attaining pupils work on problems to 500mls. In work on shape and space, pupils recognise and name a wide range of two- and three-dimensional shapes. Pupils collect and record data in a variety of ways, including pie charts and block graphs, using both pencil and paper and computer generated graphs. They use the information to answer questions, for example on favourite foods and television programmes.
- 115 The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It is never less than satisfactory and at times it is very good and excellent. All teachers show a very good understanding of the teaching of the basic skills of number. The school has very successfully introduced the three-part lesson recommended in the National Numeracy Strategy. In most lessons the introductory mental and oral starter is used very effectively. For example, pupils in a Year 2 lesson were required to count to and from 1000 and then record numbers on individual white boards. This was carried out at a very brisk pace and kept pupils interested and on their toes. A small number of introductory sessions lack vigour and pace is variable. As a result, time is lost and pupils become a little restless. Ineffective use of the white board in some introductory sessions limits opportunities to assess pupils' understanding fully. Group sessions are used very effectively in all classes. Activities are both interesting and challenging. In Year 2, pupils had to answer a series of challenging questions based on their visit to Mirehouse the previous day. These questions covered all the four rules of number and became more difficult as they went on.
- 116 In group sessions, teachers set work at different levels to meet the needs of all pupils. Work set at the correct level and mathematical targets set on individual education plans ensure that pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Relationships with pupils are very good and behaviour management is very good in almost all classes. Teachers ensure that all pupils are included in lessons by questioning and setting appropriate work. There are isolated instances of behaviour management being inconsistent, for example by not ensuring that all pupils are paying attention very quickly and, as a result time, is lost. Pupils know what they are going to learn because teachers explain lesson objectives. At the end of the lessons,

teachers revisit the objectives to see if they have been met. Homework is used very effectively in all classes to develop learning. Teachers make very good use of information and communication technology in mathematics. Pupils worked on relevant programs in all classes. Pupils' literacy skills are developed effectively when they have to read and understand the mathematical word problems they are given.

- 117 Pupils respond very well to the good quality teaching. In almost every class, pupils listen very well in the introductory sessions, when they are eager to answer questions. There are a very small number of occasions when pupils need reminding about their behaviour or they do not react quickly enough to teachers' requests. This is linked to the lack of vigour and pace seen occasionally in introductory sessions.
- 118 Mathematics is developed very effectively across the curriculum. There are very strong links with information and communication technology. In other subjects, such as design and technology, pupils measure and weigh. In physical education, pupils develop their counting skills when checking how many rounders have been scored. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effectively enhanced in mathematics because pupils are valued by adults, they learn the rules of number and are given many opportunities to work together with other pupils.
- 119 There is very good management of the subject. The co-ordinator is determined to raise the standards even further by providing more challenging work. Assessment systems are very good and are used very effectively to identify areas of strength and for development. The good resources are used very effectively to develop learning.

SCIENCE

- 120 Standards in science by the time the pupils leave the infants are well above those expected nationally. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. No significant difference was seen in the performance of boys and girls. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection, particularly in planning and the quality of teaching and learning.
- 121 Strengths in the subject are:
- The high level of focus on first hand experiences
 - The high standards achieved through very good teaching and teachers' subject knowledge
 - The keen interest in the subject shown by pupils
 - Very good leadership
- 122 Areas for development are:
- To strengthen the links between knowledge and understanding of the world in the Foundation Stage and the work in Year 1 and Year 2 to ensure progression and continuity
- 123 By the time pupils are seven they show a very good understanding of the different parts of the human body. They use their senses well to find information and sort materials by smelling. They use their literacy skills well when they label the different parts of a plant and observe plant growth carefully, recording well what they discover.
- 124 In Year 1, pupils compare different light sources and remember this work well when they look at materials that are transparent, translucent or opaque. The majority have a very good understanding of the properties of materials. A task set by the teacher was to identify the most appropriate materials for Goldilocks to use to repair a broken

