

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST PATRICK'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Maryport

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112337

Headteacher: Mrs L Northern

Reporting inspector: Mr R S Moseley  
16886

Dates of inspection: 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> December 2002

Inspection number: 247243

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Nursery, Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 3 – 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Ennerdale Road  
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Cumbria  
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs M Stamper

Date of previous inspection: 18<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> October 1999

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
16886	R S Moseley	Registered inspector	Science Physical education Education inclusion Foundation Stage	Characteristics of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well the school is led and managed How well the pupils are taught
19740	A Smith	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils How the school works in partnership with parents
30439	M Heyes	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History	
32283	D Goodchild	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Music	How good the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils are

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>12</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>29</b>



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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School is smaller than most primary schools with 170 pupils, consisting of 93 boys and 77 girls from three to eleven years. This includes 15 part-time children in the nursery. An above average number of pupils, 44 per cent, are entitled to free school meals. The school serves the local area, which consists mainly of local authority housing. Attainment on entry to the school is well below average. There are no pupils with English as an additional language and there are no pupils who have ethnic minority backgrounds. The proportion of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs is above the national average. There are two pupils who have statements of special educational needs.

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

This is an effective school, with some good and very good features. It has developed a good and challenging climate for learning within a strong Christian ethos. The quality of teaching is largely good, with some very high quality teaching, particularly in the Foundation Unit. Standards in English, mathematics and science are average and most pupils are achieving well. Pupils' behaviour is good. Their attitudes are very good as are their relationships throughout the school. The school is very well led and managed and gives good value for money.

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

- Teaching, which is good, is having a positive effect on pupils' learning.
- Pupils are achieving well in most subjects.
- The provision for children in the Foundation Unit is very good.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development is very good. This has resulted in pupils having very good relationships with each other and very good and positive attitudes to their work.
- The leadership is very good and provides a very clear educational direction for the school.

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

- Standards in music and the development of teachers' confidence in the teaching of music.
- The use of computers to support learning across a greater range of subjects.

*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 October 1999. It has overcome all the weaknesses noted in the last inspection and has improved in a number of other ways. With reference to the key issues in the last report, the school has continued to improve the subject policies and schemes of work, which guide teachers' planning. Leadership and management by all subject co-ordinators have improved, especially in relation to their monitoring role. The provision for cultural development has improved. Standards have been maintained and in some cases, improved, since the last inspection.

In addition, the leadership has introduced other very good improvements. For example, the school has improved opportunities for pupils to develop their responsibilities by introducing a school council, which has a representative from each year. Also, it has developed a 'Buddy system' where older pupils care for younger ones. There is a now a well-developed library, which is run by a few parents who act as volunteer librarians. The nursery and reception children are combined into a new Foundation Unit and, although this has only been in place since September, it is very successful, helping all ages and abilities of children to make very good progress.

## STANDARDS

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

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

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Although the trend shown above shows a steady improvement in most standards, care should be taken when interpreting these figures on a year-on-year basis, as in some years the numbers of pupils taking the tests are small and make comparisons unreliable. For example, in 2002, there were only 11 pupils. The national tests and assessments at the end of Year 2, in 2002, indicate below average results in reading and writing and average results in science and mathematics. These results are more reliable as there were 23 pupils in the cohort. When these Year 2 results are compared to similar schools, they show standards well above average.

The inspection findings indicate that for this year's pupils, in Year 6, standards are average in English, mathematics and science and pupils are achieving well. In Year 2, standards are average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. This indicates that standards have risen in reading and writing and pupils are achieving well from an attainment on entry that is well below average, in all these subjects. The rising standards in reading and writing are mainly the result of improvements in the quality of the teaching. The improvements throughout the school have not been in place long enough for pupils to attain even higher standards by the time they leave the school. Standards in literacy and numeracy are average. The school has exceeded all the targets set. The targets were appropriate.

Attainment in music is lower than that expected in most schools and pupils are not achieving as well as they could. In all other subjects where a judgement could be made, attainment matches the expectations for pupils' ages by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils are achieving well. Religious education was not inspected as this is subject to an inspection by the Diocese.

Children start the nursery with well below average attainment. They make good progress and start full-time education in reception with below average attainment. Many children also start with very low language skills. By the time they leave reception, the numbers of children achieving the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development are below average but average in all other areas of learning. This represents good levels of achievement in some areas and very good levels in other areas. These achievement levels are a result of the very good provision in the Foundation Unit.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Almost all pupils are very eager to learn and give of their best at all times. They are very responsive and show very good attitudes in all they do.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. They are polite and courteous to each other and to adults.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Most pupils are developing confidence by the time they leave the school. A number of younger pupils, however, still need a great deal of support, and pupils' skills in independent learning, although slow to develop, are only satisfactory. Relationships at all levels are very good.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Broadly in line with the national average.

Pupils greatly enjoy coming to school. They are very proud of their school, care about each other and show a great deal of respect for each other's views.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is largely good in Years 1 to 6, with some in Year 6 that is very good. The quality of teaching in the nursery and reception is largely very good with some that is excellent. The present level of teaching ensures that learning is mainly good in many areas as pupils achieve well and successfully acquire skills, knowledge and understanding in most subjects they are studying.

Particular strengths are the effectiveness of the methods and ideas teachers use. These interest pupils and motivate them well to the end of the lesson. The management of pupils is good and, in the case of the more experienced teachers, very good. This ensures good or very good behaviour in lessons and pupils develop very positive attitudes to learning. The pace of lessons is good, resulting in pupils making good, intellectual, physical and creative effort. A very good strength in the teaching is the way pupils are encouraged to respond to questions and contribute ideas and suggestions. Teachers' planning is usually very good, especially in English and mathematics, and builds very well on previous lessons. This generally fulfils the needs of all pupils and ensures they make good progress. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are at least good in most subjects. However, teachers' confidence in the teaching of music is weaker and, consequently, pupils' attainment in aspects of music, where a judgement could be made, is below that expected for their ages. The use of computers to support learning in subjects is also weaker and underdeveloped. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well.

The quality of teaching in the Foundation Unit leads to very good learning. The nursery and reception teachers work very closely together and form an effective team. They have created a very rich and vibrant learning environment where children of all abilities are challenged and make very good progress.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. It is very good in the Foundation Unit. Teachers provide many opportunities to make pupils' learning experiences, both in school and during visits out, rich and purposeful. The school ensures that all pupils are included in all aspects of school life.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Teachers and support staff work closely together to support these pupils and they are fully integrated into the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good. Within this, the provision for spiritual and moral development in a context of a strong Christian ethos is very good. The provision for social and cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. The school has created a caring and positive family atmosphere. In most subjects, teachers have developed good assessment procedures and are using this information to support pupils and plan work well related to their needs. Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are very good.

The school has established a good partnership with parents. The range of information supplied to parents is very clear. Parents view the school as being very good.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. Within this, the headteacher is an excellent leader. She has developed a strong sense of purpose amongst the staff and monitors all aspects of school life rigorously and thoroughly. She has also enabled staff to develop their own leadership roles well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well. The chair of the governing body is very supportive and works closely with the headteacher. A number of other governors are linked to subjects of the curriculum. They take their responsibilities seriously. They visit the school regularly to monitor their subjects and often write reports.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The headteacher, staff and governors are fully aware of the school's performance. They have a very clear idea of the aims, values and ethos of the school and the educational direction in which they wish to go.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Resources are readily available and used well. All money is spent wisely and carefully and the school applies the principles of getting the best value for its pupils.

The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is good. The accommodation is good. Teaching resources are satisfactory.

## 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 child is making good progress in the school.</li><li>• Teaching is good.</li><li>• The school expects their child to work hard and achieve his or her best.</li><li>• Their child gets the right amount of work to do at home.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A very few parents felt the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons.</li></ul>

Inspectors support parents' very positive views of the school. They also judged that extra-curricular activities are good.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. A significant majority of children enter the nursery with social, language and mathematical skills that are well below the expectations for three year olds. Some have very low language skills. They make good progress. Attainment on entry to full time education in the reception is therefore higher and below average. They continue to make good progress and by the time they leave the reception year, although the numbers of children attaining the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development are below average, the number attaining all the other early learning goals is average. This represents very good levels of achievement in relation to the abilities of the children when they start the nursery. The overall standard of work seen at the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6 is average and pupils continue to achieve well from the below average attainment on entry to full time education. This is mainly because of the improvements in the quality of the teaching and the very good monitoring and evaluation of the planning by the headteacher, closely linked to good assessment procedures.
2. In the National Curriculum tests and assessments in Year 2, in 2002, pupils' standards in reading and writing were below average. In mathematics and science, they were average. In the tests for pupils in Year 6, in 2002, standards in mathematics and science were average but in English they were above average. When these results are compared to similar schools, standards in English in Year 6 were very high, which puts the English results in the top five per cent on this comparison, and in mathematics and science they were well above average. However, it must be recognised that as there were only 11 pupils taking the tests in Year 6, this makes the comparisons to all schools, as well as to similar schools, more unreliable. The results over the last few years in the national tests have varied widely. This is again because, in some years, there are quite small numbers.
3. For this year's pupils, in Year 2, standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are average and pupils are achieving well. In Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are again average and pupils continue to achieve well. It must also be remembered that up to one third of pupils in both Year 2 and Year 6 have special educational needs, which emphasises just how good this achievement is.
4. In English, pupils have positive attitudes to reading and in Year 2, there is a satisfactory level of word recognition. By Year 6, pupils read with improved fluency and accuracy and demonstrate an ability to interpret and predict story lines. In writing, pupils write successfully for a wide range of purposes. They compose letters, make up stories and write about books they have read. By Year 6, pupils are able to use precise and imaginative vocabulary and their writing shows variety and interest. Pupils contribute well to question and answer sessions in all subjects. Their speaking and listening skills are satisfactory. Standards in literacy are in line with those expected for their ages at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
5. In mathematics, pupils in Year 2 accurately count up to and have a sound understanding of numbers up to 100. Many pupils can confidently double and halve numbers, such as 28 or 18. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a well-developed knowledge and understanding of number and readily apply these in activities presented to them. They find the area of different shapes and use percentages, decimals and fractions in solving problems. Standards in numeracy are in line with those expected for their ages at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
6. In science, pupils at the end of Year 2 have a sound knowledge of all areas of science. For example, they study a range of different materials and are beginning to learn how suitable some materials are for specific purposes. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a sound understanding of physical processes, as well as life processes and living things. For instance,

they understand how different parts of the human body work and know what is important to create healthy bodies. Pupils' abilities to carry out investigations are satisfactory. They understand how important it is to predict what might happen, as well as making the test fair. The skills of literacy and numeracy are soundly developed in science, but the use of computers to support learning is underdeveloped.

