

# INSPECTION REPORT

**KIRKOSWALD CHURCH of ENGLAND  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Kirkoswald

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112253

Headteacher: Mrs. H. Armstrong

Reporting inspector: Dr. B. Blundell  
23868

Dates of inspection: 31<sup>st</sup> March- 1<sup>st</sup> April 2003

Inspection number: 247205  
Short inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior School

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4-11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Sand Hill, Kirkoswald  
Penrith,  
Cumbria.

Postcode: CA10 1EN

Telephone number: 01768 898461

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs. C. Lewthwaite

Date of previous inspection: March 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Kirkoswald Church of England Primary School is a school for boys and girls, aged 4 to 11, situated in Kirkoswald, Cumbria. There are 73 pupils on roll; the school is smaller than most primary schools. The ethnic background of the pupils is white with U.K. heritage. No pupils are at an early stage in the acquisition of English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is 1.4 per cent, which is well below the national average. No pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils identified within the school as having special needs is nine per cent, which is well below the national average. The nature of pupils' special needs includes speech and communication difficulties. Pupils' attainment on entry is average overall. Pupil turnover is relatively low.

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

The overall effectiveness of the school is very good. Standards in English, mathematics and science for pupils aged eleven exceed national averages. The overall quality of teaching is very good, and leadership and management are very good. All pupils are fully included. The school provides good value for money.

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

- Pupils by the age of eleven reach standards in English, mathematics and science that exceed national averages.
- Leadership and management are very good; the headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and is committed and capable.
- The overall quality of teaching is very good; pupils learn very well as exemplified in the pupils' excellent records of achievement.
- The school's improved provision for information and communication technology is promoting better progress in that subject.
- Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour, and the very good relationships promote a successful learning environment.

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

- The tracking of pupils' progress against national standards, whilst improving, is not yet fully in place.

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

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

The school was last inspected in March 1998. Standards in English, mathematics and science by the age of eleven have improved. The overall quality of teaching has improved further, with a higher proportion of very good teaching. The key issue to increase the level of regular support for teachers has been addressed and has had a positive effect on pupils' learning. Information and communication technology provision has been very greatly improved. The quality of the information to parents has been improved. The school's buildings have been extended and improved. The school has justifiable ambition to succeed further, and has a good capacity to do so. Overall, the school has made very good improvement since the last inspection.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	C	C	A*	A	well above average A
mathematics	B	A	B	C	above average B
science	A	A*	A	A	average C
					below average D
					well below average E

*Please note that as each year group of pupils is relatively small, results can be considerably skewed by the performance of even a single pupil.*

**Standards attained by pupils aged eleven** in 2002 were very high in English being in the top five per cent of schools nationally. In mathematics standards were above average and in science they were well above average. Compared to those attained in schools of a similar type, standards were well above average in English, average in maths and well above average in science. Over the three years from 2000 to 2002 averaged together, pupils have left the school six months ahead of pupils nationally in English and in mathematics and two terms ahead in science. The school's targets are appropriately ambitious and standards at the school are sufficiently high.

**Standards reached by pupils aged seven** in the national tests in 2002 were well above the national averages in reading and writing, and average in mathematics. Compared to that in schools of a similar type, pupils' attainment was well above average in reading and in writing and below average in mathematics. Over the three years from 2000 to 2002 averaged together, pupils have left the infant phase with standards not far off one year ahead of pupils nationally in reading and in writing and nearly six months ahead in mathematics.

**In the work seen during the inspection**, standards for pupils aged seven exceed national expectations in reading, writing, mathematics and science. For pupils aged seven and eleven, standards in information and communication technology fully meet national expectations. Pupils aged eleven exceed national expectations in English, mathematics and science. Whilst other subjects were sampled, there was too little evidence to judge overall standards. Children aged five are on course to meet the nationally expected standards for the end of the reception year, and some have already exceeded them. Pupils' achievement is good overall; nonetheless, the school strives to raise standards further.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to the school are good; they enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic about their work. They take interest in what they are doing, ably assisted by 'Ossie the Owl' who watches over their activities. Particular strengths in pupils' attitudes include their hard work and enjoyment of learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour, both in and out of the classrooms, is good. There were no exclusions in the last school year.

Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good; relationships are very good both between pupils and with adults. The School Council is an active body successfully fulfilling a range of functions including charity fund raising.
Attendance	Pupils' attendance is very high, placing the school in the top five per cent of schools nationally. Unauthorised absence is below average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is very good; the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are well taught. Particular strengths in teaching include the quality of the worksheets produced by teachers, the overall level of challenge, class management and the sharing of learning objectives with pupils in most lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well. Classroom support assistants work well with teachers. The school meets the needs of all pupils appropriately. All pupils are fully included. Particular strengths in pupils' learning include their general concentration, interest and pace of learning; the teaching nurtures these important areas.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of the curriculum are good throughout the school. The school appropriately follows a topic-based approach with a whole school theme each term. The curriculum is enhanced in the infants with the provision of French; this is about to be extended to junior pupils. All areas of the curriculum meet statutory requirements.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good overall; learning support assistants support pupils well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal development is very good. The school provides successfully for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Assemblies are uplifting and accompanied by enthusiastic singing and the playing of instruments such as guitar and flute by accomplished pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school looks after its pupils well and has a caring ethos. The tracking of pupils' progress is not yet fully in place.

The school works well in partnership with parents.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership and management by the headteacher are both very good. She is capable and committed to the school and knows her pupils very well. Particular strengths in leadership and management include the care and commitment of the headteacher and senior management team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities very well. They bring a wide range of expertise to the running of this school. The recently appointed chair of governors is a regular visitor to the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's evaluation of its performance is good. It analyses its work in external national tests, and uses the findings to improve standards appropriately.
The strategic use of resources	The strategic use of resources is good.

The school's administrative assistant is very efficient and helps ensure the smooth running of the school. Lunchtime assistants help create a happy atmosphere at the mid-day break. The accommodation is well maintained by a dedicated caretaker. However, the school playground is small and at the mid-day break it is very crowded. A project to increase the play space by developing land at the side of the playground is now underway. The school intends to stagger the lunch break so that both older and younger pupils have some dedicated access to it. The school makes the best use of its improved accommodation. The school's application of the principles of best value is good.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school and they make good progress.</li> <li>• Parents feel that the school sets high expectations.</li> <li>• They are very happy with the way that the school is led and managed.</li> <li>• They judge the overall quality of teaching to be good.</li> <li>• Parents feel that the school helps their children to mature and be responsible.</li> <li>• They are generally happy with behaviour at the school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some parents are not happy with the level of homework.</li> <li>• Some parents would like more information about their children's progress.</li> <li>• Some parents would like the school to work more closely with them.</li> <li>• Some parents are unhappy with behaviour at the school.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views. It finds that the level of homework is appropriate overall, and that the information for parents and the manner in which school works with parents are good. It also finds that whilst behaviour overall is good, at times pupils call out in class when others are speaking.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

**Pupils by the age of 11 reach standards in English, mathematics and science that exceed national averages.**

1. *Please note that as each year group of pupils is relatively small, results can be considerably skewed by the performance of even a single pupil.* The results of the national tests for pupils aged eleven in 2002 show standards in English to be very high, placing the school in the top five per cent of schools nationally. In mathematics standards were above average and in science they were well above national standards. Compared to schools of a similar type, results were well above average in English and science and average in mathematics. Girls have generally performed better than boys in English and science with the reverse being the case in mathematics.
2. Over the years from 2000 to 2002 averaged together, pupils have left the school, on average, six months ahead of pupils nationally in English and in mathematics and two terms ahead in science. Pupils currently aged eleven are exceeding national expectations in all three subjects, although this particular cohort has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, amounting to nearly thirty per cent.
3. The performance of recent eleven-year-old pupils who stayed at the school throughout the junior phase when compared with their results when they were aged seven, show good progress, particularly in English. In mathematics, progress appears, on the face of it, to be less good, with four pupils who achieved above average results at the age of seven merely reaching average standards by the age of eleven. A scrutiny of their results at the age of seven, however, shows that they only just reached the higher than expected level three, and, that they only just missed obtaining the higher than expected level five at the age of eleven.
4. In English, the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening of pupils currently aged eleven all exceed national expectations, due to the quality of the teaching. Pupils in Year 6 write effectively about their recent visit to a local quarry using appropriate language and setting their work out neatly with a good understanding of how to use paragraphs. They respond enthusiastically to the well focused questioning. Pupils in Year 2 present information in a logical structured sequence on the local environment. Pupils throughout the school use a very good range of vocabulary in their work on the term's theme 'Read all about it'.
5. In mathematics, pupils aged eleven tackle word problems deliberately designed to 'trick' them. They recognise the snares well and eliminate unnecessary information. For example, 'if each tree has eight branches and there are ten twigs on each branch and each twig has six leaves, how many leaves are there on one branch'. They are clear and concise in their mental strategies, and are able to explain very clearly how they arrive at their answers. Seven year olds recognise simple number sequences and extend them appropriately. They

