

INSPECTION REPORT

LAZONBY C OF E SCHOOL

Penrith

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112304

Headteacher: Mr R B Rogers

Reporting inspector: Mr J Heap
18824

Dates of inspection: 4 – 5 February 2003

Inspection number: 247210

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 category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Lazonby
Penrith

Postcode: CA10 1BL

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr H Knipe

Date of previous inspection: 21 April 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Lazonby Church of England (VA) Primary School serves pupils aged four to eleven years from a social background that shows few signs of deprivation. Most pupils live in the village or in nearby villages, but some come from further afield, including the nearest large town of Penrith. There are 82 pupils on roll: 40 boys and 42 girls and the school is much smaller than the average primary school in England. The roll has decreased slightly, after being relatively unchanged in recent years. The vast majority of pupils are white and the very small proportion of pupils from ethnic minority families are mixed-race. No pupil has English as an additional language. Sixteen pupils (20 per cent) are on the list of special educational needs and this is around the national average. One pupil (one per cent) has a statement of special educational needs and this is below the national average. There is a range of special needs and most involve moderate learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural or specific learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils (seven per cent) entitled to a free school meal is much lower than the national average. The levels of attainment of children entering the reception class are mixed, but generally they are average. There are four classes in the school and each caters for more than one age group. A fairly recent development has been the reduction in the amount of time the headteacher teaches a class; it now stands at two and a half days per week.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school that is providing a rich education in a cooperative working ethos. At the age of 11, standards are above national expectations and pupils' personal skills and attitudes are developing very well. Teaching is good, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The headteacher and staff provide a firm steer for the school, but governors need to improve their approach to strategic management. Overall, pupils benefit equally from the school's provision. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Overall, standards of work seen at age 11 are above average and achievement is good.
- Overall, teaching and learning are good, with particular strengths in Years 3 to 6.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, personal development and relationships are very good.
- The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good and it is good for spiritual development.
- This is a caring school and the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Overall, the headteacher and staff provide good leadership and management.

What could be improved

- The governors have insufficient input into shaping the direction of the school.
- The provision for cultural development needs further development, particularly in providing pupils with further knowledge and understanding of a multicultural and multi-faith society.

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 April 1997. There has been good improvement since then. A major factor in this judgement is the maintenance of strengths identified in the last report. In relation to the key issues identified in the report there are now policies and schemes of work that give clear guidance to teachers on how they can develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. The school has implemented well a range of measures to judge pupils' levels of attainment. Particularly useful is the document that tracks individual pupils' achievements, and this helps in the formation of 'booster' groups and groupings in each classroom. The management issue concerning the evaluation of initiatives has been resolved, partially through the review work for the school improvement plan. However, the lack of up-to-date aims for the school makes evaluation of initiatives very difficult.

Results in national tests are improving. There has been further improvement in pupils' personal development and this owes much to the school's improved provision, most particularly in moral and social development. There have also been gains in the following areas:

- increased non-class teaching time, so that teachers can have more impact as subject coordinators;
- greater emphasis on the checking of teaching, teachers' planning and pupils' work.

Nevertheless, improvement planning is not as good as last time because the scope of the plan has been reduced from three years to one and this adversely affects strategic planning. The building has been much improved and the teaching, curriculum and resources for information and communication technology are much better than they were.

STANDARDS

Owing to the small number of pupils aged eleven it would be inappropriate to look at percentage proportions of pupils' attainment in national tests. This is because each pupil would equate to as much as ten per cent and would give an unclear comparison with schools where there are many more pupils.

However, some guidance and analysis is possible when looking at the trends in results over the last three years. In that time, standards for seven-year-olds exceeded the national average in reading and writing, and are close to average in mathematics. In the same period, there is no significant difference between the standards of boys and girls in reading and mathematics, but girls do better in writing. Eleven-year-olds, in the last three years have results that exceed the national average in English, fall below the national average in mathematics and match the national average in science. Results in 2002 were affected by a larger than usual group of pupils with special educational needs. Taken as a whole, the results from English, mathematics and science reveal no significant differences in the standards of boys and girls. The overall trend in these results is below the national trend. However, the school's tracking of individual pupils' achievements indicates that most pupils made at least satisfactory progress and that pupils with special educational needs are often reaching challenging targets. In fact the targets in 2002 were exceeded in English and almost met in mathematics.