7. In information and communication technology, pupils' attainment is in line with that expected nationally at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils are achieving well. Pupils in Year 2 use the mouse and keyboard to work computer programs with increasing confidence and they alter the font size when word-processing work. By Year 6, pupils carry out sound word-processing work, importing pictures and moving them around the screen. They input data and produce graphs and charts with confidence. Most pupils in Years 5 and 6 are able to use a digital camera and work on the Internet. Their opportunities to develop skills further using computers to aid learning in other subjects, are limited.
8. Attainment in music is lower than that expected in most schools and pupils are not achieving as well as they could. For example, singing is below the level expected for pupils' ages and pupils are unfamiliar with a range of composers.
9. In the remaining subjects, attainment is in line with that expected for pupils' ages at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils are achieving well.
10. Religious education was not inspected as this is subject to an inspection by the Diocese.
11. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because the school has good systems for assessing and supporting their needs. All these pupils have individual educational plans that include a range of specific targets in literacy, numeracy and personal development. Each target derives from well-kept target sheets that ensure the right level of expectation so that the pupils achieve the standards of which they are capable. The pace and quality of learning of pupils with statements of special educational needs are consistently good and well tailored to meet the needs of individual pupils.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

12. The pupils' attitudes to school and their relationships to each other and staff are very good. Their personal development, behaviour and general respect for others' feelings, values and beliefs are good. These important aspects clearly add to the progress pupils make in an encouraging learning environment, which the school has generated. The school's aims place a high priority on this aspect of its work. It meets these aims very well. Parents' opinions, as expressed in the questionnaire and also at the meeting with inspectors, show they are very pleased with the way their children grow into confident, responsible and mature individuals, well prepared for secondary school and their future lives. The pupils' attitudes have improved since the last inspection, when they were judged to be good.
13. The pupils are eager to come into school, looking forward to the day's activities and wishing to learn. The youngest children clearly took great pleasure in the subjects presented to them, confidently making a visit to the local Post Office to post a letter to Father Christmas. Older pupils enjoy participating in the Buddy system where they link up with a younger pupil and help and support them. They talk with enthusiasm about their participation in this scheme. Pupils have a strong sense of ownership of the school and fully involve themselves in the many activities it offers.
14. Behaviour is good. The pupils are aware of the rules and are suitably motivated by the system of rewards for their house teams, as well as being personally embarrassed to be in receipt of any of the sanctions for unacceptable behaviour. They are proud of their involvement in the various activities in the school and confident to express their opinions. No examples of bullying were observed and in discussions with pupils they did not see it as a

difficulty, knowing to speak with staff if they have any worries. There have been three exclusions, two for a fixed period and one permanent; these were all for unacceptable behaviour.

15. Relationships are very good. The pupils are very co-operative, willingly sharing resources and taking turns. Pupils with special educational needs are equally valued and fully included in all aspects of school life. Pupils are very sensitive to the needs of others and particularly helpful to those younger than themselves. For example, the older pupils assist the younger children in the school at lunchtimes and are active in fulfilling their duties in the school's Buddy system. They are aware of the feelings of others and respectful of their beliefs. Pupils show caring attitudes to others, regardless of their skills and abilities.
16. The pupils develop into more mature and responsible individuals as they progress through the school. However, many younger pupils still need a great deal of support and the skills needed for independent learning are still only satisfactory. The school has a system in place that provides a growing range of personal responsibility, which they execute conscientiously with all pupils, giving them the opportunity of contributing to the smooth running of the school. The recently introduced school council is showing high levels of pupil involvement and willing participation. They express their opinions on consultation exercises, such as improvements to their school, showing an awareness of citizenship and involvement in the local community. Pupils take part in fund-raising activities for charities, locally, nationally and internationally, so supporting those less fortunate than themselves.
17. The level of attendance is satisfactory. Comparison with the national average over the last three years shows a steady rate of improvement. The pupils enjoy coming to school and almost all arrive on time. However, there are a few who are consistently late. There are also a small number of parents who take their children away during term time on holiday. These do account for most of the school's avoidable absences. The school rightly, recognises that this can easily have a negative impact on standards and is working hard to improve attendance further.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

18. Overall, teaching is good with a significant amount of very good teaching and some which is excellent. The very good teaching was seen in Year 6 and in the Foundation Unit. The excellent teaching was seen in the Foundation Unit. The inspection team has judged that the quality of teaching seen during the inspection was not quite as high as indicated by the work in pupils' books. This is mainly because just before the inspection, the school suffered the loss, through illness, of a very experienced teacher. Work seen in pupils' books indicate that this teacher had many skills. He was replaced during the first day of the inspection by a newly qualified supply teacher of sound quality who is developing her teaching strategies well. This level of teaching shows an improvement since the last inspection, with more lessons being very good or excellent. The improvement in the quality of the teaching has resulted in the maintenance or an improvement in standards and is helping to ensure that pupils are achieving well in almost all subjects. The quality of teaching has improved, mainly because of the headteacher's monitoring and evaluation of lessons and of the teachers' planning, and also the way teachers are using their good assessment information to plan future work.
19. The quality of teaching for children in the nursery and reception, who are now in one class, is very good, with some excellent teaching. This is a new arrangement since September but has led to very good learning. The nursery and reception teachers, together with the nursery nurse, work very closely together and form a very effective team. They have created a very rich and vibrant learning environment where pupils of all ages and abilities are challenged and make very good progress from the start of the nursery until they enter Year 1. Teachers' planning reflects all the areas of learning. Assessment records are used very well to plan appropriate work. The very good relationships that exist between teachers, support staff and children, ensure the children work in a very effective, supportive and caring atmosphere and

achieve very well. Some excellent teaching by both teachers was seen in the Foundation Unit. In these lessons, the amount of preparation, the use of exceptionally good resources and the quality of the planning and the depth of the supportive relationships, were outstanding, resulting in strong learning sustained for a good period of time with children who normally have a short attention span.

20. The teaching of literacy has been a major focus during the last two or three years and it is now well established. The quality of teaching in this area is mainly good throughout the school and, as a result, pupils are making good gains in learning. There is a good balance in all lessons in terms of whole class, group and individual activities. Teachers share with the pupils what they want them to achieve and how this links to what they have learned previously. Activities generally match pupils' ability. For example, lower attaining pupils in Year 2 were helped to write a sequence of sentences by being provided with a list of easy linking words they understood. Lessons are interesting to ensure that pupils develop their speaking, listening, reading and writing in an enjoyable way.
21. The teaching of numeracy has received specific attention also and a good format for lessons has been established. The quality of teaching is good. All lessons begin with a lively session of mental arithmetic that fascinates pupils and motivates them to stimulate their thinking skills. Planning is detailed and learning objectives are clearly identified. These are shared with pupils and, because the planned activities are well matched to pupils' different learning needs, all are effectively challenged and motivated. All teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan interesting activities, which are well linked to the activities that relate to pupils' own lives.
22. Particular strengths are the effectiveness of the methods and ideas teachers use. These interest pupils and motivate them to the end of the lesson. This was seen to good effect in a science lesson for pupils in Year 6. The pupils were studying food chains. The teacher used a good range of resources and a pyramid made of Lego to show that the base of a food chain has to be very wide to feed a lesser number of animals which, in turn, are eaten by a few animals with often one animal or bird at the top of the pyramid. The teacher then produced a good set of coloured pictures of animals and plants and the pupils had to arrange these in order. This approach ensured that pupils became fascinated and interested and worked hard throughout the session. Teachers have good subject knowledge in most areas. All subjects have good schemes of work and policies to guide them. Teachers have undergone training in a number of subjects but more recently for the teaching of music, where their knowledge and confidence are not as strong.
23. Teachers' lesson planning is very good. It always has very clear objectives, which are usually shared with the pupils. Lessons are then planned carefully in structured learning steps. This results in good progress in learning as pupils acquire skills, knowledge and understanding. Almost always, a good plenary session at the end consolidates learning and informs the teacher whether pupils have achieved the objectives. The teacher records this information and uses this assessment to plan the next week's work. This is carefully checked twice a week by the headteacher to ensure the consistency and value of this approach.
24. The management of pupils is good overall. The more experienced teachers have very good management skills. This ensures good or very good behaviour in lessons. Most pupils have developed very good attitudes to their work, have a very good desire to improve and usually give of their best throughout. A small number of teachers have satisfactory management skills and pupils then show slightly poorer behaviour on occasions. One particularly good feature in all lessons is the way pupils are encouraged to respond to appropriate questions, usually at the start of the lesson. This helps to consolidate previous knowledge well and give a springboard to progress to new learning in the lesson. This was seen to good effect in a mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 2. The teacher's good questioning skills, about how to double single numbers, consolidated previous work well. After this, the teacher questioned pupils on the more difficult exercise of halving larger numbers. Pupils responded well

because the teacher was able to grade her questions to challenge the differing abilities of the pupils. Because of this type of approach, all pupils are developing confidence and an ability to speak and listen carefully which improves as pupils get older.

