

INSPECTION REPORT

KIRKBY STEPHEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kirkby Stephen

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112180

Headteacher: Mr Mike Buckler

Reporting inspector: Andrew Clark
21596

Dates of inspection: 19th – 22nd May 2003

Inspection number: 247193

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Nateby Road Kirkby Stephen Cumbria
Postcode:	CA17 4AE
Telephone number:	01768 371387
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	To be appointed
Date of previous inspection:	November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21596	Andrew Clark	Registered inspector	Mathematics; art and design; music; English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards. The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
8943	Margaret Manning	Lay inspector		The pupils' attitudes and values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
27591	Maddie Campbell	Team inspector	Science; information and communication technology; design and technology; geography; foundation stage curriculum; educational inclusion	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
18819	John Atkinson	Team inspector	English; history; physical education; religious education; special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is an average sized primary school in the market town of Kirkby Stephen, Cumbria. There are 216 boys and girls on roll aged between four and eleven. The majority of pupils are from a mixture of privately owned and rented accommodation within the town and outlying rural areas. The pupils' parents are in a wide range of occupations, with many linked to farming. The area was significantly affected during the foot and mouth outbreak in 2002. About 10 per cent of the pupils are eligible for a free school meal, which is below average. The percentage of pupils on the schools' register of special educational needs is about average at 21 per cent. One per cent of pupils have a statement of special educational needs, which is below average. The pupils needs include moderate learning, emotional and physical difficulties. There is a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this year's Year 6 cohort as there was last year. All the pupils in the school are from white British backgrounds. The children start school with attainment which is typical for their age, although there are significant variations from year to year and speaking skills are often below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. Educational standards are sound and pupils have very good attitudes. The quality of teaching is good and pupils become eager learners. The headteacher provides very good leadership and the school is well managed. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in information and communication technology are above those usually found and teachers make excellent use of computers in their teaching
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and is moving the school ably in the direction it needs to go
- Teaching is good and pupils become effective learners as a result
- The school promotes excellent relationships resulting in very good behaviour and personal development
- Parents are central to school life and this has a very positive impact on children's learning
- The school uses its financial resources very well to improve the quality of education, especially for pupils with special educational needs

What could be improved

- Opportunities for writing in subjects other than English
- Pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work
- The consistent use of good marking

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made sound improvement overall with good improvement to the quality of teaching since the last inspection in 1997. The role of curriculum co-ordinators has improved well especially for English, mathematics and information and communication technology. Systems to measure and track pupils' progress are now good and leading to improvements in learning. The information for parents about their children's progress is very good. The school makes a detailed analysis of its work that forms the basis for future improvement.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	B	A	D	E
Mathematics	A	B	E	E
Science	D	A	E	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Overall standards are sound and pupils' achievement is at least satisfactory. For many pupils, especially those with special educational needs, achievement is good. Last year's test results were uncharacteristically low. These pupils also had low standards when they were in Year 2 and made good progress from that level. The significant disruption to the community had a significant impact on the results in 2002. A higher percentage of pupils than average were on the school's register of special educational needs. Over time standards in English and mathematics have generally been above the national average. In 2002 fewer than average pupils attained higher levels in the tests. Standards were well below those of similar schools in 2002. The results for pupils by Year 2 were well below average for reading and mathematics and below average for writing. This was again unlike previous results. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well towards the targets set for them throughout the school.

In the work seen, standards in English and mathematics meet national expectations. Progress is at least sound for all abilities. Pupils are eager readers by Year 6 and enjoy a good range of fiction and non-fiction books. The new reading scheme has had a good impact. Writing is sound, but standards of presentation and handwriting vary too much. In mathematics, pupils' numeracy skills are good throughout the school and they are increasingly effective at solving number problems. Standards are sound in science and knowledge and understanding are good but there is too much use of worksheets in some classes which does not encourage pupils to investigate and think for themselves enough. Standards in information and communication technology are good and this reflects the very effective use teachers make of computers in teaching. Standards in art and design and design and technology are above average as are standards by Year 2 in music. In all other subjects standards are in line with those normally expected.

Pupils make a good start in the reception class. By time they start Year 1 they are working at above expected levels in personal and social development and at least normally expected levels in all other areas of learning.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work and eager to learn more.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	This is very good. Pupils are polite and sensitive towards others. They play and work together well.
Personal development and relationships	This is very good. The pupils respond well to the increased responsibility through the school council and supporting daily routines.
Attendance	This is good. Pupils arrive in good time and are ready for work.

The headteacher has developed a culture where pupils' views and opinions are sought and valued in all aspects of school and this has a good impact on pupils' attitudes and personal development.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The teaching is good throughout the school. A significant proportion is excellent or very good and this inspires the pupils to learn more. A small proportion of teaching is not so effective because there is a lack of clear purpose and marking is not always good enough to guide the pupils. The teaching of English and mathematics is good and basic skills are generally well taught. In some classes in the juniors writing is limited too much by the use of worksheets and throughout the school teachers do not make enough use of opportunities for writing in subjects other than English. The needs of all pupils are met well in the majority of lessons. The best lessons are marked by highly motivating use of resources, especially interactive computer technology. The teachers challenge pupils through probing questions leading pupils to make decisions for themselves and express their own thoughts and ideas. As a result pupils often persevere in solving problems and showing creativity. Children make a good start in the reception class. There is a good concentration on personal development and literacy and numeracy skills throughout the day in the reception classes.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	This is good with some very good aspects. Many visits and visitors enrich the pupils' learning in science, art, music and other subjects. The development of thinking and learning skills are well planned for. There are very good activities for pupils after school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is good. There is a very strong commitment to full inclusion and activities are well planned to ensure pupils make good progress to the targets set. Very good use is made of computers in teaching and assessing pupils with special educational needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school places high value on promoting the pupils' self-respects and awareness. There are good opportunities for shared reflection in assemblies and lessons. Moral development is approached openly and honestly. The pupils learn to value their immediate culture alongside international studies.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The excellent relationships between staff and pupils form the basis to good care. Procedures for maintaining health and safety are sound. Good behaviour is promoted very well.

The school works very well with parents and they have positive views of the school. The information for parents is very good. The curriculum is well planned and enriches learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. Since his appointment two years ago the headteacher has established a very clear direction for the school. There is good team work. Subject co-ordinators, for English and mathematics, take a strong lead through example and observation though this needs to be more developed in other subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	This is sound. The governors' new committee structure ensures that all appropriate policies are in place and effective. The headteacher keeps governors well informed through his detailed reports and they have taken sound advantage of training opportunities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This has improved and is now good. The school makes detailed analysis of test results and other assessments and acts upon the outcomes well. An important strength of the school is that the views of all concerned with the school, especially that of the pupils are taken into account.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school's budget is well matched to priorities in the school improvement plan. Grants for special educational needs and for information and communication technology have a good impact on the curriculum. The school follows procedures to ensure best value well.

The accommodation is adequate for the number of pupils on roll and there is good use of the library and computer space. Staffing levels are good promoting more effective teaching of English and mathematics. Teaching assistants provide very good support. Resources are good. The subject co-ordinators have very specific targets for each term and time for monitoring. However, there are variations in the impact of subject leaders and systems to ensure best practice in teaching and learning are not always robustly pursued.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They feel comfortable approaching the school • Their children are very happy • Children make good progress • Teaching is good 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are not sufficient activities for children after school • Homework • The information provided for parents

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views. They largely disagree with their concerns. In the team's judgement the provision of homework is satisfactory and meets government recommendations. The range of extra curricular activities is better than that normally found and is very good. They agree that some pupils may not have the access they would like to clubs because they travel home by bus. The information for parents, especially the reports on pupils' progress, is very good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 In the most recent national tests in 2002 standards were well below the national average. The results in 2002 are not typical of the standards that the school normally achieves. For example over the previous three years the school's results for pupils aged 11 improved each year and in 2001 standards had been well above the national average. There were special circumstances in 2002 that adversely affected the school's results. There were a large number of pupils with special educational needs in the Year 6 class and a number of pupils were absent from school for an extended period of time because of the restrictions imposed due to the outbreak of 'foot and mouth' disease. The results were well below average for similar schools. This bears no relationship to standards currently in school. The trend in the school's average national curriculum points for all core subjects was broadly in line with the national trend.
- 2 In 2002 the standards in Year 6 were well below the national average and the number of pupils achieving the higher levels was well below the national average. However these pupils' standards were not high when they were Year 2 pupils and indeed they made at least sound progress throughout Key Stage 2. Their achievements in English were above what was expected, in line with what was expected in mathematics and below what was expected in science.
- 3 In 2002 the standards in Year 2 were well below average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing where no pupils reached the higher level. The results in the infants have been variable over the past five years because of the differences in the basic skills that pupils have when they start school and staffing changes including new leadership.
- 4 A significant strength of the school is systematic analysis of the pupils' attainments in each year group undertaken by the head teacher. In each year group the head teacher has identified what the key issues are in relation to standards of attainment. These issues are fully explained and action has been taken to address each issue. The outcome is that the whole school is fully aware of the issues and committed to raising standards. The school sets challenging targets based on the pupils' previous attainment. It assesses pupils on a regular basis to ensure that the right amount of progress is being made. It is implementing specific strategies to stretch higher attaining pupils to ensure that they reach the higher levels in the national tests.
- 5 Currently the pupils' work in English is in line with the national expectation. By year 2 pupils are reading fluently and with good expression. The introduction of a new reading scheme has had a positive impact and pupils are keen to read with the result that Year 6 pupils are independent readers with an appetite for a wide range of books. Pupils are developing good writing skills and write effectively for a number of purposes such as letters, stories and instructions. However the standard of presentation of written work is an area for considerable improvement which the school is addressing. Pupils do not make enough use of opportunities in other subjects to improve writing.
- 6 Currently the pupils' work in mathematics is in line with the national expectation. Pupils have good number skills and a logical approach to problem solving. They do not record their thinking and strategies in writing enough through the juniors.
- 7 Currently the pupils' work in science is in line with the national expectation. Pupils have sound investigative and experimental skills and a good knowledge and understanding. The pupils are sometimes too closely directed in their work so that they do not have the

opportunity to decide on the appropriate scientific skills to use to conduct their own experiments.