In the work seen during the inspection, standards in English and mathematics at the age of 11 exceed the national expectation. Overall, standards are high enough. Pupils with special educational needs are making good progress in relation to their prior levels of attainment. This is particularly due to the challenging targets set for them in their individual education plans and the good support they receive in lessons and in the 'booster' groups. The development and use of literacy and numeracy skills, knowledge and understanding are good.

Children enter the Reception Year with broadly average levels of attainment. They achieve soundly and are on target to enter full-time schooling having met the nationally agreed early learning goals.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are highly enthusiastic and keen learners.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. In all situations pupils are orderly and most show commendable self-discipline. There have been no exclusions recently.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are courteous and respectful to peers, staff, visitors and property. Relationships are very positive and friendly. Older pupils show a welcome maturity when given responsibility.
Attendance	Good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Overall, the teaching and learning are good. Every teacher in the school produced at least some good teaching. The teaching of English and mathematics is good and the headteacher provides a good role model with his good work in science. Analysis of pupils' work and the rate of pupils' achievement show teaching to be effective even though around a quarter of the lessons observed were satisfactory. Teachers plan lessons well and this helps to achieve a brisk pace. Through the accurate judging of pupils' levels of attainment, teachers match work precisely to individuals and use resources effectively. The main area for development is to challenge the highest attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2, thereby helping them become more independent in their learning. In some satisfactory lessons, there was a lack of ambition and pupils repeated work that they already knew before going on to do work that stretched them a little.

The teaching of skills, knowledge and understanding in literacy, numeracy and information technology is effective. Each of these subjects is used and developed in a range of other subjects and generally helps pupils in their learning.

The majority of pupils have all their needs met well. Those with special educational needs are making good progress towards the targets set for them. Across the school learning is good, and in Years 5 and 6 it is strongest. Additional literacy and numeracy support for pupils having difficulties is effective.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. There is a broad and balanced range of learning opportunities. All subjects have appropriate policies and schemes of work. There are good examples across the school of knowledge and skills in English, mathematics and information and communication being used and developed in other subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are well supported in normal class lessons and in 'booster' groups. Individual education plans are well written and challenging, but staff need to start writing their own rather than relying on the special educational needs coordinator to do so as she does at the moment.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall, very good. Provision for moral and social development are significant strengths of the school. Provision for spiritual development is good. Overall, provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Nevertheless, provision dealing with the local culture is very good, but multicultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Effective procedures are in place to maintain the good standards of attendance, welfare, child protection and discipline. The judging, checking and tracking of pupils' academic achievement are effective. There is no policy relating to racial equality.
Partnership with parents	Parents' views of the school are good. They have a positive impact on the work of the school through helping in classrooms and raising money for

	resources.
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HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The school is led by a conscientious, caring and experienced headteacher. Staff have key roles in the school and they have successfully worked hard at increasing their management expertise. This has been supported by the governors in the generous provision of time away from direct class teaching.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are highly supportive and gladly give a lot of their time to ensuring they know what is going on and successfully fulfilling their statutory obligations. However, they are less successful at developing and arriving at a long-term strategic view.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Strong in the tracking of individual achievements and setting appropriate targets. However, there are shortcomings in the setting of long-term strategic priorities: there is mainly a reliance on one-year plans rather than setting a longer term strategy. Furthermore, the aims of the school have significant omissions that make evaluation very difficult.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Educational priorities are appropriately costed and funded. The headteacher has been very successful in acquiring grants that have enhanced the school's provision. Grants for specific purposes are appropriately used. The school has good procedures for obtaining value for money in its purchasing of supplies and services.