25. The pace of most lessons is good and so pupils make good, intellectual, physical and creative effort. For example, in an information and communication technology lesson for pupils in Year 2, the teacher's enthusiasm and planning stimulated pupils to work rapidly, using a new set of icons to 'flood spray' their drawings of trees. In physical education lessons, all teachers have no difficulty in getting pupils to sustain physical activity for long periods of time.
26. Teachers have good knowledge of all pupils they teach and their day-to-day assessment of how well pupils are learning is usually accurate. All assessments are used well to track pupils' progress. The assessment procedures are particularly good in English and mathematics where they are used well to plan appropriate work for individual and groups of pupils. The quality of marking is variable but good at times with helpful comments which indicate to pupils what they have done well and what they have to do to improve. The school has plans to update its policy on marking. The amount and type of homework set are appropriate for the ages of the pupils. The use of information and communication technology to support learning over a range of subjects is underdeveloped.
27. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is effective. As a result, these pupils learn well. The teaching is well organised and delivered both by class teachers and by learning support assistants. All teaching staff and learning support assistants are well versed in the procedures for special educational needs throughout the school and they make good use of individual education plans to match work to pupils' individual needs. The good quality of the targets in these plans means that the teaching is sharply focused on pupils' specific learning needs and strongly supports their progress. Good teamwork between the class teachers and learning support assistants ensures that all available expertise is used effectively to enhance learning. This was seen in a geography lesson for pupils in Year 2, when older pupils with special educational needs were integrated well into the class activities to help with learning and personal needs. Learning support assistants are clearly informed about planning, recognise their key role and make sure that their pupils are focused, interested, and productively busy in relevant learning activities.

#### **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?**

28. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum. It provides a very good range of activities and learning opportunities in the foundation stage. It is effective in addressing its mission statement, namely: "At St Patrick's we recognise Christ in everyone as we grow together in faith and love to serve the community." An appropriate statutory curriculum is in place which provides a good range of learning opportunities. Attractive displays around the school illustrate the range of opportunities within the life of the school and also add to the sense of pride pupils have in their work.
29. All subjects have a co-ordinator in place and policies and schemes of work provide guidance on what to teach. The school acknowledges the need to further develop skills and confidence of teachers in the implementation of the music scheme of work. All co-ordinators have a good sense of where their subject area requires development. They monitor plans and a programme of lesson observations is in place. The school has fully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and teaching is well supported by very good planning. Additional guided reading and writing and extended writing periods are timetabled to further develop these skills. The school has in place good assessment strategies which identify individual targets and teachers provide clear guidance on how pupils can improve. All pupils therefore have full access to the curriculum regardless of needs, gender, background or ethnicity. Teacher assistants are used effectively in classes to support pupils with special educational needs and very good use is made of an assistant in the school's information and



communication technology suite. Extra literacy support and booster classes have provided additional support.

30. The school has a good range of extra-curricular activities organised by teaching and support staff. These include a Press Club, Art, Sewing, Cookery, Computer, Sports and Reading Clubs. Some of these clubs have been set up in response to perceived needs. For example, the Computer Club targets pupils who do not have a computer at home, the Reading Club targets lower attaining readers and the Press Club develops pupils' literacy skills in an exciting way. Pupils thoroughly enjoy these activities, which enrich the curriculum and contribute to the pupils' personal development. Further enrichment is provided through visits and visitors to the school. Visits include an annual residential camping trip to Keswick, to local schools to watch pupil performances and to pantomimes and to various places in the local area. Visitors to the school have included reporters, artists, dance and music groups from different countries, kite fliers and a grandparent during a history topic. Appropriate transitional arrangements are in place for the transfer of pupils to their secondary school. The school has close links to the local Catholic church, which it visits regularly. Many of these activities indicate that the contribution of the community to pupils' learning is good.
31. An enthusiastic co-ordinator is in place for personal, social, and health education. She has completed an audit of this aspect and has produced a well-structured whole school programme incorporating sex education, and is raising pupil awareness of the misuse of drugs. A programme of in-service training is planned to develop the teachers' expertise in delivering an extensive range of teaching materials. The whole ethos of the school is based on this development for personal and social education and respect for oneself and for others. All the staff present very good role models in terms of their relationships with each other and in the respectful way they treat pupils. Pupils relate well to each other in lessons and listen with respect to other pupils and adults. Older pupils are given responsibilities such as caring for younger ones at playtime and lunchtime, selling crisps, monitoring doors and issuing and collecting resources during lessons. Regular time is planned for pupils to share concerns with teachers and classmates in a supportive environment. A 'Well Done' board displays certificates awarded to pupils for good work, improvements or appropriate behaviour. These, along with a 'Courtesy Cup', are presented during an assembly and help boost self esteem.
32. Since the last inspection the school has made good improvement in the curriculum for pupils with special educational needs. This is because it is regularly evaluated by the co-ordinator who puts improvements in place quickly and supports all the teaching and support staff. She ensures that all target sheets for pupils are reviewed on a regular basis, and annual reviews are undertaken, in which both pupils and parents contribute. The school has successfully implemented the requirements of the revised Code of Practice, and the provision of special educational needs in the school is now good.
33. At the time of the previous inspection, provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development was good and for cultural development satisfactory. In this inspection, provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development is very good and for pupils' social and cultural development it is good.
34. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. This is due in part to the strong leadership of the headteacher and clear guidelines provided to staff. Assemblies and collective acts of worship take place in the hall and within the classroom. They are Christian in nature, take place in a revered atmosphere and recognise a higher being. Pupils are provided with opportunities for quiet reflection and prayer. Each classroom has a prayer book in which pupils are encouraged to record individuals for whom they wish to pray. Meaningful issues are raised in the context of stories and pupils respond positively as in an assembly on preparing for Christmas. Opportunity is provided for pupils to reflect on and understand human emotions as demonstrated in an assembly presented by the nursery and reception children based on the story *Lucy's Picture*. This helped to promote a sense of empathy and

compassion for the needs of others. Teaching styles through questioning and evaluation encourage the pupils to reflect on their own learning.

35. The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral development. The headteacher, who considers that the school lives its life through Gospel values and the teaching of Christ, provides a strong lead. Staff effectively model, through the quality of their relationships, principles of fairness and respect for others and their welfare. Rules of behaviour within school are displayed and staff take time to discuss with pupils what is right and wrong and how it affects others. Opportunity is provided within personal, social and health education lessons to discuss moral aspects, such as in making and keeping promises, which was addressed in a lesson for pupils in Year 4/5. Pupils in Year 6 explored individual responsibilities that come with belonging to a group. They develop respect for themselves and others as in a scheme of work titled 'Here I am.' Pupils raised money for CAFOD, a catholic charity, providing an opportunity to consider the needs of others less fortunate than themselves. The establishment of a school council provides opportunity for pupils to exercise responsibility and explore their own and others' views.
36. The provision for pupils' social development is good. Relationships within the school help to form positive attitudes towards good behaviour and self-discipline. Within lessons, pupils are encouraged to work in groups, pairs and individuals. Opportunities are provided to participate in corporate activities, such as assemblies and performances. Within the school council pupils engage in the democratic process and begin to exercise leadership. Pupils have a range of responsibilities within the school and classroom which they carry out willingly and reliably. The Buddy system and 'Friendship Benches' help foster personal qualities such as sensitivity and thoughtfulness. The camping visit to Keswick for pupils in Year 6 supports pupils' social development.
37. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. Within art and design lessons, pupils examine the work of a range of artists including Mondrian, Matisse, Picasso and Mackintosh. Works of the great composers are played in school assemblies. The school's cultural values are reinforced through attractive displays of pupils' work and posters illustrating the work of different authors. A display of books and illustrations on other religions helps develop pupils' awareness of other cultures. A range of visitors is encouraged to visit the school to provide cultural diversity and interest. These have included music and dance groups, artists and cooks from such diverse countries as India, France and Africa.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

38. The school cares for its pupils very well. It has generated a strong ethos of caring and a positive family atmosphere, which includes all members of its community in a calm and safe environment in which pupils can flourish and achieve their best. Parents are very pleased with the way the school supports and encourages their children. From the time they enter the school, all pupils rapidly become well known to the adults. Their individual strengths and weaknesses are identified and sensitive planning takes place in order to meet their needs. Older pupils play a significant role in welcoming and supporting the youngest, for example, by helping them at lunchtimes and in forming companions with the less confident. The 'Friendship Benches' in the grounds are an asset to promote a healthy respect and awareness of others needs. If a pupil feels lonely or is in need of some guidance and help from an older pupil, they sit on these seats. This successfully develops their confidence and their sense of belonging to the school community.
39. The pupils' welfare is very well promoted. Very good attention is paid to health, safety and security, including the risk assessments for all activities. There is a very high level of awareness of child protection matters. The headteacher is the designated person responsible and she undertakes this duty with great diligence, ensuring that all staff are suitably aware

throughout the school. The school holds regular fire drills that are carefully monitored and there is an adequate number of qualified first-aiders in the school.

