

INSPECTION REPORT

CHAPEL STREET INFANT SCHOOL

Dalton-in-Furness

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112192

Headteacher: Mrs A Edmondson

Reporting inspector: Andrew Clark
21596

Dates of inspection: 13th – 16th January 2003

Inspection number: 247194

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant school
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Chapel Street Dalton-in-Furness
Postcode:	LA15 8RX
Telephone number:	01229 897919
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms M Martindale
Date of previous inspection:	19 th January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21596	Andrew Clark	Registered inspector	Science; information and communication technology; music; foundation stage	What sort of school is it? 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?
9306	Barbara Moore	Lay inspector		The pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
25623	Ted Cox	Team inspector	English; history; geography; religious education; special educational needs	
21585	Tony Kingston	Team inspector	Mathematics; art and design; design and technology; physical education; educational inclusion	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Chapel Street Infant School serves the small town of Dalton-in-Furness, Cumbria. The school caters for boys and girls aged between three and seven. There are currently 151 full time pupils and a further 52 children who attend the two nursery classes in the mornings only. The majority of pupils are from white British families. A very small percentage of pupils do not speak English as their first language. Approximately 13 per cent of pupils are eligible for a free school meal which is broadly average. The majority of pupils are from the local area and the families are from a range of occupations. The area has suffered many years of high unemployment. Almost a third of pupils are identified with special educational needs, which is above average. These include moderate learning difficulties, particularly in speech and communication and literacy. Two pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The attainment of children on entry to the school is typical for their age, although it is often below this for mathematics.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Chapel Street Infant School is a very good school. Standards in reading and writing are well above average and pupils make good progress in many subjects. There is an excellent ethos for learning and the quality of teaching is good. The school is very well led and managed through the commitment of all staff and governors. There is very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in reading and writing are very high and good in many other subjects
- The learning opportunities for children, both in and out of school time, are rich and challenging
- The headteacher provides excellent leadership and staff successfully share her commitment to succeed
- The quality of teaching is good. The teachers make good use of their detailed knowledge of what children understand and can do
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good
- The children have very good attitudes and their personal development is very good. Relationships are excellent
- The partnership with parents and links with other schools make a very good contribution to learning

What could be improved

- Challenge to the most able pupils in mathematics

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been good improvement since the last inspection in January 1998. There were no key issues at that time. The school has continued to build on the many strengths described at the time. Standards in reading and writing have improved well. The minor issues identified have been addressed. There are now more opportunities for subject leaders to work alongside their colleagues. The school governors are now successfully involved in establishing priorities for school improvement. There is still room to raise standards in mathematics closer to those achieved in English.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

There has been good improvement in all three subjects over a period of five years and the work seen indicates that this is being maintained. Standards of reading and writing are well above similar schools and progress is very good. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels in tests is above average in reading and writing. The results for mathematics declined for a period because fewer pupils than average reached the higher levels, although more pupils than normal reached the expected level for their age. This largely reflected the pupils' attainment when they started school but, following a detailed review of planning, standards have risen. The overall time devoted to mathematics is not as high as that given to reading and writing and this limits learning opportunities, particularly for the most able. Standards in science are average overall, but the pupils' knowledge of materials was in the top five per cent nationally in the 2002 assessments. Pupils' achieve well in most subjects. Those with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them.

In the work seen, standards of reading and writing are very high. Pupils read expressively and with good understanding. Pupils' stories are exciting and their spelling, handwriting and punctuation are good. Speaking and listening skills are very good. In mathematics, basic skills are good but their ability to use them in problem solving is not as strong. Standards in art and design are very good. Standards in design and technology, information and communication technology and music are above average. Standards in history, geography, physical education and religious education are typical for their age.

The children make a good start in the nursery and reception classes. Many children achieve above normally expected levels for personal and social development, communication, language and literacy, creative and physical development. They reach expected levels for mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils love coming to school and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The pupils are friendly and polite and play and work well together. There have been no exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	The pupils' personal development is very good. They take a pride in their work and relationships are excellent.
Attendance	Good. Pupils are happy to come to school.

The school has such a happy, caring and exciting atmosphere that pupils are happy and hard working. Although attendance levels fell in 2001-2 because of illness, they are generally above average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching and learning is good. It was very good in a third of lessons observed and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. The teaching of English is very good. The pupils' literacy skills are well taught through all subjects because of the very strong emphasis given to stories and poetry throughout the curriculum. The teaching of mathematics is good and pupils' calculation skills are well taught. Teachers plan their lessons very well making good use of the school's subject guidance. Teachers make very good use of their detailed knowledge of pupils' achievement in most subjects to set motivating work. However, in mathematics, there is not always challenging enough work for pupils who complete the main tasks. The relationship between staff and pupils is excellent and the management of behaviour through the 'Chapel Street Code' is very effective. Very occasional lessons lack pace with the teacher spending too much time introducing activities. The pupils' work is well marked and good use is made of homework in all subjects. As a result pupils show enthusiasm and take a pride in their work. They work hard. The nursery and reception children concentrate for good periods of time and make decisions about what work they will do. The pupils with special needs are very well planned for and teaching assistants support them with skill and sensitivity. Lessons are usually very appropriate for the pupils and good links are made between subjects. The main strength of the teaching is the consistent approach built upon well thought out guidance. This has maintained the quality of teaching despite recent teaching staff changes and changes of age groups taught.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	This is very good. It is well planned with interesting links between subjects. The range and quality of extra-curricular activities is excellent.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils are identified at a very early stage and their progress is closely followed. Small, yet challenging steps are planned for their learning and pupils are well supported.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The school has only had very recent experience of this. Teachers have made good use of Local Authority services to plan and monitor progress. The school's inclusive approach means that there is good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is very good. The curriculum is thoughtfully planned to encourage pupils to be aware of beauty and wonder around them and there are many opportunities for prayer and reflection. Art and design, drama and religious education contribute well to cultural development. There is very good moral guidance.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. There are very good procedures to make sure pupils are well cared for and the high quality of assessment and recording of pupils' progress contributes to their good learning.

The very good partnership with parents and the community contributes to the challenging ethos. The record keeping and assessment of all aspects of pupils' learning are a particular strength.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides excellent leadership through her energy, careful planning and example as a teacher. The deputy headteacher and other staff share her enthusiasm and commitment.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. They monitor the work of the school systematically and contribute well to planning for further improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school makes detailed analysis of all available statistical data and consults regularly with parents. Their close relationships with the local junior and secondary schools mean they are well informed of the progress of pupils after they leave Chapel Street Infants.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school makes particularly good use of its computers and rich resources for literacy.

The accommodation is adequate for the number of pupils and the outdoor space is well used. There are good levels of staffing and they are used particularly well to support the above average number of pupils with special educational needs. The headteachers' commitment to the school is a significant strength. The school is effective in providing the best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children enjoy school • Children are well taught and make good progress • The staff are approachable and welcoming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities out-of-school time

The team fully agrees with the positive views of parents. Only a small percentage of parents expressed concern over extra-curricular activities. In the view of the inspectors the range and quality of after school activities which includes first-aid, gymnastics, recorders and computers is quite exceptional for pupils of this age and the commitment of staff is very high.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 There has been a good improvement in standards in reading, writing and mathematics overtime. Standards in reading were well above the national average in 2002 tests and standards of reading were above. They were well above the average for schools with similar free school meal ratios. The high standards are a direct result of the very good quality of teaching and learning and the emphasis given to stories and rhymes throughout the curriculum. The percentage of pupils attaining higher levels in the national tests is above average for reading and writing. The pupils currently in Year 2 are working at very high standards in both reading and writing. The achievement of pupils is very good for all abilities. Although the majority of pupils start school with average language and communication skills there are few pupils who start at a higher level.
- 2 Standards in mathematics dipped after the last inspection because fewer than average pupils attained the higher levels in national tests. This meant results were very low when compared with the national average. However, following careful analysis of past test results, the school amended aspects of its planning for mathematics successfully and standards rose in 2002 to compare favourably with the national average. This meant good achievement for the pupils of all abilities as many of them started the school with attainment below that normally expected for their age. It is an important strength of the school's achievement that although there have been fewer than average pupils reaching high levels in the past, there have been above average numbers of pupils attaining the normally expected level. This is because the teachers' thorough planning and careful use of the assessment of pupils' past achievement is very effective in ensuring the less able and those with special educational needs make good progress.
- 3 The pupils' standards in science are average overall. In the teachers' assessments for Year 2 pupils in 2002, however, the pupils understanding and knowledge of materials was in the top five per cent for the country and in several other areas was above average. There are no specific weaknesses in the current pupils' standards.
- 4 Children make good progress through the nursery and reception classes because of the good quality of teaching and learning. A very firm foundation is laid for future learning because teachers and support staff lead the children to a love of learning and good levels of independence. By the end of reception most children meet the expected standards for their age in all areas of learning and many exceed them for personal and social development, communication, language and literacy, creative and physical development.
- 5 Pupils with special educational needs achieve standards that are below average but appropriate to their level of understanding. By the age of seven, they make good progress relative to their abilities. This reflects the position at the previous inspection. The good progress is the result of good, and often very good teaching, both in class lessons and when pupils are taught in small groups by the special educational needs teacher. Teachers make very good use of the monitoring of pupils' academic progress to plan work that matches pupils' academic needs. Classroom assistants provide valuable individual attention for pupils with special educational needs, who follow all aspects of the National Curriculum.