window, but she had to be able to see if the bears were coming. Pupils predict very well which materials they think will be best. They sort a range of materials by fair testing and show a good understanding of the importance of choosing the right material for a specific purpose. Pupils record well their findings as a group. They decide that cling film and clear plastic are the most appropriate materials for Goldilocks to use. In practical work, pupils work very well together and are very enthusiastic. The work of older pupils shows a very good understanding of life processes and of solids, liquids and gases. They have a very clear understanding of how to predict the ball they think will be best for bouncing and the best surface to bounce it on. They know the varying needs of animals in terms of food, oxygen and water to enable them to be healthy and grow. Pupils' writing shows a sound understanding of different rocks and they know that 'lava is liquid rock inside volcanoes.'

- 125 Overall, teaching is very good and teachers ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs are fully involved. Where excellent teaching is seen, pupils listen very carefully, show a very keen interest and respond very well. Pupils demonstrate good observational skills. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and how it can be taught effectively. They develop the lessons well and, through effective questioning, lead the pupils to consider how fair their tests were. As a result of these activities, pupils are developing a good understanding of scientific enquiry. In one lesson where teaching was satisfactory, a lack of management and control of the class affected learning. These pupils do not work well when working independently, and this affects the progress they make. Overall, pupils of all capabilities achieve well because teachers recognise their particular learning needs and plan interesting activities to motivate and involve them. Teachers' expectations are generally high and are based on very good knowledge of how pupils learn. Where suitable, teachers use ICT to expand on pupils' experiences.
- 126 The subject is very well led and managed. The subject leader has very good subject knowledge. She monitors planning and work samples regularly. The opportunity to observe others teach is planned for the autumn term. Assessment is in place, linked well to the nationally agreed scheme for science and folders of assessed work are kept. Resources are good and include a selection of big books with a science focus and appropriate computer software. Since the last inspection, more opportunities have been planned for investigative work, standards have improved considerably and the adoption of the nationally agreed scheme has given more structure to planning.

ART AND DESIGN

- 127 Standards in art and design are above expectations by the end of Year 2. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection
- 128 Strengths in the subject include:
- Opportunities to work with a wide range of materials
 - Close links with other curriculum subjects
 - The high quality of teachers' subject knowledge in the lessons seen
- 129 Areas for improvement are:
- Greater focus on the development of skills through the use of assessment
 - Develop the role of the subject co-ordinator

