

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **VICTORIA INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL**

Workington

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112144

Headteacher: Mrs P Robertson

Reporting inspector: Mrs A Soper  
18148

Dates of inspection: 10<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> March 2003

Inspection number: 247188

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant/Nursery
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Islay Place Workington Cumbria
Postcode:	CA14 3XB
Telephone number:	01900 325250
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	David Hodgson
Date of previous inspection:	9 <sup>th</sup> February 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>19</b>



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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Victoria Infant and Nursery School is near the centre of Workington, placed between a large council estate and private housing. The socio-economic circumstances are below average, with few pupils coming from high social class backgrounds. The school has a large fence erected around it to protect it from potential vandalism. It has worked extensively to improve the grounds and outdoor play facilities and has received a 'Kitemark for Excellence' award for this work. The school has the Investor in People award. There is a large nursery on the site, which currently caters for 50 children in the mornings and 40 in the afternoons. In addition, there is 'Educare,' which provides 16 child-care places every afternoon in a designated part of the nursery. Attainment on entry to the nursery is well below average. The roll of the infant school is 156, which is smaller than most schools. All pupils are from white, British backgrounds and speak English as their mother tongue. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs, 24 per cent, is above the national average. The percentage with a statement of specific need, 5.7 per cent, is also above this average. The specific needs include speech and language difficulties, autism, multiple learning difficulties and physical disabilities.

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

This is a very good school. The skilled leadership and efficient management of the headteacher and key staff ensure that the school continues to improve. All staff, including the support staff, have a strong commitment to providing a very good quality of education for the pupils. The quality of teaching is very good in both the nursery and in the school and ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. From a well below average attainment on entry, pupils attain good standards in writing, information and communication technology, art and design by the end of Year 2. The standards attained in reading, mathematics and other subjects are average by the time pupils are seven years old and compare well with what pupils achieve in similar schools. Pupils enjoy school and work and play well together. The school uses its resources wisely to promote high standards and provides very good value for money.

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

- As a result of high quality teaching, pupils of all ages and abilities make good progress, especially in writing, information and communication technology, art and design.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are very good and ensure that there is a shared commitment to continuous improvement and effective action to bring this about.
- The school provides a very good curriculum for the children in the nursery and for pupils in the school. This ensures that the pupils are eager to learn and that they approach their work with positive attitudes.
- There is very good care for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Their academic and personal development are monitored very well and work is adapted very effectively to meet all of their needs.

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

- The attendance rate is below average, despite the school's efforts to improve this. There is poor attendance from a few pupils, which adversely affects their progress. Too many pupils arrive late and miss the start of lessons, which also restricts good progress.

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

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

The school was previously inspected in February 1998. The school has taken very good action to bring about change and to improve standards and these have been effective. Assessment procedures are now very good and the progress of all pupils is closely tracked from nursery and throughout the school. Standards have improved significantly in writing and information and communication technology, while the good standards in art and design have been maintained. The teaching and the range and quality of what is taught have also improved.

## 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				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
reading	C	A	C	A	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
writing	C	A*	B	A	
mathematics	D	A	D	C	

The table shows that, in 2002, pupils' performance in relation to standards nationally, was average in reading. It was above average in writing but below average in mathematics. In comparison with schools in similar contexts, the pupils' performance was well above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. There have been differences in performance over the last three years, but the results are affected by the performance of the pupils with special educational needs. The trend of improvement in results is above the national trend and in all year groups pupils achieve well. In the present Year 2, standards are above average in writing and average in reading and mathematics. The standards in mathematics are improving because the school is now providing increased opportunities for problem solving, an area that was seen to be weak in the pupils' performance in 2002. Teachers now provide good opportunities for practical mathematics activities and the development of mathematical language from an early age. Lesson aims are clear. Resources, including computers, are used well to support learning and teachers have developed a wide range of methods for promoting problem solving activities. The pupils make good progress and achieve well. Pupils' writing continues to be above average because there is a strong emphasis on this aspect of English throughout the school. The school is working hard to improve pupils' comprehension skills to raise their reading standards further. The children begin the nursery with well below average attainment and make very good progress so that by the time they begin Year 1 they have met the early learning goals for their age in all six areas of learning. The school has set realistic targets for the future, based on the very good knowledge of what pupils can attain.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The children and pupils are eager to learn. They concentrate and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils work and play together well. There is no oppressive behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils willingly take responsibility and are courteous and polite. There are very good relationships and all adults successfully encourage pupils' independence and confidence.
Attendance	Below average. A few pupils have poor attendance and too many arrive late for lessons.