- 6 The pupils' speaking and listening skills are good. They listen carefully to teachers and answer questions clearly and thoughtfully. Standards of reading for the current pupils are well above average as a result of the strong emphasis on developing reading skills. They enjoy reading and show good expression and interest. Writing skills are also well above average. Pupils write imaginatively with careful spelling and neat handwriting. Pupils achieve well in numerical calculations in response to fast and exciting mental activities. Their knowledge of shape and measure is developed well throughout the curriculum. The problem-solving ability, particular of the more able, could be further improved.
- 7 The pupils make good progress in information and communication technology and standards are above average. This is because of the very good use of skills they have learned in other subjects. For example, word processing skills are used well in history and English.
- 8 Standards in art and design are very good. The pupils develop a wide range of skills and have many opportunities to use them in interesting and relevant ways. The standards of pupils' work in design and technology are above average by Year 2 and achievement is good and often very good. Standards in physical education are good for swimming, which is not often taught to infant school pupils, and sound in other aspects. The pupils achieve standards that are typical for their age in history, geography and religious education.
- 9 The school has set challenging targets for future attainment which are very securely based on accurate assessment of previous achievement. The school is well placed to meet its targets and see further improvements to standards.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 10 In the last report pupils' attitudes and behaviour was judged to be good, this has improved and is now very good. Pupils' participation in school activities is very good. They participate very well in the extra school activities that are available; the clubs, which the school provides for children, are very popular and very well supported. This enthusiasm for the day to day life of the school is reflected in the very good behaviour of pupils. However, there are occasional lapses of behaviour by a minority of children when the pace of the lesson is less effective. Pupils with special educational needs are very well behaved and have very good attitudes to learning. They respond very well to classroom assistants. Moving around school, during assemblies and at play children understand what is expected of them and they respond well to this. Pupils are courteous and polite and very welcoming to visitors, they are happy to talk about their school and the things they enjoy about their life in school. Pupils' enthusiasm for school and their participation in the many excellent activities available for them is a strength of the school.
- 11 Children quickly settle into nursery routines because of the well planned activities and very good support they are given. Their confidence is particularly evident in the outdoor play area when clambering the climbing frames and riding their bikes. They behave very well and learn to concentrate for long periods in the reception classes.
- 12 Staff, led by the headteacher, set an excellent example in their relationships with one another and with the pupils. They are very good role models; this is reflected in the way pupils relate to one another, without any apparent aggression. There is an absence of oppressive behaviour and a high degree of harmony exists, this is

demonstrated at break and lunchtime when children play happily making full use of the facilities available.

- 13 The personal development of pupils is very good; the strong programme for personal, social and health education enhance this. There is a strong moral ethos that permeates the day to day life of the school. Children take pride in their work; in an art lesson children were eager to show their skills at drawing. Simple tasks to help in the day to day activities of the school are undertaken with enthusiasm and pride. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into the life of the school. Social inclusion has a clear priority in the life of the school.
- 14 Attendance levels at the school are good overall and pupils are happy to come to school. The school focuses well on improving attendance and maintaining a high level of punctuality. Through the daily life of the school, pupils' understanding and respect for others reflects the strong ethos of the school and its strong links within the community.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 15 The quality of teaching and learning is good and is a key reason for the school's continuing success. In the lessons observed, the quality of teaching and learning was very good in a third of the lessons and very few lessons were less than good. The teachers actively teach the pupils to become good learners by giving them useful strategies for tackling their work. The headteacher has created an excellent ethos for learning through the care, respect and high expectations of all involved in the school. Standards of teaching and learning have been maintained despite significant staff and role changes. Support staff make a good contribution to the quality of teaching.
- 16 The quality of teachers' planning is very good. They make full use of national strategies in literacy and numeracy to guide their planning and match activities carefully to the pupils' needs. They also make good use of the regular and accurate assessments made of pupils' progress in most subjects. Teachers consider the vocabulary they intend to teach carefully so that it can be a tool for pupils later on. For example, in science the teacher discussed the meaning of words such as 'fair test' and 'experiment' in good depth so that the pupils used the terms successfully throughout the lessons. Teachers match the activities in the lessons well to the time available and the abilities of pupils. For instance, at this early stage of the year literacy and numeracy introductions in the nursery and reception class are short, very focused and involve a good range of songs and rhyming activities to involve all pupils. The 'plenary' or end sessions of the lessons are regularly well planned to assess the progress pupils have made and set them thinking about the next stage of the lessons.
- 17 The quality of teaching in English is very good. Literacy skills are very well taught throughout the curriculum. Teachers set good examples in their lively reading of well-chosen texts to develop reading skills. There is a very strong focus on developing language skills such as speaking and listening and activities are motivating and challenging. There is a rich culture of traditional rhymes, folk tale and song that underpins learning in many subjects. As a result pupils become competent learners, able to use their reading and writing skills well to further their understanding in other subjects. They are given good strategies to enable them to find the meaning of words and how to spell them, which increases their confidence in writing in all subjects.
- 18 The teaching of mathematics is good. It is not as good as English because the lessons are often too short to allow pupils to use their skills in problem-solving

thoroughly, in particular the more able pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to extend their learning. Although, the school follows the recommendations of the National Numeracy Strategy for the length of lessons, teachers do not make the same very good use of incidental and extra-time for mathematics that they do for English. The teachers start lessons with very effective, quick-fire mental sessions during which counting and computation skills are developed progressively. Pupils take pride in striving for faster times and more accuracy. The teachers make use of good techniques to allow pupils to explain their strategies for mental computation to others and this reinforces their learning. They model good ways of making written calculations. There are very good opportunities for practical, first-hand experience which makes learning enjoyable and encourages very good progress in the practical application of the number skills. The pupils also make good use of the mathematical knowledge and skills in science and design and technology.

- 19 The staffs' relationship with pupils is excellent, resulting in very good management of pupils. Lessons are stimulating and so pupils are motivated. Teachers talk to pupils in quiet and friendly tones. The pace of almost all lessons means there is very little opportunity for pupils to become bored and pupils are eager to hear what is coming next. The few lessons which were judged to be satisfactory, tended to be marked by a slower pace of teaching, especially an overlong introduction. However, the pupils were still well behaved, although a few became restless. The tidy, well-organised classrooms allow pupils maximum independence whilst they are collaborating closely. The nursery and reception classes are very well organised with activities representing all areas of learning which are constantly accessible to children. The outdoor area provides a good range of physical activities to motivate and challenge the pupils. The quality of teaching and learning in nursery and reception is good.
- 20 The quality of teachers' questioning is very good and in turn encourages the pupils to become inquisitive and questioning. For example, in reading in reception the teacher skilfully questioned the children so that they understood why the characters in the book they read together acted as they did. They immediately use the vocabulary and style of question employed by the teacher. The support assistant for a pupil with special educational needs shows great sensitivity and subject awareness when questioning the pupil she is supporting in a science lesson. This enabled the pupil to understand the basic principles of the lesson well.
- 21 The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is usually good and sometimes very good. Teachers know their pupils well. They make very good use of assessments of pupils' progress to set targets for pupils to achieve and plan work that is very well matched to their individual needs. Classroom assistants are used very well to support learning. All adults develop good relationships with pupils, which has a positive effect on learning.
- 22 The quality of marking is very good. Teachers are supportive of pupils in lessons and praise their achievement effectively. They also mark work closely and draw out points for future improvement. In some of the Year 2 work in English the marking becomes a helpful dialogue between pupil and teacher. The quality of marking feeds the regular assessments made by teachers and supports the continuous improvement.
- 23 The teachers make good use of homework in many subjects. Pupils are often set tasks to find out additional information or complete particular tasks. For example, in information and communication technology in Year 2 the pupils were encouraged to find information on websites on their history topic. The school supported pupils who

have not got computer access by running a computer club searching for the same information.