- 8 Standards in information and communication technology are above expected levels and this is an improvement since the last inspection. The school's investment in resources and staff development has resulted in the teaching of the subject being good and pupils working enthusiastically and confidently.
- 9 Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. The school is effective in identifying pupils with special educational needs at an early stage to make sure that they receive help as soon as possible. Teachers write clear individual plans for pupils who then make good progress towards the targets that are set. They are involved in all aspects of the curriculum and receive extra help from classroom assistants.
- 10 Pupils achieve at least soundly in all subjects. In art and design standards are high because of the effectiveness of the teaching and the stimulating activities that pupils undertake. In music standards are above average by Year 2. There was not sufficient evidence to make a judgement by Year 6, but pupils were making good progress up to Year 4. In design and technology standards are above expected levels and aspects of the work done by Year 6 and Year 5 pupils are very good because of the very good teaching and the challenging work that is set. In history, geography, physical education and religious education standards are in line with the expected level.
- 11 There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls in school currently. The school analyses test data by gender and monitors the progress of boys and girls effectively. The school is aware of individual pupils who have particular talents in certain subjects and is making sure that these pupils are challenged to achieve what they are capable of.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 12 Pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are very good, much as was seen at the last inspection. The vast majority of parents are confident that behaviour is good and that their children are very happy at school. They enjoy coming to school and taking part in the lessons and activities that it provides.
- 13 Pupils and children show very good attitudes to their work in lessons. Year 2 pupils make a very good start to each day in the "brain gym" when they respond very well to the established routines and quietly enjoy the activity. Year 4 pupils were enjoying a mathematics lessons on money calculations so much that one boy who had to leave for another planned session was very reluctant to go. The whole class showed excellent behaviour and worked with enthusiasm throughout. Behaviour and attitudes in lessons seen were rarely less than good and never unacceptable.
- 14 Behaviour around school is very good and pupils are well supported in this by the school's positive behaviour management policy. Parents can be reassured that their children behave very well at school and are polite. Even quite young pupils hold open doors for visitors. The school has not had any reason to exclude pupils. Bullying is not a problem and on the rare occasions where it is seen, it is well handled by the school, according to parents.
- 15 A particularly noticeable feature of the school is the way the pupils carry out the responsibilities they are given. The older pupils are developing considerable maturity as they undertake their duties and are very willing to try things out through the school's encouragement. This was seen in one of the regular meetings of the school council where some were very keen to plan and cost their schemes that would be for the benefit of all pupils. Older ones listened well to each other's ideas and had the confidence to put forward differing views on the value of what was proposed. Pupils undertake duties very well around school such as manning the office, under supervision, at lunchtime.

- 16 Relationships among pupils and between pupils and staff are a strength of the school. The relative isolation of the community is not a hindrance to pupils developing friendships with pupils from other areas and they respond very positively to the chances they get. Year 3 pupils worked very well with their pen friends from Appleby school on an activity day, so much so that it was hard to distinguish between them in their blue uniforms as they were all so friendly to each other. Pupils co-operate very well and are willing to share as was seen in a Year 2 geography lesson when working with maps. Such attitudes are seen in all year groups. Year 6 pupils made the most of an opportunity to find out about life in the secondary school to which most will go from some Year 7 pupils who were visiting. They had thought about their questions carefully beforehand and showed maturity in their attitudes.
- 17 Attendance at school is good. Pupils arrive in good time so that lessons can start promptly without disruption. There is currently more absence without explanation recorded in registers than there was last year, when none was unauthorised. Nevertheless pupils attend well and they get the benefit from the education that the school offers them.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 18 The quality of teaching is good and is making a significant impact on the behaviour of the pupils, their attitudes and their learning . This is an improvement since the last inspection. Some of the teaching is excellent or very good, inspires the pupils to try their hardest and creates a desire in them to want to learn more. The teachers work well as a team and give each other support by sharing their expertise in the subjects that they are responsible for. There are a number of job shares and these teachers liaise very effectively to ensure that there is good continuity between what they do.
- 19 In lessons where teaching is least effective it is because there is a lack of clarity about what the pupils are to learn and the pupils become confused about what they are expected to do. The marking of pupils' work is variable and needs to be more consistent if all pupils are to benefit from the best practice. Where marking is of high quality pupils are given detailed written and oral feedback about the strengths and weaknesses of their work and what they need to do to improve. However in a number of cases pupils' work is merely ticked and no advice is given as to how they can do better.
- 20 Teaching has improved in a number of important areas. The teachers' knowledge of information and communication technology is now very good and its use in all areas of the curriculum is very effective in improving the rate of learning and in motivating the pupils. The systems for planning what is to be taught are good. Teachers are very clear what the objectives of the lesson are and these are shared with the pupils so that they are aware of what they have to do to succeed in the lesson. This leads to pupils learning effectively and having opportunities to check at the end of the lesson what they understand and what they need to do next. The systems for assessing pupils have improved and teachers now use the information about their progress to plan the next stage of their learning. This means that higher attaining pupils are given tasks that are challenging and allow them to do as well as they can. Teachers give constructive and supportive feedback throughout lessons and the result is that pupils hard work and show good levels of concentration.
- 21 The teaching in the reception classes is good and gives the children a firm foundation for future learning. In particular teachers focus successfully on developing the children's personal and social skills and raising standards of speaking and listening which are often weak on entry.
- 22 Teaching has many strengths. Teachers and support staff work very effectively as a team and are consistent in what they expect from the pupils. This means that good use is made of the time in lessons and pupils are always aware of the tasks that they have to do. The relationships between the staff and the pupils are excellent and pupils are given many

opportunities to work independently and take the initiative in what they are learning. For example older junior pupils undertake research into an author whose books they enjoy reading. The work achieved is interesting, resourceful and demonstrates how well pupils can use information and communication technology to support their learning. The staff are warm, friendly, firm and treat pupils with respect. They trust them with responsibilities and expect them to persevere when they find the work to be difficult. This means that pupils develop a positive attitude towards what they are learning and work well in groups and pairs to overcome problems.

- 23 Pupils with special educational needs are taught well. The good progress that pupils make is unquestionably aided by the contribution of support staff. They are very clear about their role in lessons and frequently focus on individuals and groups who are in most need of support. Teachers identify pupils who are experiencing difficulties at an early stage and make sure that they are given additional support to help them with their learning. Pupils' individual education plans are precise and specific targets are set so those pupils can progress at the pace that is most suitable to them.
- 24 When teaching is very good or excellent teachers question pupils skilfully, probing pupils to take decisions for themselves and express their own ideas and thoughts. In these lessons the teachers have a high level of expertise in what they are teaching, use additional resources imaginatively and succeed in capturing the attention and motivation of the pupils. As a result pupils are enthusiastic, actively engaged in the activities and learning quickly. Where teaching is particularly effective, it is because teachers make pupils think for themselves and set them problems to overcome by using their powers of deduction. This is so in mathematics and science when pupils are involved in experiments and have to prove that their answers are correct.
- 25 Teachers are confident to use a range of approaches in their teaching and are very effective in using resources and other adults directly in the pupils' learning. The teamwork in most classes is impressive and ensures that pupils get the most out of what is being taught. Teaching makes effective use of trips and visits to supplement what is being taught in school and pupils find this very helpful in making their learning even more enjoyable.

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

- 26 The school is successful in providing all pupils with a good quality curriculum with some very good aspects. In all respects, the curriculum meets and surpasses the requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education, which is taught in accordance with the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Learning opportunities are enriched by visits and visitors to school, community participation and the wide range of extra-curricular activities that are offered to all pupils. Extensive grounds and a walled garden area enhance the school environment. An appropriate proportion of time is allocated to each subject and the curriculum is judged to be well balanced and relevant.
- 27 Since the last inspection, the school has improved curriculum provision with subject co-ordinators taking greater responsibility for their subjects. Personal, health and social education has been introduced and Circle Time is well used by all staff. The investment in information and communication technology equipment has improved standards in this subject and laptops and interactive white boards are well used by most staff across different curriculum areas.
- 28 The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are used effectively to provide a framework for the teaching of English and mathematics. Opportunities for pupils' literacy skills to be extended in subject other than English needs further development. Numeracy skills are extended in science and design technology. In most subjects, the curriculum

follows government schemes of work but these are modified according to the needs of the pupils and also supplemented by published schemes. As year teachers plan together, all pupils are given similar experiences, building on what they learned when they were younger or laying the foundations for further learning. Curriculum provision is enhanced and enriched by activities such as Brain Gym, Thinking Skills and Philosophy.