- 130 Pupils in Year 1 have good opportunities to develop their observational skills when they look at flowers in the school grounds. Their own paintings show good attention to detail and good colour mixing. These observations were extended very well in a class collage showing two-dimensional flowers as a large flower picture. Their art work is linked closely to other aspects of their work. For example, when creating musical instruments, they painted pictures to illustrate different sounds, such as a 'clip, clop horse.' Pupils have good opportunities, during independent activities, to express their feelings through their work when they paint pictures of their favourite places and write simple explanations below the picture. For example, one pupil wrote, "I like my garden because it is quiet." Pupils had recently visited church and looked at the many different trees nearby. The teacher used this experience very well to encourage pupils to compare evergreen and deciduous trees. Pupils know that 'they keep their leaves in winter, that's why they are called evergreens.' Good opportunities were created for pupils to compare how two very different artists had painted trees and how they had used different techniques and colours. An excellent demonstration by the teacher, showing how to achieve different tones by printing blue and yellow paint in dabs to represent the leaves, held the pupils' complete attention. They listened and watched very carefully and this was clearly evident when they created their own pictures. They confidently achieved very good paintings, using black and brown together to paint the trunk, roots and branches and using lines of paint rather than dabs. While they painted, they listened to the 'Eternal Forest' music and considered how the composer created the feeling of a forest through his music. The work they achieved was of a very high standard due to the very good subject knowledge of the teacher and very thorough planning of the lesson.
- 131 Pupils in Year 2 paint pictures of different animals and use sticky papers to create colourful collages of monsters. They create their own stained glass windows after visiting nearby churches. They work with a range of media, including wax crayons and clay, and demonstrate good cutting skills when they create a reflected pattern in black and white. Pupils enjoy decorating stones, linked to their work in science. In the lesson seen, there was a very good climate for learning, pupils were challenged, others very well supported and all were included in the lesson. Pupils began to compare the work of Gainsborough and Hockney when looking at portraits. Pupils have good opportunities to explore their ideas. They use their observations well to create their own portrait and demonstrate good skills when discussing in the plenary sessions the work of other pupils. Homework is closely linked when the teacher asks them to sketch a portrait of one of their family. The teacher's good subject knowledge and her high expectations enable pupils to make good progress and to achieve a high standard of work.
- 132 In the two lessons seen, the quality of teaching was very good. Pupils have good opportunities to work with visiting artists and have created wall hangings depicting the seasons of the year using different techniques, including silk painting. All pupils have contributed to an impressive tile plaque to commemorate the golden jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen. Good links are made with other curriculum areas and pupils develop their speaking and listening skills well in discussions, both as a class and in smaller groups. Pupils enjoy their lessons, work hard, show a high level of concentration and achieve well.
- 133 The leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator monitors planning and looks at pupils' work but there are no opportunities to observe others teach. This is planned to take place next term. No assessment of art is in place and teachers find it difficult to judge skills in this subject. The co-ordinator would like to expand opportunities for pupils to work with artists in school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 134 Standards in design and technology are above national expectations by the end of Year 2. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Standards and progress have improved since the last inspection.
- 135 Strengths in the subject are:
- Opportunities to use a wide range of materials
 - The quality of work produced, particularly in Year 1
 - Practical work is raising the self esteem of lower attaining pupils well
- 136 Areas for improvement are:
- More planned opportunities for pupils to understand simple mechanisms
 - More opportunities for older pupils to develop their own ideas
 - Further develop the role of the co-ordinator
- 137 Younger pupils have very good opportunities to observe instruments from Peru, Kenya and Zimbabwe and understand that scraping, tapping, beating, shaking, strumming and plucking creates different sounds. They select appropriate materials to make their own instruments and successfully achieve these different sounds using simple materials. They are very excited to find that they can change a flat piece of card into the shape of an animal's head, adding noses, ears and whiskers. They understand that by adding particular glue to their animal head, it will dry, leaving a shiny surface. They have good opportunities to investigate materials and find that a flat fish shape, made by using willow, looks much more real when they wrap wool around it. They use their weaving skills well when they create the bodies of different animals to add to their painted outlines.
- 138 Older pupils design and make a waterproof hat for teddy. They identify, on their planning sheets, the materials and equipment they are going to use. Pupils also show a picture of the finished product, giving sound ideas to improve it and identify clearly in writing the skills they have used. One pupil commented, "I thought it was brilliant because they are my favret coulors," [favourite colours]. Pupils have good opportunities to make a range of models using a good selection of construction materials. They work with balsa wood, making a selection of items, including flowers, boats and windmills. This work is over directed and pupils are not able to develop their own ideas. They design and make their own bees but are not able to add their own electric circuits, even though they have done this work in science. They extend their skills appropriately by learning simple sewing stitches.
- 139 In the one lesson seen, teaching was very good. Pupils are keen learners, apply themselves well to their work and concentrate for an extended period. Scrutiny of work shows that pupils have no opportunities to use simple mechanisms such as slides, pivots and levers to create movement. The school is aware of this. There is some confusion in the school between art and design and design and technology, and this needs to be carefully considered.
- 140 The subject is soundly led and managed. Some aspects of a nationally agreed scheme are used alongside projects decided by the school. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and a sound overview of work through the school. Resources are good but there is a need to extend these to develop the work using simple mechanisms.