- 24 The good quality of teaching is consistent throughout the school, because all staff work very effectively as a team. The outcomes of monitoring by the literacy and numeracy subject leaders and the headteacher are openly shared and incorporated into everyone's practice. This approach has been particularly successful in improving questioning techniques and developing plenary sessions. The school is well-placed to continue improving the quality of teaching and learning.

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

- 25 The school offers its pupils a very good, rich and full curriculum. It is well planned and makes sensible and interesting links between many subjects. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements and is enhanced and enriched by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities. Most of the work undertaken by pupils carefully builds on previous learning. English, design technology and art and design are especially strong and this is reflected in the high standards that pupils achieve in these areas. Some subjects such as information and communication technology, geography and history are better represented than at the time of the last inspection. Other subjects have maintained their standing. These strong features help to ensure that pupils receive a rich, relevant and lively curriculum which serves to interest, involve and sometimes inspire pupils. The school has, therefore, improved on the good quality and range of learning opportunities provided for pupils at the time of the last inspection.
- 26 The learning opportunities for the children in the nursery and reception classes are very good. There is a very good focus on basic personal and communication skills through all areas of learning. Classrooms are bright, stimulating and highly motivating to the children. The activities are made very relevant to the children's experience and to the books and rhymes they hear.
- 27 The very good teaching of literacy is the bedrock of the school's curriculum. The skills learned in literacy underpin and serve the quality of the work seen in many other subjects. They listen well both to their teachers and their friends and they speak confidently when explaining their own ideas and when performing, for example, to the whole school for their class assemblies. Pupils' very good reading skills help them to find facts from books easily and they use this information in their writing. Approaches for improving standards of attainment in mathematics have been successful and the skills learned are used across the curriculum effectively. However, one minor area for development is that pupils have too few opportunities to use and apply mathematics through problem solving investigations. This is because the proportion of time allocated to mathematics does not allow the time nor the opportunity for the higher attaining pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding in problem solving situations. This restricts their chances of achieving the higher levels. Information and communication technology is used well across the curriculum to assist pupils' learning. They use it to consolidate work in number, to write captions for displays, to present their poems and to experiment with simple graphic design.
- 28 The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinator supports her colleagues, parents and pupils well and teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs are given tasks which systematically build on what they already know, understand and can do. Teaching assistants provide very

good support to the pupils and their skills make a significant contribution to their good gains in learning. A number of parent and student volunteers also work in school and they too give good support. Individual education plans have clear targets which are based on the very good knowledge of the pupils' achievement.

- 29 Although a minority of parents thought that the school's approach to extra-curricular activities was inadequate, this is not the judgement of the inspection team. There is an excellent range of interesting clubs for pupils of this age including, two gymnastic clubs, first aid, recorders, information and communications technology. There are a number of visits which support pupils' work in classrooms including museums, the local church, art exhibitions and the home of Beatrix Potter. The vicar of the local church, craftspeople, artists and other visitors are also used very effectively to enrich the curriculum. The school also takes a very active part in the life of the community accepting invitations to take part in events such as Remembrance Day and Cumbria in Bloom. There are many opportunities to bring the curriculum to life for pupils by using materials which they can handle and learn from first hand, for example in history and design technology.
- 30 The school ensures that all pupils have equal access to all areas of the curriculum and that they have equal opportunity to succeed in them. Teachers make every effort in all lessons and activities that support the curriculum to ensure that the contributions of all pupils are celebrated and valued. Teachers give good emphasis to pupils' personal, social and health education. They promote these areas actively and consistently as part of a carefully structured programme, which is embedded in the life of the school. For example, caring for others is given high priority in regular discussions in all classes. The programme includes suitable emphasis, through physical education, on the importance of exercise for maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Teachers constantly give praise and encouragement to enhance pupils' self-esteem.
- 31 The arrangements for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good and a strength of the school. Much of the school's provision is embedded in its everyday life and teaching
- 32 The school promotes pupils' spiritual development very well. Collective acts of worship offer opportunities to celebrate festivals and other occasions and provide time for quiet reflection. The school provides pupils with many insights into their own and others' values and beliefs through religious education lessons and whole school assembly. Teachers successfully promote pupils' awareness of beauty and wonder through, for example, the close observation and delicate paintings of flowers which grow in the school's wildlife garden.
- 33 The school fosters pupils' moral development very well. The school's Code of Conduct is displayed all around the school and teachers take advantage of the opportunities to reinforce the code in classrooms and assemblies where moral themes are given considerable emphasis. Pupils accept the code, try hard to meet its aims and have a strong sense of right and wrong. There are consistent approaches by all adults to the rewarding of effort and good behaviour. The support given to charities illustrates the caring ethos of the school. All staff provide very good role models, consistently treating all members of the school community and each other with courtesy and respect.
- 34 Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Pupils are polite and courteous. They co-operate and collaborate effectively in pairs and small groups when carrying out tasks in mathematics, art, design technology and most do so very sensibly.

Supportive and constructive relationships between teachers and pupils successfully promote pupils' self esteem and social interaction. The efforts of all staff to provide clear and consistent messages are unfailing. At lunch times pupils are well-mannered, making these enjoyable social occasions where friends meet and quietly and sensibly enjoy each others' company. After-school clubs, day visits and joint ventures with both the junior school and the comprehensive school provide further opportunities for pupils to work together and grow in confidence when working with others.

- 35 Provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. Through literacy pupils learn a wealth of traditional folk tales, fairy stories and nursery rhymes which they enjoy reciting and performing with actions. Through history and geography pupils find out about their own locality both in present times and the past and engage in history weeks when they dress up and go out into the community. Music from a wide range of styles and periods in history provides pupils with very good opportunities to engage in quiet listening and to extend their knowledge of composers such as Stravinsky. A rich and varied art curriculum ranging from the crafts of Cumbria and the work of local artist George Romney to that of other cultures and styles provide excellent opportunities for pupils to enjoy the richness of the world's cultural heritage.
- 36 Religious education and assemblies help develop knowledge of other religions and cultures. Pupils benefit from visitors to the school and a programme of visits such as to the local church, museum and Buddhist temple which help to bring the cultural aspect to life for them.
- 37 There are excellent links with partner institutions such as the local church and junior school. Pupils and staff from the local secondary school, Dowdales, support the school through dance and the making of story sacks.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 38 Since the last inspection report the school has improved its support for ensuring pupils welfare which is now very good and is a strength of the school. Staff know and understand their pupils very well. They know the procedures to be followed to ensure that pupils are well protected and the level of welfare is very good. Effective procedures are in place to promote all the related matters of health, first-aid, safety and security to a very high level. Parents appreciate the way staff care for their children.
- 39 Procedures for the monitoring of children's academic performance are very good. Through assemblies and the programme for personal, social and health education the school has established very good personal support and guidance for pupils. This is developed through the teachers' knowledge of the children, and is a strength of the school. The excellent relationships which flourish throughout the school ensure that everyone within the school community is valued. The strong moral ethos, which is part of the daily life of the school, contributes to the caring environment and the strong family atmosphere. Social inclusion is a strong feature in the life of the school. This very effective support makes a positive contribution to children's well being, and enables them to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered.
- 40 Pupils with special educational needs benefit greatly from the additional support they receive from the special educational needs teacher and classroom assistants. Baseline and other tests are used to measure pupils' progress and to help teachers provide work focused on individual pupils' needs. The school uses the information it

collects very well, often providing short-term help for pupils who are having difficulties with specific parts of the curriculum. Good use is made of outside agencies to help pupils with speech and behavioural problems.