40. The monitoring of attendance is good. The school has plans in place to introduce computer monitoring of attendance shortly. This will allow for speedier and therefore more effective procedures to reduce the numbers of late arrivals and improve attendance at the school. Appropriate procedures are followed for investigating unexplained absences, with the very good involvement of the education welfare officer who is a regular and helpful visitor to the school. She has given talks to the whole school about the value of being punctual and not missing any term time. The headteacher and the governing body are seeking further ways to reduce the level of term-time holiday absence for the benefit of its pupils.
41. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. Any minor misbehaviour is correctly and consistently handled across the entire school. The school and classroom rules and guidance are known by staff and accepted by pupils. Reward systems are in place and appropriate. They encourage individual and teamwork involvement. These do promote well the development of self-control, and respect for others and for property by the great majority of the pupils. The good behaviour in classes is fostered by the very positive relationships between staff and pupils. The school's approach to bullying and eliminating oppressive behaviour is very effective. The school promotes equality very well.
42. The school has good and comprehensive assessment procedures and practices to guide curricular planning and monitor the academic performance of pupils. It has continued the good improvement it made at the time of the last inspection. The headteacher is currently undertaking the role of assessment co-ordinator whilst the permanent co-ordinator is on maternity leave. Teachers' planning is effectively and rigorously monitored by the headteacher on a weekly basis, including checking for annotations to planning by class teachers at the end of the week. This is part of an initiative the school is undertaking on formative assessment. There are whole-school assessment procedures for all areas of the curriculum. However, the ones for science are not adequate and the school is to review these shortly. For English, mathematics and information and communication technology, there are individual records for each pupil. All this data is kept in class assessment folders and includes information on end of year goals for each class in English, mathematics and science, reading records and the progress of pupils with special educational needs. A range of statutory tests optional tests, and reading and spelling tests is used to monitor and assess the progress of both individual and groups of pupils. All this information is rigorously monitored by the headteacher to ensure that teachers are using this information to inform their planning. Marking of pupils' work is also an area that the school is developing to improve its assessment procedures. Stronger examples seen in pupils' books take the pupils' learning forward with appropriate comments, whilst the weaker examples consist of a tick and a one-word comment, which are not as effective.
43. Pupils with special educational needs, including those who have statements of special need, are well supported. Their needs are rigorously identified and met. The progress of all pupils with special educational needs is monitored continuously and conscientiously by the co-ordinator in close liaison with all teaching staff. Records are meticulously maintained and each pupil's progress can be tracked step by step. Effective links with outside agencies and specialists ensure that the programmes outlined in all statements are carried out and monitored well.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

44. Parents think very highly of the school. They value its effect on their children, their academic progress and their personal development. They rightly believe that its teaching, leadership and management are very effective. Their children are happy. The school has established a good partnership with parents, which contributes notably to the standards the pupils achieve and to the warm and positive atmosphere. The headteacher writes in the school brochure,

“We see parents as partners in their child’s education. We endeavour to forge links with the parents of the children, and also the wider community.” This they do successfully.

45. The headteacher and several members of staff are always visible at the start of the day and this is an opportunity for parents to exchange much useful information. There is an official ‘open door’ policy at the school that is helpful in avoiding any supposed barriers in communications about pupils’ education. There are two formal opportunities each year at which time parents have the chance to look at their children’s work as well as discuss progress with their child’s teacher. The school tries hard to ensure that all parents have the opportunity to discuss their child’s progress by contacting any parents who do not attend parents’ evenings and offering an alternative time. The pupils’ annual progress reports are clear and give clear reviews of pupils’ abilities and achievements.
46. Parents make a good contribution to the life of the school. A number attend the seminars the school puts on. This enhances their own skills. For example, the classes on numeracy, literacy and the foundation stage have been well received by those parents who attended. A good initial induction programme begins the close relationship with parents that the school believes will enhance pupils’ learning. Most parents are happy with the levels of homework. There is an active and beneficial Friends Association that is successful in generating much valued additional funding and also in organising a range of social activities for pupils, parents and the wider community. For example, the recent purchases of screens in the hall by parents have proved to be of great benefit. They screen off stored equipment so that physical education activities are safer. There is a small but reliable band of parent volunteers who are valued by staff for the beneficial support they give to the school. For example, the supervision in the library during registration periods by parents allows teachers to use these periods for bookwork and other activities during which some pupils visit the library.
47. The range of information supplied by the school is clear and well presented with regular informative newsletters that give diary details and social information, including some pupils’ achievements in out-of-school activities. There are also topic information sheets that enable higher levels of parental support at home for those who wish to become even further involved with their children’s education. Parents are welcomed at the whole-school assemblies once per week and this is also a very positive time of joining with the school and community in a religious celebration.
48. Although only a relatively small number of parents attended the meeting with the registered inspector, their opinions agreed with the returns from the parents’ questionnaires. Analysis of the meeting and questionnaires shows that there is very strong support for the school. The majority of parents felt that their children like school, the behaviour is good, homework is about right in volume, teaching is good, that pupils are expected to work hard and the school is helping pupils to become more mature and responsible. The areas that a small number of parents would like to see improved are extra-curricular activities and the volume of information supplied to parents. The inspection team supports all the positive opinions that parents hold about the school. However, they do not agree with parents’ comments about activities outside lessons or the range and extent of information that the school now supplies to parents. The current levels of extra-curricular activities are better than those found in many similar schools and are very beneficial in developing pupils’ interests and skills. The wide range of well presented information, keeps parents well informed about their child’s progress, encourages them to participate in their education and maintains a secure level of social and community involvement.
49. The parents with children who have special educational needs are kept fully informed from the earliest stage of concern and are given good guidance as to how they can help their children at home, with learning or personal problems. Parents are appropriately involved in reviewing their children’s progress towards the targets in individual education plans.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. Leadership and management are very good. This is an improvement from the last inspection where it was judged to be good. The headteacher gives outstanding leadership. She has provided an excellent vision and has created a very clear educational direction for the school based on a strong Christian tradition. She leads by example and has been very successful in developing an agreed sense of purpose amongst the staff. All the key issues from the last inspection have been resolved, many new improvements have been introduced and pupils continue to achieve well in most areas. She has ensured that the school's priorities for development are appropriate. The monitoring and evaluation of the teaching and an improvement to the quality of the planning are successful examples of these priorities, which have had a good impact on standards and achievement.
51. The governing body is very supportive in many ways. The chair of the governors is fully committed to the school. She is involved in the life of the school, visits very often and engages in regular professional dialogue with the headteacher. A number of other governors visit the school and some are very closely involved and support aspects of the curriculum. For example, governors are linked to subjects. They come into school to speak to their link subject co-ordinators regularly. They keep careful records of these visits, outlining what they have discussed. Governors often go into classrooms and observe what is taking place and report back to the co-ordinator, the headteacher and to other governors. Governors therefore have a very good understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas that need further development and are closely involved in the production and evaluation of the yearly improvement plan, as well as the longer three-year plan. They are very well supported by the chair of the governors' financial committee who is well aware of future developments. For example, the finances show a high carry over at present. However, this is prudent and deliberate as extra funding now available in Years 1 and 2 will be withdrawn next year. The governors are determined to use this money to keep the good pupil teacher ratio in this area, especially in the light of the large number of pupils with lower abilities in English and mathematics. In addition, the governors have plans to develop a sports area in co-operation with a local rugby club. All the governors' statutory duties are fulfilled well.
52. The headteacher has been involved in the monitoring and evaluation of teaching through an agreed timetable of observations set against an established range of criteria. Written feedback has been provided and the outcome of the observation is discussed with teachers. This has been effective, as the quality of the teaching has improved since the last inspection. Teachers' planning is also examined on a regular basis. For example, the headteacher goes round to each classroom on a Monday morning to look at the planning. She then examines it again at the end of the week to ensure that teachers have assessed how successful learning has been. These assessments are then taken into account when the teachers prepare their next week's planning. This means that lesson planning is successful in targeting pupils' needs.
53. The subject co-ordinators are developing their roles well. For example, the co-ordinator for mathematics monitors teachers' numeracy planning twice a year; she analyses pupils' work in their books and has undertaken lesson observations. She has analysed the National Curriculum results and assessments in mathematics and has led in-service training for the staff. This is a typical programme of work for a number of the co-ordinators. However, a few co-ordinators have not yet had time to fully examine their subjects and some are very new to their posts.
54. The aims of the school, its values and its policies are implemented very well. The leadership has developed an outstanding ethos in the school, within a strong Christian tradition, where pupils have developed very good relationships and attitudes to learning. There is a strong commitment by the leadership to raise educational standards for all and provide equal opportunities within a climate of including all pupils within all aspects of school life. The yearly school improvement plan effectively supports management. It is carefully costed. Funding is

well linked to educational priorities, such as maintaining the good pupil teacher ratio in Years 1 and 2. The school also has a good three-year forward-looking plan, which identifies developments and possible issues for the future.

55. The accommodation is good and has been adapted well for the teaching of the National Curriculum and religious education. It is very well cared for and maintained by the school caretaker. The grounds are extensive but the sports fields are poorly drained and cannot be used a great deal during the winter months. The field is in joint ownership with another school and money is available for development. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is good. Learning resources are satisfactory with good resources in science.
56. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides good leadership within school. She ensures that parents are kept well informed, the register of pupils is kept up to date and all staff receive appropriate training so they can meet the differing needs of all pupils. Good advice is given regarding the planning of individual education plans and records of pupils' progress are maintained well.
57. Very careful financial planning supports educational priorities very well. The school uses all money at its disposal very wisely. For example, in recent years, money has been spent to develop an outdoor adventure playground. Also, a classroom has been adapted to combine both the nursery and the reception children into the new Foundation Unit and allow another room to house a new library. These have all been very successful projects, which have improved the quality of the learning environment. The headteacher, chair of governors' financial committee and the school secretary are aware of the need to get the best value for pupils. In this they are effective. The quality of financial control is very good as the school employs the services of a local authority bursar to assist in financial matters. School administration by the headteacher and school secretary is efficient and effective. The management systems now in place, including the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, and dedicated team of teachers, support staff and governors, have ensured a number of important developments since the last inspection. The leadership has a very good capacity to maintain an effective school and introduce further improvements.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. To maintain the quality of education and promote further development, the governing body, headteacher and staff should address the following issues:

- (1) Continue to raise attainment in music and also teachers' confidence in the teaching of music, by:
  - Fully implementing the new scheme of work.
  - Improving lesson planning in the light of the many new ideas obtained during a recent music training course.
  - Monitoring the teaching and learning in music.(these are outlined in paragraphs 8, 22, 106, 109, 110 and 111)
  
- (2) Develop further the use of computers to support learning across a wider range of subjects.  
(this is outlined in paragraphs 7, 26, 82, 89, 95 and 100)

The school had already identified these two items as areas for further development.