understand the key words in problems. They solve mathematical puzzles and problems with alacrity, for example, when challenged to choose numbers to total fifty along three sides of a triangle. Pupils in the school do not all have a sufficiently prompt recall of their multiplication tables, and this is not helping their learning.

6. In science, pupils aged eleven carry out thorough investigations into the properties of different local rocks, identifying, for example, which contain calcium carbonate, by adding acid and noting effervescence. They plan their work well and record it to a high standard. Seven year olds group materials according to their properties satisfactorily overall. Pupils use correct scientific vocabulary throughout the school, and this practice is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. For example, pupils routinely use terms such as permeable. Impermeable, soluble and insoluble when writing up their experiments about the waterproof properties of different materials.

**Leadership and management are very good; the headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and is committed and capable.**

7. The headteacher is leading the school very capably in a very clear and purposeful educational direction. The school is now well placed for further improvement. The school's priorities for further development are most appropriate, and the current priorities of improving writing in literacy and pupils' skills in tackling "word problems" in mathematics are bearing fruit.
8. The coordinators for literacy, numeracy and ICT have monitored and evaluated teaching and learning through the school. Additionally the headteacher has instigated a system whereby teachers monitor each others teaching, which is helping to raise standards further. Teaching and learning through the school have been monitored and evaluated by the headteacher, who has provided teachers with constructive written and verbal feedback, including areas for improvement where appropriate.
9. The governing body is committed to the school and brings a very good range of expertise to the school. It is effective in its function as a critical friend. Governors have an appropriate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The chair of governors, who is newly in post, comes into school at the start of each week, liaising informally with the headteacher on matters affecting the school's performance. Governors monitor the way in which the curriculum is taught appropriately, especially in literacy and numeracy.

**The overall quality of teaching is very good; pupils learn very well as exemplified in the pupils' excellent records of achievement**

10. The overall quality of teaching throughout the school is very good, with examples of very good teaching in every age group. Of the 13 lessons observed, eight were very good, three were good and two were satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the time of the last inspection. There is now a much higher proportion of very good teaching. Pupils' learning mirrors the effectiveness of the teaching throughout the school.

11. Pupils know and understand the precise purpose of their lessons because, at the start of lessons, teachers explain the learning objectives clearly to them. At the end of each lesson, the learning objectives are looked at again to see how far they have been achieved. This was a particularly good feature of all literacy and numeracy lessons observed, including those in the foundation stage. This good practice is very effective in increasing the rate of pupils' learning because it helps them to understand how well they are doing and appreciate what they need to do to improve.
12. Time is used well in lessons because everybody realises what they have to do, due to the high standard of worksheets prepared by the teachers. These worksheets are clearly matched to the needs of each pupil. In a very good numeracy lesson for children in the foundation stage, each child knew precisely what they had to do as they worked in pairs on their calculations. A negative feature of the use of worksheets is that pupils often do not have exercise books. This makes it harder for pupils to see their progress in the short term. Additionally, some worksheets, whilst otherwise being of very high quality, do not have ruled lines to assist pupils' level writing.
13. The school very successfully records pupils' long term progress in their comprehensive 'Records of Achievement'. These build up as the pupils move through the school and are presented to them when they leave. Pupils help select pieces of work to be added each term, from across the curriculum. At the end of each year, pupils are able to take them home for examination by their family and friends. It is truly awesome to see how pupils in Year 6, for example, have progressed from when they entered school in the Reception class. Work in these 'Records of Achievement' is not yet matched against national standards.