- 41 The good procedures for assessing pupils' progress noted at the previous inspection have improved and are now very good. Pupils' work is assessed in all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education each half term in English and mathematics or at the end of a topic in other subjects. Teachers check pupils' progress against national levels and monitor each other's judgements to make sure they are accurate. The results of these assessments enable teachers to set targets for improvement for groups of pupils and individuals. These targets allow teachers to set work that is closely matched to the needs of pupils. For example, in a Year 2 English lesson, pupils were reminded to think about using the correct punctuation. The school carries out a series of tests and checks from the time pupils enter the nursery. This enables the school to build a comprehensive picture of how each pupil is progressing and to give extra help if it is needed. Progress in reading and spelling is monitored twice a term. Collections of work from each subject are made from high, average and low achieving pupils after the work has been assessed by teachers. This provides a further check on how well different ability groups are progressing.
- 42 Teachers use assessment information very well to plan their lessons and to identify which pupils need additional help. For example, pupils in Year 1 who are assessed in the autumn term as needing extra help with English work are given specially targeted work during the spring term. The benefit of this extra help is seen in Year 2, where some of the pupils who received help are now working in the most able English group. The results of National Curriculum tests are analysed to find areas for development. This has enabled the school to identify the need to improve the way pupils use what they have learnt in mathematics. The identification of pupils' progress and abilities from the time they first enter the nursery allows teachers to identify pupils with special educational needs at an early stage and provide appropriate help.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 43 At the time of the last inspection the school was said to have very positive links with the parents, this has continued and has improved and is now a strength of the school. Of the returned questionnaires 100 per cent of parents said their child likes school, a similar number also said they would feel comfortable about approaching the school with any problem and that the teaching was good. A very high percentage of parents thought the school was helping their child to become mature and responsible.
- 44 The school has very good links with parents to consolidate and extend children's learning. Parents appreciate the many extra curricular activities which are available for their children. Parents' involvement in the life of the school is greatly valued. Parents are welcomed into school as part of the family ethos. Parents help in classes, some of these are on a regular basis and they are able to support and work with the class teacher.
- 45 The quality of information for parents is very good. Home school agreements are in place. Letters to parents are clear and friendly and the School Prospectus and Governors' Annual report to parents are both very informative documents. Pupils' reports are very detailed and give a clear indication of pupils' progress; however, they would benefit from the inclusion of targets for future development. All the staff of the school make parents very welcome with opportunities to know about the curriculum

and their child's progress, this provides parents with many opportunities to share in the life of the school.

- 46 In addition to the very good support parents give to their children's learning at home and at school, they support the various social and fund raising activities organised by the Friends of the School. The funds raised enhance the life of pupils; recently £1000 raised at the Christmas Fair was used to provide additional books. The school has very good links with the Junior and Secondary schools and with the Church and the town community as a whole. This involvement in the life of the area places the school firmly at the hub of the community.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 47 The school is very well led and managed. The headteacher has established a very positive and high achieving ethos, continually building on the many strengths identified in the last inspection. She is well supported by a strong senior management and the rest of the staff team. The governing body fulfil their statutory requirements very well and provide good support in planning the strategic development of the school. This is a good improvement since the last inspection.
- 48 The headteacher is thoroughly involved in the life of the school and her work is a significant strength. The quality of her own teaching sets a good example to all staff. The pupils warmly welcome her on regular visits to their classrooms and the parents have nothing but praise for her open and approachable style of leadership. Similarly, working relationships with teaching and non-teaching staff are very easy and open and there is considerable mutual respect. The school plans and operates as a team with clear direction from the headteacher. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher in both day-to-day management and strategic planning. The ethos of openness and support has maintained the quality of teaching and learning despite staff and role changes. There is a good structure to management systems and all staff are very clear about their roles and responsibilities. The subject leaders for literacy, numeracy, science and information and communication technology are fully involved in monitoring standards and the quality of teaching and managing change. They also lead by setting a very good example through shared teaching activities and maintaining a good quality of display. They ensure the school is well resourced and that staff are given every opportunity to maintain their training needs. The subject coordinators manage their subjects well and maintain good levels of planning and resourcing. All staff contribute effectively to school improvement planning through producing detailed action plans based securely on their own monitoring activities.
- 49 The governing body now plays a fuller role in planning for future improvement than they did at the time of the last inspection. The governors do monitor provision well through regular discussions with key staff such as the literacy and numeracy leaders and by their own well-organised visits. They also participate in a good range of training both jointly with the school staff and through specific governor training organised by the local education authority. The commitment and enthusiasm of the chair and vice-chair of governors is very motivating in itself. They are effective in closely monitoring financial provision and ensuring that those providing services to the school, such as payroll, give good value. They receive good analytical information on the results of both national and internal tests and the headteacher's good natured and informative regular reports to governors contribute to their ability to take a useful role in school improvement.

- 50 The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils are identified at a very early stage and their progress is carefully monitored. All staff are made aware of the needs of individual pupils and work well as a team. The management of provision for children in the nursery and reception classes is very good. The staff work as a team to make sure that education is focused effectively on the needs of young children. They make good use of national guidance for provision for these pupils and there are effective procedures in place to measure children's progress. This has contributed to the successful induction of newly qualified teachers.
- 51 The school maintains good staffing levels at present because of the high teaching commitment of the headteacher. This enables the school to employ a dedicated special educational needs teacher which has positive impact on standards of both special educational needs pupils and the less able. There are adequate support staff who are very effectively deployed. The induction of new staff is very good, as is the professional development of all teachers. The headteacher is quick to identify and support teachers' particular strengths and provide real opportunities for managerial development. However, she is careful not to overburden staff and the governors match staff responsibilities to pay as effectively as overall finances allow. The procedures for professional developments are very good. Teachers set challenging targets for improving their pupils' performance and developing their own skills. They are given good support through careful monitoring by the headteacher and deputy headteacher and regular reviews on their progress towards meeting the targets. The system sits comfortably alongside the ethos of sharing and striving towards high achievement.
- 52 The financial procedures are very good. The budget is well managed and tightly matched to the schools identified needs. The governing body monitors expenditure closely on a regular basis. They make good use of information and communication technology to support this monitoring. The most recent audit report concurs with the inspectors' views that finances are very well managed. The school gives very good value for money. Day to day administration is very good. The very good administrator works closely with the headteacher to offer good quality support. The quality of accommodation is good. It is spacious and well maintained. There have been good improvements to the outdoor play provision for young pupils since the last inspection. The quality of work on display is very high and contributes to the very good ethos for learning. There are ample computers which are used well and there is an attractive and useful library area.
- 53 The overall quality of leadership and management makes a significant contribution to the school's success and potential for the future.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

54 In order to raise standards further the headteacher, staff and governors should:

(1) Raise standards in mathematics by:

- reviewing the overall time given to teaching mathematics
- providing more opportunities for pupils, particularly those who are more able, to use their problem-solving skills

(Paragraphs: 2, 72)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	35
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	16

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	11	19	4	0	0	0
Percentage	3	32	54	11	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	151
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	23

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	6	52

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.3

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	18	25	43

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	16	17
	Girls	24	25	24
	Total	39	41	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (90)	95 (92)	95 (94)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	17	17
	Girls	25	24	24
	Total	41	41	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (94)	95 (90)	95 (96)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	90	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	1	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)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	93

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	34

Financial information

Financial year	2001- 2002
	£
Total income	406,778
Total expenditure	404,866
Expenditure per pupil	2,314
Balance brought forward from previous year	7,030
Balance carried forward to next year	8,942

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	203
Number of questionnaires returned	67

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	81	19	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	70	28	0	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	46	0	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	51	30	3	0	16
The teaching is good.	75	25	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	45	4	1	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	27	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	40	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	55	40	0	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	67	28	1	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	36	0	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	33	10	0	18

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

Personal, social and emotional development

55 The children make very good progress through the nursery and reception classes and many exceed the expected level for their age by time they start Year 1. This is because of the very good quality of teaching and learning. The classrooms are very well organised to encourage children to select their own activities and to work independently and co-operatively. As a result children express a preference for specific tasks and work very well with others. For example, a group of four boys worked closely together to plan and make a building site with a construction kit. They discussed what they were going to build and shared the making. Children listen well to their teachers and follow instructions carefully. They are very well behaved and polite to each other. These excellent relationships and behaviour are encouraged by the calm and friendly way in which staff talk to children and become involved in their role-play and other activities. The high quality of resources and well-planned tasks means that children are motivated to persist on their different activities for long periods of time. As a result they develop very good attitudes to learning.

Communication, language and literacy

56 The children are very well taught and make very good progress so that by the time they start Year 1 children often work above the levels expected for their age. The children make very good progress in speaking and listening. The teaching and non-teaching staff engage the children in discussions throughout the day. They ask 'how' and 'why' questions to encourage children to explain their ideas and clarify their thinking. As a result the children are eager and confident to speak to different audiences. For example, nursery children in the role-play corner acted out the story of the three bears in great detail, revelling in the repeated phrases.

57 Children make a good start in the early stages of reading and by the time they start Year 1 several children already read independently. They make very good progress in learning initial letter sounds and names and how some letters blend together. This is because teachers use exciting schemes to develop the classes understanding by linking sounds and actions to the learning of letters. The scheme is taught at a fast pace from nursery through reception and reinforced through motivating group activities including writing, cutting and sticking and colouring. Children make very good progress in developing different strategies for reading a book. For example, they learn to look for clues in the pictures. The children can explain how characters are feeling from the expression on their faces, for example, and relate this to the context of the story. This is encouraged by the teachers' own very good reading and the questions they ask. The big books in the group sessions and the good range of books throughout the classrooms support the children's progress. Parents are keen to hear children read regularly and the teachers encourage this effectively. Displays in both the nursery and reception classes are well used to reinforce learning.