In addition to the above issues, the following more minor weakness should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

- Improve the quality of teachers' marking.
  - Devise more opportunities for pupils to develop the skills needed for independent learning.
  - Continue to improve attendance and punctuality of the few pupils to whom this applies.
  - Continue the negotiations to improve drainage on the school field.
- (These are outlined in paragraphs 16, 17, 26, 42, 55 and 89)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	40
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	29

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	8	18	12	0	0	0
Percentage	5	20	45	30	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 – Y 6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	7	155
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	68

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y 6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	44

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	6.2
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.2
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	13	10	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	20	19	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (92)	83 (88)	96 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	19	20	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (84)	87 (100)	91 (100)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

\* Boys and girls are not reported separately as there are less than 11 girls in the 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	8	3	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	9	7	10
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School	82 (75)	64 (75)	91 (95)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	11	9	11
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School	91 (60)	82 (60)	100 (85)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

\* Boys and girls are not reported separately as there are less than 11 children in each year.

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>	<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
White – British	122	2	1
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 – Y 6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	12
Average class size	16

#### **Education support staff: Yr – Y 6**

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	45

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	14
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	7

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	361,162
Total expenditure	341,774
Expenditure per pupil	2,219
Balance brought forward from previous year	41,383
Balance carried forward to next year	60,771

**Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	170
Number of questionnaires returned	47

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	26	2	2	2
My child is making good progress in school.	72	21	6	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	60	32	4	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	45	47	2	2	4
The teaching is good.	79	17	2	2	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	38	9	4	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	28	2	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	21	2	2	0
The school works closely with parents.	40	51	0	9	0
The school is well led and managed.	55	28	6	2	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	34	2	2	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	40	11	11	9

## **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**

59. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good and a strength of the school. The school has built on the good provision in the nursery and reception since the last inspection. At that time, the children in the nursery and reception were taught in different classrooms but both age groups have now been brought together. This has been an extremely successful move and, although this amalgamation only occurred in September, already aspects of the provision are excellent. For example, the nursery and reception teachers work together as a highly effective team, who fully understand the needs of each individual child whatever their age. The teaching is very good overall with some that is excellent, enabling children to make good progress and, in some areas, very good progress.
60. Children start the nursery part-time after their third birthday and become reception children in the September after their fourth birthday. There are currently 15 part-time children of nursery age and 17 in the reception.
61. The nursery and reception teachers have built very good links with parents. Children visit the school in the summer term before they start in the nursery and teachers and many parents stay for a few minutes with their children and the teachers at the start of every day.
62. The staff plan and prepare together very effectively. The planning is very good and considerably enhanced by the very good procedures for assessment. The staff know where each child is in their personal and academic development, because of these regular assessments made on the objectives within the early learning goals. Teaching is planned from this information, often in small, focused groups. These groups are often arranged by ability, irrespective of whether they are nursery or reception children. These arrangements challenge every child and ensure that the work is appropriate for each individual. Children with special educational needs are identified early in reception and their progress is carefully monitored. The two teachers have the support of a nursery nurse who also has a very good understanding of how young children learn. She is briefed very well and supports nursery and reception groups as well as when they are effectively mixed together. One outstanding strength in the teaching is the highly efficient organisation and preparation, which support every lesson. For example, all resources and requirements are fully in place to be used at the time planned. This was seen to very good effect during the visit of the post lady. She came in to deliver a birthday card to one of the children. She carefully produced this from her bag, together with a card for the pet toy dog that lives in the classroom dog box. Other cards mysteriously appeared, together with the 'singing candle' on the birthday. It gave the impression that it had all happened by accident, which stimulated the children well and made speaking and listening and the teaching of personal, social and emotional development a lot of fun. Another great strength is the way the teachers never fail to use opportunities to increase understanding and develop skills. For example, as the nursery teacher calls the register, she will ensure some learning takes place. In one registration, she produced a variety of different coloured teddies. The child had to state the colour after politely replying with a clear, "Good morning". The reception teacher used a variety of cards with letter sounds carefully matched to children's ability as she called out each child's name.
63. Many children start the nursery with well below average attainment. They make good progress and start full-time education in reception with below average attainment. Many also start with very poor language skills. This is confirmed by the assessments that are carried out when children start the nursery and the reception. Very good teaching in the Foundation Unit ensures that children make very good progress in all areas of learning. As the arrangements for the Foundation Unit are so new, it is more difficult to determine just how well children will achieve by the end of the school year. However, early indications are that by the time they leave reception, the numbers of children achieving the early learning goals will be below

average in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development but average in all other areas. This represents good levels of achievement in some areas and very good levels in other areas in relation to the abilities of the children when they start the nursery.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

64. The children in the Foundation Unit enjoy coming to school because they are offered very interesting activities. They are secure in routines and take any responsibilities they are given seriously, for instance, in feeding the goldfish and looking after the seedlings. Adults encourage children to develop their social skills in a variety of ways. For example, when sitting in a circle to do some mathematics, or when discussing what they have done at home or on the way to school, they happily take turns and listen to others in silence. When playing games, they share resources and the older reception children help younger nursery children with their tasks. Good manners are stressed and children are encouraged to say “please” and “thank you”. They willingly tidy away their equipment and show a developing sense of independence when choosing the activities they wish to do, putting on their coats or changing for physical activities. Children with special educational needs are well integrated and other children show sensitivity to their needs. Most children will reach the early learning goals in this area by the time they start Year 1.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

65. The teachers and nursery nurse have a very good understanding of how children gain their early speaking and listening skills and provide very effective support. Many children who have just started the nursery use only a few basic words to communicate meaning and rarely initiate conversation. Every opportunity is taken to enhance and extend their speaking and listening skills, through very well planned activities that cover all the areas of learning. For example, children were seen helping to put together the early stages of a nativity scene. The teacher worked hard to get the children to identify the Mary and Joseph figures. Some children confused Joseph with Jesus but the teacher used this mistake well by encouraging debate and discussion. A few children are beginning to engage in conversation with other adults, such as with the post lady who visited the school, but only a few are able to initiate conversation with adults.
66. There is a well-structured approach to the teaching of early reading and writing skills. Children of nursery age listen to stories at the listening centre and others will sit down and look at pictures in a book and begin to discuss them and learn that books are fun. Children of reception age are being introduced to the element of the National Literacy Strategy. Many activities across the areas of learning capitalise on language opportunities. For example, children have read *Pass the Jam, Jim*, and they have buttered and spread scones with jam and discussed what it tastes like. Very good language development came from the making of butterfly cakes. This was linked to the story *The Hungry Caterpillar*. Everywhere there are displays of words and sentences for children to read and write and the creative areas provide very good opportunities for the development of early reading and writing skills. In the writing area, nursery children make marks on lists, envelopes and cards. Progress in writing is accelerated for the children as they move through reception work. They use white boards that will easily rub out to create letters and words, sometimes copying words well. The higher attaining children are now using joined writing with some recognisable letters and words. The school expects that about half of the children are likely to attain the early learning goals in this aspect. Nevertheless, this represents a good achievement from their level of attainment on entry.

### **Mathematical development**

67. Adults take every opportunity to develop the children’s mathematical skills. For example, the reception teacher developed number recognition well by giving everyone a number on a card

from one to nine. She played a game where she called out a number and those with that number had to jump into a hoop. Others were asked if they had got it right. Higher attaining children confidently count numbers from one to nine. Most children are beginning to recognise simple shapes like a cone, a cube and a sphere. The teacher had wrapped Christmas presents up in these shapes, which made the activity very relevant to the children's interests. Children learn to describe small, big and bigger as they make clay models of baby bear, mother bear and father bear. The school expects that about three-quarters of the children will attain the early learning goals in this area by the time they enter Year 1.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

68. Children in the nursery and reception progress very well in this area because of the rich learning environment in their classroom, visits out of school and visitors in. For example, the classroom contains a large goldfish bowl and the children have to take turns to feed the fish. They have sown seeds of cress, herbs and radish, which are growing well and which they observe every day. There are two computers in the room, with a good range of appropriate software. These are always switched on and often in use to support mathematics and other subjects. The children have a sound knowledge of the postal service and understand the importance of a stamp. They visit places like Whinlatter Forest to observe trees, the Maryport Christmas Pantomime and Mr Trotter's animal farm. They begin to understand the early science of growth and development when a mother brings her baby to school. The school expects that a good proportion of children will attain the early learning goals in this area.

### **Physical development**

69. This is an area where many children have a natural ability. Every opportunity is used to build on this. For example, many children of reception age throw and catch bean bags and sometimes balls well, better than the level expected for their ages. In a physical development lesson, the children demonstrated increasing control when throwing and catching. Some even appreciated that, when working with a partner, they were not in competition but should throw the bean bag or ball in such a way that it would help the partner to catch effectively. All children handle scissors and small toys regularly to develop their manipulative skills. They play outside on large tricycles, play cars and trolleys, demonstrating good balance and a sense of space. The school expects that a good proportion of children will attain the early learning goals in this area.

### **Creative development**

70. Children experiment with paint and make patterns and pictures of their own choice, showing developing hand control. They cut and stick coloured paper together when making Christmas decorations for instance. They find out what happens when they mix red, yellow and blue paint together and they make patterns using apples, oranges and peas as a printing block. There are regular opportunities to develop musical skills. Children sing songs, are starting to clap in time and look at musical instruments. Nursery and reception children were seen dressing up as Father Christmas and creating a display of elves, exchanging outfits and improvising with the help of the teacher who was pretending to be Mother Christmas, which developed an early understanding of equal opportunities.