- 29 Year 6 pupils undertake a week long residential trip which is supported by parents and governors. Last Year, this was to Norfolk which provided a contrasting landscape and environment. Visitors to the school add to the richness of curriculum provision. These include local clergy, musicians, theatre groups and fire and ambulance services. Pen pals from another primary school have a day in the school to share similarities and differences. The pupils have a very full and exciting day on a range of shared projects. Pupils also use the locality for study in order to enhance learning. Youngest children visit a local garden, Year 2 pupils walk around the local environment whilst older pupils visit lead mines.
- 30 Provision for special educational needs is good. The school's policy and practice for special educational needs fully embraces the principles of the Code of Practice. This strongly illustrates the school's concern for and commitment to the individual needs of pupils. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is a combination of withdrawal for individual and group support by learning support assistants and class teachers planning work that is appropriate for the different abilities of the pupils in the class. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good. It is good in the foundation stage where teachers closely monitor children's needs and record their achievements. Teachers plan and organise activities to consolidate pupils' basic skills, particularly their personal, social and language needs. The school has good procedures to identify and assess pupils to make sure they receive help as soon as possible. It works hard to involve parents and keeps them informed of their child's progress. Good use is made of expertise outside of the school when it is necessary to give specific help to individual pupils. All pupils with special educational needs have individual education plans. Class teachers, with the support of the special needs co-ordinator, write detailed plans with specific targets that are clear as to what pupils need to learn and when. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support from very committed, experienced and qualified assistants. They work closely with teachers in planning for individual needs and have very good relationships with pupils. This is significant in helping pupils to make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs have good access to the curriculum and to all other opportunities provided by the school, meaning that all pupils are fully included in the life of the school. The school is making the best use of new technology to help pupils make progress; for example pupils with reading difficulties have a specific program to use on the computer and this gives them confidence and motivates them to improve.
- 31 The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities. These include sports for both sexes as well as chess club, cycling proficiency and music activities. Many pupils learn to play musical instruments with the peripatetic music services and there are links to local youth orchestras.
- 32 The school have made links with schools in various parts of the world. These include schools in Holland, Sri Lanka, India and the Czech Republic. It is hoped to host a conference for these schools in September 2003.
- 33 Provision for personal, social and health education is very good. The use of collective worship supports this work, as does discussion work during Circle Time. Use is made of outside agencies in order to utilise specialist skills. In Year 6, the school nurse delivers a sexual education programme and the Life Education Van visits annually in order to provide drug awareness activities. The Community Police Officer also supports the school in raising awareness about alcohol abuse.

- 34 The community of Kirkby Stephen makes a very good contribution to the life and learning of the school. The annual community Fun-Day is held on the school grounds, the school is involved in the local Charter Fair celebrations and is also an active participant in local art competitions. The Vital Villages Project included the views of the pupils, and the community policeman for sensible road use, and some shop keepers for politeness take the values of the school into the community with the distribution of 'good' stickers
- 35 Relationships with other institutions are good. The local cluster of schools is very active and the school also has close links with the local secondary school and Initial Teacher Training College. It is involved in the Heartstone Project run by the Volunteer Bureau and the Healthy Schools project. Other local small schools combine for a Thinking Skills Conference and an Eden arts project with 'post foot and mouth' funding.
- 36 Overall, the pupils have access to a very good range of spiritual, social, moral and cultural opportunities which indicates an improvement in the spiritual aspect since the last inspection.
- 37 Assemblies are thoughtfully planned to link with experiences shared by the pupils such as family, friendship and the environment. There are shared celebrations of the Christian religion and good opportunities for reflection and spiritual focus. For example, in one assembly taken by the vicar, pupils were encouraged to have faith before taking a big step forward in their lives, such as going to secondary school. This was well illustrated by referring to leaping frogs. Staff also encourage the small moments of wonder in each pupil's life, for example, delighting in the growing of seeds in Reception class or adding text to slides of Kirkby Stephen in Year 2. The pupils are well adjusted and have good levels of self respect. They seem content with themselves and are happy to come to school and participate fully in all its different aspects. Year 4 pupils led an assembly on celebrating work they had been undertaking on the four seasons and all other members of the school listened well and appreciated the efforts of these pupils.
- 38 Moral development is approached very honestly and openly. The school aims to establish and maintain high standards of behaviour and to teach pupils by the example of appropriate and acceptable behaviour. This is fully met by all members of staff, who act as exemplary models for pupils. Pupils are encouraged to consider moral themes in Circle Time and recognise people who help them in school and in the community.
- 39 Very good social behaviour is acknowledged and rewarded by the staff so that pupils recognise and understand when they have behaved well in a social situation. The school ensures that there are good opportunities at lunchtime for pupils to eat together and play with other pupils and staff in organised sports and social activities.
- 40 Year 6 pupils join with Year 2 pupils to share reading activities. The school's Personal, Social and Health curriculum has a whole school focus and it places an emphasis on supporting pupils in expressing their feelings and concerns and building their self-esteem and confidence. Pupils are encouraged to contribute to charitable causes and the School's Council empowers the pupils to discuss with the head teacher issues that are of concern to the pupils.
- 41 Cultural development is very good. The school's participation in community events is strong and the joining with other small local schools for curriculum enrichment activities ensures pupils link with other local communities. Further afield, the school's international links bring letters, photographs and artefacts from other children in other cultures and visits away from the area allow pupils to grasp an understanding of other regions of the United Kingdom. Involvement with projects run by outside agencies such as the Volunteer Bureau enrich the cultural diversity of the curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 42 The school cares for its pupils well overall and a particular strength in this comes from the teachers having excellent relationships with their pupils and knowing them well. Parents feel that their children are very happy in school.
- 43 Arrangements to ensure pupils' health and safety are sound. Staff are in need of updated training for first aid but the arrangements in place and equipment around the school for medical care are well organised. The governors and the site manager regularly check the school site for potential hazards and items such as electrical equipment are tested, as is required, by outside agencies. Volunteers are supervised and given guidance on their duties regarding health and safety when helping pupils. Child protection is properly looked after and the named person has up-to-date training. Care for the youngest children in the reception classes is good.
- 44 The school monitors pupils' attendance and promotes it in a satisfactory way. The home is contacted promptly if there are concerns about the non-attendance of particular pupils. The school however does not very rigorously follow up and get reasons for non-attendance routinely and record these in the registers. The educational welfare is in regular contact with the school to deal with any problems.
- 45 The procedures for assessing and monitoring the academic achievement, personal development and levels of attendance are good and they are now strengths of the school. This represents a notable improvement since the last inspection.
- 46 Children's work is now clearly assessed by teachers whether this is by thorough marking of written work or by using good questioning in order to clarify what has been learned. There are times when marking is quite brief and could be improved by more reference to wider targets but generally the comments made by teachers are positive, developmental and clear. Occasional references are made to pupil's judgements of their own learning but this practice is not yet widespread enough. Teachers working with pupils with special educational needs take full account of the targets included in individual education plans.
- 47 The assessment of academic and personal development is good and teachers know the children well and are thorough in support of their personal development. The school has effective practices to identify how well pupils are making progress particularly in the core subjects and considers the progress of various groups. These practices are carefully recorded in a thorough tracking system which is used to inform teacher planning well. The formal assessment procedures required at the end of key stage are observed well and results recorded and reported to parents as required.
- 48 A strength of the school is the way good behaviour is promoted. It is rare for the headteacher to have to act on any incidents of bullying or poor behaviour and call parents in to school. The school puts into practice its positive behaviour policy very well. Along with this and through circle time in all classes, when children and pupils share their thoughts and feelings, good behaviour is promoted very strongly. Teachers build up excellent relationships with their pupils and this encourages them to share their successes and achievements both in and out of school with their fellow pupils. While personal development is not formally recorded, except in annual reports to parents it is well supported because of these relationships.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 49 Parents have positive views about the school in general though they have a few reservations. In particular they feel they are comfortable approaching school to discuss anything and feel that their children are happy there. They also feel that their children are making good progress because of the good teaching and expectations that the school has of them. They are confident that the school is well led and managed. Fewer parents were confident that their children have the right amount of homework but the inspection team found this to be satisfactory. Even more parents feel that there are not sufficient activities outside lesson times. They acknowledge that this is inevitable because of the bussing arrangements that have to be made to take pupils home at the end of the day. They do appreciate, however, the range of additional visits out of school that pupils make and also opportunities for them to take part in musical productions, for example. Although parents feel that the information they receive has improved since the last inspection, they feel that it could be better as sometimes they have to ask when they should not have to. They team found that the information given to parents on pupils' progress is actually very good. The school has good links with parents of pupils with special educational needs. They are involved from a very early stage and kept closely informed of their child's progress and given ways to support their learning.
- 50 Parents receive very good information on how well their children are doing at school through the formal opportunities to talk to teachers and through the annual reports. These reports give very clear information on the levels pupils in all years are achieving, particularly in English and mathematics and also predict what they are capable of reaching. They explain what the levels mean and what is expected of pupils nationally. Understandable targets are set that parents can help their children with, including those for the very youngest children in reception. Parents also receive good information as is required through the prospectus and the governors' annual report although there are some minor omissions from these. While the school does not send out regular newsletters, it does send out information as and when required and care is taken to let parents know what topics are on the curriculum for each year. For those parents with access to the Internet a very comprehensive and informative web site was on the point of being launched at the time of the inspection.
- 51 The parents support the school and the pupils very well. They very willingly help in school and on trips and teachers make good use of this help for the benefit of the pupils. Over a dozen parents were seen escorting Year 2 pupils on a nature walk, for example, and were given information on what to look for with their small groups. Parents are generous in supplying materials that the teachers can use in design and technology, science and art for particular topics. A big strength is the amount of fund raising by parents and staff which goes on and this is directly beneficial to the pupils. The whole school has recently been provided with new reading books through their generosity. The fund-raising committee supports pupils very well in their personal development by inviting them to propose projects that they require money for. Pupils are expected to put these forward in a formal letter with costing and reasons why they feel there is a need. Parents' attendance at meetings is high and this is a further testament to their very strong commitment to the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 52 The school is well led and managed. The headteacher was appointed two years ago after the school had been run for twenty-seven years by the previous headteacher. He has firmly planted his style of leadership on the school by creating more opportunities for all concerned with the school to contribute to future planning and through restructuring the way the governing body worked. A particular success has been in developing the role of subject co-ordinators and senior staff. Despite last years dip in standards in English and mathematics, at least sound standards have been maintained overall and there has been particularly good progress in the development of information and communication technology which is used as a model for other subjects.