58 The children also make good progress in early writing skills. Children in the nursery are given many opportunities to make marks with different pens and pencils. They 'write' about the new letters they learn each week. Many children progress rapidly

from mark making, through writing over or under the teachers' writing to forming their own words and simple sentences. By the end of reception several children write independently. Many know that a sentence starts with a capital letter and ends in a full stop. The teachers create many very good reasons for children to write such as letters following visits and visitors, cards and booklets. Children successfully learn to structure their writing by cutting and sticking activities linked to the big book group work. They make good use of the computer to write their sentences or make cards.

Mathematical development

- 59 The children make good progress and achieve the levels expected for their age by the start of Year 1. The quality of teaching is good. The children make good progress in developing counting skills. They know numbers to ten and read numbers and write digits successfully by Year 1. They show imagination and understanding when asked to suggest large numbers. Most children learn to count quickly and accurately to at least 10 and match numbers to the number of objects. They make sound progress in adding one or more to a number and use a good vocabulary to express this. Children count accurately backwards and forwards. The reason for children's success in developing counting and computation skills is the teachers' enthusiastic manner and well-planned mental and oral activities that build on a good knowledge of pupils' achievement. The teachers make good use of interesting resources and question children closely. For example, the nursery children sort and organise a good range of objects by size talking to the teacher about which is the largest and smallest. The children are very enthusiastic as a result of the teachers' effective teaching. Children know a good range of counting songs and rhymes which make a good contribution to learning in these areas. Sand and water play provide good opportunities for children to develop their understanding of capacity and shape.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 60 Children make good progress and most reach typical levels for their age. The quality of teaching is good. The classrooms are set up to promote many aspects of children's knowledge and understanding throughout the day. Daily routines help children understand features of time and recurring events. The children have a good understanding of seasons, months and days. They are given good opportunities to bring objects of interest from home and discuss these knowledgeably. The role-play areas allow pupils to explore aspects of domestic life such as shopping, visiting the doctors and the post office. They also use children's experience of books and stories to develop their understanding. The activities in these areas promote children's knowledge very well. For example, in the role-play children have an idea of geography and shape and measure through sorting activities. There are good opportunities to broaden their knowledge of science through projects on people who help us and ourselves. The children have very good computer skills. They confidently select their own activity from the computer menu, such as producing their own pictures and print off their work or save it for later printing. They have good designing skills, working co-operatively to produce a building site with construction toys.

Physical development

- 61 The children's physical development is good and children are working at levels above those normally expected. They show care and accuracy in handling pencils and other small objects and teachers' encourage this well. They are given good opportunities to handle objects of different sizes in role-play and through sand and water activities. The nursery children make excellent use of the regular opportunities for outdoor play.

The wide range of climbing activities and the exciting opportunities for wheeled play challenge them. The children are very disciplined and work well together aware of safety issues. The teaching in physical education lessons is very good. In the reception classes most children change independently and call on each other for help which is encouraged by teachers. They have very good awareness of the space available in the hall and work well together. They participate in a good range of warm up activities and know that it is important 'for their heart'. The teacher makes learning fun. Children show imagination in holding a balance and stretching and curling. They travel in imaginative ways; slithering, crawling, rolling, hopping and skipping. The children follow instructions very carefully in the hall. They are resourceful when developing their own simple test for different bouncing balls and hold and throw balls well. They are very self-disciplined because of the teachers' high expectations and very good relationships.

Creative development

- 62 Children generally exceed the expected levels by time they start Year 1. The quality of teaching is very good. There are well-planned activities available to children throughout the day alongside specific focused lessons. Teachers provide resources of a high quality, which generate interest among the children. There is generally a very good balance between guiding the children in producing artwork and in allowing them to explore. Children work very well independently. There are very good links with the development of reading and writing skills. Children show very good skills in selecting the materials they want to use. Children make very good progress in singing and other musical activities because of the very good teaching. Lessons are given a little bit of magic by using secret treasure boxes with mystery musical sounds. They sing a good range of action songs and rhymes. They sing the songs they are learning tunefully and rhythmically. They have good opportunities to use musical instruments.

ENGLISH

- 63 Standards are well above average by the time pupils are seven. In the National Curriculum tests in 2002, pupils' attainment was well above average in comparison to similar schools. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress.
- 64 Standards in speaking and listening are above average by the time pupils reach the age of seven. However, as some pupils enter school with speech problems, this represents very good progress. Most pupils listen carefully to teachers and often think carefully about their answers to questions. This means that their answers show they have understood well what the teacher has been discussing with them. For example, in a religious education lesson about the flight of Jesus, Mary and Joseph from Bethlehem, one pupil answered that Herod was jealous of Jesus "*because he did not want anyone to kick him off his throne.*" Pupils are given many opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. They are expected to join in discussions in literacy and history lessons and pupils who do not answer are asked direct questions to involve them in the lesson. Teachers work hard to teach pupils new words to improve their ability to express themselves in speech and writing. This leads pupils, when preparing a newspaper report of the Great Fire of London, to use words such as *timber* and *petrified*. Practice in explaining themselves to the rest of the class, and the good examples set by teachers and classroom assistants, mean that most pupils speak clearly and make themselves understood. Seven-year-olds, taking part in an

assembly before the whole school, spoke clearly about how books are used in school. They read their own poems about winter and acted the story of *Winnie the Witch* with confidence and no sign of embarrassment.

- 65 Standards in reading are well above average. More pupils than average reach higher levels. Pupils make very good progress in reading. This is because the school places great emphasis on developing pupils' reading skills and teachers try to ensure that pupils look upon reading as an enjoyable activity. For example, when six-year-old pupils were introduced to *Each, Peach, Pear, Plum* by Janet and Alan Ahlberg, the teacher used a wand to change the class into different animals. This, combined with very good expressive reading by the teacher, caught the imagination of the pupils. Other six-year-olds, building on the very good example set by the teacher, read dramatically to put across the sense of a story. They identified different types of books, such as play scripts. Pupils use clues from the story very well to answer questions. By the age of seven, most pupils know a large number of words. Higher attaining pupils, for example, read accurately words such as *vanilla* and *accessories*. Average attaining pupils use their knowledge of letter sounds to work out unfamiliar words. Lower attaining pupils find it difficult to do this and some guess words and make mistakes. All the pupils enjoy books and describe their favourite stories. Many borrow books from the local library and most have books at home. However, pupils could not name any authors apart from the one who had written the book they were reading. Although average and higher attaining pupils take note of punctuation to help them with their reading, few put as much expression into their reading as their speaking skills show they are capable of doing. By the age of seven, pupils find information using the contents and index pages and some use the glossary to find the meaning of words. All know that these pages are arranged in alphabetical order to make finding information easier. Higher attaining pupils use the skills of skimming and scanning to find information quickly. The school's rigorous system of assessing pupils' progress ensures that extra assistance is given to help pupils improve. Consequently, several pupils who were identified as needing help as six-year-olds are reading at the expected level for their age by the age of seven.
- 66 By the age of seven, standards in writing are well above average. More pupils than average reach higher levels. Pupils write for a range of different purposes and their writing includes poetry, letters of apology, recounting events and book reviews. Pupils in Year 1 classes learn the difference between play writing and an ordinary story. They recognise the way a play script is set down so that each character's part is separate from the rest. They study the story of the *Three Pigs* to learn the importance of getting the parts of the play in the correct sequence. Teachers place great emphasis on improving pupils' vocabulary and spelling skills. In a very good lesson when seven-year-olds wrote reports of the Great Fire of London, they suggested *terrified* and *petrified* as alternatives for *frightened*. The teacher introduced *intense* to show how hot the fire was. Pupils learnt to think about the sounds of words, such as *boiling*, before writing them down. This emphasis on spelling and vocabulary means that, usually, pupils spell words accurately. They use the words they learn to write interesting stories and poems. For example, writing an eyewitness account of the fire, one pupil wrote, "*I was woken by a rattling sound. At first I ignored it.*" Another used alliteration to make her work more interesting, saying that she could hear "*crackling and crashing, booming and banging*" as the fire drew nearer. Pupils draw on experiences from nature to write poetry when they describe their reactions to winter. They write poems about bonfire night to enter in the Cumbria Literacy Project. All seven-year-olds write in sentences. Many pupils write simple sentences, often beginning with the same word, such as *I*, but some pupils are starting to use interesting phrases to start sentences like *after a while*. Most pupils punctuate their

sentences with full stops and capital letters. Higher attaining and some average attaining pupils are starting to use exclamation and speech marks, and apostrophe commas.