## **ENGLISH**

71. Standards in English are in line with the national average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. It was a similar picture in the last inspection. Comparisons between individual years must be treated with caution when year group sizes are small. For example, some years it is as low as 11 and one child can make up to nine per cent difference. From a below average starting base into reception, pupils have made good progress in reading by the end of Year 2. This achievement is maintained in Years 3 to 6. Improvement in writing is less pronounced in Years 1 and 2, but by Year 6 standards have improved, including those in spelling and

handwriting. These improvements are in line with the general improvements in the quality of the teaching and the successful introduction of the National Literacy Strategy. These improvements have not been in place long enough for pupils to reach even higher standards by the time they leave the school. Some classes have quite a high proportion of pupils who have special educational needs, which also affects the overall results. These pupils are well supported with work that matches their needs and they make good progress.

72. In Year 2, the standards in reading are in line with national expectations. Given the below average reading skills on entry to the school, pupils are achieving well. The school emphasises the teaching of reading through the literacy hour and in additional reading lessons for pupils in Year 2. The school has a clear policy for the teaching of reading. Pupils have positive attitudes to reading and as they enter the class each morning will choose books, reading individually or sharing. They take books home regularly to read to parents and other adults. Average and higher attaining pupils understand the terms 'author', 'illustrator' and 'blurb'. Pupils name books they have read and enjoyed, for example *Digger*, *The Gingerbread Man* and *What's in*. The school reading scheme gives pupils access to a wide choice of reading materials. Assessment of pupils' reading skills ensures that reading material is appropriately matched to pupils' ability. There is a satisfactory level of word recognition and use of word building. Higher attaining pupils read simple texts with accuracy and understanding and take note of punctuation, including speech marks. Lower attaining pupils read with only a little expression but use their understanding of letter sounds to help them read unknown words.
73. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 read with improving fluency and accuracy and demonstrate an ability to interpret and predict story lines. By Year 6 pupils have encountered a range of fiction and non-fiction texts, including poetry, stories, myths and legends, and texts from different countries and cultures. They borrow books from the library and find books on different subjects. Pupils identify and explain the purpose of an index and a glossary and find information from different sources by skimming the text. There is a wide range of shared reading books which ensures that pupils have a wide choice to interest them, as well as ensuring the books are at the right level. Pupils talk with interest about books and enthusiastically about authors such as Roald Dahl and J.K. Rowling. Initiatives, such as the after-school reading club focusing on Year 6 pupils and a press club for Years 5 and 6, help to foster interest among pupils of lower attainment. Booster classes and extra literacy support provide additional help for these pupils.
74. Pupils do well to achieve average standards in speaking and listening. The majority of pupils are developing good listening habits by Year 6. Class and individual behaviour management strategies are used to ensure pupils use their listening skills. Teachers use questioning effectively to ensure pupils are listening. Pupils respond eagerly and with interest, and relevant answers indicate that they have listened carefully and understood. All staff encourage good speaking and listening. They conduct discussions with sensitivity and value pupils' contributions. This helps pupils gain confidence. In considering 'bias' in newspaper reports, pupils in Year 6 discussed the issues in pairs and, as individuals, spoke out clearly and confidently as other pupils listened attentively to their contributions.
75. By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve well in writing compared to their below average attainment on entry. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress and evidence shows that standards are in line with national attainments.
76. Higher attaining pupils in Year 1 can write out instructions and write a story. They plan stories with some awareness of setting, characters and plot. However, many do not use capital letters or full stops appropriately. Average and higher attaining pupils in Year 2 use punctuation more consistently and stories show increasing accuracy in the development of ideas. A significant number of lower attaining pupils in Year 2 required staff support in a guided writing session to retell a story with appropriate ideas. Pupils record data and write out instructions but many do not demonstrate the higher skills of imaginative writing. The majority



of pupils make good progress in their handwriting due to the impact of the new handwriting policy. However, the skills are not always transferred to their writing in other subjects. By Year 6, pupils have learned to express their ideas more clearly and with some imagination. In Years 3 to 6, lessons in the literacy hour and in the guided writing sessions provide opportunities for the pupils to experience a wide range of writing styles and to write for different audiences. Pupils write poems, instructional texts, letters of complaints and thanks, stories, newspaper reports, advertisements and diaries. They are given good opportunities to explore and extend their creative use of vocabulary and phrasing. In a letter of complaint pupils wrote, "Why oh why..., I am disgusted..., I tell you...". By Year 6 pupils are able to use precise and imaginative vocabulary and their writing shows more variety and interest. They choose words for effect as in describing life in a World War II bomb shelter: "It was dark, humble and damp, but we were alive." Generally, handwriting is joined and shows a sound developing style. In Year 6 pupils have developed strategies which enable them to spell many words. There is clear evidence of sustained effort in pupils' writing with work titled and dated, and good attention is paid to presentation skills. Pupils use their word processing skills on the computer to present their work in interesting ways.

77. Teaching is good throughout the school and occasionally very good in Year 6. There is a good balance in all lessons in terms of whole class, group and individual activities. The National Literacy Strategy is well established and good planning makes clear what is to be learnt. Through purposeful and closely targeted word and sentence level work, teachers demonstrate secure knowledge of the literacy strategy. Teachers share with the pupils what they want them to achieve and how this links to what they have learned previously. They effectively build on pupils' knowledge and skills so that pupils always feel confident in their learning. In a lesson for pupils in Year 1, the teacher effectively explained and demonstrated how to plan a story, and average and higher attaining pupils planned a story identifying characters, setting and plot.
78. Activities generally match pupils' abilities and good use is made of support assistants to help lower attaining pupils. In a lesson for pupils in Year 2, the support assistant helped more pupils to write a sequence of sentences making good use of connecting words. Examples of good teaching were observed in a lesson for pupils in Year 4. Through effective questioning the teacher probed pupils' understanding of previous work and developed their knowledge of characteristics and differences between story and play scripts. In a very good lesson for pupils in Year 6, clear, concise, focused teaching enthused the pupils in their analysis of newspaper reports in which they identified bias by reference to key vocabulary. Written work is valued and evaluated with the pupils at the end of the lesson. Examples of good writing are identified and suggestions made as to how work can be improved. Marking is effective in recognising pupils' achievement and in the majority of cases identifies targets for improvement. This, with good teaching overall and high expectations of teachers, is having a positive impact on the standards of pupils' writing. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated through the provision of appropriate work and the support of teaching assistants.
79. The co-ordinator is a recent appointment. She has a good understanding of her own responsibilities and has been well briefed by the previous literacy co-ordinator. There is a good range of assessment procedures in place, which enables the school to provide realistic group and individual targets for improvement. The co-ordinator has already developed an action plan, which identifies the need for specific teaching and learning objectives. Her own role in monitoring the subject has yet to be fully developed, although a schedule is in place for the spring term. She has identified the need to analyse pupils' results in the national tests so that she is more familiar with the school's strengths and weaknesses.

## **MATHEMATICS**

80. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in mathematics are average by the ends of Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are achieving well. A

clear judgement on standards in mathematics was not stated during the time of the last inspection. There are several contributory reasons why pupils are achieving well in mathematics. For example, the school has successfully implemented the National Numeracy Strategy. The quality of teaching is good, and there are good assessment procedures in place, which alongside rigorous monitoring by the headteacher and subject co-ordinator ensures that all pupils are offered tasks that are well matched to their specific needs. The subject co-ordinator has analysed last year's statutory test papers and identified that an area for development in lessons this academic year is 'word problems'. Pupils also move into different classes for their mathematics lessons to ensure that their specific needs are met. There is also an emphasis by all teachers on pupils using the correct mathematical vocabulary when tackling investigations or working out calculations. Strong emphasis is also placed on developing mathematical skills in other areas of the curriculum, which helps contribute to the standards being achieved by the school. All these improvements and initiatives are beginning to having an impact on the standards. These improvements have not been in place long enough for pupils to attain even higher standards at the end of Year 6.

81. Pupils in Year 2 accurately count up to and have a sound understanding of numbers to 100. They can also calculate amounts of money up to a £1.00 and identify half of a triangle and a square. In a mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 2, higher attaining pupils could confidently double and halve numbers such as 28 or 18, whilst lower attaining pupils needed adult guidance when doubling and halving numbers such as 3 and 6. In a mathematics lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, higher attaining pupils could use cubes to find a quarter of 40, whilst lower attaining pupils needed adult help in identifying a quarter of a shape. In a Years 5 and 6 mathematics lesson, higher attaining pupils could confidently work out problems when using numbers up to 100,000, whilst lower attaining pupils were unsure and needed some adult support when using numbers up to 1,000. By the end of Year 6 pupils have well-developed knowledge and understanding of number and readily apply these in activities presented to them in lessons. They find the area of different shapes, and use percentages, decimals and fractions in solving problems.
82. Pupils have a positive attitude to the subject and have a strong determination to succeed. They strive to meet the teachers' high expectations and work hard because they are offered interesting activities. This was demonstrated in a Year 1 lesson on months of the year, when pupils worked hard in their groups to complete their 'month wheels'. Because the teachers insist on it, the pupils used appropriate mathematical language such as 'double', 'halve' and 'sequence'. They listened attentively and were eager to share their findings with the teacher and class. This helped them in the development of their literacy skills. The subject also makes a positive contribution to the pupils' moral and social development, for example in a Year 3 and 4 lesson when pupils worked in groups solving fraction and number problems. Pupils use their numeracy skills well across the curriculum, for example, they use graphs when recording the results of investigations in science. Although computers are used to support learning in lessons on occasions, for example in a Year 3 and 4 lesson on fractions, there needs to be a more consistent approach across the school, to strengthen pupils' learning.
83. The overall quality of teaching is good. All teachers use their good subject knowledge and their understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy effectively to plan their lessons. All lessons begin with a lively session of mental arithmetic that motivates the pupils and stimulates their thinking skills. Teachers take care to ensure that pupils of all ability levels are fully involved in these sessions, and that questions are appropriate for their different levels of capability. This was demonstrated in a Years 5 and 6 lesson, when the teacher asked all the pupils how they had arrived at their answers when adding in 25s, 75s, 70s and 0.7s on their white boards. Planning is detailed and learning objectives are clearly identified in all classes. They are shared with pupils and, because the planned activities are well matched to the pupils' different learning needs, all, including those pupils with special educational needs, are effectively challenged and motivated to do well. This was demonstrated in a lesson for pupils in Year 2, where pupils working in groups were successfully taught the strategies of doubling and then halving a number, to help with their understanding of fractions. Class management

is good and positive relationships and high expectations encourage pupils' learning in lessons. This results in lessons proceeding at a good pace and are relevant and practical, well linked to pupils' everyday lives.