- 53 There have been good improvements to the role of subject co-ordinators. They have clear tasks for completion each term which are closely linked to targets to develop their own professional capabilities. As a result there is a good range of monitoring activities to assess the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school and planning to raise standards. The headteacher and literacy and numeracy co-ordinators undertake rigorous analysis of standards from the results of national statutory and optional tests. The outcome of this analysis is presented in to staff, governors and parents in a clear and open way. There have been significant improvements to resourcing in English and to aspects of the mathematics curriculum through this process. There is also a greater understanding of assessment processes by the staff. This work is beginning to spread to other subject leaders although this could be developed at a faster rate. There is not enough attention given to marking and the presentation of work in the marking. The school is making sound use of leading teachers to model the best practice, for example in mathematics and in information and communication technology.
- 54 The work of the governing body has developed over the last two years. It is sound. There have been several changes to the governors recently, but continuity has been maintained through effective training and support. The governing body is now structured through several key committees, which oversee the work of the school. They receive very detailed and appropriate information from the headteacher. The governors take opportunities to observe the work of the school first hand and there is a good precedence set for this in the monitoring by the governors with specific links to information and communication technology. The governors have received appropriate training through the local educational authority although some governors have difficulty accessing this because of the distances involved. The governors fulfil their statutory duties effectively and have a satisfactory view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The procedures are now in place to allow full involvement in shaping the direction of future improvements. This is satisfactory at present.
- 55 The quality of monitoring by the headteacher and senior staff is generally good, although there are variations. The headteacher has taken a strong lead in staff development and is ably supported by the deputy headteacher who has particular strengths in mentoring and supporting new teachers. There are very good procedures for appointing new staff which include polling the views of staff and pupils. The headteacher sets a positive and supportive tone in his feedback to staff, which is encouraging whilst appropriately critical. For example, 'Wonderful atmosphere, I think you could develop clearer expectations for the lesson'. Sometimes the comments are not critically enough based on the evidence collected. The headteacher keeps a detailed record of regular, often informal contact with all staff, to inform monitoring and performance management.
- 56 There is a good school improvement plan identifying appropriate priorities and very carefully costed activities. The staff and governors are clear about the time available for completion and monitoring. The headteacher made his own, very critical and detailed analysis of provision through the school when he first started and this forms the backbone to the planning. Targets set are soundly based on increasingly good quality assessment material.
- 57 The leadership and management of the foundation stage are good. It is a new unit and the staff have made good headway through the planning and sharing of resources so pupils make good progress. The management of special educational needs is good. There is particularly good use made of information and communication technology in the teaching and learning.
- 58 The school has been through a very difficult two years. The whole community has suffered socially and financially from the effects of foot and mouth disease and this curtailed many activities within the school. There have also been changes within the staff, particularly in producing several job shares having an effect on subject management roles. All these changes have been well managed. The headteacher leads, literally from the front. He has

situated his office in the main entrance way so that it is a truly open door contact with staff and parents.

- 59 The school's finances are well managed. The school now employs a bursar to manage daily affairs after becoming a 'chequebook' school. This has freed senior staff to become more engaged in other activities. The grants for pupils with special educational needs are used well, particularly through the use of information and communication technology in the teaching and in assessment. Additional funding for English is also used well. There has been very good use of additional money to compensate for the impact of foot and mouth disease through the contribution to computer resources in every classroom, which are used very well. The school ensures that it actively seeks best value. The school currently has good staffing levels and support staff are well trained and provide good support. The accommodation is satisfactory as there is little spare space. Very good use is made of library areas and meeting rooms for work with small groups of pupils. The overall quality and sufficiency of resources is good. There are very good resources for information and communication technology and these are used well. Although the costs per pupil are above average, the quality of teaching and learning, the good curriculum, sound standards in many subjects and the very good attitudes and values mean the school gives good value for money.
- 60 The headteacher's clear vision and the staff's enthusiasm and commitment means the school is well placed to continue to improve.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 61 In order to improve to raise standards and improve the quality of education further the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- Create more opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills through other subjects than English. Paragraphs: 5, 28, 85, 93
 - Improve standards of handwriting and the presentation of work. Paragraphs: 5, 53, 85, 93,127
 - Ensure that marking is used regularly to improve the quality of pupils' work. Paragraphs: 19, 53, 87, 93, 118

In addition to the above key issues the following, lesser issues, should be considered for inclusion in the governor's action plan:

- Ensure good practice in subject leadership is implemented through the school in order to bring all teaching and learning to that of the best. Paragraphs: 53, 103,146

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	43
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	12	20	8	1	0	0
Percentage	5	28	46	19	2	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	216
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	22
Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils' on the school's register of special educational needs	44
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	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the normal time of leaving or transfer	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.0
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	19	13	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	14
	Girls	12	12	13
	Total	26	26	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (90)	81 (90)	84 (90)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	18
	Girls	12	13	13
	Total	26	27	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (90)	84 (80)	97 (97)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	17	16	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	8	12
	Girls	12	11	12
	Total	22	19	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (84)	58 (77)	73 (90)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	9	15
	Girls	10	10	12
	Total	17	19	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	52 (84)	58 (81)	82 (87)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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	216	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– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	112

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	2002/2003
	£
Total income	494,172
Total expenditure	493,242
Expenditure per pupil	2,430
Balance brought forward from previous year	11,903
Balance carried forward to next year	12,833

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	216
Number of questionnaires returned	60

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	30	3	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	53	37	10	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	42	10	3	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	41	15	2	5
The teaching is good.	56	40	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	37	18	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	23	7	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	43	2	2	0
The school works closely with parents.	35	49	10	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	54	38	3	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	42	7	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	35	20	2	13

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

- 62 Children in the Reception classes work towards the nationally agreed Early Learning Goals. They are given work that is stimulating, interesting and of a high quality. This motivates all children, including those with special educational needs, to learn well. By the end of reception, most children will have reached the Early Learning Goals and a few will surpass them, especially in mathematical development. However, some children still need further development in the area of communication, language and literacy for their speaking and listening skills. Overall, this is satisfactory progress and is due to good teaching in all areas of learning. A real strength is the effective teamwork. The classroom support assistants, placement students and parent helpers along with the three teachers are fully involved in teaching and bring much enthusiasm, skill and understanding to the children's learning. They work very well with the children, for example, by careful questioning and by developing vocabulary. Every opportunity is taken to develop spoken language, literacy and numeracy skills and this helps the children make sound progress in all areas of work.
- 63 Curriculum planning is very good and is carried out jointly by the teaching team. The children's learning is supported by thoroughly prepared activities that are wide-ranging and interesting. Other key strengths of the teaching are the consistently high expectations of the teachers and support staff and their organisation and management of the children. Overall, the quality of teaching in the reception classes is good. Emphasis is placed on learning through practical imaginative experiences. Activities are based upon the Foundation Stage curriculum and as the children get older they are introduced to slightly more formal ways of working to prepare them for the National Curriculum. The Reception area is well organised, using two classrooms for shared activities but a secure outdoor area still has to be fully developed and utilised.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 64 The children in Reception make good progress in this area of learning because they receive patient, caring and good teaching. Progress is good because teachers specifically plan activities to promote skills through other areas of learning where they have high expectations of the children. Once in school, the children quickly get to know regular routines and take turns well. They understand the need to change rooms and teachers and they quickly understand the afternoon planning activity boards where they are responsible for making choices and learn how many badge holders are allowed at each activity. They take part willingly, for example, at tidy up time, because they have learnt that working together makes the task easier. Children quickly realise that good behaviour is expected. All staff praise good behaviour and explain calmly why certain behaviours, like shouting out or taking somebody else's belongings, are not acceptable. As a result, most children show good levels of self-discipline and confidence by the end of the year.
- 65 Relationships are very positive in the Reception classes and help to play a significant part in the children's learning. Children enter school full of enthusiasm and are keen to become involved in the exciting range of activities. They enjoy their work and do it confidently. They respond positively to new experiences such as role play in the 'Potting Shed', making symmetrical patterns or acting out the story of 'The Enormous Turnip'. They practice motor control with sandwich making activities and create faces which will 'grow' cress.

Communication, language and literacy

- 66 Most children enter school at the expected levels except for speaking and listening, where most children are below expected levels. By the end of the Reception classes, most

children will have achieved the Early Learning Goals and a few will have surpassed it. Some children will still be below expected levels in speaking and listening because many of them will not have developed the confidence or a sufficiently wide enough vocabulary. However, they make satisfactory progress because of the good teaching by all members of the teaching team.

- 67 The children continue to develop their confidence with speaking because the staff engage in almost continual conversation with them. They chat, question and encourage the children to extend their vocabulary and their confidence in the spoken word. The Reception classrooms are rich environments for promoting the use of language. Staff use every opportunity to develop vocabulary, speaking, listening and writing. The children initiate their own conversations because they are interested in the well-planned activities as they play, for example, in the home corner or the Potting Shed.
- 68 The children listen well to class stories such as 'The Enormous Turnip', joining in when they can. Higher attaining children can identify the names and sounds of certain letters. Clear labels, descriptions and pictures are prominently displayed and used to encourage the development of early reading skills.
- 69 Children use the book areas independently to 'read' books and are developing a good interest in books and stories. Children use the writing areas well to write letters to send. Outside specified literacy time, teachers provide many well-chosen experiences to enhance children's skills, especially in speaking and listening. For example, children recall their seed planting activities or talk about what they had seen on their garden visit. Children take books home to read or share with adults.