- 67 Pupils use writing well in other subjects. In science, they describe observations of candles burning and put labels on diagrams. In history, pupils comment on the effect that the iron mines had on Dalton in the past. Writing about Jack's feelings when faced with climbing the beanstalk effectively links personal development and English. Pupils' handwriting is generally above average. Most form their letters correctly and try to write neatly. This means that their handwriting is easy to read and looks pleasant. Pupils have not yet started joining letters.
- 68 Overall, the standard of teaching is very good. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection and results in pupils making very good progress. Teachers make good use of the introduction of lessons to ensure that pupils understand what they have to do. Targets for the whole group to achieve are explained carefully, displayed so that pupils can see them and referred to during lessons. In some lessons, particularly those involving pupils with special educational needs, pupils are given individual targets. This ensures that pupils know what they have to do to improve and that teachers give them work suitable for their needs. In the most successful lessons, the enthusiasm of teachers is communicated to pupils. The pace of these lessons is good so that pupils become involved in the activities and do not become restless. In one very good lesson, the teacher encouraged pupils to start work promptly by saying "*Come on, time is pressing.*" The impetus was maintained when pupils competed with each other to count the number of syllables and spell words on cards held up by the teacher. Lessons are less successful, but nonetheless sound, when the pace of the lesson slows and pupils begin to become restless.
- 69 Teachers know the subject well. They provide good role models when reading. Teachers place due emphasis on showing pupils how to write successfully, ensuring that pupils understand the importance of putting their stories in sequence so that it has a good beginning, middle and end. Teachers plan lessons well and make good use of classroom assistants and volunteer adults, particularly to support pupils who have special educational needs. They manage pupils well. Teachers work well with classroom assistants to make sure that most pupils concentrate on their work and some classroom assistants are skilled in knowing when to intervene to ensure that individual pupils do not disturb others. Most teachers use their marking of pupils' work to show them how they can improve. However, there is inconsistency in the marking with some teachers making comments that give praise but do not show why the work is good or how it could be improved.
- 70 The co-ordinator leads the subject well and the management is good. Systematic checking of pupils' work against national levels and the analysis of results over time has enabled the co-ordinator and teachers to find out what they need to do to raise standards and to plan suitable lessons. This enables teachers to identify pupils who might benefit from extra help at an early stage. Teachers make very good use of the information they gain from checking pupils work and this shows in the high standards achieved by pupils. Given the commitment and enthusiasm shown by staff, the school is in a good position to improve results further.

MATHEMATICS

- 71 By the end of Year 2, standards are in line with national expectations. Although this is similar to the findings of the last inspection it is a significant improvement on the pupils' performance in the national tests in 2001 when standards were well below most similar schools. The school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy well and basic skills of numeracy are taught very effectively. Their achievements are good.
- 72 Pupils achieve well in their development of understanding of number, shape, space and measure and in their ability to handle data. Teachers make good use of whole class sessions to sharpen pupils' skills in counting and in making simple calculations in their heads. At the age of seven pupils have a good understanding of place value of digits, sequence numbers beyond 100, can count forwards and backwards in ones, twos, fives and tens and can add three numbers together mentally. Most have appropriate strategies to add and subtract two-digit numbers and perform simple multiplication and division calculations. They recognise patterns in numbers, can name two and three-dimensional shapes and use reflective symmetry. Pupils of all levels of attainment are making good progress in learning to use mathematical terms correctly and to explain how they carried out a calculation. Pupils of higher attainment are challenged by, for example, being asked to work with larger numbers or involving calculations that cross from the 'teens' into the 'twenties'. All pupils take pride in their work and lay it out neatly.
- 73 The quality of teaching across the school is good. Teachers are familiar with the Numeracy Strategy and apply it effectively. The three-part lesson is well established and each part is carefully planned. Learning objectives are clearly explained to pupils at the beginning of a lesson. Oral and mental activities involve all pupils and provide a brisk and exciting start to lessons. Teachers use questionings well and use an effective range of teaching strategies to explore mathematical ideas and to reinforce mathematical language. However, due to restrictions in time, teachers do not plan sufficient opportunities for pupils to use their skills in problem solving situations. This results in insufficient challenging extension work being set for the higher attainers once the main activity has been completed. The relationships teachers have with their pupils are excellent. This is a significant contributory factor to the very good management of pupils seen in all classes. It results in pupils being attentive, keen to respond to questions and eager to meet their teachers' expectations, exhibiting very good behaviour and lessons proceeding at a lively pace. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and they make good progress. During group work pupils are able to work collaboratively and with real effort. Teachers plan well to include the use of information and communication technology as part of mathematics. Good examples of this are the use of the 'Graphers' program to record details of investigations in the form of bar charts and the use of animation to improve the speed at which pupils perform simple mental calculations accurately.
- 74 Pupils are interested in number. This is developed through the very good connections made between mathematics and other aspects school life. For example, during registration they willingly calculated the pupils present given the information of the number in the class and the number absent. Opportunities to use numeracy skills across the curriculum are good and well planned. For example, in art and design pupils use their well developed measuring skills and understanding of shape in the making of models and in geography they use their understanding of data handling to collect information for a simple block graph showing how they travel to school. Many can use the graphs to interpret the data. In all classrooms staff have worked extremely hard to produce high quality, stimulating resources and interactive displays which promote the fun and joy of mathematics. The exciting and games-based

maths club successfully reinforces this notion of mathematics being enjoyable. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning and they work well both on their own and in groups.

- 75 The subject leader is enthusiastic about mathematics and has a good knowledge and understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school's mathematical provision. Procedures for monitoring the planning of lessons, pupils' work and the quality of teaching are very good and they have impacted very positively on standards. She has made an excellent analysis of the school's results in recent national tests and has developed an action plan aimed at addressing the main issues, including that of the amount of time devoted to teaching and learning problem solving.

SCIENCE

- 76 Standards are average by Year 2. Pupils of all abilities make sound progress.
- 77 In both year groups, the pupils develop a good fund of scientific knowledge relating appropriately to their own daily lives and experiences. They have a good understanding of how living creatures grow and change derived from their own observations. They are able to apply their knowledge to other life cycles. For example, they understand and accurately describe the change from a caterpillar to a butterfly. They make good use of the school wild life areas. By Year 2, the pupils identify accurately the main parts of a plant and the human body. They understand the conditions necessary for plant growth as a result of direct observation. The pupils use an appropriate vocabulary to describe their thinking. For example, in a Year 1 class, the pupils describe the different 'sources of light' and that some light is 'reflected.' The pupils develop sound skills in recording carefully their observations and findings using a variety of charts and diagrams. They make good use of information and communication technology to find information and record data in graphs and charts.
- 78 The quality of teaching and learning is good and relationships are very good. Well-judged questioning is a strong feature of the teaching so that the pupils at all levels of ability are challenged. Good emphasis is placed on prediction and careful observation. The pupils demonstrate increasing progress in these areas in each year group. The pupils are encouraged to explain their thinking and to describe why they need to carry out fair tests. However, questions are not always sufficiently challenging to the pupils so that the understanding of basic terms such as a 'fair test' are not thoroughly understood by some pupils. The good emphasis placed on developing the pupils' investigative skills is reflected in the good progress which they make throughout the school with regard to scientific enquiry. There are very good guiding principles established in the scheme of work for teaching investigative science.
- 79 In each class, resources are used very effectively. All teachers take steps to enable all pupils regardless of gender, ability or ethnic background to take a full part in lessons. The pupils respond with much enthusiasm and their behaviour is exemplary. Well-briefed and highly competent support staff make a significant contribution to the progress made by pupils with special educational needs.
- 80 Since the last inspection, standards have been maintained. Assessment strategies are now effective and evaluation is used very well to plan future work. The subject leadership has recently changed and the new co-ordinator has a good action plan for raising standards.