The very good attitudes, behaviour and personal development contribute very well to pupils' progress throughout the school.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

<b>Teaching of pupils in:</b>	<b>Nursery and Reception</b>	<b>Years 1 – 2</b>
Quality of teaching	Very good.	Very good

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

The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is very good. Staff explain and discuss work clearly and there are good opportunities for discussion to improve pupils' speaking and listening skills. There is a very good contribution from visiting artists who provide creative stimuli to promote pupils' speaking and listening skills. The pupils talk about their work with increasing confidence, make suggestions and reflect on their achievements, and all of their contributions are valued. The school is introducing philosophy lessons, which also contribute well to improving pupils' thinking and speaking skills. Here, the pupils focus on certain questions and begin to talk about their feelings and views. For example, they discuss people's jobs, their possible reasons for doing these and then state whether or not they agree with other pupils' views. The teachers have very good subject knowledge and they successfully develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in many lessons. They plan work thoroughly, making sure that work is developed in progressive steps. Support staff are deployed effectively, such as in teaching literacy skills to small groups of pupils and in supporting individuals in lessons. This means that less able pupils achieve well and make good progress towards their targets. Teachers and support staff plan together, which ensures that all staff know lesson aims and expectations. They assess pupils very effectively, set targets and use the information to meet the needs of all pupils. There are very good experiences for the pupils with statements of specific need. They benefit from teaching that uses a wide range of additional resources, such as 'We play' physical activities and individual 'chests' of activities. Nursery and reception children have a wide range of good quality experiences, both indoors and outside, which successfully develops their skills and understanding in all six areas of learning.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The children in the nursery and reception classes have a very good range of learning experiences, both indoors and outside. In the school, pupils also benefit from a very rich curriculum that is enhanced by visits to places of interest, visitors who provide extra experiences and the excellent extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The school welcomes and integrates pupils very well. There are very good resources and support staff work very effectively with them. The pupils with statements of specific need are taught very well. Their needs are carefully identified and planning is detailed, showing small, achievable steps. These are followed very well by all staff and ensure that the pupils progress well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The staff provide very good examples for the pupils to follow. There is a very good learning climate that very successfully promotes pupils' social and moral development. The curriculum provides a wealth of opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils reflect, experience awe and wonder and learn very well about different cultures of the past and present day.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. There are very good systems for ensuring pupils' health and safety and their welfare. The pupils' academic and personal development are monitored and tracked very closely and they are given very good guidance and support. The school works hard to improve attendance and there has been a small improvement in this in recent months.

## 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 skilled leadership and has a clear vision for the school's further improvement. Staff, including support staff, are deployed efficiently and have excellent job descriptions that clearly outline their various management roles. The key staff carry out their management responsibilities very effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Legal requirements are carried out well. Governors are very supportive of the school and keep a careful check on spending. They take an active role in helping the school to improve the premises. Their roles in curriculum development and acting as a critical friend to the school are satisfactory and continuing to develop.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Pupils' progress, their attainment and the quality of education provided are all checked thoroughly and regularly.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Rigorous checks are carried out to identify strengths and weaknesses in the provision. The school spends very wisely, basing spending on the targets in the school improvement plan.