**The school's improved provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is ensuring that pupils make rapid progress.**

14. The school has considerably improved the provision for ICT since the time of the last inspection. The new suite, coupled with the appointment of an ICT specialist, is helping to ensure that pupils keep fully abreast with national expectations.
15. All pupils have two sessions each week in the suite, one of which is a taught ICT lesson in which skills are further learned, the other of which is used to support and to develop the skills on the school's termly theme.
16. Pupils in Year 2 re-arrange text in a poem competently, showing appropriate word-processing skills, in order to make it easier to read. Year 1 pupils produce stunning literary works on 'The Magical Train Ride'. In Year 3 and Year 4 pupils produce high quality broadsheet newspapers such as 'The Daily Rat' with very attractive layouts and eye-catching punchy headlines. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 import digital pictures skilfully from their very good geography work on rock trails around Kirkoswald, into their presentations, fully aware of the needs of their audience.

- 17 In both Year 2 and Year 6, pupils successfully enter the Cumbria Certification scheme, each year receiving gold certificates for their worthwhile work.

**Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour, coupled with the very good relationships promote a successful learning environment**

- 18 Pupils' attitudes are at least good. They generally behave well and want to learn. They mirror the enthusiasm of their teachers and really enjoy coming to school as exemplified by their first class rates of attendance. Very occasionally pupils talk when other pupils or the teacher are speaking and this is both rude and unacceptable. The school's mascot, affectionately known as 'Ossie the owl' does not approve of such behaviour!
- 19 Pupils take part in question and answer sessions eagerly, as in a Year 5/6 numeracy lesson on tackling complicated word problems. They are keen to explain what they are doing and demonstrate their thorough understanding of which words matter in problems and which are irrelevant.
- 20 Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are very good. Staff treat pupils respectfully, and this is reciprocated by the pupils. Pupils work well together in the running of the monthly School Council meetings. Recent successes have included the establishment of a card swap club, computer club and benches for the playground. They have been successful in raising money for charity.

**WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

**The tracking of pupils' progress against national standards, whilst improving, is not yet fully in place.**

- 21 The school has yet to introduce a consistent assessment system that will regularly assess and systematically level pupils' work and set targets for future work. Nationally, pupils are expected to improve, on average, by two "full levels" between the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6. A "full level" is made up of three sub-levels. This equates to pupils being expected to improve by six sub-levels over this four-year period, or one and a half sub-levels per year. Whilst the school is, appropriately, considering introducing a system whereby targets for improvement of two sub levels every year will be set, it has yet to do so.

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

- 22 In order to improve the school further, the headteacher, senior management team and governing body should;
- Improve the tracking of pupils' progress against national standards. (Paragraph 21)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

13

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

8

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	8	3	2	0	0	0
Percentage	0	62	23	15	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)	0	73
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/a	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		7

#### English as an additional language

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

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.0
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	*	*	10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	9	9	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90(100)	90(100)	90(100)
	National	84(83)	86(84)	91(90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	9	9	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90(100)	90(100)	90(100)
	National	85(84)	89(88)	89(88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	*	*	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	14	14	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100(63)	100(75)	100(75)
	National	75(75)	71(72)	87(85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	14	14	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100(63)	100(75)	100(100)
	National	72(70)	74(72)	82(79)

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

\* indicates that figures were too small to be statistically reliable.

**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	73	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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



### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	24

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	1.8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	53

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	-
Total number of education support staff	-
Total aggregate hours worked per week	-
Number of pupils per FTE adult	-

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	200,576
Total expenditure	217,506
Expenditure per pupil	3,021
Balance brought forward from previous year	-11,180
Balance carried forward to next year	-28,110

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0.0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	73
Number of questionnaires returned	27

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	48	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	67	26	3	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	52	0	4	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	48	41	11	0	0
The teaching is good.	59	41	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	33	7	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	19	0	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	78	22	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	59	30	11	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	63	30	7	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	74	26	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	59	30	4	0	7

A minority of parents expressed dissatisfaction with behaviour at the school during the pre-inspection meeting with parents. Inspectors found behaviour to be good during the inspection visit, although there were examples of pupils occasionally 'calling out' when others were speaking.