ART AND DESIGN

- 81 The pupils' attainment in art and design is well above that expected for their age. It is a strength of the school. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection
- 82 The pupils do so well in art because:
- the art curriculum is well structured and applied consistently throughout the school to ensure skills are taught and learned systematically
 - pupils learn a broad range of skills and are provided with plenty of opportunities to develop their ideas in a wide variety of media
 - teachers are knowledgeable, enthusiastic and have high expectations
 - lessons are well planned and resourced
 - very good links are made to other subjects and so the pupils' work is relevant and interesting
- 83 To maintain such high standards whilst retaining quality in the core subjects is inspiring and does much to enrich pupils' lives.
- 84 Pupils take a great pride in their work and this is further boosted by the attractive and stimulating displays around the school. Pupils talk enthusiastically and in detail about their work and show great pleasure in the subject. They have a good sense of colour. Year 2 pupils know how to mix colours and make delicate tones and tints when, for example, painting the night sky as a background to the silhouette of the town's church, St Mary's. Pupils' observational drawings show a very good variety of line. Year 1 pupils use shading to show form in their pencil drawings of Victorian objects. This technique is built upon very successfully in Year 2 and results in some outstanding portrait work which demonstrates pupils' ability to represent shape, tone and texture with sensitivity and precision of proportion. Standards are further improved through the links art makes with other subjects. For example, in literacy Year 1 pupils have created a magnificent 2 metre by 3 metre batik background on which to display their stories of Goldilocks and the Three Bears and Year 2 pupils have constructed Ted Hughes' 'The Iron Man' out of clay tiles, each with delicate nut and bolt impressions.
- 85 All pupils have a sketch book in which they record techniques and ideas. The books are well maintained. These books are a valuable resource and contribute to the high standards attained. Computers are used very effectively to create graphic designs.
- 86 Teaching is very good. This is because teachers have good subject knowledge, are enthusiastic about artwork and are very confident to try out new ideas and use a wide range of media. Good skills teaching, linked to appropriate demonstrations by teachers, has a very positive impact on pupils' learning. Skills are taught through a systematic and structured curriculum throughout the school with each year successfully building on the previous learning experiences.
- 87 The art and design curriculum is rich and exciting and enjoys the valuable contributions made by visiting artists such as Maddi Nicholson who, in conjunction with the 'Better Ways to School' scheme, has worked with the teachers and the pupils to produce two large fabric banners which, before taking pride of place in the school hall, will be on view to the public in the Nan Tait Gallery in Barrow. Pupils also have many opportunities to study and work in the style of a variety of artists such as Picasso, Monet and Bridget Riley. The subject makes a very strong contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

- 88 The subject leader provides strong and effective leadership. She ensures that the subject maintains a high profile. Learning resources are plentiful and are used extremely well by the knowledgeable staff to enhance pupils' artistic awareness and skills.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 89 The pupils' attainment in design and technology is above that expected for their age. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, reflecting good subject leadership and well-planned projects which link very effectively with other areas of the curriculum. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.
- 90 It was not possible to see any lessons but the school has kept a variety of displays, examples of work and photographs from the previous year. These clearly show the value placed upon design and technology and the standards achieved. Planning indicates a good balance in the curriculum, including food technology as well as designing and assembling a range of products from a variety of materials. For example, in food technology Year 1 pupils identify fruits and prepare them for the making of a fresh fruit salad. In the making of snowmen characters with moving parts they also demonstrate good cutting skills and knowledge of levers using split pins. The learning opportunities in Year 2 include a variety of rich experiences such as the preparation and making of sandwiches carefully packaged in boxes of their own design. These are accompanied with evaluations such as, "I think I could improve my sandwich by not putting in so much butter." The pupils' design and making skills and knowledge of materials and tools are demonstrated very well in their work involving glove puppets and the very attractive pop-up books of Australian animals which links design technology extremely well to both geography and literacy.
- 91 The management of the subject is good and contributes well to the standards being attained. Following the experience of the nationally suggested scheme of work the school has sensibly agreed an amended version to link design and technology more effectively with topics within other areas of the curriculum and to increase the focus on the skills to be covered each year while leaving teachers with more flexibility in the content of the work.

GEOGRAPHY

- 92 No geography lessons were seen during the inspection. However, discussions with pupils and examination of work indicate that, as at the previous inspection, standards are typical for the age group. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.
- 93 By the age of seven, pupils develop satisfactory mapping skills when they plan a route round Dalton, noting the main features and buildings. This builds effectively on work done by six-year-olds when they design a treasure map, including a key to explain the symbols used, and use toys and building bricks to lay out a floor plan of Dalton. They learn about the importance of giving clear instructions when they address post cards to their parents. Seven-year-olds use simple grid references to places and animals on a map of Australia and learn about the Great Barrier Reef, making use of the interest engendered by a teacher exchange with that country. Pupils accurately place the countries on maps of the British Isles and show the position of places such as Dalton and London. However, they often confuse countries and cities and are unsure

of the difference between cities and towns. Pupils place countries and places such as the United Kingdom, America, China and the Crimea on a map of the world. They know the four main points of the compass. Good use is made of the Katie Morag stories to enable pupils to draw comparisons between life in Dalton and on a small island off the coast of Scotland.

- 94 As no lessons were seen during the inspection it is not possible to judge the quality of teaching. Nonetheless, evidence gathered from checking pupils' work and planning suggests that teaching is at least satisfactory. Teachers' planning is good. Lessons match the needs of individual pupils. Teachers make good links with other subjects. Work on the small island of Struay complements work in English. Geography lessons are supported well through the use of information and communication technology. Teachers use the digital camera to take photographs of buildings in Dalton and the local web site provided a silhouette of Dalton and drawings of buildings. Pupils use a graphics program on the computer to make drawings of winter. In design and technology, pupils make pop-up books showing Australian animals.
- 95 The management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator supports her colleagues well. She has written a good policy and scheme of work and is carrying out an audit of the way geography is taught to make sure good links are made between work in Year 1 and Year 2. Very good procedures are in place for teachers to assess pupils' work at the end of each topic and collections are made of pupils' work. Teachers make very good use of these assessments to plan work for pupils. They make good use of the area round Dalton to develop pupils' skills. Visitors such as firemen, ambulance drivers and postmen make lessons more interesting.

HISTORY

- 96 Only one lesson was seen during the inspection. Examination of pupils' work and discussion with pupils indicate that, by the age of seven, standards in history are what would be expected for pupils of this age. This is similar to the situation at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils make good progress in learning about the past.
- 97 Teachers make very good use of the history of Dalton and the area around it to show pupils how things change over time. Pupils study the effect that the former iron stone mines had on the local population. They learn about the harsh conditions endured by the workers, in particular by children similar in age to themselves. Pupils visit the ruins of Furness Abbey and dress as monks to help them understand their way of life. They experience travel from a past age when they take the steam train to visit the home of Beatrix Potter. This adds to their knowledge of life in Victorian times. When studying World War 2, pupils visit Barrow Dock Museum and Preston and experience what it was like to have to go into an Anderson shelter. Pupils study famous people from the past. They learn about the Crimean War from the point of view of the efforts of Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole in caring for soldiers. Pupils use computers to find out about the exploits of Grace Darling.
- 98 Only one lesson was seen during the inspection, when both classes of seven-year-olds came together to watch a video about the Great Fire of London. In this lesson, teaching was good. The pace of the lesson was brisk. The video was chosen well to help pupils to learn more about the fire and how Londoners reacted to it. The teachers used questions well to make pupils think about the images they were seeing. Pupils show a good understanding of how the cramped nature of the buildings and their timber construction helped the fire spread from its source in Pudding Lane. They discuss the differences between fire fighting then and now, in particular the difficulty of

obtaining water to put out the flames. One pupil pointed out that firemen easily obtain water now from fire hydrants. Teachers emphasise the importance of the diaries left by Samuel Pepys to inform our knowledge of the fire. Pupils were fascinated that Pepys decided to bury a block of Parmesan cheese when the fire threatened his house and speculated on what they would save if their house caught fire. They learned that Pepys wrote his diaries in code so that no one else could read them.

- 99 Teachers make good links with other subjects. The study of information and communication technology is promoted when pupils are encouraged to carry out research using both their own and the school's computers. In art, pupils study the work of George Romney, a well-known local artist who lived in the late eighteenth century. Their knowledge of English authors is helped by the visit to Beatrix Potter's home. In religious education, pupils learn about the moral issues surrounding the work of Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole. Teachers make good use of homework to support history and try to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities to complete the work. For example, when pupils were asked to carry out research on the Great Fire of London using their own computers at home, pupils who do not have their own computers were allowed to use the computers at school.
- 100 The management of the subject is good. A good policy and scheme of work are in place based on nationally agreed documents and the best elements of previous schemes of work. Very good arrangements are in place to check how well pupils learn. The quality of pupils' work is checked at the end of each topic and teachers make collections of work that allow them to see how pupils are progressing over a period of time. Teachers' planning is good and the co-ordinator and teachers go to some trouble to make history interesting for pupils. For example, collections of objects from Barrow Museum, such as a display of Victorian household objects, and visits by someone who had been evacuated during World War 2, further develop pupils' knowledge of the past. An annual history week is arranged when all subjects for the week are based on a history topic and enjoyable activities, such as an end of World War 2 party, take place.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 101 Standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and pupils of all abilities make good progress. There are good resources for computer studies and they are used well throughout the school. The teachers also make good use of photography and recording equipment in many subjects.
- 102 The pupils' basic skills are good because they are taught well from the nursery and reception classes and computers are regularly used in most subjects. The pupils start up the computers and select activities from a menu. They call up information from their own folders or store information as required. They print off information from websites with little support from teachers.
- 103 Their skills with word processing and art packages are very good. Many pupils see the computers in the classroom as a natural tool for learning. This is because they are regularly used in imaginative ways by the staff. For example, in music the Year 2 pupils listened to music through the CD facilities of the computer. The pupils write their own poetry and stories on the computer mixing text with pictures on their winter stories, for example. The Year 2 pupils know how to change the colour, size and shape of the words they create.