GEOGRAPHY

- 141 Standards in geography are similar to those found in most schools. Pupils make satisfactory progress. The quality of teaching and learning and the standards attained have been maintained since the previous inspection.
- 142 Strengths in the subject are:
- A well balanced curriculum that is relevant to the needs of all pupils
 - Good use of the community, educational visits and a good school environment that provide pupils with first-hand experiences
- 143 Areas to develop include:
- More challenge for higher attainers
 - More opportunities for the subject coordinator to see what is working well and which areas can be further improved
- 144 Pupils' knowledge and understanding of geography is average. In Year 1, they learn about the local environment and produce simple maps such as the route they follow from the school to the library. They use educational visits like the one to Whinlatter as a catalyst for discussion, so that pupils can compare the forest environment to the more urban environment of Seaton. Pupils say what they like and dislike about the places. In Year 2, pupils extend their knowledge of maps by using more detail. They discuss the parts they like and dislike. For example, one child explained that he likes the park because there are swings and balancing beams, whilst another explained, "My street is noisy and it gives me a headache". Higher attainers are becoming more aware that people can effect environments and they explain that litter can cause problems for animals and make the countryside look messy. They discuss with interest and enthusiasm their visit to Mirehouse and remember the physical features such as the distant Scottish hills, the fells and Bassenthwaite Lake. They learn about the weather and how certain animals live in deserts and others in cold lands. Most of this work is suitably planned at the levels expected of seven year olds, but higher attainers could do more, especially in comparing different environments and giving more consideration to the effects of man on the landscape. For example, they could think more about the type of work in different places and learn more about farming and industry affecting the different jobs in these places.
- 145 The quality of teaching in the lessons and from evidence of pupils' work in books suggests that teaching is satisfactory overall. In lessons, there was a good focus on using the correct geographical vocabulary, and good resources were used that captured the pupils' interest and motivated them to learn. The teacher used questions well to develop all pupils' knowledge and understanding, and to ensure that all pupils participated well in the lesson. They had made good use of the local environment and educational visits to gather information for this lesson. The teacher had used a digital camera effectively to record areas that the pupils like and dislike in their local environment. Pupils make sound progress in developing their writing skills, but the range of writing is somewhat limited and sometimes guided too much by worksheets on which pupils record their work. The simple reports that the Year 1 pupils write should grow more in length and complexity in Year 2. The mathematical topics of scale and coordinates are not taught in such a way as to enable pupils to apply them in geography work. The use of information and communication technology is satisfactory, with occasional word processing, digital photography, drawing of maps and research by using programs and the Internet.

146 The role of the co-ordinator has been enhanced recently. The co-ordinator has undertaken a valuable review of geography and produced an action plan for the subject. There has not been time to monitor teaching and the scrutiny of work has been a little informal and should be done with more rigour. There is a simple but effective system of assessing pupils' attainment. This will establish what standards need to be in each year, to ensure that pupils move from satisfactory to good progress.

HISTORY

147 By the end of Year 2, pupils have attained standards in history that exceed national expectations. All pupils achieve well and make good progress. Additional support from teachers or other adults ensures pupils with special educational needs make progress in line with the rest of the class. There has been good progress since the previous inspection because standards have risen, a new policy and scheme of work have been introduced, and there is more use of information and communication technology.

148 Areas of strength

- The higher than expected standards of attainment and good achievement
- The good and at times very good quality of teaching
- Pupils' good attitudes to the subject
- The use of visits out from school and visitors to the school.

149 Area for development

- To give pupils more opportunities to find out why people acted as they did

150 By the end of Year 2, pupils show a good understanding of the difference between past and present. They sequence events such as the development from a baby to a child. They compare items from the past and the present, for example mangles, washing machines and driers. Pupils explain how holidays and shopping have changed over time. They explain how children were treated in the past, for example working up chimneys and in coalmines. Pupils express views about what it would have been like to be a child in the past. When talking about famous people from the past, they show particularly good knowledge of Guy Fawkes and Florence Nightingale. Whilst they know what they did, they are not as clear on why they acted as they did. Higher attaining pupils recall the story of Mary Seacole.