84. The leadership and management of the subject are good. Both the headteacher and co-ordinator monitor planning and teaching on a regular basis, and there are effective assessment procedures which are used well to inform planning and target setting for the whole school. Appropriately challenging targets are also set for year groups and within these for individual pupils and ability groups. Resources for the subject are adequate and are accessible to staff and pupils in all classes. Mathematical displays around school are stimulating and informative.

## SCIENCE

85. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are in line with those expected for seven and eleven year olds. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. No judgement on science was made in the last inspection.

86. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a sound knowledge of all the components of science. For example, they know a number of differences between a range of materials such as wool, metal, fabric and plastic. They are able to state which are natural and which are man-made. They have a sound knowledge of parts of the human body, such as teeth, and are able to relate this to the health issues of tooth decay. They are able to investigate this and have carried out an investigation by leaving teeth in a mixture of sugar and lemon juice and recording what happens. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are beginning to use an appropriate scientific language, for example, words like testing and predicting. This is a sound link to literacy and language development.

87. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good knowledge of physical processes, materials and their properties and life processes and living things. For example, work in their books indicates that they have an appropriate understanding of the human skeleton, the more technical parts of a flower, such as the stigma and the stile, and know its connection with pollination and seed formation. Pupils' skills in scientific enquiry are sound. For example, an investigation written up in their books demonstrated that they had successfully investigated what happens to the heartbeat after exercise. They had set out the purpose of the experiment well and recorded the heartbeat over one minute when the human body was at rest. They then tried to predict what might happen after a limited period of exercise. They carried out the investigation, recorded everything well, even drawing a graph, which gave a valuable connection to mathematics teaching, and reached a valuable conclusion. This particular experiment was set out well in pupils' books, with a clear, logical progression. However, this type of layout is not used consistently throughout the school.

88. The quality of teaching is good. A particular strength is the way teachers use question and answer sessions at the start of lessons. This consolidates previous knowledge and sets the level of information in order to build on this as the lesson progresses. This was seen to good effect in the lesson for pupils in Year 2. The pupils were preparing to set out their ideas in an investigation into the melting rate of ice cubes. The teacher questioned the pupils well on their knowledge of materials and which might slow the melting rate, such as wrapping the cube in tin foil, woollen fabric or paper or dropping it into cold water. Questions were useful in consolidating the pupils' previous knowledge. Also, they were put in such a way that pupils of all abilities understood and were able to answer or make a contribution to the discussion. Another strength is the way teachers insist on the use of a good scientific language. This was seen in a lesson on food chains by pupils in Year 6. The teacher listed appropriate words such as 'consumer', 'producer', 'herbivore', 'omnivore' and 'carnivore'. Pupils used these words freely and it proved a good way to build up their general knowledge of words.

89. Teachers have a sound approach to investigative and experimental science. The pupils participate in plenty of investigations. The investigation work seen in the books of pupils in the Year 4/5 class was of particularly high quality. Teachers emphasise the importance of predicting what might happen and the need to make a fair test. Resources are good for pupils to carry out their test and pupils record their results accurately, often using a graph. Some teachers are using a standard format for writing up experiments. This logical and structured approach, which helps pupils who have weaker writing skills, is not consistently used throughout the school. This means that pupils with weaker writing skills do not always produce clear, logical reports of their investigations. The use of information and communication technology to support learning in science is underdeveloped. The lesson planning is good in part as it has clear learning objectives, often well linked to the importance of science in pupils' lives. However, work is rarely planned to meet the different needs of the higher, as well as the lower, attainers or those with special educational needs. This is mainly because the assessment records are not collected in such a way that they can be used for this type of planning. This means that, on occasions, progress is not as rapid as it could be despite the good teaching. The school is aware of this weakness and has plans to address this from January onward.
90. The science co-ordinator was ill at the time of the inspection and could not be interviewed. He has built up a good range of resources, is well qualified and has attended many courses. He has carried out lesson observations and undertaken in-service training with the staff. The curriculum is enhanced in a number of ways. For example, pupils in Year 6 study riverside life during walks at Penrith and Appleby. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 carry out a mini-beast study in Whinlatter Forest Park. There are good links with the secondary school to which most pupils transfer. Pupils in Year 6 visit for a whole day to carry out activities in science. At present the school grounds are underused for the study of science, therefore pupils do not have a regular opportunity to study wildlife.

## **ART AND DESIGN and DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

91. Judgements are based on the one lesson seen in each subject for pupils in Year 1 and Year 2, an analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning, displays around the school and discussions with the co-ordinators. These indicate that standards are broadly average in both subjects by the ends of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are achieving well.
92. Scrutiny of work and displays shows that pupils experience a satisfactory range of activities and develop a range of skills in both subjects. By the end of Year 2 they have used a range of drawing materials including pencil, crayons, pastels and paints. Illustrations for seaside displays and Katie Morag's island show some appreciation of tone and shade. Design tasks have included a lift for 'The Lighthouse Keepers Lunch', and making an example of Joseph's coat of many colours, an African string bead necklace, cous-cous biscuits, animal masks and a simple electric circuit. These activities provide opportunities for pupils to use a variety of tools and materials and to measure, cut, paste, stick, decorate and make appropriate choices. However, there is only a little evidence of pupils engaging in the planning and evaluation process.
93. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have a sketchbook in which higher attaining pupils produce quite detailed sketches. However, little advice is offered in the marking as to how work can be improved. Pupils show sensitivity in the use of crayons and pastels, layering colours to achieve the required tone. For example, this was seen in their work on Picasso's painting of his son. They also explore tone values by layering tissue paper and paints in work on autumn leaves. Pupils in Year 6 explore composition in landscape paintings by use of a viewfinder. Their design work begins to show evidence of planning and evaluation. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 draw plans for a photograph frame and explore issues of choice of suitable materials and joints.

94. It was not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching in either subject because only one lesson was seen in each subject. In the art lesson for pupils in Year 1, planning was in place to support a trainee assistant. The assistant gave appropriate advice on the skills of shading as pupils were using felt tips to shade in 'stained glass windows.' Another group worked on self-portraits in pencil which were to be scanned by the computer and used to create calendars. Both groups responded well to the advice offered. In a design and technology lesson in Year 2, a good range of activities provided opportunities for the pupils to measure, mark, cut out, assemble and combine materials. Pupils decorated a small Christmas cake with icing and marzipan and created patterns using food colouring paste. They worked diligently under the supervision of a well-briefed parent helper. Another group used string to measure the circumference of the cake to create a cake band, which they then decorated appropriately. A further group wove coloured ribbon through foil net to create different patterns to use on a Christmas card. All the pupils were engrossed by these activities and were able to discuss and modify their ideas as they worked.
95. Information and communication technology is used on occasions to support both subjects. Pupils use a range of drawing programs to create pictures based on various artists and to draw plans. Both co-ordinators have a clear view for their subjects and are enthusiastic. The co-ordinator for art and design is a recent appointment and has a good sense of the strengths and areas for development within the subject. She has identified a need to resource and develop three-dimensional work and also work in textiles. The co-ordinator for design and technology has identified a need to develop the planning and evaluation processes within the subject. Policies, schemes of work and assessment procedures are sound in both subjects.

## **HISTORY and GEOGRAPHY**

96. During the week of the inspection it was possible to see only one geography lesson and three history lessons. However, evidence was available through an analysis of pupils' written work, teachers' planning, an evaluation of classroom displays and discussions with pupils and teachers. All evidence for history and geography indicates that by the ages of seven and eleven, pupils are working at a level that is expected for their ages. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are achieving well. No overall judgement in these subjects was made at the last inspection.
97. In history, pupils in Years 1 and 2 are developing a clear understanding of the passage of time and can distinguish between the past and present. In a Year 1 history lesson, high attaining pupils could tell the difference between old and new toys and what materials they were made of. Pupils in Year 2 know and understand how Florence Nightingale cared for the wounded soldiers during the Crimea War, and that nursing methods have changed since then. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 study different periods of history such as life in Victorian Britain, the Romans and Celts and life during World War II, and put these different periods into correct chronological order using a time line. Pupils are also beginning to identify some of the ways the past is represented, such as in buildings, artefacts and old documents. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 have visited the Maryport Museum, and looked at the ditch and tower the Romans built to watch for Celtic raiders. In a history lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, they developed understanding of why rationing was necessary during World War II and how it was administered by the use of ration cards. They also learned how much people had to live on during a week, by looking at the actual amounts of foods people received and comparing this to the present day.
98. In geography, pupils in Year 2 contrast different environments and the different weathers found in these locations. In a geography lesson in Year 2, high attaining pupils could confidently describe the weather conditions in a Spanish holiday resort, in comparison with the local beach at Grasslot. Lower attaining pupils needed some adult help to describe the differences in Grasslot and those in Spain when completing their poster. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have traced the origins of how bread is produced from its planting and harvesting by the farmer, to how it is processed and made into different types of bread. Pupils in Years 5

and 6 have also used their mapping skills to locate the major cities in Britain which were bombed during World War II and why, for example, Sheffield because of its steel-making capabilities.