Mathematical development

- 70 Overall, children's attainment in mathematics is average but with several children working at a level above those expected. The quality of teaching and learning is good. They experience a wealth of opportunities to use mathematics in practical ways and across other areas of learning. Children know the names of squares, circles and triangles. They are able to recognise 2D shapes from descriptions and can also identify cubes and cylinders. Most can count to 10 forwards and backwards and several can carry out this activity with numbers to 20 and beyond. Towards the end of the reception classes, the national numeracy strategy is gradually introduced and builds well on the practical work done earlier.
- 71 Children apply their shape knowledge well to the construction of symmetrical patterns when they try to copy the opposite shape to that made by the teacher. Staff encourage children to use mathematical vocabulary as they explain their work. Much attention is given to consolidating children's learning through play situations and positional language such as on, in, over, under and behind is emphasised by all staff in as many situations as possible. Activities around the concept of symmetry are emphasised and children build models, make patterns and create butterflies. In reception classes, teaching is good, offering children opportunities to consolidate previous learning and extend their mathematical thinking.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 72 Most children are likely to be working at expected levels in this area of learning by the end of the Reception year and children make sound progress in their learning. The quality of teaching and learning are sound. The staff plan an interesting range of activities which help children learn about the world about them and help develop an appropriate vocabulary. For example, they use a water tray as a pond habitat with model tadpoles and frogs and construction materials to create a building site following a visit. Children study the various stages of bread making and help make pumpkin soup using a variety of tools and equipment. The attractive displays and photographic evidence shows evidence of the

exciting activities that children are offered. In most activities, children have good adult support to help them develop vocabulary and knowledge.

- 73 Children are beginning to investigate simple scientific ideas. They study living things, planting and growing a variety of seeds and design and create plate gardens. Such activities form the foundations for more advanced investigative work in later years. Visits and visitors enrich the curriculum. The local fire fighters, police and ambulance service visit school as part of 'People who help us' topic and all children visit a local garden in groups to discover the wonders of the pond, greenhouse, potting shed and compost heap. Children make cress sandwiches, buttering bread, cutting shapes and labelling a bag to take home in order to extend their knowledge of a variety of foods.
- 74 All children have good access to computers. Children are given opportunity to practice mouse control, they complete 'Alphabet Soup', learn how to click and drag and using 'My World', create life cycles of a frog and parts of a flowering plant.
- 75 Children take part in discussions to raise awareness of their own traditions and those of other cultures. They celebrate Christmas and Chinese New Year, tasting appropriate foods and enjoying traditional celebrations. This has helped the children to learn the need to respect the views of others and raise their awareness of the importance of belonging.

Physical development

- 76 Most children reach expected standards by the end of the reception class. The quality of teaching and learning is sound. The children learn quickly and make sound progress because they participate in structured and purposeful activities both indoors and outdoors. Reception children use the playground and school hall for physical activity as there is no secure outdoor play area for them.. They are able to run, jump, climb and balance. They are all able to change for the lesson and fold their clothes tidily. This is an important aspect of their social development. Once ready, they are able to use the space well, running, hopping, skipping and walking. Most are able to control a ball with hands and feet, able to make little throws and catch the ball.
- 77 In the classrooms, children are given ample opportunity to develop hand-eye co-ordination. They can manipulate the computer mouse competently and roll and mould play dough into numbers. They are supervised closely so that they acquire a correct pencil grip when learning to write. They cut paper with scissors, roll and use tools with play dough, a knife when cutting sandwiches under supervision and control small tools such as glue sticks and paint brushes. They are offered a wide variety of construction toys to use on the carpet. They can use 'small world' figures, the model house and farm and use building toys to create their structures. Most children are on course to meet the early learning goals on this area of development and some will surpass it.

Creative Development

- 78 Children's progress is satisfactory as they have access to good daily activities. The resources provided for creative exploration are strength of provision. Children use paints well to create symmetrical butterflies and they draw and colour plants and seeds. Children are taught basic skills and techniques in their creative work and this can be seen in the scope of children's work. They have made rubbings of different surfaces around school and the potting shed walls are decorated with the good results.
- 79 Children's creative skills are developed further by the provision of a wide range of activities in the role play areas. Children use the exciting resources imaginatively. The large potting shed allows children to act out gardening tasks such as planting seeds and watering plants. Staff talk to children as they play to develop their ideas and vocabulary, and to encourage their understanding of the need to share and help others.

- 80 Children's attainment in creative development is on a level with what is expected of children of this age and all staff work hard at developing the language of creative work.

ENGLISH

- 81 By Year 2 and Year 6 standards in English are in line with national expectations. This is a satisfactory attainment for pupils. Pupils with special educational need make good progress because of the skilled and enthusiastic additional support in classrooms and when withdrawn for specific teaching. This is particularly the case in reading where extra resources and the use of new technology have made a significant impact. Pupils have detailed individual education plans and teachers and support assistants are fully aware of the pupils' targets when working in small groups on structured learning programmes.
- 82 Since the last inspection there has been a gradual improvement in the standards attained. There was a dip in standards in 2002 where the number of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6 was high and the education of many pupils was severely disrupted by the restrictions imposed by the outbreak of 'foot and mouth'. Other improvements have been made. The number of pupils achieving the higher levels of reading has increased, particularly in the infants. Junior pupils are more confident in expressing their views and justifying their preferences. Teaching is good and effective use is made of setting targets for pupils with the effect that pupils work hard to achieve them.
- 83 Infant and junior pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is in line with the national expectation and this represents good progress from when pupils enter school. In all classes pupils are willing to express their opinions and many do so confidently and clearly. They listen carefully to their teachers, and to each other, and older junior pupils contribute maturely to group and class discussions. Pupils are very keen to ask and answer questions and are enthusiastic about contributing their own ideas. In the infants many opportunities are provided for skills to be developed. For example Year 1 pupils are able to explain what they did over the weekend and Year 2 pupils discussed what they wanted to put in an e-mail message to a friend about life in Kirkby Stephen. Good opportunities are provided for older pupils to express their personal feelings and explore events that are in the news. Good use is made of role-play by putting individual pupils on the spot to answer questions from other pupils. This helps them to think quickly and consider views from different angles.
- 84 Infant pupils make good progress in their reading and achieve national standards. They develop an enjoyment of reading and strive to improve their reading skills under the close attention of their teachers. The higher attaining pupils demonstrate a good degree of fluency, expression and understanding when reading. Pupils with reading difficulties are given plenty of help and really enjoy the new reading resources that are linked to the computer. The school has good procedures for monitoring pupils' progress and effective links between home and school mean that parents and teachers support each other to help pupils to make good progress and read regularly. Pupils are good at using their understanding of letter sounds to attempt unknown words. Junior pupils also make good progress and the standard of reading is in line with that expected of eleven year olds. By the age of eleven many pupils are independent readers who read for pleasure, can justify who their favourite author is and are able to review books saying what they liked and disliked.
- 85 Standards in writing are in line with the national expectation. In infant classes progress is sound and careful attention is given to punctuation and spelling. Infant pupils' writing shows a clear sequence and the effective use of adjectives. Pupils in Year 2 are able re-tell the fairy tale Goldilocks and are imaginative in their ideas and use of words. Pupils write for a good range of purposes and can change their style of writing according to the different audiences. Year 2 pupils write thank you letters and letters from imaginary characters such as an animal in the countryside. They can write an information pamphlet about owls and set

out the instructions on how to make a 'monster sandwich'. The progress of junior pupils is variable with older pupils making better progress than younger pupils. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils are able to plan and redraft written work including stories, drama scripts, narrative, poetry and letters. They are persuasive when writing letters of complaint and compiling arguments for and against the building of a leisure complex. Their extended story writing is full of suspense, is well structured and uses direct speech effectively to make the work lively and interesting. Many pupils in older junior classes write poems that are sensitive in content and good in structure; for example when pupils wrote poems to express their views about the war in Iraq. However pupils' writing skills in Year 4 are restricted by the limited opportunities to write for different purposes and the excessive use of work sheets to practise grammar and comprehension. Not enough attention is paid to developing pupils' writing skills through other subjects.

- 86 The quality of teaching is good. In the best lessons teachers are enthusiastic, confident and sustain pupils' involvement through the challenging activities that they set. As a result, pupils are attentive, enjoy what they are learning, work hard and make good progress. Where teachers have high expectations of what pupils can do and give them opportunities to research and develop their ideas, then pupils work independently, show initiative and construct imaginative pieces of work. Where teaching is very good lessons are thoroughly prepared and tasks extend pupils to achieve their best. Teachers' skilful questioning involves pupils directly in lessons and sustains their interest. There are very good relationships between teachers and pupils and this encourages pupils to participate willingly in discussions, freely offering their opinions and feelings. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and set targets for pupils to help them make progress and this keeps pupils motivated. There are some very good examples of the use of marking but this is not consistent. A significant strength of the teaching is that teachers and support staff collaborate effectively to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all English activities.
- 87 The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership and management. There are good formal procedures for monitoring the planning of English and analysing test results to help improve the standards that pupils achieve. Recently purchased reading books are a good investment and pupils of all abilities have access to a good range of books. The presentation of work and the standard of handwriting are areas where improvements need to be made to ensure better work and greater consistency in the school.