All staff have a shared commitment to improvement because they are inspired by the headteacher's leadership. The school has good plans to use its funds to improve the facilities further, such as in providing an additional quiet room for teaching pupils with specific needs. The school has efficient procedures for seeking best value for money.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teaching is good.</li> <li>The children like school and their behaviour is good.</li> <li>The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A few are unhappy with the amount of work their children do at home.</li> <li>A few are unhappy about the information they receive about their children's progress.</li> <li>A few believe the school does not work closely with parents.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views. The team disagrees with their views on homework, information and the school's work with parents. The homework policy is good and sufficient work is provided for pupils to do at home. The information provided to parents about their children's progress is very good overall and the school is always willing to discuss any matters with parents. All staff are approachable and accessible.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

**As a result of high quality teaching, pupils of all ages and abilities make good progress, especially in writing, information and communication technology, art and design**

1. When the children start nursery education they begin with well below average attainment, especially in their communication skills. A small number of the children are confident and communicate well. The nursery teacher and support staff focus sharply on promoting children's personal development and their communication skills and these are developed very well through a wide range of activities. For example, children learn to recognise their names by finding their photograph and name cards each day and placing these on their coat pegs. Their parents are encouraged to help them to do this and to point out other labels around the room. The children are sensitively encouraged to talk about matters of immediate interest. For example, when playing in 'Victoria Hospital,' the children put bandages on the student nursery nurse's 'broken leg' and explained to her that she needed this to get better. The 'hospital' contains a wealth of charts and labels, 'get well' cards, an eye chart and signs such as 'Waiting Room' and 'Casualty', providing children with good stimuli and opportunity to talk about their experiences. There are numerous writing and reading experiences to promote children's learning.
2. Creativity is promoted very well and is used very effectively to support children's speaking and listening skills. Adults encourage children to experiment with paint, such as by mixing colours and painting from observation and from using their imagination. Children make collages, print and work with clay. They choose their own resources. The children's work is displayed to good effect, at a height that enables them to see their work easily. The visiting artists work with the children on creative drawing and painting and use this time to encourage them to talk as they work. The adults who work in the nursery talk to the children at length and carefully plan where and when they will interact with them. From the time they begin nursery, the children learn to use the computers for various purposes, including playing sorting and matching games and letter and number recognition. The children operate the mouse with increasing confidence and know that they can find and retrieve information.
3. These opportunities continue into the reception class, where for example the recent work on Cinderella is being used very well as a focus for drama, dance, reading and writing. By the time children are in this class they talk with increasing confidence and willingly offer their ideas and suggestions. Writing is given a high priority in the whole school and there are very good opportunities for creative writing. The teaching is very good and work builds progressively on what pupils can already do. This is based firmly on teachers' very good knowledge of the pupils' capabilities and what they have already achieved. There has been a considerable improvement in the use of assessment to guide planning and teaching since the previous inspection. Work is closely adapted to meet all pupils' needs, with less able pupils receiving additional, effective support in reading and writing. The Year 1 pupils wrote simple sentences about people who help them as part of their work in personal, health and social education and more reluctant pupils were sensitively helped to express and write about their ideas. More able pupils received good challenge by being asked to elaborate their ideas.
4. By the time they are in Year 2, pupils write for a range of purposes and in different ways and their attainment is above average. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection when standards were in line with those expected nationally. The pupils write in sentences and use appropriate punctuation. Many include direct speech in their stories, which have clear beginnings, middles and endings. There are many whole class books written by pupils for others to read and enjoy. For example, Year 2 pupils have contributed to books such as 'Our Own Transporters' and 'Tesselation,' while Year 1 pupils have made the books 'The Rainbow Fish' and 'Looking at Judaism.' When marking pupils' writing, the teachers point out areas for improvement and ensure that pupils refer to their individual writing targets as they write. The

pupils show good understanding of authors' different writing styles and, in particular, show very keen interest in poetry. For example, they discuss and then write poems about the Caribbean, using methods similar to those used by the poet. The very good teaching ensured that pupils were stimulated, such as by using the song 'Island in the sun' and photographs, to enhance pupils' knowledge of the Caribbean islands. The pupils have frequently won local poetry competitions.