Overall, there are adequate levels of staffing and learning resources. Despite recent improvements to the accommodation, the lack of a school hall means that it is difficult to teach physical education in the way that the school would like to.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The approachability of staff. • The expectations the school places on pupils of hard work and achievement. • The quality of teaching. • The behaviour of pupils. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of extra-curricular activities. • Closeness of the home/school partnership. • Homework. • The information they receive from the school.

Inspectors agree with the positive judgements of parents. However, inspectors do not agree that the range of activities outside lessons is a weakness. The school provides a wide range of activities that are appreciated by many pupils, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Inspectors judge the home/school partnership to be good, most particularly the high level of quality information that is sent home. The provision of homework is satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Overall, standards of work at age 11 are above average and achievement is good.

1. The standards pupils achieve in their schoolwork are similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection. Pupils enter full-time education with broadly average attainment and achieve well by the time they leave the school at the age of 11 with standards that generally exceed the national expectation. Overall, results in national tests in the last three years broadly confirm the standards in English and science and are worse than the current standards in mathematics. However, standards this year in mathematics look to be better because there are fewer pupils who have difficulties with mathematics.
2. Owing to the small numbers of pupils in most year groups, it is difficult to make secure judgements about standards in national tests. However, at the age of seven standards over the last three years exceeded the average in reading and writing and were close to average in mathematics. Over the same period there was no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls in reading and mathematics, but girls did better in writing. National trends have been steadily rising, but the school has been inconsistent. At the age of 11, national test results taken over three years were above average in English, average in science and below average in mathematics. The trend is inconsistent, with strong results in 2000. Girls did better in English and boys did better in science, but the overall differences are insignificant. The trend in results was below the national one. However, the school's document that tracks individual pupils' achievement indicates that all pupils are achieving, at least, at a satisfactory level and most are achieving well. Furthermore, pupils with special educational needs are often reaching challenging targets.
3. In English, standards exceed national expectations in speaking, listening, reading and writing. By the ages of seven and 11, pupils speak well and listen carefully to their teacher and each other. Even at the younger ages, pupils explain themselves well and respond appropriately. In reading, standards are generally good throughout the school. By the age of 11, the vast majority of pupils are accurate, fluent and knowledgeable readers who recount their books in some detail. The highest attaining pupils have a very broad range of words they can read, but their true quality is shown in their excellent expression which makes them very interesting to listen to. The lowest attaining pupils read accurately and with sound fluency which is enhanced by some expression. In writing, seven-year-olds are generally good writers with improving basic skills. The highest attaining pupils are becoming more adventurous with their range of words and they have improved well the style and impact of their writing. By the age of 11, basic skills have been developed well and there are particular improvements in handwriting, spelling and style. The higher attaining pupils write interesting and creative poems alongside a wide range of other genres. Basic skills are very good, particularly handwriting, spelling and punctuation. Their style of writing is well organised and helps the reader to retain interest and be entertained:

'Suddenly, there was a huge, gigantic "Roar!"'

'The cold was like a thousand knives tearing through my flesh'

Lower attaining pupils are generally accurate in their spelling and punctuation. However, their punctuation lacks breadth and they have little knowledge about contractions such as 'I'm'.