151 The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers make history lessons interesting for the pupils by bringing people in to talk, for example about holidays in the past. They use pictorial evidence and artefacts to help bring the subject alive for the pupils. Visits out to the nearby Mirehall and Haig Mining Museum are used very effectively to develop historical understanding. Teachers start from what the pupils know. In a very good Year 1 lesson, the teacher talked about modern day shopping before moving on to talk about specialist shops from the past. Pupils are effectively managed in lessons and this allows the teachers to impart knowledge rather than spend time on behavioural matters. Teachers develop literacy skills effectively in history when they ask pupils to read and write about their topics. Information and communication technology are developed effectively when information is sought off the computers.

152 Pupils enjoy history. Year 2 pupils talk with enthusiasm about the visits from school and the topics they have studied in the past. They show good attitudes to the subject, and this has a positive impact on learning.

- 153 There is satisfactory management of the subject. The co-ordinator is monitoring planning and pupils' work, but has not yet had time to monitor teaching and learning in the classrooms to identify areas of good practice and areas for development. She has recognised this and it is included in her action plan. Assessment is satisfactory but it is not yet used fully to ensure step-by-step development as pupils move through the school. Curriculum provision is good and is enhanced well by the visits out and visitors to school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 154 Standards by the end of Year 2 are above those expected nationally. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Improvement since the last inspection is very good.
- 155 Strengths in the subject are:
- Clear evidence of progression from the Foundation Stage to Year 2
 - Teachers' knowledge and confidence has improved
 - ICT is seen as an integral part of teaching now and is used across the curriculum
 - Standards have improved significantly since the last inspection
 - Improved resources enables pupils to have more 'hands on' experience
- 156 The younger pupils demonstrate very good keyboard skills when they enter text to plan a story. They know that the shift and caps lock key will change letters from lower case to capitals, and use arrow keys very well to add missing letters and words. They delete mistakes with confidence. Pupils increase the size and fonts used in their writing and change the colour of their letters. They are familiar with the correct terminology and understand what is meant by drag, click and highlighting. They create graphs showing their favourite fruits and achieve good symmetrical patterns using a range of lines and colours. They also reverse pictures and shape patterns, linking their work well to that covered in their numeracy lessons. The teacher uses the interactive whiteboard very well to demonstrate and teach ICT skills for pupils to use in the classroom. Year 2 pupils extend their skills well by creating graphs showing their favourite television programmes, colours and food. They create both pie and block graphs. ICT is used well in their literacy work to extend their story writing. They use capital letters and full stops confidently and know how to start a new line in their writing. They successfully give instructions to a floor robot to enable it to turn in different directions and travel specific distances. Pupils create attractive pictures using simple art programmes. They show a good understanding of the use of a range of tools. These include the ability to select a range of colours, and pupils use the flood tool well to fill areas of their picture with colour. They demonstrate sound skills when searching a CD to look for information.
- 157 Although only one lesson was seen, evidence from work scrutiny and through discussions show that teaching is good. Teachers' knowledge of how to use ICT to enhance teaching and learning is good and good use is made of computers in most of the lessons seen. All classes are timetabled to use the interactive whiteboard each week and have regular opportunities to use the classroom computers. The recent national training has improved teachers' skills and confidence and, as a result, the teaching is more focussed and pupils make good progress.
- 158 The subject is well led and managed. Resources have improved significantly since the last inspection. Recently, the school has purchased 7 laptops and these are used well by both teachers and pupils and enhance the good provision already in

classrooms. A good range of appropriate software is now available and the school's reading scheme materials are also available on line. The use of a nationally agreed scheme has helped to make sure that pupils develop their skills, knowledge and understanding through careful planning, building on pupils' previous learning. The assessment, built into the units of work, enables teachers to have a clear picture of how each child is progressing and informs planning of future learning.