MATHEMATICS

- 88 Standards in mathematics are average and the pupils make sound progress. Pupils' numeracy is good because of the good quality of teaching of basic skills. There is good leadership and management and the school is well placed to raise standards further. There has been satisfactory progress since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make progress that is at least as good as their peers. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls. The national test results for 2002 do not reflect the standards most pupils are working at through the school.
- 89 By Year 2 pupils have a good understanding of number patterns and have quick mental computation skills. For example, they count quickly in patterns of two and ten starting from any given number. They add on or count back speedily in tens and fives. They identify missing numbers in a sequence using their knowledge effectively. The teachers plan questions carefully to enable their pupils to build systematically on earlier learning and to challenge them to try harder sums. This is done at a fast pace and with questions matched closely to the needs of individual pupils. This pace and challenge continues throughout the juniors. By Year 6, most pupils are secure in their knowledge of multiplication and division facts and have a good understanding of place value, decimals and percentages. The significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the older classes also make

good gains in retaining important number facts because they are taught as part of a set of pupils working at a similar level and the teaching is pacy. The more able are very good at multiplying larger numbers and at least sound at long division. They recognise sequences involving decimals and produce their own. They respond very well to the highly motivating mental sessions in lessons where the teacher makes very good use of computers to generate sequences of numbers or to display calculations quickly.

- 90 The pupils' ability to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills is sound and an area that is improving because of the good focus on developing this throughout the school. However, the pupils do not always write down their ideas in clear and logical ways, often just giving one word answers where some brief explanation is needed. This is because there is not enough clear guidance on this. Occasionally work is untidily presented. This means that pupils do not always have the opportunity to review and learn from their earlier work and sometimes this even confuses them in the lesson. For example, in a lesson for the most able pupils in Year 5 and 6, they were making very good progress in calculating the mean and mode from a series of statistics based on the football league. The problems involved several calculations of some complexity and pupils generally tackled the work well. However, the later work required information from earlier sums and, because they had not kept a detailed enough record of earlier calculations, it slowed their progress. The lesson was very challenging and exciting in other respects and the pupils had a clear understanding of which aspects of mathematics to use. Work is often closely matched to the needs of different abilities. For example, in Year 2 the more able have to prove that some numbers have multiples of two, five and ten, whilst the average pupils classify numbers by five and ten. The questions are set in a challenging and interesting way. However, in much of the work in the juniors the setting out of work and written explanations could be improved.
- 91 The pupils' knowledge of shape and measure and data handling is sound throughout the school. In Year 2, the pupils understand the properties of different shapes and use this effectively in work on tessellations. They tell the time accurately using analogue and digital recording. The pupils learn to measure accurately in centimetres and metres and can convert metres to centimetres. Pupils continue this work well into the juniors so that they are making accurate calculations of areas of regular and irregular shapes, for example. They measure angles with good precision and use co-ordinates to draw and describe rotational symmetry. Pupils have a secure understanding of the value of using graphs and charts to display data and calculate the mode, median and frequency by Year 5. The most able pupils pose their own questions for further investigations when using data such as that from football leagues and other sporting activities. They use a spreadsheet well to generate their own information and display it on bar, line and pie charts.
- 92 The pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject and a willingness to persevere and use their knowledge. They have a good knowledge of their own learning because of the targets set for them which are discussed, especially with the oldest pupils of all abilities. However, in the juniors pupils do not always see the value of presenting their work well and there is not enough emphasis on this through the marking. Pupils do not need to spend ages writing out unnecessary calculations but they need clear and focused ways of recording and retaining their work.
- 93 The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. There is some very good teaching which is shared with other teachers. The best teaching starts from clear planning with activities which are progressive and closely linked to the main purpose of the lesson. The teacher explains the purpose of the lesson clearly to the children so that they have a sense of anticipation and achievement. For example, in Year 1 the teacher explained to the pupils how they were going to have fun learning how much different coins are worth and then go onto use what they had found out to buy things in. Throughout the lesson she built up their anticipation so they were desperate to try the next thing. In Year 6, the teacher got the lesson off to a dramatic start by creating random numbers on the laptop projected on a whiteboard for pupils to use in their calculations. In most lessons teachers use a good

range of resources well, particularly computers. One reason why some of the work recorded in books in the juniors is not as good as other aspects of the pupils' work would imply is because they make very good use of individual white boards which are wiped off. The teachers ask challenging questions in most lessons and reinforce a good mathematical vocabulary. In the best lessons this is done almost incidentally so that the pupils use the terms easily. In Year 2, there is a very good emphasis placed on pupils' recording throughout the mathematics curriculum and work is well presented. The teachers make good use of homework which is set regularly to reinforce learning. The quality of marking is variable but overall good. The best marking links what the pupil has achieved to what they need to do next and shows that misunderstandings have been fully discussed.

- 94 The subject is well led and managed. Over the last two years, the subject co-ordinator has had increased opportunity to support his colleagues through monitoring teaching and learning and modelling good lessons. He is a leading teacher for the local education authority and uses this experience well. There is very detailed analysis of national test and other data and this is now used well to raise the standards of learning. The curriculum has been modified in the light of this. The good leadership and management, good teaching and the attitudes of the pupils mean the school is well placed to raise standards further.

SCIENCE

- 95 By Year 2 pupils have an average knowledge of science and at the age of eleven they also have an average knowledge and understanding of many aspects of science and have developed a sound understanding of scientific process. This indicates a slight decrease in standards since the last inspection. Although science is well planned and taught by a subject specialist in a large part of the school, the over reliance upon a scheme and photocopied materials restricts the opportunities, especially for the higher attaining pupils to plan, investigate and record their own scientific ideas independently. Pupils with special educational needs make the same progress as their classmates and there is little difference in the attainment levels of boys and girls.
- 96 The pupils in Year 6 can recall well their earlier scientific work. However, when questioned, their scientific knowledge concerning the parts of a plant upon which they were working was insecure.
- 97 The quality of teaching is overall good with one unsatisfactory lesson seen during the inspection. As a consequence, pupils learn well and consistently. In a good year 1 science lesson on growing, pupils were taught to identify the three stages of a bean's growth. They made very good use of information and communication technology using the computer to recall 'Our Bean's Story', which was Year 2's diary of bean growth with photographs, sound and bubble commentaries. Year 2 pupils, accompanied by teachers and parents, went on a walk to compare local habitats where care and concern of living things was emphasised.
- 98 Year 4 pupils compared the time different fats took to melt over hot water as a continuation of their work on solids and liquids. Pupils were able to use equipment carefully and safely but accurate timing devices would have improved the investigation. In Year 6, good teaching prevails. Pupils have been working on plant reproduction and were making models of a flowering plant. Resource provision was very good but subject knowledge of the form and function of the plant parts needed greater emphasis. The class teacher made effective use of the plenary to assess pupil knowledge and understanding by skilful questioning.
- 99 The pupils throughout the school cover a wide range of topics and have a good level of practical engagement through a well planned curriculum. The youngest pupils have covered a range of topics including simple electricity, living things, materials and their properties and investigated light sources around the school. They record their findings mostly on photocopied worksheets, thereby missing opportunities for developing scientific writing at an

early age. Throughout the infants, the foundations for investigative work are laid with fair testing being introduced and pupils making decisions about how a test can be kept fair.

- 100 Investigative work is continued in the juniors with subject vocabulary being emphasised. Year 4 pupils use the terms granules, liquid, powders and solids in their discussion work. They investigate well insulating materials, measuring time and temperature. However, again recording opportunities are limited and pupils fill in charts and tables rather than construct their own.
- 101 Pupils in Years 5 and 6 undertake a comprehensive range of science work and carry out well investigations, making predictions and drawing conclusions. They melt, dissolve, separate and filter different materials, study food chains and spend time studying the human body, looking at major organs, pulse rates and the digestive system. There is evidence of the use of numeracy in the work of the older pupils in graph work, measuring liquids and forces but the opportunities for independent and extended recording are limited due to overuse of photocopied materials. In most science work, standards of presentation were poor and pupils take little pride in their limited written work.
- 102 Information and communication technology is used for some research work but this is an area for further development in science.
- 103 The co-ordinator works very hard, given her limited time in school. She has a very good knowledge of the state of science throughout the school as she plans and delivers most of it. However, the school needs to move more quickly to moving towards class teachers having greater responsibility for the planning and delivery of their own science and the withdrawing of dependency on a scheme of work and worksheets.
- 104 Overall, there is good coverage of all aspects of the National Curriculum Science and planned changes to planning and delivery patterns is likely to enable pupils to take greater responsibility for their own science learning.

ART AND DESIGN

- 105 Standards are above average by Year 2 and 6 and pupils of all abilities achieve well. There has been sound improvement since the last inspection. Although only two lessons were observed during the inspection, judgements on teaching and learning are also drawn from discussions with pupils and staff and scrutiny of work.
- 106 Pupils' basic skills are good. By Year 2, they are very capable at mixing colours with paints and pastels. They know their primary and secondary colours well. They also know that darker colours dominate lighter ones when they are mixed together. They progress through the juniors to show different tones in their work and to use paint well for showing the different effects of light falling on an object. The pupils drawing skills are developed well, although not consistently as some classes have less opportunity to draw from first hand experience. Overall, however, the pupils have many good experiences to observe different objects and arrangements to develop their sketching skills. For example, they make detailed sketches and paintings of lilies in Year 2 showing a very fine eye for the detail in the shape and texture. In the juniors, they make more formal studies of still life objects and learn sketching techniques such as 'hatching' to give the work a three dimensional effect. There are good examples of sketches and paintings of very fine objects such as feathers and shells showing all the patterns and markings.
- 107 The pupils use a good range of different techniques and resources in their work. By Year 6, pupils are quite confident to choose the right media for their task. They understand the different techniques which need to be applied well. For example in Year 2, pupils mix their poster paints to give the texture and brightness of real sand that they have to observe. They

understand that they need a different textured paint for the prints they add to their pictures of the fictional 'Isle of Struay'. The pupils often use very interesting techniques, such as batique, paper tearing and marbling, well. They have used screen prints in their work based on Matisse. They have made sound use of computers both for design and for research.