4. In mathematics, standards are a little above national expectations. By the age of seven, pupils are strongest at number and measure. However, they are developing at least sound skills in data handling exercises such as tallying and these are increasing skills and awareness in problem-solving and investigations. These investigations are often linked to work in other subjects such as science. By the age of 11, attainment is at least at the expected Level 4 and some work is at the higher than expected Level 5, such as converting fractions to decimals and coordinates using negative numbers. The highest attaining pupils are good mathematicians who enjoy and are enthused by difficult, challenging work such as working out probability scales and converting fractions to percentages. They relish investigations and gain much from the links with other subjects, such as science and information and communication technology. Throughout the school there is evidence of investigations and problem-solving work. There is a wide range of work, for instance:
- in Reception Year, children sort playing cards into like numbers;
 - in Year 2, pupils successfully shop with money and count the number of legs belonging to six dogs;
 - in Year 6, pupils investigate well a set of coordinates and work out the maximum area that can be included in a rectangular field of fixed perimeter.
5. Standards in literacy are good and they benefit from a wide range of applications and uses in other subjects. Good examples are:
- in history, Year 6 pupils make their own booklets about Victorian transport and include pages for contents, bibliography and glossary;
 - in Year 2, pupils write about the cause and consequences of actions, for instance comparing the wooden homes at the time of the great fire of London with those in ancient Egypt and working out that they would burn quickly in 1666 because they were made of wood;
 - in geography, pupils in Year 6 write at length about their visit to Grasmere. Lower attaining pupils write well about the effects of tourism on the village;
 - in science, Year 6 produce good writing about the human kidney and seed dispersal.
6. Standards in numeracy are good. Again, skills are used and developed in a range of subjects. For example:
- in Year 2, pupils produce a timeline for Ancient Egypt and investigate the consequences of raising and lowering a ramp on the distance a toy car travels;
 - in Year 6, pupils reinforce their findings in scientific investigations about forces through line graphs. In their work on the solar system they produce block graphs that show comparative weights in the particular gravitational conditions of a range of planets;
 - in geography, pupils compare the climates of Delhi and Amsterdam by reading the relevant graphs.
7. Standards in information and communication technology are rising, and meet national expectations. This is due to the good, enthusiastic work of the coordinator and the way that the subject supports learning in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils are confidently using computers in a range of applications, for instance:

- pupils in Year 6 have made a good multi-media presentation that includes words, pictures, interviews and graphics. They understand how technology controls devices and they are monitoring change in the environment;
- pupils in Year 2 use a word bank, find information from a range of sources and create pictures, pictograms and stories.

Overall, teaching and learning are good, with particular strengths in Years 3 to 6.

8. At the time of the last inspection, the teaching is described as high standard. There was no unsatisfactory teaching and two-thirds were good, or very good. The proportions have remained very similar, no teaching was unsatisfactory and teaching still has a positive effect on pupils' achievement.
9. The strongest teaching is in Years 3 to 6, and particularly in the Year 5/6 class. In the very best lesson, the strengths are:
- good interpretation of the literacy hour, through the accurate matching of work to pupils' levels of attainment;
 - pupils were provided with many opportunities to provide their own ideas and build up their own writing of a myth;
 - good encouragement to improve their work as they progress, for example by broadening their use of words for 'dry' such as 'barren', 'wasteland' and 'arid';
 - very good links to other subjects by the higher attaining pupils, for instance when explaining how the Gods quarrelled about the world and shared out the planets. One pupil used good scientific knowledge to describe Jupiter protecting his planet with rings.

These strengths are also noticeable in mathematics and science lessons. In general, basic skills are taught well, with consolidation and review being important parts. Learning objectives are clear and the pace of lessons is brisk. In a Year 5/6 mathematics lesson on equivalence of fractions, the majority of pupils are very secure about working out vulgar and decimal fractions, for instance:

$$\frac{4}{10} = \frac{2}{5} = 0.4$$

and the highest attaining pupils include percentages:

$$\frac{1}{8} = 0.125 = 12.5\%$$

In the mathematics 'booster' groups, lessons are well organised, they sometimes consolidate and often build on past learning. The teacher provides a good range of tasks for pupils to apply new knowledge. However, there are too few opportunities to discuss strategies in the mental and oral start to the lesson.

10. In Years 3 and 4, the teaching is good. The class teacher has good knowledge and understanding of the subjects she teaches. For instance, in a history lesson about Egypt, she corrects erroneous views about the reasons for mummification. At the outset, most pupils thought it was purely to do with preservation and did not have a spiritual element: pupils' greater understanding constituted good learning. In the same lesson, there were notable contributions to learning in literacy and information and communication technology and in their use as tools for learning, for instance:

- development of a broad vocabulary that evokes a strong sense of Ancient Egypt, such as 'preserve', 'organ' and 'eternity';
- good work with a CD ROM, that provides good illustrations, challenges pupils' thinking through the detailed animations of activities during mummification, such as 'hooking' the brain;
- in literacy, the teacher provides good targets for pupils, that lead to effective learning, such as good openings to stories:

'Alice slowly tiptoed down the creaking staircase',

and developing a mature use of vocabulary:

tugged his warm and cosy coat, closer'

whispering through the leaves'

11. Overall, the teaching in the Reception Year and in Years 1 and 2 effectively develops pupils' basic skills. For example:

- in a good Year 2 mathematics lesson, there are high expectations of pupils' skills in estimating weight and practical work is closely linked to pupils' levels of attainment. This was particularly useful with the lower attaining pupils who had found difficulty with the work in the previous lesson. The class teacher recognises that pupils have different needs and is sensitive to the full range of levels of attainment in the class;
- in a satisfactory literacy lesson in Year 2, there was good emphasis on letter sounds, such as 'or', 'ore' and 'aw'. Appropriate emphasis is placed on illustrating words containing these sounds and ensuring pupils recognise the similar sound, but different spelling.

However, when the Year 2 literacy lesson moved on to using alphabetical order, there was less challenge, to begin with, for the higher attaining pupils. This was because the opening task called for ordering by the first letters of words and the higher attaining pupils could do better than that. They did not need the consolidation, even though more challenging work followed.

12. In the Reception/Year 1 class, the younger children benefit from the joint sessions with the older pupils. For example, in geography, all the pupils discussed their views about places in and around Lazonby and consigned them to categories of good and bad. All pupils had clearly benefited from their walk around the village and were later reminded by the photographs taken. Pupils' views on good and bad features/aspects/places gave clear insights to:

- safety views, such as why some places are dangerous;
- attitudes, such as the rights and wrongs of litter and vandalism;
- the pupils' keenness, enthusiasm, ability to provide contributions and their listening skills.

Overall, the teaching of basic skills is effective and this is done in such a way that they all retain their interest and enthusiasm for learning, because:

- the teacher is well organised, plans interesting activities and assembles a good range of resources;
- the management and control of lessons is good;
- the teacher has close and detailed knowledge of all the pupils.

13. Literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are taught effectively. The skills, knowledge and understanding of each of these subjects are used to good effect in pupils' learning in subjects such as history, geography, science and religious education.
14. Throughout the school there are many examples of good marking that relates directly to pupils' individual targets. Comments are helpful and, often, challenging, particularly for the older pupils.
15. Homework is satisfactory. Pupils talk about regular and helpful basic skills work that is followed-up in school time.

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, personal development and relationships are very good.

16. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes to their work, behaviour, relationships and personal development continue to be the strengths of the school identified at the last inspection. However, the present judgement shows there has been a further improvement. These conclusions confirm the very positive views and confidence expressed by parents in their meeting with inspectors and in the returned questionnaires.
17. Attitudes to learning and the school are very good. In several lessons pupils showed a high level of interest and concentration and this often fostered a strong sense of wonder at what they were learning. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, there were real signs of purpose and delight when pupils were asked to judge the weights of piles of books before they were formally weighed. Pupils settle to work quickly with the minimum of fuss. They listen well and levels of concentration in all classes are very good for the vast majority of pupils. Pupils enter fully into discussions and produce their best work. Pupils are equally successful at working independently, or in pairs or groups. Overall, these very strong attitudes have a positive effect on pupils' attainment and achievement, particularly in Years 5 to 6.
18. Behaviour is very good, both inside and outside school. This proved to be particularly important during the inspection because the playground was often unfit due to snow and ice and pupils had to spend much of their time indoors. Effective teaching in well-planned lessons encourages and motivates pupils and the few instances of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with swiftly and decisively. Furthermore, high levels of concentration and interest flourish in these circumstances.
19. The very good relationships are a significant contribution to the strong sense of community which pervades all areas of school life for instance, between pupils, teachers, other staff, governors and the majority of parents. Pupils benefit from the good role-models provided by staff and other helpers in the school and, consequently, they are friendly and courteous to adults and other visitors.
20. Personal development is very strong. From a very young age pupils select appropriate resources and tidy up well when they complete activities. Older pupils support younger ones very well, and this is much appreciated by parents. A good example was seen at lunchtime as pupils walked to and from the detached canteen. In very difficult conditions, older pupils paired up with younger ones to walk along the icy pavement and they behaved safely and impeccably. Pupils contribute to those less well off through charitable donations, for instance, through filled shoe-boxes to Eastern Europe.