5. The pupils use computers regularly and purposefully to support their learning in different subjects. They use reading and art programs, for example, confidently using the keyboard and the mouse. For example, in a literacy lesson Year 2 pupils successfully selected two separate words to make new, longer words. The pupils use the word processing program regularly to present their work in different subjects. By the time they are in Year 2 the pupils have good understanding of the methods used to log on, save and print their work. They find and select programs independently. They showed good understanding of technical vocabulary when researching the history of Florence Nightingale. For example, the pupils talked about 'accessing the website' and using the 'search engine.' The progress made by pupils is very good and is an improvement since the time of the previous inspection.
6. Art and design contributes very well to pupils' cultural development because a wealth of opportunities is provided for pupils throughout the school. The pupils learn about famous artists of the past and present, such as Vincent van Gogh and David Hockney. They use the computer art programs well. For example, reception children used a program independently to draw people who help them. They drew very realistic pictures of policemen and firemen. Art galleries are displayed around the school, with pupils' framed work and explanations of the techniques presented imaginatively and informatively. The pupils learn to observe closely and take pride in their work. They use many different resources and techniques and produce good quality work. Pupils have produced clay models of leaves and have contributed well to a large-scale clay mural of their area for the Queen's Golden Jubilee. They have studied the shape and form of peacock feathers and the painting 'Dandelion Circle' by Andy Goldsworthy to make their own attractive representations of a 'Daffodil Circle'. As at the time of the previous inspection, pupils attain well and produce work that is above the expected standards for their age by the end of Year 2.
7. Numeracy is taught effectively throughout the school. The co-ordinator is an effective leader, who ensures that mathematics is taught consistently well throughout the school. Since the previous inspection, there has been a strong focus on developing pupils' use of mathematical language. Learning aims are clear, computer programs are used regularly to support pupils' learning and resources for practical investigations have been improved. The co-ordinator has provided training for teachers and is regularly involved in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning. These are all having a positive impact on pupils' achievements. Reception children make good progress in counting, often using songs, where they work out how many objects are left when these are taken away one by one. The good teaching ensures that the children have many activities for sorting objects, matching shapes and investigating the properties of different shapes. Lessons are planned and organised well. In a very good Year 2 lesson about money, pupils' achievement was very good. The teacher skilfully developed addition facts such as counting on in twos to counting two pence coins. She showed pupils how to record simple money addition sums and provided the further challenge of adding different coins together. There was a brisk pace to the lesson and resources were used efficiently.
8. The teaching of music is very good and pupils sing well. The headteacher, who has expertise in the subject, provides strong leadership. She leads the school choir, which performs in music festivals and local events. During one rehearsal, the pupils sang tunefully and understood that their singing was improved by good posture and breathing. The headteacher ensured that the pupils sang clearly and both softly and loudly where required. The pupils watched closely as the headteacher conducted. In a good Year 1 lesson, the teacher skilfully taught pupils about the ways in which music is written by using dots to show rhythmic patterns in a sequence. The

pupils followed, clapped and sang and then used percussion instruments effectively to conclude the work.

**The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are very good and ensure that there is a shared commitment to continuous improvement and effective action to bring this about**

9. The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership and actively encourages and develops the staff's shared commitment to continuous improvement. She has a clear vision for the school's development and promotes a strong sense of purpose amongst all who work in the school. The Investors in People award has been acquired and the school continues to work successfully in the next phase of this. The headteacher ensures that all teachers are involved in developing policies and they respond well, so that there is a consistent approach to teaching and managing pupils throughout the school. The senior management team supports the headteacher very well in making sure that aims and policies are put into practice successfully. Responsibilities are delegated very well, making very effective and efficient use of the expertise of individual members of staff. For example, teachers lead subjects in which they have particular skills. The teachers and support staff work closely together in special aspects such as after school clubs, study support groups and staff development.
10. There is a very effective and well-established arrangement for checking the quality of teaching and learning. The headteacher and key staff carry out lesson observations regularly and provide positive, critical written comments for teachers. The procedures for helping newly qualified teachers and other staff new to the school work very well. New members of staff are given very helpful information about the school, their roles and responsibilities. Experienced staff act as mentors supporting their new colleagues very effectively by helping with planning and working alongside them. Students are also supported very well. They are given job descriptions that are used as a working guide and are then used to evaluate how well the students have carried out their roles. All staff, including the students, are invited to attend staff meetings and after school training, which supports their professional development very well. Constructive reports on progress are written each term and all staff appreciate the help they are given. The school is a Partnership Promotion School, actively promoting Initial Teacher Training as a member of Cumbria Teacher Training.
11. Performance management is well established and highly effective. Teachers are well experienced and there is an Advanced Skills Teacher, who contributes considerably to the very good quality of teaching and to pupils' good and often very good progress. There is very effective delegation of responsibilities. For example, all co-ordinators have time to monitor classroom teaching and learning and a retired member of the senior management team takes their classes to ensure there is continuity for the pupils. All staff, including non-teaching members, have very clear job descriptions for their multiple roles and their work is appraised annually by the headteacher and senior teachers.
12. The local authority's link inspector works with the headteacher effectively to review the overall provision each term. School improvement planning is undertaken very carefully, taking into account the strengths and weaknesses of the provision, the standards achieved and the staff's professional development needs. The headteacher provides very good information to the governing body, which is fully supportive of the school. The governing body contributes well to the financial management and has a very good involvement in improving the premises. Its experience in curriculum matters is less well developed but the headteacher has established a good system for governors to learn about the subjects that are taught and the methods used to promote effective learning. This encourages governors to hold curriculum meetings with relevant staff, to discuss the provision and challenge assumptions. It is improving their understanding of the curriculum. The headteacher welcomes governors' increased involvement and constructive criticism.