MUSIC

- 159 Standards in music are above national expectations by the end of Year 2. Pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs. This has maintained the good position found during the previous inspection.
- 160 Strengths in the subject include:
- teaching is good
 - music is secure within the curriculum and all that should be taught is taught
 - pupils have good opportunities to join a choir
 - good interlinking with other subjects helps to develop pupils' joy of music and makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development
- 161 Areas for improvement are:
- to improve the range of musical instruments
- 162 Pupils in Year 2 have good skills in performing, as they showed in a good lesson linked to the story 'Goodnight Owl'. Pupils named instruments, including a guiro, woodblocks and Indian bells, and discussed how these could be played for effect. For example, by playing certain instruments with due regard to dynamics and rhythm, pupils created the sound of 'buzzing bees' and the 'crunch' of cracking nuts. Most pupils in the infants genuinely enjoy the subject. Pupils confidently used their voices to sing old and new songs sweetly and with expression. All pupils are fully included in the lessons. Pupils listen attentively to the music of living composers and composers of years ago. For example, when listening to Andrew Lloyd Webber's 'Don't Cry For Me Argentina' pupils described the music as relaxing. Such lessons help to promote pupils' use of descriptive words and also set the mood for the music. The lesson undoubtedly supported pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
- 163 Progress in Year 2 is good because of the high quality teaching by the music co-ordinator. It is not possible to comment on teaching in Year 1 because no lessons were seen. Teachers are supported by a scheme of work that provides clear guidance, so that work becomes progressively more demanding as pupils move throughout the school. Lessons are generally well structured but the success of the lesson is very much linked to the confidence and security that (teachers feel about music?) a teacher feels about music. Teachers occasionally use ICT in the form of tapes to record music and Year 2 teachers use a composing programme to support their teaching. A positive feature of the school's music making is the provision made for infants who choose to sing in the choir. This is thoroughly enjoyed.
- 164 The leadership of the subject is good and the co-ordinator has correctly identified the need to provide a greater range of musical instruments. Monitoring of planning is firmly in place and there is a satisfactory assessment procedure.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 165 Only one lesson of physical education was observed during the inspection period. Pupils were observed as they used climbing and other equipment at playtimes. The standards of attainment seen are above those normally expected at the end of Year 2. Pupils make good progress and all pupils achieve well. Where pupils have particular problems additional classroom assistants give support.
- 166 Areas of strength
- The higher than expected standards of attainment and good achievement
 - The good quality of teaching seen
 - The good curricular opportunities including competitive sport
 - Use of equipment at break and lunchtime to develop pupils' physical skills
- 167 Areas for development
- Ensuring all pupils are correctly dressed for physical activities
 - Ensuring all pupils are aware of the effects of exercise on their body
- 168 By the end of Year 2, pupils show a very good awareness of space. The great majority have very good co-ordination, seen when passing and catching a ball. They balance on one hand and one leg. Pupils understand the need for rules in games and understand how using skills can improve their performance. They talk about improving performance. In outdoor activities, pupils show good climbing and balancing skills. Other areas of the physical education curriculum were not seen, but records of teachers' planning shows that they are carried out.
- 169 The quality of teaching and learning seen was good. The lesson was correctly modified for safety reasons when the teacher moved it into the hall rather than on the field with a very hot temperature. The warm up session was appropriate but the teacher missed an opportunity to talk about the effects of exercise on the body. The main part of the lesson was very good, with increasingly challenging skills development, which was then very effectively used in a game of 'tunnel ball rounders'. The teacher developed in pupils the skills of throwing and receiving very well. Pupils responded very well to the high expectations of behaviour and they showed very good attitudes to the subject. Adults and pupils relate very well. Teachers use support staff effectively in physical education to give support to pupils with special educational needs, or those who find physical skills a little difficult.
- 170 Pupils do not all get fully engaged in physical education and, as a result, some find it difficult to perform as effectively as they might. The subject has a good impact on developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Pupils are valued and listened to in lessons. They learn and understand rules for games and are given many opportunities to develop social skills by working with partners and in groups and teams. Dances from other countries, including Wales and Japan, develop cultural understanding.