- 108 The pupils are very proud of their three-dimensional work, particularly in clay. The school kiln is regularly used. There are very fine examples of tiles and plaques based on houses. The pupils could explain clearly the process they used to add colour and glaze models. There is good progression in their clay work through the infants and juniors from thumb pots to whole, hollow shapes using 'slip', which can be developed in a range of ways. Pupils are sometimes involved in large group projects such as in their figure making work with a visiting artist.
- 109 The pupils learn to appreciate the work of different contemporary and past artists. They have studied Egyptian art to good effect. They have been inspired by artists as diverse as Lowry and Van Gogh. The teachers make good links between their own work and that of other artists. For example, in their first hand observations of the local landscape using view finders, the pupils made comparisons with their studies of Lowry in the previous term. The pupils have had good experiences from working with local artists. For example, the Year 5 and 6 pupils have made abstract designs based on poseable figures working with a visiting artist.
- 110 The pupils' attitudes are good. They have firm memories of work they have done throughout the school because they have enjoyed it so much. They are confident to use the different techniques they have experienced. They particularly understand that art does not mean being able to draw well, but see it as a way to express their feelings and that everyone's art can be valued.
- 111 The quality of teaching and learning is good. The school makes sound use of teachers' specialist skills and experience. The lessons have a clear purpose and this is expressed well to the pupils. A strength of the teaching is in the good links made to other aspects of their work both within art and through other subjects such as geography and history. Teachers make good use of the local environment. Lessons are planned well with a clear art focus. However, sound progress is not fully consistent throughout the school as some teachers lack confidence in the subject.
- 112 The subject is well led and managed. The subject co-ordinator is very skilled and effectively supports colleagues through schemes and guidance. There are plans to create more time for monitoring the subject as it has been a low priority for the school and the subject co-ordinator has other significant responsibilities on a part-time post. The school is well placed to address any inconsistencies in progress through this. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. There are a good range of projects and visits to support the subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 113 By the end of Year 6 standards are above national expectations and pupils' achievements across the school are good. The pupils are secure in their knowledge of the key processes of planning, making and evaluating. Overall, teaching is good and sometimes very good and this contributes to the good progress made from Year 1 to Year 6. These are improved judgements to the ones made at the last inspection and show that pupils' attainment and the position of the subject within the curriculum have been improved.
- 114 By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to evaluate their work on fairgrounds. They can identify the sequence of the making process in what was used and how the roundabout was built and are able to evaluate the effectiveness of their models. Year 1 pupils plan playground

equipment. They study the equipment in the school grounds and identify possible movements used such as balance, roll, climb and jump. They consider the fitness for purpose of the materials used such as wood, rubber, metal and concrete and discuss how the existing equipment might be improved. Pupils are able to identify the directional movement of the equipment and make good use of positional language to describe their work.

- 115 An attractive classroom display shows that, in Year 3, pupils have planned and made a monster with moving parts. They use simple pneumatics to make movements and they are able to evaluate the accuracy of their planning and making and suggest possible modifications. Year 4 improved making things move by using simple mechanisms to cause a character in a nursery rhyme picture to move when a lever is activated. They learn how to use simple joining techniques and sliding mechanisms.
- 116 Year 5 pupils have made moving toys using cam mechanisms. They use a design brief, can identify the sequence of making and after completion, make good evaluatory comments about the product. They have also undertaken product research on bread, looking at different varieties, used Information and Communication Technology to download recipes for breads from around the world as well as making and eating bread.
- 117 In another popular topic, Year 6 pupils make slippers. They design their footwear, specifying fabrics, decoration, and needs of the product. Their potential wearer is consulted, the sequence of making ordered and a mock up slipper created to test the design. After the final article has been made, product evaluation takes place. A strong feature of the work throughout school is the emphasis placed on evaluation. Pupils evaluate their good designs and the things they make and consider ways in which they might be improved.
- 118 Where teaching is very good, there are very good relationships between teacher and pupils which allows for a positive work ethos to prevail in the classroom. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work and enjoy the learning that is taking place. They show high levels of co-operation and collaboration and all pupils make contributions that are valued. They appreciate that the importance of designing and know that this guides the making stage. Teachers do not make enough use of marking to raise standards. Good use is made of information and communication technology in the subject and there is an emphasis on subject-specific vocabulary.
- 119 Staff use the national scheme of work and adaptations to teach the subject and the enthusiastic co-ordinator is aware of the state of the subject in school. He has a very good subject knowledge and as well as specialist teaching, provides effective advice and support to colleagues. Resource provision is good and he feels that there is clear progression in skills and subject knowledge across the school.

GEOGRAPHY

- 120 Standards in geography are broadly in line with what is expected for pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils make sound progress. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates. During the week of inspection only one lesson was observed but it was possible to come to judgements about standards through an examination of pupils' work, through the co-ordinator's file, displays and discussions with pupils. The school had adopted the national scheme of work although this still needs adaptation to meet the needs of the pupils. The geography programme is divided into topics which are allocated across the year groups. Teachers plan together and this enables expertise to be shared and for pupils to receive a similar curriculum. Good attention is paid to covering the content of geography in the National Curriculum and the development of geographical skills. Improvement since the last inspection is good overall.

- 121 By the end of Year 2 pupils have a good knowledge of the immediate area and of places beyond. In Year 1 pupils study the immediate area, looking at their route to school, where they live and the immediate locality. Year 2 extend their knowledge of maps and locations and thoroughly explore “Struay”, the island home of “Katie Morag”. With the help of a large map created by a member of staff, pupils explore physical and human features of the island. They begin to make use of simple keys and symbolic representation and very good teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the development of map reading skills.
- 122 By the end of Year 6 pupils, pupils continue to make sound progress in acquiring geographical skills and knowledge and their attainment is satisfactory. Most pupils can accurately identify the main continents of the world as well as oceans and rivers. They know where to find Cumbria and Kirkby Stephen on a map. They compare and contrast land usage in Kirkby Stephen and the Indus Valley. They understand the use of symbols on maps and understand the particular characteristics facing a developing country such as India. Following a visit to Manchester Airport, pupils in Year 5 investigated the air links with Europe and there is use of subject specific vocabulary such as dyke, flatland.
- 123 Overall, teaching is good with some very good aspects. Lessons are well prepared with clear learning objectives. Year 2 pupils were able to identify features on a map and then tried to replicate them on a model using a ‘bird’s eye’ view of the island. They add features such as roads, houses and woodland. The teachers do not pay enough attention to developing pupils’ writing skills through the subject. Pupils were given responsibility for making their own choices and devising symbolic representation.
- 124 The knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator is aware of the state of the subject throughout the school, perhaps more so in the juniors than the infants. He feels it is important to provide pupils with a broader insight of the world outside Cumbria and is aware that there is scope for greater use of information and communication technology in the subject. As yet, he is not given the opportunity to monitor the quality of geography teaching in school.

HISTORY

- 125 Infant and junior pupils are working at a level that is expected for their age and making sound progress. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.
- 126 By Year 2 pupils understand the difference between past and present and old and new. They have a sound knowledge of famous events and people from the past; for example Year 2 pupils know the causes of the Great Fire of London, where it began and why it spread so quickly. They have a good understanding of the similarities and differences between schools in the past and schools now. They achieved this through a questionnaire that they have carried out with grandparents and a careful analysis of what they said. Junior pupils are knowledgeable about the periods in the past that they have studied. For example, Year 6 pupils recognise how events in the past were influenced by famous people and the power that individuals can have in creating images for people to follow. Pupils are aware of how sources of evidence can inform them of the past; for example Year 5 pupils are able to compare Victorian schooling with their own and assess the life styles of rich and poor people in Victorian times. Pupils are encouraged to look at events from the past through the eyes of the people who actually experienced the event; for example Year 3 pupils researched the experiences of evacuee children in World War II and wrote letters home as if they were in the same situation.
- 127 Teaching is good because teachers plan and prepare lessons well, make effective use of artefacts and resources and have a secure knowledge about the topics being taught. Teachers place an emphasis on looking for evidence to justify opinions and written statements. As a result pupils are well motivated and are enthusiastic to participate in

discussions. This helps their confidence in speaking and increases their vocabulary. Good support is given to pupils who have special educational needs and they are interested in topics being taught. The standard of presentation of work is an area for improvement where teachers' expectations need to be higher.