13. The management of the school's budget is very good. All improvement aims are carefully devised and money is set aside to achieve these. Funds are allocated very well to staff development and training opportunities for the benefit of the school and its pupils. For example, staff have learned how to use signing methods to support pupils' communication skills and there have been several good training sessions to ensure that staff know how best to support particular groups of pupils. The identification of the need for increased problem solving work in mathematics and science has been very well supported by the purchase of additional resources. Considerable money has been spent on improving outdoor play facilities, with the aim of improving the quality of children's experiences. For example, the school has made very good use of an 'Awards for All' grant to provide low height basketball posts and nets to encourage team games. All subjects are well resourced.

**The school provides a very good curriculum for the children in the nursery and for pupils in the school. This ensures that the pupils are eager to learn and that they approach their work with positive attitudes**

14. The nursery provides a wealth of interesting activities and experiences for the children in all areas of learning. These include personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. There is a very good balance between teaching children new facts and skills and providing activities that they can choose themselves, both indoors and outside. The nursery accommodation is designed and organised very well, providing specific areas for investigation, reading, writing, mathematical activities, role play and construction work. Water and sand are provided and all activities are very well resourced. All areas are labelled with words to help the children to recognise print and displays of children's work include photographs and information for parents, to support their understanding of what their children are learning. Snack times are used very well to encourage the children to talk about matters of interest and to learn courtesies such as saying 'please' and 'thank you.'

15. The nursery works very hard to inform and include parents in their children's learning. For example, parents' meetings are held to explain the early learning goals and resources used to develop children's knowledge of letters and words. There is a lending library and books and activities are taken home for parents to work with their children. Specific aims for each child are explained to parents and they receive helpful booklets, such as those that explain ways for them to help their children learn to write.

16. In the school, the curriculum continues to provide a wide range of interesting learning experiences. The reception curriculum builds very well on what children have learned in the nursery and in Years 1 and 2 the subjects of the National Curriculum are very well linked through topics to provide meaningful contexts for learning. The curriculum has been enhanced well since the time of the previous inspection. At present, the school is making good progress in developing its curriculum further to rationalise the topics and provide more time for the lessons it is introducing for personal, social and health education. These include 'Brain Gym,' which focuses on establishing positive attitudes and concentration, and philosophy lessons, where pupils can discuss their feelings and creative work, which also aims to help pupils to express their thoughts and ideas effectively.

17. Literacy skills are taught very well and there is a very strong and effective focus on developing pupils' communication skills, both orally and in writing. Basic skills such as recognising letter patterns and commonly used words are taught very well. The lessons provide very good continuity and progression throughout the school because they build carefully on what pupils have learned previously and take care to include relevant work for all pupils. Poetry and literature are prominent in the curriculum and pupils are successfully encouraged to recognise and write in a variety of ways. For example, there is very effective use of methods such as 'brainstorming,' where pupils collaborate and suggest ideas. The poem 'A Far Away Place' was used very well to explain to Year 2 pupils the ways of selecting interesting words and styles. The

creative activities led by two visiting artists successfully contributed to pupils' artistic development and to their speaking and listening skills. For example, Year 1 pupils expressed their preferences confidently when making very colourful and attractive felt patterns.