99. Pupils have positive attitudes towards their work in history and geography. They are keen to share their work and celebrate the achievements of other pupils. This was seen in a geography lesson in Year 2, when pupils enthusiastically discussed the reasons for their choice of Spain or Maryport for a holiday during the plenary session of the lesson. They use their literacy skills appropriately in both subjects, using words such as 'ration' and 'old' in history, and 'resort' and 'weather' in geography. This, and the encouragement to use their speaking and listening skills, makes a positive contribution to the development of literacy throughout the school. The teaching of history and geography supports pupils' moral, social and cultural development. For example, working together in groups and travelling to the Anne Frank exhibition at Tullie House in Carlisle, the Toy Museum at Cockermouth, and the Beamish Museum, and using the local environment around the school to discuss environmental issues.
100. The quality of teaching is good. All teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan work that holds pupils' attention and interest well. This was clearly demonstrated in a history lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, on the effect of rationing in World War II, in which the teacher used the oral explanation to interest and stimulate the pupils' learning and then take it forward in the different group activities. Teachers use questioning and intervention well to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding about both subjects. For instance, in a geography lesson for pupils in Year 2, the teacher moved effectively around the different group activities in the class offering suggestions on how pupils might approach their work of producing posters about visiting Maryport or a holiday resort in Spain. At the end of the lesson, the teacher used the summing-up session well to reinforce what the pupils had learnt in their different group activities. All adults manage the pupils well. This helps build positive relationships between staff and pupils, which in turn enables the pupils to learn well. Although the teaching staff use computers to support learning in both subjects on occasions, there is no consistent approach to using computers. The good displays around the school, such as the one showing that Barnaby Bear has visited different places around the world, and the display on Victorian Britain, help maintain pupil interest in both subjects.
101. Both subjects are well led and managed. Policies and schemes of work have been adopted to reflect the individual character of the school. Both co-ordinators monitor planning on a half-termly basis, and there are whole-school assessment procedures in place for both subjects. Resources for both subjects are only just adequate and are stored centrally. The school is intending to build up its stock of artefacts in both subjects shortly.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

102. Standards are in line with those expected for pupils' ages at the ends of Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are achieving well. Since the previous inspection the school has made good improvement in the provision. There was no judgement on standards at the time of the last inspection. There is now a computer suite with nine net-linked computers, with an appropriate 'closed system' in operation to safeguard pupils using the Internet. There is a computer and printer in each classroom to help support pupils' learning during lessons, although this is generally underdeveloped.
103. Since her appointment last year, the co-ordinator has led and managed the subject well, and has been instrumental in giving all the staff confidence and support in delivering all the strands of the subject. In addition, the school benefits from having a dedicated learning support assistant who effectively teaches small groups of pupils in the computer suite. The co-ordinator is aware that the subject needs to be further integrated across the whole curriculum, and the school needs to update its computer software. The school has a good policy and scheme of work and there are whole school assessment procedures in place to

assist with planning and tracking pupils' achievements. There is a computer club, which is specifically targeting pupils in Year 3 who may not have access to a computer at home.

104. The quality of teaching in the computer suite is good. The learning support assistant has good subject knowledge, and effectively supports the teachers by giving them details of how well pupils have coped with the activity. She also has good relationships and communicates well with all the pupils she teaches. This results in the computer suite being well used to support pupils' learning in the subject. All the activities seen proceed with good pace, and the learning support assistant uses effective questioning and guidance to help pupils. This was clearly demonstrated when she taught a group of Year 1 pupils to use the 'paint brush' program to create an image. In all the activities observed the pupils have good attitudes towards their work in information and communication technology, and treat all the equipment with respect. They have a genuine desire to learn and to increase their skills when they work in the computer suite. However, the use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects is underdeveloped. This is in spite of the fact that classrooms are well equipped with computers linked to the computer suite.
105. All pupils learn how information and communication technology can affect their lives and is linked to real-life situations, such as accessing information from different websites on the Internet. This was seen when a group of pupils in Years 5 and 6 accessed information from the Internet websites and saved it in their word documents. The pupils used the mouse confidently to double click and highlight information they wished to use, and then copied and pasted the text to their document, including deleting text that they did not want. Pupils also have access to working with control technology such as a digital camera and a floor robot. They do this soundly. A group of pupils in Years 3 and 4 used a digital camera to take a photograph of another pupil in the group and saved it on a floppy disk. Higher attaining pupils in the group could independently open the disk when it was put into the hard drive of a computer, whilst lower attaining pupils needed some adult guidance into the operations of how to open it. Pupils also have experience of using different programs on the computer and know how to use the different icons to create different images. A group of pupils in Year 2 used the 'paint' program to create different images of a Christmas tree. Pupils were confident in double clicking on the icons to create both different shapes and colours on their trees. The pupils were also shown how to print off their work and were taught the difference between 'landscape' and 'portrait' when positioning their paper in the printer.

## **MUSIC**

106. Attainment in music is lower than that expected in most schools and pupils are not achieving as well as they could. For example, singing is below that expected for pupils' ages and pupils are unfamiliar with a range of composers.
107. It was possible to observe only one lesson during the inspection but evidence has been collected by a discussion with the co-ordinator and an interview with a group of pupils.
108. In the one lesson observed, for pupils in Years 4 and 5, the teacher closely followed the school's new scheme of work and the purpose of the lesson was clearly communicated to the pupils. The pupils listened carefully to a Calypso Melody played from a compact disc and then to a phrase which they had to repeat on chime bars or glockenspiels. Music paper was provided to support the activity and a teaching assistant also provided very good support. The pupils were enthusiastic in their work and some groups were able to repeat the appropriate phrase on their instrument.
109. The singing in assemblies and hymn practice was below that expected for pupils' ages. Little enthusiasm was displayed and pupils were not encouraged to sing with clear diction or required to reflect on and improve their performance during hymn practice.

110. Pupils have opportunity to listen to a limited range of music; however, music of the great composers is played as they enter assembly. Pupils in Year 6 talked enthusiastically about listening to music from different cultures, such as African and Indian, although they could not name any of the classical composers. They described how they could see images of hills and cliffs as they listened to 'Scottish music'. A visit to a local school concert was also described and pupils participated in a 'Jubilee Concert'. They enjoy singing along with the teacher playing a guitar and have played simple instruments such as keyboard, scrapers and chime bars.
111. The development and implementation of a music policy are priorities in the school improvement plan. A school policy and scheme of work are now fully in place, although very new, and teachers have yet to become acquainted with them. The school has had a staff training day to develop staff skills and confidence. However, implementation of the ideas obtained on this course is still in the early stages of implementation and the headteacher recognises the need to further develop staff skills and confidence, and to monitor teaching and learning in order to raise standards further.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

112. It was not possible during the inspection to see all aspects of physical education. Nor was it possible to make a judgement on attainment over the full range of the curriculum. However, in those lessons seen, attainment is in line with that expected for pupils' ages at the ends of Year 2 and Year 6 and their achievement, including of those with special educational needs, is good. No judgement on physical education was made at the last inspection.
113. In a dance lesson for pupils in Year 1, pupils demonstrated that they were able to interpret the story of *The Hungry Caterpillar* effectively. They curled up in a ball to become an 'egg' and slowly emerged as a 'long caterpillar'. The pupils were beginning to show sound co-ordination, linking their sequences together with confidence. In a gymnastics lesson for pupils in Year 3, pupils demonstrated more advanced skills as they performed a floor exercise, which included balancing, taking off, turning and rolling. These pupils were able to talk about the differences between their own and others' performances. They were able to suggest improvements. By Year 6, pupils are able to link skills, techniques and ideas and apply them appropriately and accurately. This was seen in a games lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Pupils practised both attacking and defending when throwing a ball to a colleague, with two other pupils trying to obtain the ball. This was an appropriate skills development exercise. Pupils then went on to play a short game of netball, which they did with a vigorous competitive approach. Pupils throughout the school are able to sustain physical activity over quite long periods of time. A discussion with the co-ordinator indicates that almost all pupils are able to swim 25 metres by the time they leave the school.
114. The quality of teaching is good overall. The teachers' planning is good, with clear learning objectives in each lesson linked to a good scheme of work. Teachers have a clear idea of what skills they intend the pupils to learn and improve. This ensures that the class remains focused throughout the lesson. Teachers often set a good example by giving a demonstration themselves. They also plan for pupils to demonstrate their skills to others and allow time for a discussion and debate as to how their performance could be improved. Teachers plan appropriate warming up and cooling down exercises. They also ensure that all safety aspects are covered. Teachers have good class control and this ensures behaviour is good.
115. A discussion with the subject co-ordinator indicates that all areas of the physical education curriculum are covered. Pupils from Year 3 upwards swim in the pool belonging to the secondary school and pupils in Year 6 take part in outdoor and adventurous activities during a camping weekend. The co-ordinator has organised in-service training for the teachers in gymnastics and games in recent years. She was able to use the services of the physical education teacher from the secondary school. In addition, teachers have had training in general sport and athletics. Pupils have had many opportunities to compete against other



schools and, on occasions, have won competitions. For example, the girls' football team came first last year in a competition against many schools in the area. Pupils also play netball and touch rugby against Maryport schools. Two boys from the school were selected by a local club to play rugby league in the main football and rugby stadium in Wigan.