- 128 The co-ordinator provides good leadership by planning a curriculum that is matched to the particular needs of the school. There are good resources to support teaching and information and communication technology is being used effectively; for example the co-ordinator has written a CD ROM about a mining accident where pupils have to evaluate the evidence from the different perspectives of those involved. Good use is made of the local area and visits to places of interest to develop pupils' understanding and extend their knowledge. Assessment is an area for development to help teachers to plan the next stage of the pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 129 There has been very good improvement since the last inspection. Standards of pupils' work are above national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils are provided with planned and many opportunities to use their information and communication technology (ICT) skills in all subjects of the curriculum, with the exception of physical education. They make good progress across the school. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well during these lessons. They are given full access to the curriculum with the results that they make the same rates of progress as their classmates.
- 130 Only 4 lessons were observed during the period of inspection. However, a wide range of other evidence was available. This includes discussion with class teachers and the ICT consultant and discussions with pupils and co-ordinator. This made it possible to judge both rates of progress and levels of attainment for all pupils.
- 131 By the age of seven, pupils have developed computer skills which are above expectations and they have made good progress in this aspect across Years 1 and 2. Pupils use the keyboard and mouse confidently and understand how to access information, using icons, menus and files. They successfully access information from the internet, word process and are able to use programmable robotic devices. They use different fonts and can change the style and size of word-processed text. The whole class use of network laptops means that all pupils are taught together using a interactive white board and the experienced ICT consultant supports staff and pupils during lessons.
- 132 Information and communication technology is used effectively to support literacy and numeracy as well as other subjects. During the week of the inspection, Year 2 added text to a slide presentation of Kirkby Stephen to which they had already added sound. This was linked to their Geography work on "Struay". The pupils' enthusiasm for the subject is very evident. They work independently or in pairs and most are able to work without over dependence on adult supervision. This is a strength of provision.
- 133 By the age of eleven, pupils talk knowledgeably about their use of spreadsheets and how they can use the computer. Most pupils have secure understanding of the use and purpose of databases- including tabular and graphical presentation of data. The use of the computer and whiteboard during maths lessons means the pupils are continually challenged and procedures are demonstrated for them on the calculator display. Year 5 pupils use different tools in order to draw a plan of their classroom, adding details such as lighting, and desks. Subject specific vocabulary is emphasised and pupils understand copy, paste, fill colour and zoom. The computer technician supports pupils very well and acts as a valuable trouble shooter in all classes.

- 134 Year 6 pupils consolidate work on power point slide presentations. Again, using the school laptops and interactive whiteboard, they add navigation and hyperlink buttons to their presentations and the excellent teaching seen during this lesson ensures all pupils are challenged and supported, if necessary. Pupils are given responsibility to manage their task and they share the task and laptops with maturity.
- 135 Throughout the school, digital cameras are regularly used by staff and pupils and the outcomes incorporated into displays or pupil's work. This aspect is also a strength of provision in school.
- 136 All pupils have very positive attitudes to, and high levels of interest in this subject. In the lessons observed, pupils show intense concentration and great enjoyment. They work well together, listen attentively to the contributions of others and behave very well. The good quality of work produced across the school and the care with which computers and other related equipment are used reflect the high expectations of teachers and the responsibility that pupils take for their own learning when working independently. The subject is contributing positively to the social development of pupils and, through subjects such as history and geography, to their moral development. Most teachers have secure subject knowledge and are confident in their use of ICT. The use of the ICT consultant, the technician and the advice and support of the subject co-ordinator, who is, at present, the head teacher, ensures continuing development of the subject.
- 137 When all the evidence available is taken into account, the quality of teaching is very good with some excellent features observed across the school. Teaching and learning are well supported by thorough planning. The setting out of clear lesson objectives is a positive feature. These establish expectations of what should be achieved in a series of lessons.
- 138 The subject is led by the enthusiastic and very knowledgeable head teacher. He has a clear vision of the place of ICT within teaching and the school which is indicated in the subject development plan. He has been instrumental in the positive way in which the subject has developed, and still is, developing. The management of the subject is very good. The ICT consultant offers support and advice, when needed, and provides a good role model for other staff.
- 139 Resource provision is very good with inter-active whiteboards in some rooms and a set of wireless laptops which can be moved across classrooms. The governors with ICT responsibility monitor the subject in school and parents are supportive of developments in the subject.

MUSIC

- 140 Standards in music are above expected levels by Year 2. It was not possible to judge standards by the end of the juniors but work in Year 4 indicates that good progress is being maintained. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. There is not the same level of specialist teaching throughout the school but the two lessons seen were both very good and the planning in place provides sound guidance.
- 141 By Year 2, the pupils are very good at maintaining a rhythm whether clapping, singing or using a percussion instrument. This is because of the good example set by the teacher. The pupils identify repeated rhythmical patterns in the song they have written and use this to accompany the music. They sing in rounds and in more than one part with very good accuracy because of the support of other adults when singing, but they also show good independence. The pupils compose their own songs as a class, which involve chants and singing. They understand that music can be loud and soft and use this knowledge well in their compositions. They follow the 'conducting' of their classmates closely and thoroughly enjoy the experience.

- 142 The enthusiasm for music continues through the juniors. They respond well to vocal exercises to warm up at the start of their lesson extending their rhythmical knowledge. They have a good understanding of notation. For example, they devised their own picture system in Year 4 to tell a musical story of the wind and water. They also have a sound understanding of more formal notation and more able pupils can explain what a six/eight rhythm is. They use their knowledge of the sound capabilities of different instruments to make their own compositions. They benefit from the specialist skills of a visiting musician and the subject co-ordinators own musical ability. They discuss their ideas fully; 'How can we show high sounds.....but not loud?' 'I know we could use symbols like a heart machine.'
- 143 Pupils have a sound appreciation of different styles of music. For example, the Year 6 pupils are composing their own blues songs and have a good understanding of the 12 bar structure. They have listened to opera and classical music as well as recent studies in history of the music of Elvis and John Lennon. The Year 6 thoroughly enjoyed their 'Hippy Day'.
- 144 The quality of teaching and learning is very good. The teachers observed had good personal skills and pass these on well to the pupils. Their enthusiasm is contagious. They have very high expectations and make good use of the many pupils who take instrumental tuition lessons. The quality of instrumental teaching is also at least good from the small sample seen. The planning for the lessons seen is very good with a clear purpose. All pupils are encouraged to be involved and are supported very well.
- 145 The pupils have positive attitudes to music because of the high profile and opportunities for first hand experience. They have produced CDs of Christmas songs and regularly perform in assemblies and concerts.
- 146 The subject leadership is good and management is sound. The subject leader provides some specialist teaching and so knows the standards of pupils work well. There are many opportunities taken for visiting musicians to contribute to learning. A high proportion of pupils receive tuition for musical instruments. However, some of the work on reviewing and developing the planning is not as far advanced as anticipated and this limits the contribution non-specialist staff can make to the development of the subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 147 By the ages of seven and eleven pupils are reaching standards that are in line with what is expected for their age. Pupils achieve well because of the breadth of the curriculum that enables pupils to participate in a wide range of games, including football, netball, rounders and rugby. There has been sound improvement since the last inspection.
- 148 Junior pupils have sound levels of co-ordination and are agile and balanced in their movements. In games for example Year 6 pupils are to throw, catch and strike balls with accuracy. A strength is that pupils are able to make perceptive evaluations of their performances and give encouragement to each other to improve. Pupils have regular swimming lessons and the standard is good with the vast majority of pupils being able to swim 25 metres by the age of 11. Older pupils have good opportunities to engage in outdoor and adventurous activities. For example, junior pupils go on a residential week where they have opportunities to go sailing, kayaking, fell walking and orienteering. This is very helpful in promoting pupils' personal and social development and building good attitudes towards teamwork. Infant pupils play games with enthusiasm and are good at throwing and catching balls. In dance they are able to put together a sequence of movements to music and pay sound attention to starting and finishing positions.

- 149 The quality of teaching is satisfactory. When teaching is good lessons are well planned, effective use is made of pupil demonstrations and expectations of pupils' behaviour are high. This leads to enthusiastic responses from pupils, good standards of concentration and positive attitudes to their work. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and use praise appropriately to motivate them, ensuring that pupils persevere with tasks, work collaboratively and practice their skills. Where teaching is satisfactory the teachers organise the lessons well and use resources and space effectively but not enough attention is paid to developing pupils' skills in physical education. A strength of the teaching is the impact on pupils' personal development in promoting their confidence, self-esteem and ability to work collaboratively. Teachers understand the importance of warming up and relaxing after exercise and this is consistent feature of all lessons.
- 150 The curriculum co-ordinator is providing good leadership and management because of the effective procedures for supporting teachers and planning the curriculum. Her commitment to ensuring that pupils receive a good range of physical activities is effective in successfully promoting pupils' personal development. As a result physical education makes a good contribution to the social and moral development of the pupils by promoting the importance of teamwork, problem solving and fair play. The good range of extra-curricular sporting activities is appreciated by the pupils who respond by attending well and participating vigorously.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 151 By the ages of seven and eleven pupils are working at a level that is broadly in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus and make satisfactory progress. Infant pupils have a thorough understanding Christianity and Judaism. Junior pupils have a sound understanding of Buddhism as well as Christianity and Judaism. There has been sound improvement since the last inspection.
- 152 Pupils in infant classes make sound progress in religious education. Pupils' knowledge about Christianity and Bible stories is sound. They know that there are similarities and differences between the celebrations of religions. For example, they know that Jews celebrate Hanukkah and that Christians celebrate Christmas but appreciate that each celebration is special to followers of both faiths. Pupils have good opportunities to apply what they have learnt to their own lives; for example by looking at what is right and wrong and what is special to them.
- 153 Pupils in junior classes also make satisfactory progress. They develop their understanding of religious values and beliefs by listening to parables and investigating the special books of different religions. Year 3 pupils have a good knowledge of the different places of worship and have visited many of the churches in the local area. They know that places of worship are special places but are aware that individuals have their own special places that give them special feelings. Pupils have a secure understanding of Buddhism and understand the similarities and differences with other religions.
- 154 Teaching is good. Lessons are well-planned and prepared and pay good attention to the objectives as set out in the Local Agreed Syllabus. Teachers question pupils skilfully to bring out their ideas and this helps them to share personal feelings and beliefs. This leads to pupils recognising and respecting individual differences. As a result the pupils are attentive, have positive attitudes and keen to participate in lessons. For example younger pupils in Year 1 pupils offered their own personal feelings about objects that are special to them and why they are special.
- 155 Religious education is well organised, led and managed. The co-ordinator has a very clear view of the strengths and areas for improvement and has put an action plan in place to bring

them about. Good support is given to help teachers with their planning and good resources are available to support individual topics.