18. The whole school planning and teachers' individual planning are very good and ensure progression and continuity throughout the school. At the time of the previous inspection, planning did not always ensure a good match of work to pupils' abilities. This has been effectively resolved as teachers make sure that all work is carefully planned to meet all pupils' needs. Topics are carefully planned and link subjects in a meaningful way. For example, when studying the people who help them, Year 1 pupils developed their artistic skills well in drawing figures and also made good progress in speaking and writing when they discussed their characters and wrote a simple sentence about them. The same theme was developed well through religious education when pupils recalled their visit to the fire station and the help given by firemen. They then went on to compare the help with that given by 'The Good Samaritan.' The provision and planning for pupils with special educational needs meet specific needs very well. All pupils, including the more able, receive good challenge, enabling them to make the progress of which they are capable.
19. There are excellent extra-curricular activities, which considerably enhance pupils' learning. This is a very good improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in art, drama, ICT, football and basketball clubs and to join the choir, for example. The choir sings to elderly residents and at special events in the community. The school makes excellent use of visits and visitors to provide pupils with a wide range of experiences. Pupils visit many local places, for example a bus depot and railway station. They travel on a bus and train as part of the topic about transport. They visit local supermarkets and shops and learn about the features of the town. The pupils have created banners for the education offices in Carlisle and have worked with an artist in residence to make an attractive clay mural for the school.
20. There are very good business links that help to enhance the curriculum and learning environment. For example, a local trust was involved in developing the school grounds, while trainees from a local college have built a half-circle stone seat in the nursery. A major employer in the area helps the pupils to understand environmental conservation issues.
21. All classes in the school provide detailed information to parents about their children's studies and any forthcoming events. There is good advice to parents on the ways in which they can support homework, which is used well to enhance pupils' learning. Overall, the school's curriculum provides a wealth of interesting and imaginative learning experiences that promote pupils' enthusiasm for learning and enable them to achieve well.

**There is very good care for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Their academic and personal development are monitored very well and work is adapted very effectively to meet all of their needs**

22. The school is situated in an area where there are below average socio-economic circumstances. On entry to the nursery, many children lack confidence in their personal and social skills and many have immature speech. The school places considerable emphasis on raising children's self esteem and helping them to communicate effectively and is very successful in doing so through its caring and sensitive approach to the children and their families. The headteacher has developed a very good approach to informing parents about their children's progress, which includes meeting parents in the mornings as they arrive and holding regular meetings and events for them. All staff are readily available to talk to parents and they take part in many social events such as school discos and concerts.
23. Very good care is provided after the morning nursery, through Educare,' with a number of places provided for children to stay on for lunch and to continue to receive pre-school education in the afternoons. The school manages this provision very well, by designating a particular area in the nursery for this care and continuing to provide a very good range of activities.