The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good and it is good for spiritual development.

21. Overall, the development of spiritual, moral and social attitudes is very good. This conclusion takes into account a range of judgements from very good provision for moral and social development, good for spiritual development and satisfactory for cultural development. These judgements show good improvement from the last inspection in spiritual, moral and social development. Cultural development has improved satisfactorily, but still has some way to go, most particularly in the provision for multicultural development.
22. Spiritual development is firmly rooted within the Christian faith and places a strong emphasis on developing family values in the school. Parents, at the meeting with inspectors, strongly endorsed these as a strength. Visits by local clergy provide pupils with good opportunities to consider and reflect on spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues. For example, an assembly led by the local Methodist Minister referred to the current 'darkness' in Zimbabwe. This came after a short talk about the uselessness of having a torch without batteries. Good opportunities are taken to celebrate pupils' achievements. Pupils listen well and sing hymns enthusiastically and tunefully. Elements of spirituality are included in the curriculum, such as writing prayers and examining the wonder and beauty of nature.
23. The very good provision for moral and social development has much to do with the school's high expectations in these areas. There is active encouragement of a strong moral code. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and they actively seek to be supportive of each other. More subtly, where there are the very few pupils who have behavioural difficulties, pupils tend to avoid becoming involved and get on with their own activities. Pupils are taught to respect property and be sensitive to the needs of others. For example:
 - supporting charities for the less well off and disadvantaged;
 - developing personal views about the cause and effect of man's effect on the natural world.

Social development lays firm foundations for citizenship through strong links with the local community. Planned group work in several subjects provide good opportunities for pupils to work together. Older pupils are expected to support younger ones and help in the day-to-day running of the school. All of these aspects provide:

- effective contact with the local community;
- a very strong contribution to the quality of relationships at all levels.

This is a caring school and the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.

24. At the time of the last inspection, the report identified a caring ethos that ensured effective support for all pupils. The quality of care has been mentioned already. There have been improvements in the procedures and use of the recorded judgements of pupils' attainment, which was identified as an area for improvement. Particularly strong is the development of a whole-school tracking document that gives clear information about pupils' achievements over time. These are particularly helpful in identifying pupils who need 'booster' work.

25. The school continues to promote effectively pupils' health and welfare through:

- appropriate, prompt and vigorous attention to health and safety matters;
- good procedures to promote discipline, attendance and personal development.

Pupils and parents are clear about the school being a happy and secure environment and several parents compare the school favourably with others that their children have attended.

26. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs promotes their learning and they receive appropriate support within the classroom. Individual education plans are written for all pupils who have been identified as having special needs. They are well-written by the coordinator and identify appropriate and realistic goals. Teachers plan tasks based on the individual plans and support staff are well-briefed to work with small groups. For example, in a Year 3 additional literacy support group, the strengths shown by the teaching assistant were:

- a good review of words learned from a previous lesson that established the level and quality of learning;
- good reading of 'The Kind Knight' and pupils listened intently;
- effective use of the text to highlight 'ay' sounds and correct errors in a sensitive, but fair, manner;
- good management of pupils ensured good behaviour;
- pupils were given a useful word game as homework.

In Year 6, a group of 12 pupils were taught mathematics in a 'booster' group setting. This was a well-organised lesson which consolidated and built on previous learning about multiplying, in two- and three-digit sums. A good range of tasks were assembled for pupils to apply the new knowledge. Particular strengths included:

- good questioning, such as "How many times bigger is 57,000 than 57?"
- introduction of challenging work as in what is the new temperature when it rises by four degrees from -9° .

An area for development is raising expectations in the mental and oral start to the lesson, so that pupils have good opportunities to discuss the strategies that they use to get to an answer.

27. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs ensures that they receive equal access to the full programme available. They benefit from a curriculum that is well-planned and balanced, takes good notice of the targets set for them and has careful records to check on the progress they make. The special educational needs coordinator checks regularly on the individual education plans and their reviews. This information is shared with parents on a termly basis.

28. Although the provision is effective, there are two areas that require attention and development:

- increasing staff experience and confidence in writing individual education plans;
- identification of need does not come until Year 2 and should be done earlier.

It is to the credit of the newly appointed coordinator that she has rightly identified these issues and is planning for their improvement.

Overall, the headteacher and staff provide good leadership and management.

29. The headteacher and staff continue to provide the effective leadership and management identified in the last report. There has been good improvement in the amount of non-class teaching time provided for teachers to work on their areas of responsibility. The school improvement plan continues to identify suitable priorities, but has been reduced from a three-year plan to a one-year plan and this has weakened the process.

30. The headteacher and staff are highly committed to the school and they shoulder well their heavy workloads. The headteacher provides clear direction for the school through:

- his clear philosophy that successfully supports pupils' learning and personal development, his support of staff and the amount of information he supplies for parents and the local community;
- a good range of policies for most aspects of school life;
- his focus on giving staff a say in decision-making and finding solutions.

As a result, the school has maintained the strengths from the previous inspection and retains the confidence and interest of the vast majority of pupils, parents and local community.

31. Staff manage several areas of school work, mainly through coordination of curriculum subjects. The increase in non-class-teaching time has ensured the improvements in:

- the amount and quality of checking provision and pupils' performance and the feedback to the rest of the school. For instance, in mathematics, the July 2002 analysis of pupils' work for each year clearly sets out appropriate strengths and areas for development;
- the range of opportunities provided in information and communication technology. For example, good use in literacy, mathematics, science and the humanities; with particular emphasis on using the internet. This is achieved by successful auditing of provision, appropriate identification of training needs and good support for staff before they embark on work.

In all aspects of coordination, the school has rightly highlighted the importance of checking provision, standards and support needs. Consequently, a team approach has emerged and is actively promoted by the headteacher.

32. Financial management is good. The school has prudently managed the monies that it receives. There have been significant improvements to the building, resources and time for staff to complete management tasks. Many of these initiatives have been supported by the headteacher's successful applications for grant aid. For example:

- £30,000 to alter classrooms which equalised the size of the rooms and supported teachers' successful management of their class;
- £11,000 for the external play area for reception children which means that the full recommended curriculum for these children could become a reality.

There is, currently, a £200,000 bid for a school hall that is properly aimed at replacing the old and distanced canteen and providing accommodation for physical education and community activities. Furthermore, grants to enhance provision for special educational needs, information and communication technology and boosting literacy and numeracy have all been used successfully.

33. The school has good principles and practices for ensuring that they achieve value for money in their purchasing of supplies and services. For example:
- management compare results in national tests with school in similar circumstances and seek comparative comments from local education authority officers;
 - the school responds to the challenges of parents on issues such as homework. A new policy is being drawn up that the headteacher feels will answer the critics and give a stronger framework for pupils' work at home;
 - consultation is rightly sought with governors, the support-group of parents, a range of local authority officers on a range of curricular/pupil performance issues and with pupils on the school council about playground equipment;
 - competitive tendering is effectively used when resources and services are purchased, such as the purchase of computers.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The governors have insufficient input into shaping the direction of the school.

34. The governing body continues to provide effective support for the school and they are involved in the day-to-day work of the school through visits and supporting in classrooms. Consequently, governors have a good knowledge of the school. This is further enhanced by the regular and detailed work of officers and committees, for instance:
- the chair of governors meets the headteacher weekly;
 - the officers group meets monthly;
 - the two committees meet regularly;
 - the full governing body meets three times a term.

Furthermore, the governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities fully.