- 104 The pupils make very good use of the art capabilities of the computer. They show very good control of the computer mouse to 'paint' or 'draw' and make very good use of the tools such as spray painting. This is particularly effective in history work on the Great Fire of London. The teachers and support staff teach the pupils quick and easy techniques to achieve their results and this helps them remember them.
- 105 Pupils are making good progress in using the information facilities of the computer. They are learning how to access the Internet in history and religious education work. They know how to send e-mails and communicate with staff working abroad, for example.
- 106 The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have good skills themselves and transfer their enthusiasm to the pupils. Computers are used regularly and effectively in many subjects. Software is carefully selected to support good learning. Teaching and learning is enhanced by the use of pupils' home computers for research. This is supported by an information and communication technology club, which focuses on pupils who have not got the opportunity to learn at home. The subject is well led.

MUSIC

- 107 Standards are above nationally expected levels by Year 2. Pupils of all abilities achieve well. This is because of the good quality of teaching and rich learning opportunities. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.
- 108 The quality of pupils' singing and performing are high. In assemblies and in their lessons they sing tuneful and expressively with clear diction. This is because of the many opportunities they are given to sing a wide range of traditional and modern songs, hymns and activity rhymes. The teachers pay very close attention to the quality of pupils' singing and use motivating techniques to improve the quality. Pupils are encouraged to listen carefully to each other and memorise tunes accurately. This leads to good quality singing in two parts. The pupils are eager to take a solo role and are happy to sing in front of others. They are often confident performers in front of the whole school.
- 109 Pupils use a good vocabulary to describe their musical activities. They understand musical terms such as 'tempo' and even 'allegro' and 'largo' and match them to music they hear. They listen to a wide range of contrasting music on CD and on the computer and their appreciation skills are good. They successfully identify the sounds of several orchestral instruments and recognise how they reflect the mood of music they listen to by describing it as 'lively, joyful and fun.'
- 110 The pupils maintain a constant beat well on percussion instruments or by clapping or tapping. They follow the directions of a 'conductor' whether pupil or teacher and recognise simple musical notation. They compose their own rhythms individually and in groups well. All pupils have the opportunity to learn the recorder. They make good progress because the teachers have a good knowledge of the pupils' ability and lessons are planned well.
- 111 The quality of teaching and learning is good. Several teachers have good subject knowledge and effective use is made of specialist skills particularly in whole school activities. Very good use is made of links to other subjects. For example, the Year 1 pupils learn songs based on the story of 'The Three Little Pigs'. They enjoy the repeated phrases in the rhymes and sing with enthusiasm. The teachers' relationship

with the pupils is excellent and leads to very good behaviour management. As a result, pupils are very disciplined when working with percussion instruments and sing enthusiastically without losing tunefulness. Above all lessons are fun, fast paced and challenging and the subject is well led.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 112 The time allocated for physical education and the manner in which it is organised on the weekly timetable is very good. All pupils have three lessons each week to develop their skills in dance, gymnastics, outdoor games and swimming. At the time of the last inspection standards were in line with those expected for pupils of their age and this has been maintained. Pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in all aspects of physical education except swimming where it is at least good.
- 113 Year 2 pupils use their feet well to gain control of a ball. They can walk with it and many are able to swerve to avoid obstacles. They work extremely well with partners and this high level of co-operation contributes very positively to the level of skill achieved. In gymnastics pupils move and position their bodies with good levels of control and coordination showing good awareness of others working in the space around them. They build linked sequences of moves using balances, rolls, springs, jumps and slithers of good variety and imagination. Links with the local comprehensive school which has recently gained Performing Arts status are excellent. This tremendous working partnership looks set to improve standards further. The two exceptionally well attended and supervised after school gymnastic clubs support and reinforce the quality of the school's work. Year 2 pupils gain confidence and competence in water through attending regular swimming lessons. By the time pupils leave the school they can swim at least 10 metres. The majority however, can swim at least 25 metres whilst the most able have been successful in completing a thousand metres.
- 114 Teaching and learning are never less than sound. Sound teaching is seen when teachers help pupils to improve their movements as they travel along and between apparatus. Good teaching is seen when there is a clear plan which helps pupils to add to what they can do already and then improve as the lesson progresses. Lessons are planned with appropriate introductory sessions to warm up the body and they are rounded off by good cooling and calming down exercises. Pupils know the effect which exercise has on their bodies, for example after completing some good and energetic cardio-vascular work one pupil commented, "My heart. I can feel it. It's going bumpety bump!" All lessons start with well-established routines and this helps lessons to move along briskly without unnecessary intervals of inactivity. Teachers encourage pupils throughout lessons, addressing those especially who may be experiencing difficulties. Pupils are asked to find the best ways to complete a task or to move from one shape to another in a particular way. Pupils who work particularly well demonstrate their prowess to their friends and this encourages everyone to try to improve their work. Teachers are aware of potential safety risks and ensure safe practice at all times.
- 115 The subject is managed effectively. There is an up-to-date policy and a good scheme of work charting a wide range of activities which help pupils to develop appropriate skills as they move through the school. There is an ongoing process of professional development with all members of staff to ensure that the subject is well led and taught. Resources are good with sufficient large apparatus and small equipment to teach the curriculum effectively.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 116 Only one lesson was seen during the inspection but the evidence gathered by talking to pupils and looking at their books during the inspection indicates that standards are typical for the age group. This is similar to the situation at the time of the previous inspection and represents good progress in the relatively short time the pupils have been at school.
- 117 In Year 1, pupils have learnt about Genesis. They also use the story of Daniel in the lion's den to talk about the bravery of Daniel and give instances of when they think they have been brave. Pupils contrast this with the bravery of Grace Darling and the concern she showed for others. They have a sound understanding of the celebrations surrounding the Chinese New Year and why the years are named after animals. Pupils learn about the differences between local churches and places of worship when they visit the Church of England and United Reform churches in Dalton and the nearby Buddhist temple. They begin to understand the significance of the candles, graveyard, lectern and baptistry to Christians and the Dharma wheel, gong, throne and offering bowls to Buddhists.
- 118 In Year 2, pupils use the story of Jesus', Mary and Joseph's flight into Egypt to talk about the jealousy shown by King Herod. In using the story to discuss the moral issues, pupils show good insight into Herod's motives for wanting to kill Jesus. Pupils are helped in their understanding of Christianity when they visit the church, receive visits from the vicar and have the opportunity to dress in church vestments. Good links are made between history and religious education in lessons where pupils study the care shown for injured soldiers during the Crimean War by Mary Seacole and Florence Nightingale. They begin to appreciate the significance of Remembrance Day when they place crosses and wreaths at the local Cenotaph. Pupils develop a sound understanding of the moral issues faced by us all in protecting the Earth from pollution.
- 119 Although only one lesson was seen during the inspection, sufficient evidence was seen in planning and pupils' work to suggest that teaching is good. Teachers present pupils with a range of experiences on which to make judgements about moral issues and feelings. They make good use of visits to places of worship and talks by local ministers to make lessons interesting. Teachers plan lessons so that pupils can record their work on computers, using both word processing and drawing programs. In the one lesson seen, teaching was sound. The teacher used questions well to find out what pupils knew and built effectively on this knowledge. Pupils were given time to reflect on what they were most thankful for in their lives. Most found this difficult and they would have been helped if the teacher had provided some examples of her own. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly but seldom comment on how pupils can improve their work. Some teachers have higher expectations than others of what pupils can achieve. This is seen when pupils in one class copy work provided by the teacher while the parallel class attempt the work for themselves.
- 120 The subject co-ordinator has a good understanding of the subject and supports other teachers well. She works closely with her colleagues to provide a very good and varied curriculum. The co-ordinator does not currently check teaching and learning during lessons. Pupils' work is assessed regularly.