24. The procedures for Child Protection are very good. The headteacher is the designated person and there is very good guidance for staff. There are effective arrangements for monitoring and promoting good attendance. The headteacher reminds parents regularly about the need for good attendance and ensures that parents of those pupils who attend irregularly are challenged and supported when necessary. There are close working links with the Education Welfare Officer and the school closely monitors the attendance of those giving concern. Staff know and fully follow the procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare and supervisory staff at break times are all well trained in first aid procedures. The headteacher is successfully improving the safety of access to the school as a result of considerable collaboration with the local authority and parents' support for a safer route into the school grounds.
25. The school works hard to ensure the facilities and resources for pupils with special educational needs, including statements of specific need, are provided. Pupils' specific needs include physical disabilities, autism, severe learning difficulties, speech and language problems and multiple learning difficulties. The school provides very well for these pupils. For example, outside agencies such as speech therapists visit the school regularly to support pupils and provide good advice to staff. Specialist visiting staff provide detailed reports and guidance for the teachers so that they can provide the appropriate support required by pupils with different learning difficulties. The headteacher has ensured that funds were raised to provide pupils with hearing loss with suitable hearing aids, raising their confidence and enabling them to make good progress in learning. The few pupils with hearing impairment are also successfully included in the school choir.
26. The pupils with statements of specific need have very good help from support staff and very well devised individual programmes of work. The needs of the disabled are catered for well and the school has good plans to build a 'quiet room' to improve the facilities for helping those with hearing and auditory difficulties. Special signing methods are used effectively to support the few pupils who cannot speak and the staff also teach other pupils the rudiments of these methods. In one whole school assembly, all pupils impressively took part in signing methods to respond to the teacher. Teachers and support staff effectively share the responsibilities for supporting the pupils, monitoring and recording their progress very well. They discuss daily the pupils' responses to lessons and the plans for subsequent teaching and support. There are very sensitive arrangements in place to help pupils with particular needs, such as those with skin problems. Designated support staff apply cream when required and this helps to ensure that pupils' learning is not affected by discomfort. The school also introduced the wearing of lightweight jumpers to help alleviate any discomfort from excessive heat.
27. Each morning, music is played in the hall to support the school's aim to provide a warm and welcoming and calm atmosphere. The school kitchen provides a good range of healthy eating options and each day the kitchen staff explain the menus well to the pupils.
28. Assessment procedures are very good. Pupils' academic progress is very carefully tracked and recorded from the time they begin school. The early identification of pupils with learning difficulties is a priority and is successfully achieved because all staff effectively assess pupils' performance in all subjects. All pupils are tested each half term and at the end of each year. The teachers provide the headteacher with these results and she analyses them closely to determine how well the pupils have progressed. The information is used very well to regroup pupils or to identify areas where they may require further support. Class and group learning aims are displayed clearly in classrooms and at their entrances, enabling parents to be aware of these and to know how well their children are achieving. Very good, detailed records of pupils' attainment and progress, including any specific needs, are sent to the pupils' next schools.
29. Staff use the results of national tests very well to determine specific targets for improvement. For example in the current academic year, seven targets have been identified and are being developed. These include developing pupils' skills in mathematical and scientific enquiry, improving creativity and raising further the numbers of pupils attaining higher than average



standards in speaking, listening, reading and writing. The headteacher visits classes and works with pupils regularly to ensure that the targets are being effectively pursued. Overall, there has been a good improvement in the care provided since the previous inspection.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED?**

**The attendance rate is below average, despite the school's efforts to improve this. There is poor attendance from a few pupils, which adversely affects their progress. Too many pupils arrive late and miss the start of lessons, which also restricts good progress**

30. Attendance has declined since the time of the previous inspection. The arrangements for monitoring and promoting good attendance are satisfactory. The headteacher actively discourages absence by regularly discussing the need for good attendance with parents. Awards are given at the end of terms for good attendance. The school's prospectus explains the procedures for authorising absence but does not explicitly emphasise the need for good attendance. Nevertheless, the School Information Handbook clearly describes the procedures for recording attendance and teachers mark registers conscientiously, with late arrivals recorded and monitored effectively. The school keeps a record of all notifications of absence, which is satisfactory. There are a few pupils who are underachieving because of their repeated absences.

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

31. To improve the progress of those pupils who are frequently late and/or absent, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- (1) review the quality of information about attendance provided to parents in its prospectus and provide increased emphasis on the need for good attendance and punctuality.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

18

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

17

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	8	7	3	0	0	0
Percentage	0	44	39	17	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 five 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)	42	156
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	47

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	5	38

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	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	7.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	32	23	55

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	25	29
	Girls	20	23	21
	Total	46	48	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (94)	87 (96)	91 (94)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	28	27
	Girls	20	18	17
	Total	47	46	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (94)	84 (94)	80 (92)
	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**

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>	<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
White – British	156	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

*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	22.3
Average class size	26

### Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	230

### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	42
Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	96
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10

*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
	£
Total income	570,000
Total expenditure	555,129
Expenditure per pupil	2,804
Balance brought forward from previous year	31,417
Balance carried forward to next year	46,288

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	198
Number of questionnaires returned	110

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	32	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	66	25	4	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	63	35	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	34	5	3	19
The teaching is good.	82	15	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	54	36	6	1	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	24	1	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	32	0	1	3
The school works closely with parents.	53	41	5	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	76	24	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	71	28	0	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	57	28	2	1	12