35. However, there are two basic shortcomings that lessen their effectiveness over the longer term, and these are:
- they have not revised the aims of the school for several years and there are several omissions that would sharpen the school's performance in important areas;
 - improvement planning has a one-year duration and this hinders clarity in the identification of priorities over time and in the evaluation of effective implementation.
36. In relation to the aims of the school, there is no doubt that the school achieves many of the aims that are published. Nevertheless, revision is needed to introduce aims that plainly point to contemporary, important issues, such as:

- the achievement of the highest standards;
- developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of a multicultural society;
- constructing the strongest relationships with parents.

At the present time the governors would not have the formal framework to evaluate these matters, and judge in clear terms the quality of the present provision and the rate of progress made.

The provision for cultural development needs further development, particularly in providing pupils with further knowledge and understanding of a multicultural and multi-faith society.

37. Overall, the school gives great attention to its provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The successes reflect a strong commitment to developing all aspects of pupils. However, there are areas for development in the provision for multicultural and multi-faith understanding. This means that pupils are not as well prepared as they will require for the world beyond Cumbria.
38. There is no denying that local culture studies are very successful, informative and practical, with well-timed visits being a feature. Religious education, history and geography provide sound insights into:
- an adequate range of religions;
 - stories from important ancient civilisations, such as Greece and Egypt;
 - life in India and Sri Lanka.

Whilst this work is valuable, it is mainly led by books and CD ROM. There are no examples of visits to a range of holy places, such as places of worship, so that pupils can see for themselves the similarities and differences in religions. However, visitors from several cultures come to the school, often as performers for example, an Indian dance company.

39. The headteacher is aware that first-hand experiences for the pupils are desirable, such as visits to mosques, temples and synagogues. Furthermore, the school is keen to set up internet links with other schools, although the option of that link being an inner-city school has not been explored. The fact that the shortcoming has been recognised means that the school is soundly placed to make successful developments. However, there is the lack of a direct aim for the school to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of multicultural and multi-faith issues. This remains a shortcoming in the governors' leadership of the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

40. Governors, headteacher and staff should:

(1) Improve the governors' leadership of the school by:

- revising the aims of the school to ensure that they fully express the direction for the school;
- making sure that there are no significant omissions in the aims;
- using the aims to evaluate school provision and identify provision;
- increasing the range of longer term planning to at least three years in duration.

(Paragraphs: 34, 35)

(2) Develop the provision for pupils' multicultural and multi-faith understanding by:

- fostering the school's commitment through a dedicated aim;
- identifying and implementing ways to provide pupils with first-hand experience of different cultures and faiths.

(Paragraphs: 36, 37, 38)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	15
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	0	1	10	4	0	0	0
Percentage	0	7	67	27	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 six 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)	N/a	82
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/a	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/a	16

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	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.1
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	N/a*	N/a*	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	N/a*	N/a*	N/a*
	Girls	N/a*	N/a*	N/a*
	Total	N/a*	N/a*	N/a*
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (93)	71 (100)	94 (79)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	N/a*	N/a*	N/a*
	Girls	N/a*	N/a*	N/a*
	Total	N/a*	N/a*	N/a*
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (93)	88 (100)	94 (100)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	N/a*	N/a*	10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	N/a*	N/a*	N/a*
	Girls	N/a*	N/a*	N/a*
	Total	N/a*	N/a*	N/a*
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (82)	70 (71)	90 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	N/a*	N/a*	N/a*
	Girls	N/a*	N/a*	N/a*
	Total	N/a*	N/a*	N/a*
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (71)	70 (71)	80 (88)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

*The numbers for boys and girls have been omitted because there are less than ten of each. This is to ensure that individual pupils cannot be identified.

Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/a
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.5

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.8
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	82
Number of questionnaires returned	55

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	36	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	44	45	5	2	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	49	5	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	55	16	5	0
The teaching is good.	49	42	5	2	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	27	51	18	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	56	36	5	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	35	5	0	9
The school works closely with parents.	35	40	24	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	35	51	11	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	42	53	2	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	36	27	9	7

Other issues raised by parents

A number of written comments were also sent in, several were full of praise for the school. Others picked up individual issues that concerned parents, the majority of these are responded to in the report.