- 171 There is satisfactory management of the subject. The co-ordinator monitors planning but has not yet had opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in lessons to highlight areas of good practice and areas for development. This has been recognised and is in the subject action plan. There is a good curriculum, which is enhanced by competitions including a football tournament, and a wide range of break and lunch time activities. Climbing and balancing equipment on the school field have a very positive effect on improving pupils' physical skills.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 172 Standards of attainment at the end of Year 2 are above those expected in the syllabus used in local schools. Pupils achieve well and make good progress throughout the school. Teachers ensure pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all lessons and, as a result, they make similar progress to their classmates. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection, when teaching and attainment were satisfactory.
- 173 Areas of strength:
- The higher than expected standards of attainment and the good achievement and progress
 - Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith
 - Good quality of teaching and learning
 - Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in the subject
- 174 Area for development
- Development of links with members of different faith groups
- 175 By the end of Year 2, pupils show a better than expected understanding of the Jewish and Christian Faiths. They recall stories from both the Old and New Testaments. Pupils write and draw about Daniel in the lion's den and recall the story of the baby Moses. In books from the New Testament, pupils explain about the 'calming of the storm' by Jesus and about Zacchaeus climbing a tree and being invited to meet Jesus. Pupils know that there are special places of worship. They have particularly good knowledge of Christian places of worship, shown when they compare and contrast the local church and chapel. Pupils understand that there are special times such as 'Shabbat' in the Jewish faith. They know about special clothing such as the 'kippur'. They know that different faiths have festivals to give thanks, for example the Christian festival of harvest and the Jewish festival of Sukkot. Pupils learn from religions. They express their feelings and relate biblical incidents to their own lives. Pupils consider how they have been let down by someone after learning about Peter betraying Jesus before the crucifixion. Pupils have knowledge of other world religions including Islam.
- 176 The quality of teaching and learning is good because teachers make lessons interesting to the pupils. Very good use is made of the local churches and clergy to develop pupils' understanding of Christianity. Photographs and artefacts are used effectively to develop learning, for example in a Year 1 lesson after a visit to a local church. Teachers used copies of holy books and a scroll very effectively in a Year 2 lesson to illustrate the importance of special books in Christianity, Judaism and Islam. Teachers in all classes develop their pupils' literacy skills effectively by asking them to read and write about the topics being studied. Adults have very good relationships with pupils and this leads to pupils feeling valued and enables them to talk about difficult subjects, for example someone who has died. Links between religions and pupils' own lives are developed effectively when pupils are asked to talk and write about their special place or person. Teachers develop spirituality extremely well in religious education. On a visit to a church, pupils were given time to reflect on the silence in the building. Teachers use information and communication technology effectively to illustrate different types of places of worship, for example synagogues and mosques. The school's location makes it difficult to give pupils first hand experience of visiting places of worship other than those of the Christian faith.
- 177 Pupils show very good attitudes to the subject. On a visit to the church, they all behaved very well. Pupils listen carefully in lessons. They talk about their feelings to adults. In groups they share materials, for example when designing and colouring

'stained glass windows' and when building a model of the church to highlight its features.

- 178 Religious education makes a very strong contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils learn about special things and places. They are valued and know that their contributions to lessons will be valued. They learn about the cultural aspects of the world's major religions.
- 179 The subject is managed satisfactorily. The co-ordinator has monitored planning and pupils' work but she has not yet had time to monitor teaching and learning in the classrooms. This has been recognised as part of the subject action plan. Assessment is informal and does not yet guarantee step-by-step development as pupils move through school. There is a good curriculum, enhanced by regular visits to churches and by visits to the school by local clergy? There are occasional visits from a Rabbi, but considerable travelling distance restricts the frequency of his visits. The school has recognised the need to develop links with members of other faith groups.